

## WIGAN AND LEIGH HOUSING BOARD 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2009

### Report of the Director of Strategy, Policy and Projects

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### WALH Half Year Performance 2009/10

<b>Purpose/Summary:</b>				
To advise Board Members of the organisation's performance in the first half of 2009/10.				
<b>Recommendations:</b>				
Board is asked to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the performance in the first half of 2009/10.</li> <li>• Advise of any areas it wishes to refer to Business, Investment and Performance Committee for more detailed discussion.</li> </ul>				
<b>For decision, discussion or information?</b>		Discussion and decision		
<b>For the open part or the press and public excluded part of the agenda? If press and public excluded please state reason.</b>		Open		
<b>Resource and Value for Money Implications:</b>	A number of indicators have key value for money implications e.g. re-let performance, rent collection.			
<b>Employee Implications:</b>	None			
<b>Key Risks incl. Company reputation, business relationships, health and safety and legal implications</b>	Risk to reputation of the organisation, value for money and satisfaction of tenants if performance is not strong.			
<b>Equality (Impact) Assessed?</b>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
			Not Applicable	X
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity and Community Implications:</b>	The indicator set includes some which relate specifically to the experience of vulnerable groups.			
<b>Environmental Implications:</b>	None			
<b>Area Forums Affected:</b>	All			
<b>Tracking/Process</b>	<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Area Forum/s</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Board</b>
				1 Dec 2009

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A Board working group has looked at how performance is reported to Board and their recommendations were to:
- Clearly link performance management reporting to delivering the Vision
  - Make it easier for Board Members to identify performance for each indicator
  - Report how we are performing compared to 'best in class'




A revised performance report was trialled for quarter one and Board endorsed this new reporting structure.

- 1.2 This report is structured around our Vision of providing 'Better Homes, Brighter Futures' for our customers. This Vision is supported by 5 goals and 4 business enablers:
- Goal 1 – Better Housing Services
  - Goal 2 – Decent Homes
  - Goal 3 – Better Estates
  - Goal 4 – Access to Affordable Homes
  - Goal 5 – Housing Services for Vulnerable People




Business Enablers:

- Value for Money
- Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Governance

- 1.3 For all indicators an overall target for the year has been set. For those indicators which Board agreed would be reported quarterly, there are also quarterly targets to help monitor progress towards reaching the annual target. If performance isn't on target but is within 5% of the target (1% for BS5 proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward), performance is classed as 'close to target'.

Key	Performance against target
	On target or better
	Close to target - within 5% of the target (1% for BS5)
	At risk – more than 5% from the target (1% for BS5)





1.4 This report also highlights if performance is improving compared to either year end 2008/09 or half year 2008/09:

Key	Performance trend
	Improving
	Stayed the same
	Declining

1.5 To report how we are performing compared to ‘best in class’, this report details, where available, our relative position against the HouseMark ALMO Club or other relevant benchmarking information. The benchmarking information in this report is based on comparison of our half year performance against the ALMO Club half year performance. However there are gaps in this benchmarking information because:

- The indicator is a local indicator so isn’t collected by HouseMark (5 indicators)
- The indicator is only collected annually by HouseMark (4 indicators)
- Very few ALMOs carry out the homelessness function (2 indicators)
- Our performance data isn’t yet available (1 indicator)
- HouseMark haven’t published the quartile data (1 indicator)

Where possible, we have included other comparative information which will help to give Board Members an indication of our performance compared to others.




Key	Quartile
	Top quartile – in the top 25% of ALMO Club members
	2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile – above average, in the top 25% to 50% of ALMO Club members
	3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile – below average, in the bottom 25% to 50% of ALMO Club members
	Bottom quartile – in the bottom 25% of ALMO Club members

1.6 The following sections provide a summary of our performance against each element of the Vision bringing out important issues to note. The supplementary performance information booklet included with this agenda provides more detailed information.




