

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the University of Toronto crest. The crest includes a crown at the top with four floral motifs, a shield with a cross, a ship, and a beaver, and a banner at the bottom with the motto 'ANNE FOR A'.

Agenda Item 5

**Corporate & Housing Services
Performance Update April 2018 -
October 2018**

Falkirk Council

Subject: Corporate & Housing Services Performance Update
April 2018 - October 2018

Meeting: Performance Panel

Date: 13 December 2018

Author: Director of Corporate & Housing Services

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out an executive summary of Corporate & Housing Services performance for the period April 2018 to October 2018 and includes:

- significant challenges and changes in Service pressures since our last Performance Panel update; and
- an update on relevant underpinning strategies, i.e. workforce strategy, medium term financial strategy, and digital / technology strategy.

1.2 The attached Performance Panel statement seeks to update Members on our progress towards achieving the priorities and outcomes within the Corporate Plan, progress on our key Council of the Future projects and areas for reform.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Performance Panel is asked to note the performance of Corporate & Housing Services over the period April 2018 to October 2018.

3. Background

3.1 The Service makes a significant contribution to the achievement of the Corporate Plan priorities and SOLD outcomes, particularly with regards to:

Corporate Plan priorities:

- **People**
 - reduce the impact of poverty on children and their families
- **Place**
 - grow our economy
 - improve the neighbourhoods we live in
 - promote vibrant town centres
- **Partnership**
 - work with communities to deliver better services
 - empower and enable people to be self-reliant

SOLD outcomes:

- our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live
- we will grow our economy to secure successful businesses, investment and employment
- our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults
- people will live, full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities
- our area will be a safer place to live.

3.2 The performance statement attached, notes progress against the actions we are taking forward over the coming year.

3.3 We will be determining our programme for areas for reform as reported to Council. These will be presented in our next report to Performance Panel.

4. Service Update

4.1 There have been a number of significant challenges, risks and changes in our Service since the last report to Performance Panel:

- **Equal Pay** - the work undertaken to negotiate and settle the Council's outstanding claims has given the Service a number of challenges in terms of the resource commitment for this work. This has required officers to be taken off other work priorities to ensure relevant complex information has been available to inform negotiations, and subsequently, that significant work is undertaken to ensure settlements are progressed. Settlements have been issued and further work is being done with representatives on those claims that remain outstanding. A report providing Members with more detail on the current position is being submitted to the meeting of Council on 5 December 2018.
- **Cyber attacks and cyber crime** – the Council is refreshing its approach to cyber security and indeed security of its technology infrastructure generally. This will include establishing clear lines of reporting, clear guidance for services on the security of our network and looking systematically at resilience. This work will be undertaken as part of our emerging digital strategy.
- **Revenue Budget** – In light of recent information the 2019/20 budget gap is now estimated to be c£18m. A key challenge is how we are going to bridge this gap. Work is ongoing to identify a range of options for Member consideration to ensure the Council delivers its Corporate Plan.
- **GDPR** – there has been a significant piece of work undertaken to prepare for the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force. This has involved a cross Council audit of personal information held and intensive work on the preparation of privacy notices. There is now a significant amount of follow-up work to be undertaken particularly around assessing the outcome of the audit process.
- **Universal Credit** – We have now had Full Service Universal Credit in Falkirk area for almost 9 months (since 21 March 2018). We have seen

significant growth in UC caseload each month, along with migration of the Live Service cases on to Full Service, and this is presenting significant challenges, as expected. The opening of West Hub on 19th November, with Central Hub in 2019, will help ensure that we identify, inform, and protect the most vulnerable households.

4.2 A number of strategies underpin our work. An update on these is provided below.

- **Workforce Strategy** – work has been being undertaken to develop a workforce plan for the Service to support the Council’s Workforce Strategy. This is a ‘live’ document, changing to reflect the changes in the workforce, the changes impacting on the workforce and any decisions taken such as those relating to the medium term financial planning and corporate plan, as well as policy changes. It recognises the workforce numbers, the influencing factors which impact on the workforce, and the need for skill and knowledge retention as the workforce and services we deliver change. The Service’s workforce plan was approved by members along with the Council-wide workforce plan in September 2018.
- **Council of the Future Change Programme** – the service continues to develop the Council’s change programme: Council of the Future. This includes direct support to Services in the initiation, development, progress and monitoring of projects which are part of the programme, and which support the medium term financial plan and corporate plan. It also includes a wide range of engagement with stakeholders. The change programme continues to be developed and recent work has included a review of the governance arrangements for the programme. Progress on the programme continues to be reported to the Executive on a quarterly basis.
- **Procurement Strategy** - under the terms of the [Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) 2014 Act](#), the Council must prepare and publish an Annual Procurement Report. Falkirk Council’s first Annual Procurement Report covering the period 1 January 2017 to 31 March 2018 has now been published on the Council’s web-site. The report outlines how the Council’s procurement activity has complied with the outcomes of our Procurement Strategy, provides a summary of regulated procurement activities completed during the period and outlines planned procurement activities over the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020.
- **Digital / Technology Strategy** – the service has been working closely with the Local Government Digital Office to develop a digital strategy that reflects on where the Council is in terms of its digital transformation and where it needs to go. This strategy has three key pillars:
 - leadership
 - transformation by design
 - rock solid technology and foundations.

This strategy is currently being finalised in conjunction with services but will be presented to Members in the New Year. This represents a fundamental shift in the way we will deliver services and how technology will be deployed in support of that change.

- **Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)** – An updated position on the MTFP was presented to Executive on 27 November 2018.
- **Local Housing Strategy 2017-2022 (LHS)** – approved by Executive on 15 August 2017 for submission to the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government approved the strategy in March 2018. The LHS sets out how the Council and its partners plan to address housing issues and demand in our area over the next five years. The strategy covers six local housing strategy priorities. These are: increasing housing supply, creating sustainable communities, improving access to housing, providing housing and support to vulnerable groups, tackling fuel poverty, energy efficiency and climate change, and improving housing conditions. An update on the strategy will be published early 2019.
- **Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2018-19 to 2022-23 (SHIP)** – the SHIP shows how the needs and priorities related to affordable housing will be tackled and focuses on how projects will be delivered. Executive agreed the SHIP 2019/20 to 2023/24 in October 2018. In summary, a total of 1,371 additional affordable properties are planned to be delivered from the projects detailed in the SHIP (1,048 Falkirk Council properties and 323 other RSLs).

