Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 27 February 2024

Cyclical assurance on service performance

Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Committee:

1.1.1 Agrees to receive a cyclical performance report on housing and homelessness performance;

1.1.2 Notes that this report will contain key indicators representing a range of services delivered across the Housing and Homelessness services, as outlined in paragraph 4.2;

1.1.3 Notes that on a cyclical basis a drill down will be presented on a specific data set; and

1.1.4 Notes the work being undertaken on improving the data literacy, service improvement and prevention culture within the Housing and Homelessness Service.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Derek McGowan, Service Director – Housing and Homelessness

E-mail: derek.mcgowan@edinburgh.gov.uk

Report

Cyclical assurance on service performance

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report proposes the introduction of a cyclical performance report on key performance indicators to allow more effective performance and progress reporting to Committee, enabling a more appropriate level of oversight and assurance over how the Housing and Homelessness service is operating.

2.2 Key indicators proposed for this new assurance model will include homelessness; void properties; rental income; new build completion, antisocial behaviour and whole house retrofit.

2.3 To support this, a deliberate approach is being taken to develop the data and service improvement culture within the Housing and Homelessness service.

3. Background

3.1 A strong Corporate Governance system ensures accountability, performance, and improved stewardship; and is fundamental in driving service improvement and culture to ensure delivery of objectives. Through this, appropriate assurance can be provided that risks, issues and communities are understood and targeted.

3.2 An effective system of oversight and assurance of service performance is vital to ensuring service improvement and best value. The Council achieves this through the agreed governance structure of Committees, and scheme of delegation to Council Officers.

3.3 The Housing and Homelessness Service was formed in February 2022, when a redesign of Council operating structures led to housing services within the Place Directorate being combined with Homelessness and Housing Support that had been within the Children and Families Directorate. The service as currently formed has c1,000 posts. The 2023/24 net General Fund budget is £62.2m and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) has budgeted income of £106.5m with corresponding expenditure budgets delivering a net zero budget.

3.4 The current Housing and Homelessness service is responsible broadly for Housing Management including repairs, Homelessness, Housing Support and Advice Services, Strategic Housing Development, Shared Repairs and Whole House

Retrofit projects. Traditionally, performance has been reported through annual or bi-annual scorecards, when a committee (or the Council) has requested a specific report, and when budget and expenditure decisions are required. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the annual reporting cycle in detail.

3.5   The range of services historically reported through Committee does not currently represent the scale and complexity of the work undertaken across the whole service as it currently stands and focusses more on strategic reporting than performance reporting.

3.6   It is proposed to improve the reporting of performance in order to ensure Committee can have appropriate oversight and assurance of service performance, influence service improvement, or ensure that the appropriate and relevant risk, issues and communities are being targeted.

4.   Main report

4.1   This report proposes the adoption of a cyclical performance reporting model, based on a set of key indicators drawn from across the service. Within each cyclical report, a drill down will be provided for a specific area of performance outlined below to allow for more detailed oversight of performance, risks and issues.

4.2   Key datasets proposed for this cyclical performance model are trend analysis for:

4.2.1   Void property management, including reasons for voids;

4.2.2   Antisocial behaviour;

4.2.3   Whole house retrofit progress;

4.2.4   Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation;

4.2.5   Number of homeless people, including by demography and characteristic (where available);

4.2.6   Number of and reason for homeless presentations;

4.2.7   Prevention activities and cost avoidance;

4.2.8   Damp and mould;

4.2.9   Money and debt advice; and

4.3.10 Completions and approvals of new build property.

4.3   The introduction of this approach to performance reporting, if approved by Committee, will complement service actions to develop the data culture through accessible performance reporting, improved analysis of data to drive service strategy and improvements, and training on data literacy. It is expected that as the data culture improves, the detail and visual representation of reporting will also improve.

4.4   A focus of this work is a more deliberate approach to preventing harm to people and the organisation. The service is working with the University of Edinburgh's Futures Institute on developing and embedding prevention practice, developing systems thinking capability, and bespoke training for staff on managing, handling and using data to target improvements and interventions. 32 colleagues (representing the range of services delivered) commenced this training on 29 January 2024.

5   Next Steps

5.1   If approved by Committee, the first cyclical performance report will be submitted for consideration at the next Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee in May 2024. It is proposed that the first drill down analysis will be on void Council properties.

6   Financial impact

6.1   This report will have no direct financial impact, but the identification of service improvements through enhanced oversight of performance will result in financial benefits that will be monitored and factored in to financial reporting as appropriate.

7   Equality and Poverty Impact

7.1   This report will have no direct impact on equality and poverty, but the identification of service improvements through enhanced oversight of performance will complement existing approaches and be enhanced by the development of data and prevention culture. It is acknowledged that one in five children in the city live in poverty, and that there is a clear link between homelessness, housing and poverty across Edinburgh.

7.2   Where specific approaches are identified to improving performance in key areas, those initiatives will be subject to Integrated Impact Assessments as required.

8   Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

8.1   This report will have no direct impact on climate and nature emergency, but the identification of service improvements through enhanced oversight of performance will complement existing approaches and be enhanced by the development of data and prevention culture.

9   Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

9.1   This report will enable a more appropriate level of assurance through the Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work Committee.

9.2 Where issues are presented or requested that highlight risk, or the need for a new policy, this will be progressed and assessed as appropriate at the relevant time.

10 Background reading/external references

10.1 None.

11 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Annual service reporting schedule

Appendix 1

Performance/Policy Reporting – Housing, Homelessness and Fair Work

Item	Frequency	Next Update Due
Annual Assurance Statement on Housing Services	Annual	August 2024
Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	Annual	August 2024
Strategic Housing Investment Plan	Annual	December 2024
Land Strategy to support delivery of affordable housing and brownfield regeneration	Annual	December 2024
Homelessness Statutory Returns	Annual	October 2024 *
Affordable Housing Policy Update	Annual	August 2024 **
Empty Homes	Annual	February/March 2025
HRA Capital Programme	Annual	May 2024
Edinburgh Living Annual Update	Annual	March 2024?
Housing Land Audit and Completions	Annual	Last update December 2022 **
Acquisitions and Disposals (Business Bulletin)	Annual	February/March 2025
Homelessness Performance Dashboard	Six monthly	May 2024
Housing Service Improvement Plan	Six monthly	May 2024
Damp, Mould and Condensation	Six monthly	May 2024
Mixed Tenure Improvement Service		Last report – March 2023
Financial Monitoring • Month Three • Month Five • Month Eight	As noted	September 2024

* - timing is data publication dependent

** - referral from Planning Committee

Other Updates

- Internal Audit reports, including Open and Overdue Audit Actions