## 2.0 Half Year Performance Summary

2.1 This half year update shows that of the 22 indicators reported quarterly:





### Are we meeting our targets?

Key	Performance against target	Number of indicators
	On target	13
	Close to target	3
	At risk	5
	Not yet measurable – not yet able to measure performance	1

### Are we improving?

Key	Performance trend from 08/09	Number of indicators
	Improving	13
	Stayed the same	1
	Declining	2
	Not yet measurable - new indicator so no trend data	6





### How do we compare with others?

Key	Quartile	Number of indicators
	Top Quartile	4
	2 <sup>nd</sup> quartile	4
	3 <sup>rd</sup> quartile	0
	Bottom quartile	1
	No benchmarking information currently available	13*

\* At year end there will be HouseMark benchmarking information available on a further 6 of the quarterly indicators. 7 indicators are either local indicators or relate to homelessness which very few ALMOs carry out.

### 3.0 Half Year Performance

#### Goal 1 – Better Housing Services

Indicator	Actual Half Year 09/10	Target Half Year 09/10	Actual against target	Trend from 08/09	Quartile
Avoidable contact- proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer <b>(National Indicator)</b>	12.6%	12.9%		New indicator	Only available at year end
% of tenants on who the landlord has diversity information (age, gender plus at least one other of ethnicity, sexual orientation and religion)	57%	57%		New indicator	Not available-local indicator
% of tenants who said that the service provided by the Contact Centre was excellent or good	97%	97%			Not available-local indicator
% of new tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process	N/a	85%	Revised indicator	Revised indicator	Not yet available

#### • **Key Business Indicators**

##### **Avoidable contact- proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer**

This is a key indicator because it is a National Indicator. Of the 98,899 calls recorded by the Contact Centre during the first half of the year 12,444 (12.6%) enquiries received may have been avoided. There was a slight dip during quarter two with 12.9% of calls being avoidable compared to quarter one performance of 12.3%. During quarter 2 the most common cause of repeat calls was customers chasing a repair despite a timescale for attending the repair being given on their previous call. We also received 584 calls from customers chasing a repair that was not completed within the timescale agreed on the first call and this resulted in the customer having to call us again. We are currently looking at IT software which will make improvements to the repairs appointments system. From quarter 4 we will also be starting to ask tenants as part of the repairs satisfaction survey if their repair was completed right first time.















Although the Cabinet Office has stated that current national data is not appropriate for comparison, it does give Board Members an indication of our performance compared to others. The England average for 2008/09 was 24.7% which is significantly worse than our half year performance. Wigan Council's performance for 2008/09 was 24.3%.

#### • **Issues to Note**

##### **% of tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process**

This is a HouseMark indicator which is a revised version of an annual indicator reported to Board in previous years. It required changes to an existing tenant satisfaction survey to be able to correctly record the % of tenants satisfied with the allocation and letting process. These changes have now been made and implemented from the beginning of October so we will be able to report satisfaction for the remaining half of the year.

## Goal 2 – Decent Homes

Indicator	Actual Half Year 09/10	Target Half Year 09/10	Actual against target	Trend from 08/09	Quartile
% of non-decent council stock <b>(National Indicator and Local Area Agreement indicator)</b>	3.5%	4%			
% of urgent repairs completed within Government time limits	99.27%	98%			
Average time to complete non-urgent repairs	7.8 days	8 days			
% of repairs which are emergency/urgent repairs as defined by Govt Right to Repair legislation	14.03%	18%			Local indicator
Proportion of gas servicing certificates outstanding	2.04%	1%			

### • **Key Business Indicators**

#### **% of non-decent council stock**

This is a key indicator because it is a National Indicator and a Local Area Agreement indicator. Continuing progress with works to the multi-storey blocks and boiler replacements has resulted in a reduction in the percentage of non-decent dwellings to 3.5% representing 796 dwellings out of a stock of 22,819. This is excellent performance as it is within target and places us in the top quarter of organisations in the HouseMark ALMO Club.