5. Conclusions and Future Actions

5.1 Corporate & Housing Services will:

- continue progress on the high level actions identified in our Service Plan to achieve the priorities and outcomes
- continue to progress our Council of the Future projects
- continuously monitor our key strategies
- remain alert on any significant challenges, risks and changes in our Service.

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE & HOUSING SERVICES

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Date: 3 December 2018

Appendices: C&HS Performance Panel Statement - April 2017 to October 2018
List of Background Papers: None

Performance Panel Statement – April – October 2018

Key Actions Progress	
	Action is significantly behind target.
	Action is slightly behind target or in danger of not achieving deadline.
	Action is on target.
	Action is completed.

Our Area - The Area We Need To Be - Priorities (CHS)

02 People - Reducing the impact of poverty on children and their families

Action	Progress	Status
02.01-CHS17 Tackle food poverty.	The Hunter Foundation Innovation Fund application was not successful. The fund was oversubscribed. We received feedback that our application was interesting, however the assessors felt that we would be able to get funding from a different source. To date we have been unable to identify any other sources of funding.	
02.02-CHS17 Tackle the stigma of poverty.	This is one of three themes of the refreshed poverty strategy currently being finalised. Once the refreshed strategy is approved we plan to establish a subgroup of the Fairer Falkirk Partnership to take forward actions to address and reduce the stigma associated with poverty. The Partnership includes Council Services, NHS Forth Valley, Citizen's Advice Bureau, CVS Falkirk, Salvation Army, Food Bank and Falkirk Community Trust.	
02.03-CHS17 Increase household income.	We continue to support people in the Falkirk area to increase their household income through providing income maximisation and debt advice via our Hubs, Community Advice Services and Citizen's Advice Bureaux. We will continue to provide our online Entitlement Calculator, which was used 2,372 times in its first year.	

Action	Progress	Status
<p>02.04-CHS17 Prioritise disadvantaged communities when it comes to designing and delivering services.</p>	<p>The West Hub opened on Monday 19th November. Initial feedback from both staff and customers has been positive.</p> <p>Bonnybridge Finance Office closed on Friday 2nd November and an outreach service will be introduced in Bonnybridge library early in December.</p> <p>Stenhousemuir One Stop Shop will close to the public on Friday 21st December. We are currently engaging with people who use this facility to understand their preferred location for outreach.</p> <p>Central Hub - we are still working with Hubco and the preferred supplier to agree a programme including cost and timescales. Work is underway to develop contingency arrangements for service delivery in advance of the completion of works to the library to create the Central Hub.</p>	
<p>02.05-CHS17 Improve access to services for the most vulnerable within our area.</p>	<p>As we move towards establishing the West and Central Hubs we will continue to promote our Advice Hubs via our networks and via targeted communications.</p> <p>Fairer Money week in November 2018 will be used to promote the Hubs, Community Advice Services and our Entitlement Calculator to the public via our website and twitter and also via a series of events.</p>	
<p>02.06-CHS17 Define basic standards of living.</p>	<p>Information on the amount of money required for a basic standard of life and how that relates to poverty and income on benefits is included in the introduction of the refreshed poverty strategy.</p> <p>This information informed the approach to poverty part of the recent review of charges and concessions, underpinning the concept of providing services free to people in receipt of an income related benefit.</p>	
<p>02.07-CHS17 Secure maximum available funding to improve the energy efficiency of homes within the Council area.</p>	<p>We secured £795k of Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland Area Based Schemes (HEEPS:ABS) funding for 2018/19. This is for external wall, cavity wall and roof insulation to improve the energy efficiency of 97 privately owned and RSL (registered social landlord) homes within the area. To date 64 owners have indicated interest in participating. The contract is expected to be completed by end of May 2019.</p> <p>£1m of Scotland's Energy Efficient Programme (SEEP) funding has been secured for the extension of the existing Combined Heating and Power (CHP) system at high flats and the installation of a private wire to transmit the electricity generated from the CHP system to a number of surrounding council owned properties. Consultation events have taken place informing tenants and owners of the proposed project. The tender process has concluded but did not provide value for money due to time constraints associated with Scottish Government funding. We have requested an extension to the funding award that will allow us to retender with a possible start date of April 2019.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
<p>02.08-CHS17 Support the development of a district heating strategy.</p>	<p>Extension to the existing Combined Heating and Power system to a further three multi-storey blocks (Belmont; Eastburn and Leishman Towers). This could provide heating and hot water to 260 flats and assist in meeting the target of 40,000 homes to be connected to a District Heating Network (DHN) by 2020.</p> <p>Consultation events have taken place informing tenants and owners of the proposed project. We have recorded a 47% scheme uptake across the three blocks.</p> <p>The district heating strategy has now been absorbed under the Scottish Government's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy. Development Service secured funding for LHEES in 2018/19. A tender is being developed to procure services of a consultant to progress this project.</p>	

03 Place - Growing our economy

Action	Progress	Status
<p>03.01-CHS17 Work with local SMEs (small to medium enterprises) to maximise public sector procurement business opportunities.</p>	<p>The Procurement and Commissioning Unit (PCU) has hosted monthly Procurement Clinics during 2018, with eight local SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) attending appointments. Further promotion of Procurement Clinics is being progressed with the Council's Growth and Investment Unit.</p> <p>The PCU aims to use Quick Quotes to improve opportunities to local SMEs. Quick Quote training has been delivered to 34 officers within the Council so far during 2018. The Council's Procurement Procedures have also been amended to mandate the use of Quick Quote for procurement exercises valued between £10,000 and £49,999. We will continue to review the effectiveness of Quick Quotes for supporting local business and will report progress to each meeting of the Procurement Board. Spend with local SME businesses increased from £28.6m in 2016/17 to £36.7m in 2017/18.</p> <p>Three procurement workshops were presented at the Forth Valley Third Sector Conference in February 2018. The PCU shall continue to work with CVS Falkirk to promote access to contracts for the Third Sector. We increased spend with this sector from £23m in 2016/17 to £24m in 2017/18.</p> <p>In May 2018, the Procurement Board agreed that officers across the Council shall attend Sustainable Procurement training, focusing on maximising social, economic and environmental benefits from Council contracts. A number of training sessions have already taken place with the remainder scheduled for completion by the end of October 2018. An aim of the training is to provide increased opportunities for local SMEs and Third Sector organisations to bid for public sector contracts.</p>	