### • **Areas of Concern**










#### **Proportion of gas servicing certificates outstanding**

As a result of properties being converted from electric to gas 19,812 properties are now included in the gas servicing programme, this is an increase of 114 from quarter one. At the end of quarter two 405 properties (2.04%) had certificates which had expired. The challenging target of 1% has not been achieved but there has been a significant year on year improvement. At the end of quarter two in 2008/09 there were 3.27% of certificates outstanding and for the same period in 2007/08 there were 6.60% outstanding.

Of the 405 properties where a certificate had expired, 249 certificates have been outstanding for under 3 months and 8 have been outstanding for between 2-3 years. 143 tenants have also been referred to the Council's Solicitor to commence legal action. We are continuing to intensively monitor the gas servicing programme and will be reporting the findings from a review of our policy, procedures and processes by CORGI Services to Business, Investment & Performance Committee in December.

Benchmarking against the ALMO Club places us well within the bottom quartile- our half year performance of 2.04% compares to the bottom quartile of 0.79%. However we are aware that other ALMOs exclude some properties from their calculations which shows them as better performing. We will be looking at how other ALMOs calculate this indicator.

### Goal 3 – Better Estates

Indicator	Actual Half Year 09/10	Target Half Year 09/10	Actual against target	Trend from 08/09	Quartile
% of customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with	74%	83%		New indicator	Only available at year end
% of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint	66%	80%		New indicator	Only available at year end
% of ASB cases resolved	82%	75%		New indicator	
Proportion of empty homes as a % of the stock	1.13%	1.02%			Not available-local indicator
Average time to relet properties	26.5 days	26.75 days			

#### • **Key Business Indicators**

##### **Average time to relet properties**

This is a key indicator because empty homes impact on our rental income, the appearance of our estates and the allocations process. Performance has continued to improve which keeps us in the second quartile compared to the HouseMark ALMO Club. Top quartile performance at this half year point was 24.4 days.

#### • **Areas of Concern**

##### **% of customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with**

Whilst the half year target of 83% has not been achieved and half year performance of 74% is down compared to last year (82%), quarter two has seen a 10% increase from quarter one. The lack of regular feedback is the main customer complaint and this has been considered as part of the ASB Service Improvement Team (SIT) review.

Only 9 organisations have supplied their half year performance on this indicator to HouseMark, but comparing our performance against these organisations places us above the average of 70%.

##### **% of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint**

Performance has increased slightly from quarter one (64% to 68%). However, half year performance of 66% is some way off the 80% target although the target is particularly challenging in this service area as outcomes may never satisfy the person complaining. Only 12 organisations have supplied their half year performance on this indicator to HouseMark, but comparing our performance against these organisations places us below the average of 79%.

A report elsewhere on the agenda details the findings from the ASB SIT review which will help to improve performance on the above two ASB indicators. A review of the ASB customer satisfaction survey has also resulted in some changes to questions being made which will be implemented from quarter four. In particular, changes have been made to how the above two indicators are surveyed which could change future performance. These changes reflect good practice, will ensure that the questions we ask are easier to understand and will help us to have a better understanding of why customers are not satisfied. The response rate to the ASB survey in the first half of the year was 14% which represents 59 responses by post and phone out of 435 closed cases. This response rate is increasing as a result of undertaking telephone surveys, but it needs to increase much more to give us robust findings.





**Proportion of empty homes as a % of the stock**

The number of voids has continually reduced over the last couple of years, but quarter two saw an increase of 25 from 233 to 258. There is no major cause for concern at this stage although this area will continue to be closely monitored. The number of terminations has remained fairly constant but some staff are reporting an increase in the number of offers having to be made before a property is let. We have always been aware that the constant improvement would have levelled off at some point, we now need to monitor if this increase was a one-off or the start of a more long term swing.

**• Issues to Note**

Discussions have started with the Housing Management directorate around the need to measure performance on the broader quality of life on estates. These discussions will feed into the refreshed Vision which will be reported to a future Board.