04 Place - Improving the neighbourhoods we live in

Action	Progress	Status
<p>04.01-CHS17 Provide new and additional affordable housing.</p>	<p>Full Affordable Housing Programme: 2018/19 - Strategic programme agreement for 2018/19 signed by Falkirk Council and the Scottish Government on 21/06/18. Subsequent meeting with developing landlords, Scottish Governments and Strategy & Development were held on 28/06/2018.</p> <p>New Build Projects – 145 RSL. Cadzow (30) Williamson Street (36), Etna Road (25), Corbiehall (7) Dunipace (16), Whiteside Hotel (31) Buy Backs Council (90), Buy back RSL (10) Possible land acquisition by RSL at King Street (23) 344 total units will be completed, started or land acquired.</p> <p>Council affordable supply programme: 2018/19 – Resource Planning =£10.676 million Assumption total grant required = £11.832 million</p> <p>April – June (Q1) grant drawn down to date Completed units – 5 Spend - £125,000</p> <p>Cadzow Avenue, Bo'ness actual completion date for units was April 18.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Investment Plan for 2019-2024 was approved at Executive on 16 October 2018. It aims to deliver an additional 1371 units.</p>	
<p>04.02-CHS17 Invest and improve our housing and estates.</p>	<p>The current three year Housing Investment Programme for the period 2018/19 – 2020/21 was approved by Council on 15 January 2018. The approved budget includes a total investment of £143m over the three years, with a budget of c. £40m allocated for 2018/19. The confirmed actual spend for the first two quarters (1 Apr 18 – 30 Sept 18) is £12.m.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
<p>04.03-CHS17 Develop area based regeneration strategies in partnership with registered social landlords (RSLs) and the local community.</p>	<p>Falkirk Council, Link HA, Paragon HA and Weslo HA are looking at how we collect data on low demand properties in a uniform way across the partnership. The purpose of this exercise is to establish if current, historical properties for let meet aspirations or simply are let because there is not alternative. Work includes agreeing how we measure low demand, collecting information from Tenant Satisfaction Surveys and 'Settling In' visits based on the Scottish Household Survey questions. Update October 2018 - this information will be collated every 6 months and distributed among the group but it will be used as an evidence base for the next LHS and also for the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).</p> <p>Other projects under consideration include reviewing the process of applying for social housing in the area to make it simpler and easier for both applicants and customers.</p> <p>It has been agreed that a Co-production Pilot will take place to look at estate management issues in areas where the Council and the three other RSLs have stock such as Grangemouth, Bo'ness and Denny. A site visit of the Falkirk area will take place in November. Information from this visit as well as information from Tenant Satisfaction Surveys, Estate Walkabouts will be pulled together to identify the main estate management issues. An action plan will then be agreed.</p> <p>Work is currently ongoing reviewing all Council properties that appear to be less in demand. As part of developing the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) we ask all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) annually what work they plan on completing relating to community benefits. So far Falkirk Council had brought back 16 empty homes in 2018/19.</p> <p>A paper has been produced using the indicators of low demand to identify areas of low demand within the Council area and this has been distributed to the group and to colleagues in CPP.</p>	

05 Place - Promoting vibrant town centres

Action	Progress	Status
<p>05.01-CHS17 Review our approach to CCTV, safer streets etc.</p>	<p>The Privacy Impact Assessment is expected to be completed by the end of November 2018. A consultant has just been appointed to support the assessment of our CCTV system to go digital. A report outlining the technical requirements and cost implications is expected from the consultant at the start of December, which in turn will inform the report to the Executive.</p>	

06 Partnership - Working with communities to deliver better services

Action	Progress	Status
06.01-CHS17 Develop a common approach to co-production that supports service redesign.	The Engaging and Empowering Communities event was held on 25 September. An initial summary and feedback report was submitted to the Community Planning Executive Group on 18 October. This will also be submitted to the Community Planning Strategic Board in November. The Executive Group has asked that a further piece of work is undertaken to develop a framework for this approach for consideration in the New Year.	
06.02-CHS17 Deliver locality planning underpinned by community action plans within specific communities.	<p>Eastern Locality: Community Action Planning has commenced in Grangemouth with the establishment of 4 thematic groups which as of 1 October are being co-ordinated by a new Corporate Policy Officer post.</p> <p>Western Locality: The first meetings of the Support Group and Locality Planning Group covering the western locality have been arranged during October and November. These meetings will be supported by the submission of an issues paper drawn from partnership evidence and the results of the locality consultation.</p>	

07 Partnership - Empowering and enabling people to be self-reliant

Action	Progress	Status
07.01-CHS17 Our approach to engagement and participation will give a voice to our diverse communities.	<p>This is one of Councils mainstreaming outcomes. Progress on this has to be reported to the Equality and Human Rights Commission by April 2019.</p> <p>A report has been drafted for CMT recommending changes to the mainstreaming outcomes action plan for services to complete.</p>	
07.02-CHS17 Our communities will be supported to understand and celebrate the diversity of those who live, work and visit the area.	This is one of Council's mainstreaming outcomes. Training has been organised for Chief Officer an elected members in relation to this. A report has been drafted for CMT recommending changes to the mainstreaming outcomes action plan for services to complete.	

Our Area - The Area We Need To Be - Outcomes (CHS)

09 Our area will be a fairer and more equal place to live

Action	Progress	Status
09.01-CHS17 Improve access to our services for equality groups by understanding and reducing barriers.	This is one of the Council's outstanding mainstreaming outcomes and the Council is required to report on all outcomes to the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). Training has been organised for our elected members and our chief offices. A report has been drafted for CMT recommending changes to the mainstreaming outcomes action plan for services to complete.	

Action		Progress	Status
09.02-CHS17	Increase the availability and supply of accessible homes.	2018/19 – Developing landlords advised at tripartite meeting held on 28/06/18 that projects were progressing. Currently, developing landlords advise that projects are progressing. These will be discussed at the tripartite meeting on 1 December 2018. In addition to the tripartite meeting 6 weekly monitoring emails are also sent to developing landlords.	
09.03-CHS17	Ensure our workforce package is modern, fair and attractive to current and future employees.	Following Trade Union ballots, the Collective Agreement has now been signed by all parties. Guidance for managers is now being prepared to ensure services are informed in advance of individual letters being issued to employees affected. It is anticipated that letters will be sent out to those affected by end November/beginning of December.	

10 We will grow our local economy to secure successful businesses, investment & employment

Action		Progress	Status
10.01-CHS17	Rejuvenate our town centres ensuring that they are both attractive and resilient to challenges and change.	An update meeting is scheduled for November 2018 with Falkirk BID to review progress in this area.	

11 Our children will develop into resilient, confident and successful adults

Action		Progress	Status
11.01-CHS17	Develop a younger peoples housing plan.	Data analysis is ongoing and a picture of young people's housing need is emerging from the work. Data relating to the Socio-Economics, Health, Income, Education and Housing Aspirations has been collected from various sources including the Scottish Government and DWP. Information provided by young people from previous consultations including Local Housing Strategy focus groups, Surveys and Tenant Satisfaction Survey is also currently being analysed to indicate any potential issues or gaps in service provision. A survey for Younger People has been finalised and is due to run from the 19th October until 19th November on Citizen's Space. The Younger Person's Strategy may be delayed due to the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) which will need to feed into the strategy. The key link between the RRTP and the Young Persons' Plan is that circa 30% of homeless applicants are 16-25. The RRTP has to be completed by 31st December 2018 but needs to be delivered during 2019/20.	

13 People live full, independent and positive lives within supportive communities

Action	Progress	Status
<p>13.01-CHS17 Community Based Support: Informal supports are in place, which enable people, where possible, to live well for longer at home or in homely settings within their community.</p>	<p>Adapting for Change is now a project lead by Social Work Adult Services. An Implementation Report has been drafted and circulated for discussion by Senior Managers in Housing, Social Work Adult Services and Health. Sub groups of the Housing Contributions statement steering group met over the summer. The three sub-groups are as follows. Sub-group 1 - future need for care, support and accommodation. Sub-group 2 Information and definitions - use of current facilities, social activities and housing support. Links to information on Living Well Falkirk. Sub-group 3 - use of current provision (Council Salmon Court, Council High Flats, Council Housing with Care 3), links to Strategic Housing Investment Plan (unused warden flats) and specifications new build.</p> <p>The Housing Contribution Statement Steering Group considered reports from sub groups and a report has been requested for the Integration Joint Board in November.</p> <p>The Peer Support Project aims to assist older people and their carers/families in Falkirk to get information on issues that affect them. This service will provide a single source of information on issues older people feel are relevant for them. Older people who are peer volunteers will take information out to places where older people go and take a peer support approach to encourage people to follow up on sources of support and practical help. The aim is to get information to older people that will enable them to be safe and well at home, have more choice and control, and have a good life. Previously the project was working with the Make it Happen forum. However, this forum is no longer operating. To ensure continuation the project will now be delivered by Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) who will take early direction from Outside the Box. CAB has been chosen due to their volunteer base. In addition their volunteers are trained to an accreditation standard and operate within national advice standards.</p> <p>Contact has also been made with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denny and Bonnybridge Men's Shed. • Falkirk Foundation Walking Football. • Falkirk Later Life Information Centre. <p>The Peer Advice Project continues to arrange events with voluntary sector groups to promote their work and raise awareness. CAB/ Outside the Box believe an event held in October was useful in spreading word of the project.</p>	

14 Our area will be a safer place to live

Action	Progress	Status
<p>14.01-CHS17 Further develop how we share information with partners to identify risks within our communities.</p>	<p>An overarching framework has been agreed by the Community Planning Strategic Board on information sharing. Impact and risk assessment is now encompassed within the work of a Locality Planning Group.</p>	

Action		Progress	Status
14.02-CHS17	Increase effectiveness of partner agencies in tackling issues such as antisocial behaviour, alcohol and drugs issues, hate crime and other emerging threats.	A consultant has just been appointed to support the assessment of our CCTV system to go digital. A report outlining the technical requirements and cost implications is expected from the consultant at the start of December, which in turn will inform the report to the Executive.	
14.03-CHS17	Encouraging our communities to participate in preparations for emergency events through community resilience.	<p>Our communications with the public during the Beast from the East won a silver award in the Chartered Institute of Public Relations PRide Awards in October. The awards cover the public and private sectors and the category was Best Community Relations.</p> <p>The Council is an active participant in the work of the East RRP Public Communications Group and the National Resilience Communications Group and this enables us to share best practice. We are reviewing our weather communications during the Beast from the East based on feedback from the public and will make any necessary changes.</p>	

Our Council - The Council We Need To Be (CHS)