## Goal 5 – Housing Services for Vulnerable People

Indicator	Actual Half Year 09/10	Target Half Year 09/10	Actual against target	Trend from 08/09	Quartile
Households considering themselves homeless who approach for housing advice and housing advice casework intervention resolves their situation (per 1,000 households in the authority)	3.0	1.9			Not available
Number of households living in temporary accommodation <b>(National Indicator and Local Area Agreement indicator)</b>	42	40			Not available

### • **Key Business Indicators**

#### **Number of households living in temporary accommodation**
















This is an important indicator because it is a National Indicator and a Local Area Agreement indicator. At the end of quarter two the number of households in temporary accommodation, as measured for this indicator, was 42 which just misses the half year target but represents a significant improvement on the year end position of 59. However, although it is too early to be completely confident, there does now seem to be some positive impact from all the intensive work staff have been putting in. This improvement will need to be maintained to enable us to get close to the Government's particularly challenging target of 19 by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. Proposals in the Allocations Policy review should help us get closer to this target. A report to Business, Investment & Performance Committee in October described more fully the challenges the Homelessness Service faces and the work being done to tackle those challenges and improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

### • **Excellent Performance**

#### **Homeless prevention**

The number of cases where we have prevented a household from becoming homeless after they approached us for housing advice has steadily increased over the last year. Although there was a slight dip from quarter one to quarter two, performance is well above the target and is on track to exceed the year end target. During quarter two there were 195 cases where housing advice casework intervention resolved the situation, this is a significant improvement on the 67 cases resolved during the same period last year.

## Business Enablers

Indicator	Actual Half Year 09/10	Target Half Year 09/10	Actual against target	Trend from 08/09	Quartile
<b>Value for Money</b>					
% void rent loss	1.02%	1.01%			
Proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward	95.90%	96.42%			Only available at year end
% of tenants with more than 7 weeks of gross rent arrears	4.06%	4.17%			
% of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.05%	0.12%			
Proportion of former tenant arrears collected	7.55%	8.0%			Not available-local indicator
<b>Human Resources</b>					
The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence	4.16 days	4.3 days			Not yet available

### • **Excellent Performance**

#### **% of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears**

There were 12 evictions during the first half year compared to 26 for the same period last year. This continues the downward trend of the last few years and is the result of revised procedures focused on advice, assistance and sustaining tenancies in addition to early intervention and prevention. There is also an element of the Courts suspending more eviction applicants in the current recession. Our half year performance of 0.05% placed us in the top quarter of HouseMark ALMO Club members.

### • **Areas for Concern**

#### **Proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward**

As expected the proportion of rent collected is below target due to the change from collecting rent a week in arrears to 'real time' collection. The change was implemented on 7<sup>th</sup> September which was five weeks before the half year position was calculated. As we move further away from the implementation date the impact of the change will reduce, but it will be difficult during the second half of the year to reduce the extra arrears created by raising two week's debit in one week. However we have had a very encouraging start- an extra week's debit of £1.4 million was raised in September which, following housing benefit and tenant payments, has now reduced the amount outstanding to below £200k.

### **Proportion of former tenant arrears collected**

£166k has been collected in the first half year which equates to a collection rate of 7.55%, below the half year target of 8% but still an improvement on the same point last year when the collection rate was 7.27%. New procedures, including the start of litigation on specific cases, should help to ensure the year end target is met.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

4.1 16 of the 22 quarterly indicators reported are either on target or close to target. The 5 indicators which are “at risk” of not meeting their year end target are:

- DH5 Proportion of gas servicing certificates outstanding
- BE1 Percentage of customers satisfied with the way their ASB complaint was dealt with
- BE2 Percentage of customers satisfied with the outcome of their ASB complaint
- BE4 Proportion of empty homes as a percentage of the stock
- VM2 Proportion of rent collected including arrears carried forward

The reasons for the indicators not meeting their target and actions required are detailed in the report.

## **5.0 Recommendations**

5.1 Board is asked to:

- Note the performance in the first half of 2009/10.
- Advise of any areas it wishes to refer to Business, Investment and Performance Committee for more detailed discussion.