The Council We Need To Be

Action		Progress	Status
COTF17.D1	Information Working for You	<p>Scope: To ensure that our information is fit for purpose. Enable better use of our data and realise potential in our info. This includes establishing a business classification scheme, an information management policy. Implementing an open data strategy and complying with GDPR.</p> <p>Progress: Following on from completion of the first work stream within the project (GDPR-compliance), an updated Project Initiation Document is ready for approval.</p> <p>The Information Management Working Group met on 22nd November and, amongst other matters, discussed the remit of the Open Data Working Group, lessons learned from recent data breaches, and a pilot project in Legal Services for a revised folder structure to support a move to a function-based information management system.</p> <p>Challenges: Work is ongoing to move towards full compliance with GDPR. There is a greater awareness across the Council of the need to report data breaches, and the need for up-to-date data sharing agreements and data protection impact assessments to be in place. However, there remains a considerable amount of work to do, with limited resource to support this.</p> <p>As previously highlighted to the CotF Board, the Council needs to properly plan, resource and implement a corporate electronic document and records management solution. It is essential that any new information management solution have records management capability and that the Information Governance Manager/Records Manager be involved in any project developments.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.D2 Procuring for the Future	<p>Scope: This project is to improve how we procure/purchase goods and services within the Council. The project involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council employees involved in contracting activities • Customers receiving services and benefits from contracts arranged by the Council • Suppliers tendering for new contracts and already doing business with the Council • Elected Members • Trade Unions <p>Impact: transparent, streamlined and more efficient processes, potential contract savings, compliance with legislation.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft Procurement and P2P ICT Strategy 2018-20 has been developed and presented to the November meeting of the Procurement Board. It provides actions that require to be delivered to enable improved service provision with reduced resources. A meeting shall now be convened with stakeholders and feedback on the strategy provided to the next meeting of the Procurement Board. • Sustainable procurement and lifecycle costing training has been provided to Council officers that have a key/lead role in arranging contracts valued above £50,000. Staff now require to use the Sustainability Test when conducting procurement exercises valued at £50,000 and above. • Progress has been made with regard to the review of the Council's standard tender documentation and processes for Supplies and Services. Training is planned for Quarter 4, 2018/19 which will inform all PCU staff of changes to tender templates, terms and conditions and procurement guidance documentation. • The Quick Quote Contract Request Form was launched on 5 November which reinforces the requirements of Contract Standing Orders and Procurement Procedures and requires to be completed by all service users intending to publish Quick Quotes with an estimated contract value between £10,000 and £49,999. • Greater working has been established between PCU, Falkirk's Business Gateway and the Supplier Development Programme with procurement clinics now scheduled after each Falkirk based quarterly workshop to provide additional procurement support to local SMEs. • A graduate has been recruited to PCU to support the roll out of the Public Contracts Scotland Tender system within the Council for the purpose of tendering and managing Contracts and Suppliers. <p>Challenges: Challenges include continued compliance within strict regulated regimes, requirement for additional contracts to be awarded with reducing staff resources, a requirement to up-skill resources both internal and external to the Council and a greater reliance on I.T. and digital technology to support improvements.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.EEC1 Implementation of the Advice Hub & Spokes – Phase 2	<p>Scope: Delivery of Central and West Hub.</p> <p>Progress: The upgraded back office area in Carronbank House, Denny, opened on November 6th. The West Advice Hub, within Carronbank House, welcomed its first customers on November 19th. Phase 2 has now begun within the building, with first and second floor renovations underway.</p> <p>As a result of supplier issues, the planned Central Hub is currently delayed. Contingency arrangements are being reviewed to allow a Hub model to be introduced in the Central area (Falkirk).</p> <p>Challenges: The lack of agreed programme means that the work will not start as planned and this will impact on the timescale for opening the Central Hub. We need to consider the implications in terms of timescales for exiting Callendar Square.</p>	
COTF17.EEC2 Locality Planning	<p>Scope: This project covers the eastern locality within the Council area and includes Grangemouth, Bo'ness, Upper Braes and surrounding areas. Locality Planning exists to ensure that the SOLD priorities and outcomes are delivered upon, through an integrated and holistic approach to service delivery. The Locality Planning tier of Community Planning aims to deliver a much stronger focus on partnership working, ensuring that Community Planning Partners mobilise collective resources towards reducing inequalities and delivering better outcomes for communities.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p><i>Eastern Locality</i> Four groups have been established in Grangemouth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing & Accommodation • Civic Pride • Town Centre Regeneration & Local Infrastructure • Employment, Employability & Connections to Local Businesses & Industry <p>Terms of reference for the groups were considered by stakeholders and the Locality Planning Group in November.</p> <p>A meeting with local communities in the Upper Braes took place to discuss local community assets.</p> <p><i>Western Locality</i> Conversations progress with communities and seldom heard groups to understand local issues.</p> <p>Challenges: None Reported.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status												
<p>Housing of Tomorrow</p>	<p>Scope: Housing Services has a statutory obligation to continually review and challenge what we do to make sure we provide quality service and value for money to our tenants and residents.</p> <p>Listed below are the project's five workstreams with the outcomes that will be used to monitor success:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="734 304 2024 644"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="734 304 1137 344">Workstream</th> <th data-bbox="1137 304 2024 344">Outcome</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="734 344 1137 405">Provide long term stability for staff</td> <td data-bbox="1137 344 2024 405">Modernising how we deliver our services, being innovative by design and delivering services that are more accountable, flexible and efficient.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="734 405 1137 466">Improve access to housing to all out customers</td> <td data-bbox="1137 405 2024 466">Working together with communities and partners to have enabled, empowered and connected communities where people lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="734 466 1137 526">Improve communication getting it right first time</td> <td data-bbox="1137 466 2024 526">Working together to improve outcomes for the people of the Falkirk Area.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="734 526 1137 587">Helping our tenants and communities</td> <td data-bbox="1137 526 2024 587">Working together with Communities and partners to have enabled, empowered and connected communities where people lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="734 587 1137 644">Support and developing staff</td> <td data-bbox="1137 587 2024 644">Enabling communities, members and officers to use data and information to make decisions based on shared priorities and real-time information.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Progress: Work undertaken includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A successful recruitment exercise was undertaken giving temporary and permanent staff the opportunity for career development • An induction programme has been launched for housing staff and includes a customer service module delivered by the Chartered Institute of Housing (ISO accreditation) • A procurement exercise is currently ongoing to acquire a core IT system for Housing • A survey of young people's housing needs has been issued to identify gaps <p>Various working groups have been established to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a paperlite work environment • Review technology for lone workers • Develop a toolkit to identify local housing market and homelessness needs <p>Hackathons were organised to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to improve Housing Options Advice • Areas of improvement within the current allocation policy • What a communication strategy looks like to staff <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing change and helping teams to adapt to these changes to maintain performance and morale and minimise the impact on frontline services. • Time constraints for staff to undertake the training and overcoming IT issues; archiving all historic paperwork; educating staff how to reduce paper use • The largest challenge for communication is breaking down barriers and cynicism • Ensuring any changes meet local needs, are aligned with Council policy and Government legislation. 	Workstream	Outcome	Provide long term stability for staff	Modernising how we deliver our services, being innovative by design and delivering services that are more accountable, flexible and efficient.	Improve access to housing to all out customers	Working together with communities and partners to have enabled, empowered and connected communities where people lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives.	Improve communication getting it right first time	Working together to improve outcomes for the people of the Falkirk Area.	Helping our tenants and communities	Working together with Communities and partners to have enabled, empowered and connected communities where people lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives.	Support and developing staff	Enabling communities, members and officers to use data and information to make decisions based on shared priorities and real-time information.	
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Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.MD01 Digital Strategy	<p>Scope: To provide services which allow customers to choose to transact with us digitally. This will allow us to reduce cost, improve efficiency and deliver a better service to our customers.</p> <p>Impact: Citizens use digital to find information, engage with the Council, access services and self serve. Customers can contact us 24/7, 365 days each year. Services are transformed to include digital delivery based on data analytics and new Services will be digital by design. Savings are realised through more efficient processes, channel shift and a reduction in legacy systems and associated costs. Internal transactions are digital. Business benefits will be achieved by using social media. We have saved c. £50k as part of 2018 /19 budget.</p> <p>Progress: A digital strategy is being developed to allow customers to transact better with the Council online. Over 20k accounts have now been created in My Falkirk, and customer feedback continues to be positive. A customer support service has now been created to allow customers to contact the Council if they are having a problem using My Falkirk. The following services are now available online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefits applications and advice • applications for council tax reductions and exemptions • payments including council tax, rent and sundry debts • waste services such as bulky uplift requests and additional bins • Homespot applications • reporting anti-social behaviour and abandoned vehicles • registration services such as ceremony booking and copy certificates • community lets • school placing requests, free school meals and clothing grants. <p>Pupils and young people were able to apply of Education Maintenance Allowance online this year, with applications up by 42% from last year and 99% of them being made online</p> <p>A project is underway to assess current levels of digital skills across the Council.</p> <p>Challenges: Resources and skills available to take this area of work forward continue to be a significant challenge. The figures above provide examples of fundamental shifts in how people wish to do business with the Council and we need to continue this drive. The Council is becoming increasingly dependent on online channels and it needs to ensure that these are resourced appropriately, both for further development and to ensure they are solid and sustainable.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to ensure that the available resources are supporting priority projects such as the Hub and the Contact Centre telephony. We are also looking at how to enhance our user experience/service design capacity. Both of these specialisms are essential if the Council is to transform how it delivers its services in future.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.MD02 Rock Solid Technology	<p>Scope: Rock solid technology will provide the Council with a safe, secure, reliable and agile technology base to deliver its services. The project covers many elements of technology including mobile technology, networks, business continuity, and telephony solutions. Each element, although being developed separately has collaboration at its heart to ensure a fully integrated Council.</p> <p>Progress: Good progress continues to be made on the individual projects that collectively make up the Rock Solid Technology programme of projects.</p> <p>Following the successful delivery of the new contact centre, a mobile phone roll out to over 3k staff was undertaken. A guide to telephones, mobiles & voicemail has been uploaded to the Intranet front page.</p> <p>The next phase of the project is the implementation of desk phones and unified communications across the Council. This creates the opportunity for the user to log into any desk phone across the Council estate and receive calls related to their assigned telephone number. The phones were tested in November in Municipal Buildings for 80 people.</p> <p>Video conferencing (part of unified communications) is currently available between fixed sites across the Council and will soon be available across multiple internal and external sites.</p> <p>The telephony contract is a significant enabler of many of the Council of the Future Projects.</p> <p>Challenges: Challenges include resources, existing networks and reliance on legacy solutions. However by delivering the programme in a planned approach the advantages of the new technologies will benefit all services.</p>	
COTF17.MD04 Contact Centre	Phase 1 complete. PID currently being developed for Phase 2.	

Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.MD06 Redesign of BMD Services - Phase 2	<p>Scope: To review the Building Maintenance Division to ensure it is more effective and efficient whilst improving the customer experience. Impact: Building Maintenance Division is more effective and efficient. Improved customer experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointments are available when customers need a repair - Increased customer satisfaction by getting things right first time - Employees have digital devices for real time updates on jobs <p>Progress: The workflow team continues to focus on scheduling repairs to maximise employee productivity and improved customer service. Customer satisfaction for repairs is circa 98%. New software is being implemented to improve appointment scheduling to maximise productivity. Mobile technology is being explored to improve communication with customers during the course of their repair.</p> <p>The introduction of the new contact centre telephony system has improved call handling and enabled customers to get in contact with BMD quickly.</p> <p>Non-emergency repairs performance has continued to improve throughout the year, with the average time to complete a repair of 7.3 days - a 0.5 day improvement on last year.</p> <p>The home to work pilot has now increased to twenty-five operational employees, which has increased productivity by c30%. Additionally, there are now approximately one-third (c800) more appointments per month being completed.</p> <p>The relocation of the Joinery Manufacturing Unit within Inchyra Depot has commenced with building construction now complete. Consultation with stores staff has been undertaken and a location for the new stores facility has been identified, and agreed, within Inchyra. Work is also progressing with regards to rationalising stock in preparation for the relocation of the stores.</p> <p>Challenges: The main challenges relate to the scale of change in business processes required to support more efficient working. Additionally, the division continues to experience recruitment and retention issues and as such work will be undertaken to develop a Workforce/Business Plan to ensure we effectively plan for these issues over the coming years. The increased reliance on IT also places additional workload pressures on IT colleagues, to ensure effective contingency arrangements are in place. Regular programme of communication and employee involvement is also critical to developing a culture of trust with employees, to ensure we have buy-in to the changes.</p> <p>Next Steps: Staff training is underway within the Workflow Team for new staff and plans are in place to expand the scope of the workflow team to the West area in December. Stage 2 of the installation of heating and dust extraction systems within the new JMU area will commence in November and will be completed by December 2018. Stage 1 of the roof replacement works will also commence in November 2018 and will be completed in December 2018 allowing further redevelopment works at Inchyra Depot.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
<p>COTF17.MD08 Integrated Resource Management System</p>	<p>Scope: Phase 1 of this project is to improve the Council's HR & Payroll system to support our employees in making sure our customers get the right services at the right time.</p> <p>Progress: Myjobscotland Interface: This interface will provide a link between the Myjobscotland recruitment portal and the Council's Resourcelink HR and Payroll system to allow vacancies to be advertised and for the selected candidate to be loaded to the HR and Payroll system with minimal intervention on the part of the recruiting manager or business support staff. This development is now linked to the technology strand of the Recruitment Process review within HR and Business Transformation. Resources are being assigned from the Improvement team to work on this and there has been engagement with suppliers, resulting in a clearer picture of the way forward. The Resourcelink API (Application Program Interface) software has been installed and the license key is being acquired (delayed due to change of Account Manager). A technical conference was held with the Myjobscotland (Talentlink) API supplier in October and it was agreed to progress the supply and install of the API software after further work was undertaken on the Resourcelink API.</p> <p>Barrachd Monthly Payroll Reports This system provides direct and secure access to the Monthly Payroll Reports to Managers using the Barrachd system without the need for the report to be manually split and distributed to each manager. The system was rolled out to Development Services in October 2018 having previously been implemented for Corporate & Housing Services in May 2018. Work has been undertaken to replace the current server and upgrade to the latest version (Cognos Analytics 11) and this will now require to be tested.</p> <p>Sickness Absence Roll-out The roll-out of the sickness absence module is now complete for all Falkirk Council employees. Employees of Falkirk Community Trust will be added at an appropriate future point.</p> <p>System Hosting Discussions have commenced with the software supplier regarding having the system hosted by them at their secure Data Centre. This remains subject to ongoing technical evaluation as well as procurement and legal discussions.</p> <p>I-Connect Pensions Interface This interface will provide a link between the Council's Payroll system and the Pension Fund's Pension Administration System using the i-Connect software. The purpose is to ensure that any contractual changes affecting Pension Scheme members are notified to the Pensions Fund electronically, saving the need for completion of paper forms by Payroll staff and subsequent keying by Pensions administrators. This will ensure that records are kept up to date and will avoid the need for a yearend return. The first step in this development will be to have an extract written by the payroll software supplier based on the layout provided by i-Connect.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
Integrated Resource Management System cont...	<p>Challenges: External Access This is needed to enable the remainder of employees to access their payslip electronically and for a range of other functions. It is considered that this will be best delivered by having the system hosted by the software supplier at their secure Data Centre (see above). This remains the biggest challenge by far and the lack of progress is frustrating.</p> <p>Myjobscotland Interface Now that our approach to this development is clear, the challenge will be for the Improvement team in working with the new API software and familiarising themselves with the technology.</p> <p>Conclusion: The delays and challenges referred to above and in previous updates continue to have a significant and adverse effect on the project timescales. This is impacting both the delivery of project tasks and project planning. The project can no longer be considered to be on target.</p>	
Falkirk Community Trust	Phase 1 now complete. A report Falkirk Community Trust – Options Appraisal was approved by Council in September 2018.	
Fees & Charges	A report on Fees and Charges was approved by Council in September. All existing and new charges will be reviewed in line with the Policy as part of the budget process for 2019/20.	
COTF17.OC01 Fit for the Future	<p>Scope: There are four strands to this project which will change our culture and develop and empower our leaders and employees. Impact: Our 'customer experience' will be regarded as more innovative, responsive, trusted and ambitious as we get it right for our customers through our culture. More of our employees are proud to work for Falkirk Council with satisfaction results recognised in future employee surveys. More of our employees to work flexibly and be empowered to deliver services to our customers, and use effective leadership skills to support our workforce. We have reduced absence and overtime rates and we are a smaller organisation and our roles have changed in line with modern working practices. We communicate with our stakeholders and employees using fit for purpose, modern & digital communication channels to enable 2-way feedback and consultation. We have a modern, fit for purpose industrial relations partnership model to enable effective collective bargaining arrangements, communication, engagement and consultation. Made savings of £35k in 2018 / 19 budget.</p> <p>Progress: Internal communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council was awarded Gold in the Best Internal Communications category at the Chartered Institute of Public Relations awards in October for its work around the Council of the Future engagement process. An internal communications strategy running until April 2019 has been developed. <p>The Employee Communications Group met on September 20th to discuss :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of an accessible intranet that can be accessed via employees own devices An e-newsletter for employees Revamping the internal awards scheme <p>Plans for a new employee recognition event are being developed.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
Fit for the Future cont...	<p>More news and staff information is now available on Inside Falkirk. Yammer has been growing organically and almost 1k employees have signed up.</p> <p>Anytime Anywhere The e-learning modules are available in OLLE. A guidance pack is drafted, and an intranet page is being developed, for all information relating to Anytime Anywhere.</p> <p>Guidance for staff visiting Grangemouth Hub has been prepared and will shortly be uploaded to the intranet. The furniture specification is being finalised, with the aim to develop a catalogue that will be available to managers to support purchasing new furniture. Specific projects are ongoing with workshops taking place with relevant teams to explain and support the change to the new Anytime Anywhere arrangements.</p> <p>Organisational Development Extra Skills Development workshops are likely to be needed due to poor uptake.</p> <p>The design of the coaching sessions is nearly complete and four sessions have been arranged for November and December. 360 degree feedback is currently being undertaken with service managers with a closing date of November 30th.</p> <p>Challenges: None Reported</p>	
COTF17.OC02 Business Support	Phase 1 complete.	
COTF17.OC03 Strategic Planning	Project now complete. Report " Projected Financial Position 2018/19 " was approved by Executive in October 2018.	

Important Indicators on target (CHS)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
	Value	Value	Value		
AHS 1 Percentage of New Tenancies sustained for more than a year	88.0%	88.8%	88.4%	90.0%	91.2% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
AHS 12 Percentage of settled accommodation secured by unintentionally homeless applicants	94.3%	91.9%	93.7%	89.0%	69.0% (Scottish Government report on Operation of Homeless Persons Legislation 2017/18) Average
FIN_IMP_001 Number of days to process new Housing Benefit claims	23	23	16	23	22 days DWP Scottish average 2017/18
FIN_IMP_002 Number of days to process Housing Benefit change events	7	6	10	8	5 days DWP Scottish average 2017/18
CHS033 Sickness Absence: Craft Staff	5.67%	5.61%	5.82%	5.50%	5.55% APSE Performance Network (BMD Family Group) Average 2017/18
CHS062 Number of customer accounts created on My Falkirk	3496	13817	20441	21000	No benchmark - target locally determined
CHS063 Average customer ratings on My Falkirk experience (from a score out of five)	n/a	4.0	4.1	4.0	No benchmark - target locally determined
HQM 1 Percentage of Stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	95.00%	97.42%	97.42%	98.00%	97.48% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
HQM 3a Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (in hours)	4.5	5.0	3.7	4.2	3.3 hours Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
	Value	Value	Value		
HQM 9 Percentage of Tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in	89.29%	89.66%	89.09%	91.00%	92.08% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
HQM 11 Percentage of Tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service	91.26%	93.78%	92.66%	94.00%	94.53% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)

Important Indicators slightly below target (CHS) 

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
CHS060 Percentage of FOI enquiries dealt with in 20 working days	93%	93%	91%	100%	No Benchmark applicable, however expectations would be 100% as per FOI timescales.

Progress

Performance levels continue to be closely monitored on a monthly basis.

YTD Number of FOI's received: 368

YTD Number of FOI's responded to: 334

YTD Of those responded to, number within statutory timescale: 308

August 92%, September 90%, October 91%

Year to date performance 91%.

Improvement Action

A spreadsheet is currently used and distributed weekly which covers all areas of Corporate and Housing, so all relevant managers see cases which are active and require attention. We also chase up individual cases that sit under the Information Team i.e. Corporate Support, Corporate Finance, Housing, Adult Services and Development.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
CHS061 Sickness Absence: Corporate & Housing Services	4.45%	4.35%	4.34%	4.00%	No benchmark - target locally determined
Progress					
<p>July 2018: 4.09% - a decrease of 0.88% from June 2018. August 2018: 4.28% - an increase of 0.19% from July 2018. September 2018: 4.34% - an increase of 0.06% from August 2018.</p> <p>Q2 split of short, medium and long term of absence is: Short: 15.13% Medium: 8.80% Long: 76.07%</p> <p>Absence is managed in line with the Council's Managing Sickness Absence Policy. This involves a combination of Return to Work interviews; specialist medical and OH referrals; workplace adaptations; informal and formal monitoring.</p> <p>Managers are encouraged to ensure all relevant managers and supervisors are trained on the Council's absence policy. Employees are encouraged to complete the e-learning package.</p> <p>October data not yet available.</p>					
Improvement Action					
<p>A number of measures have been taken to minimise sickness absence across the Service. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barrachd rolled out and provides additional management information including trigger levels and highlights possible areas for closer assessment. • A Council wide working group was set up to review the Managing Sickness Absence Policy and this has now been approved by committee. 					

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
HQM 4a Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (in working days)	8.9	8.0	7.3	7.0	6.7 days Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
Progress					
<p>Total number of non-emergency repairs completed up to end of August 2018 was 13,693.</p> <p>Total number of working days taken to complete non-emergency repairs up to end of August 2018 was 99,487. Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs up to end of August 2018 was 7.3 days.</p> <p>For the month of August the average length of time was 6.9 days.</p> <p>September and October data not yet available as currently being validated to ensure accuracy of data.</p>					
Improvement Action					
<p>Following a recent validation exercise of repairs jobs recorded by us, a number of issues were identified, particularly procedures for completing external contractor work. We had developed an action plan to deal with these issues, and all actions from this have now been completed. There will be regular monitoring and validation based on the outcomes of this plan.</p> <p>We are also working towards expanding the scope of the Workflow Team pilot across the rest of the Council area during 2018/19, to build on the existing success of the Workflow Team.</p> <p>The introduction of the Workflow Team has assisted in reducing the time taken to complete a non-emergency repair within the east and central areas. Work is ongoing to support the extension of repairs in the West to the Workflow Team.</p> <p>Appointments for non-emergency repairs are still provided within 72 hours of the repair being reported. We are currently looking at new improvements to further improve our performance. This includes further rollout of mobile technology; an increased number of staff on the Home to Work pilot, to help increase.</p> <p>Due to a high number of emergency repairs being carried out, this has impacted on our ability to complete non-emergency repairs within timescale, due to staff prioritising emergency work. By carrying out analysis into the current use of Repair Finder, we can verify if it is being used properly to classify emergency repairs. Improvements arising from this will allow more staff capacity to deal with non-emergency repairs.</p>					

Important Indicators significantly below target (CHS)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
CHS047 Percentage of 1st stage complaints responded to within timescales	85%	87%	87%	100%	100% SPSO Target
Progress					
Performance levels continue to be closely monitored on a monthly basis. 1st stage complaints received during October were 128.					
Those closed within 5 working days of the 128 received during October was 117. August 86%. September 94%, October 91%.					
Improvement Action					
The Information Team continues to make offices and managers aware of outstanding cases. The spreadsheet has been updated to show cases that are overdue in red and those near the expiry in amber so that all the relevant managers can clearly see which cases require attention. We also chase up individual cases that sit under the Information Team i.e. Corporate Support, Corporate Finance, Housing, Adult Services and Development.					
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
GGV 5a Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	7.79%	7.70%	7.63%	6.25%	2.86% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
Progress					
For 2018/19 we set an initial target of 6.10% as this represented the average of all local authorities' performance during 2016/17 as reported in the Housing Charter. Now that 2017/18 data is available this average is 6.25% and target has been revised accordingly. In 2016/17 we were 18th out of 26 local authorities with housing stock and we improved to 16th, again out of 26, in 2017/18. The end of October 2018 position was 7.62% which is a slight drop on the 7.42% reported at same time last year.					
This drop is due, in the main, to Universal Credit payments from DWP to Falkirk Council now being received just once per month (rather than most days) which results in larger delay between when it is deducted from claimants Universal Credit and when it is applied to rent account. It is primarily technical but tenants may have genuine underlying arrears. It is expected that end of year position will be similar to end of 2017/18 position					
Improvement Action					
A Rent Collection and Rent Arrears Improvement Group has enabled us to build a firm platform for improvement in this area by:					
1. Improving written communication.					
2. Finalising Corporate Debt Policy.					
3. Embedding recovery of rent within roles of housing staff.					
With Universal Credit Full Service and the evolving role, in relation to rent arrears, of housing staff we regularly review practices to ensure they remain effective.					
The Housing Regulator is about to consult on charter indicators for 2018/19 onwards and it is likely this indicator will be revised to current tenant arrears only (i.e. exclude former tenant arrears) and that is likely to see our national ranking improve further.					

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
GGV 6 Percentage of Rent Lost through properties being empty during the last year	0.89%	0.91%	1.07%	0.90%	0.70% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)

Progress

Total rent due year to date was £32,596,747.36. Of this £347,793.58 was rent lost due to voids.

The percentage rent loss for the month of October is 0.95%.

Improvement Action

We recently undertook an external data validation process which resulted in assurance being awarded in relation to this indicator and our statutory reporting responsibilities.

Future improvements to the void re-let time, as described under GGV7 will also impact positively on this indicator.

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
GGV 7 Average length of time taken to relet properties in the last year (days)	33.41	31.80	36.53	31.00	28.12 days Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)

Progress

At the end of October 2018 we had let a total of 909 properties with the total number of days taken to let the properties reported at 33,047 days.

There have been a higher number of low demand properties over the past three months, compared with the same period in 2017, with 25 this year compared to 18 in 2017. Low demand properties include those rejected three times before let, or advertised three times before let, so this has a negative impact on the number of days before these properties are let.

Over the period August to October 2018, compared to the same period in 2017, we let 20 more properties.

Improvement Action

We will improve this figure to meet our target over the next year by making better use of mobile working technology to manage void repairs. This will help reduce the administrative work involved and streamline processes.

We are currently reviewing the number of days that properties are void at each stage of the process, to ensure that any delays are minimised. The operational processes of the voids team are also currently under review.