

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest includes a crown with four maple leaves, a shield divided into four quadrants (top-left: a ship, top-right: a stag, bottom-left: a ship, bottom-right: a grizzly bear), and a banner at the bottom with the motto 'A NE FOR A'.

## **Agenda Item 6**

### **Corporate & Housing Services Performance Update**

Falkirk Council

**Subject:** Corporate & Housing Services Performance Update  
April 2018 – March 2019

**Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 6 June 2019

**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 March 2019 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 Scrutiny performance 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. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee considers the performance of Corporate and Housing Services and select a course of action from the following options:-

- (1) Approve the report and acknowledge progress by the service in meeting the Council's priorities;
- (2) Request further information on specific aspects of the service provided; or
- (3) Request action with a follow-up report for future Scrutiny Committee consideration.

**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.

The statement also for the first time identifies those indicators from the Local Government benchmarking framework that the Service has identified as requiring improvement over the coming year. To assist the Committee consider how services are seeking to improve, each service has been asked to provide a statement on the following:-

- Key and important indicators from the LGBF and performance, targets, benchmarks over time by service – this will identify those areas we are seeking to improve in.
- Background and context information on those indicators locally i.e. locality information, other PIs that provide additional analysis
- How we intend to improve and the steps we are taking to achieve that improvement?
- What further work the service is doing on that area of service.

- 3.3 For Corporate and Housing Services the following indicators have been identified:

- Corp 3b % of highest paid 5% employees who are women: This indicator has been chosen as we are ranked 26<sup>th</sup> and in the lowest quartile, we are also 5.77% under the Scottish rate.
- HSN1b Gross rent arrears (all tenancies) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year: While performance has

improved slightly in recent years we are still in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quartile and 0.95% higher than the Scottish rate.

- **HSN4b** Average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs. Although there has been significant improvement from 2013-14 from 14.06 to 7.97 days, we are slightly higher than the national average of 7.5 days and ranked 17<sup>th</sup>, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile.

#### 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** - significant work has been undertaken to negotiate and settle the Council's outstanding claims. This has required officers to be taken off other work priorities due to the complexity of the negotiations, and to ensure good progress is made. Settlements for the majority of cases have been issued and further work is being done with representatives on those claims that remain outstanding. Work has also commenced on claims linked to holiday pay on allowances, with a similar process for settlement options being considered.
- **Revenue Budget** - The Revenue Budget for 2019/20 is now balanced leaving an estimated aggregate of £58m to be bridged in the subsequent 4 years of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). An updated MTFP is contained in the Business Plan approved by the Executive in May.
- **Universal Credit (UC)** - We have now had Full Service Universal Credit in Falkirk area for over 12 months (since 21 March 2018). We have seen significant growth in UC caseload each month, now standing at over 6,200, and this has presented the expected significant challenges. We have two Hubs (East and West) operational and the same delivery model has been implemented in the existing Callendar Square One Stop Shop, in May 2019, pending the creation of a more permanent Central Hub. This will help ensure that we identify, inform, and protect the most vulnerable households in a consistent manner across the full council area.

Rent is the most noticeable impact of UC. We now have c.2,500 (15.4% of council tenants) in receipt of UC and these tenants have rent arrears totalling almost £1.5m (45.5% of total rent owed by current tenants). Effective management of this is crucial.

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

- **Workforce Strategy** – the Service's workforce plan was approved by members in September 2018. A further update on the Council's overarching workforce plan has also been undertaken to ensure it supports the Council's business plan (and has been incorporated into

the business plan). Our workforce plan is a 'live' document and will be updated to ensure on-going assessment of our workforce issues, taking account of changes flowing from our transformational programme commitments, our medium term financial plan and actions being taken to support our corporate plan. We continue to review our workforce planning arrangements and linked to this, our succession planning, given the level of change implicit in all that the Council delivers.

- **Council of the Future Change Programme** – the Service has taken a lead role in supporting the Council's change programme. Work has been undertaken across the Council to support the development of wave 2 of the change programme which will form part of the Council's business plan. This has included a wide range of stakeholder engagement and other activities, to ensure our wave 2 programme of change is sufficiently ambitious to benefit our communities, whilst supporting the medium term financial plan and corporate plan. 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 been published on the Council's web-site. An updated Annual Report is currently being prepared covering the 12 months to March 2019 and will be published by August 2019. 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 2019 to 31 March 2021.
- **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. The strategy has three key pillars:
  - leadership
  - transformation by design
  - rock solid technology and foundations.

The strategy was approved by the Executive in May 2019 and work has now started on taking this forward. In particular we have started:

- a comprehensive digital skills assessment survey across the council
- developing a leadership event on all things digital for the Council
- looking to identify key projects under the digital strategy
- establishing a pilot for the service design standards.
- implementing Office 365 over the next year
- developing digital project principles for all projects under this work stream.

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 MTFP is contained in the Business Plan submitted to 14 May 2019 Executive.
- **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 going to Executive for approval in June 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). An update on progress with the delivery of the SHIP will be provided to Executive in October 2019.

## 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: 22 May 2019

**Appendices:** C&HS Scrutiny Performance Statement - April 2018 to March 2019  
**List of Background Papers:** None

## Scrutiny Performance Statement – April 2018 – March 2019

### 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 evaluation of the Summer Food Project was considered by the Executive in February 2019 resulting in a recommendation for funding to be allocated to continue this work in 2019/20. £40k was agreed as part of the budget agreement for 2019/20.	
02.02-CHS17 Tackle the stigma of poverty.	Approval of the refreshed poverty strategy by Council Executive and Community Planning partnership supports us to take this forward in 2019/20 as part of the action plan	
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 continue to work with the three area Citizen's Advice Bureaux to understand the impact of a reduction in funding and to explore further opportunities to work together to improve the service provided and reduce costs.	
02.04-CHS17 Prioritise disadvantaged communities when it comes to designing and delivering services.	Outreach service in Stenhousemuir started in March 2019. A Hub 'Lite' service opened on 13 <sup>th</sup> May in Callendar Square introducing the new model of service delivery in the Central area in advance of having a fully fitted out and branded Central Hub.	
02.05-CHS17 Improve access to services for the most vulnerable within our area.	The refreshed Poverty strategy highlights access to services as one of four themes. This includes our work on Advice Hubs, Digital Inclusion our online support services map.	
02.06-CHS17 Define basic standards of living.	This is included in the refreshed poverty strategy that we are aiming to take to Members early in 2019.	


Action	Progress	Status
<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, 86 owners have indicated interest in participating and 84 owners have had the works installed. The contract is expected to be completed by end of May 2019.</p> <p>We also secured c.£1m funding through Scotland's Energy Efficient Programme (SEEP) for the extension of the existing Combined Heating and Power (CHP) system at high flats. This project also includes the installation of a private wire to transmit the electricity generated from the CHP system to a number of surrounding council owned properties. The contract has been awarded and the contractor started work on site in April 2019. Further consultation/briefing events have taken place informing tenants and owners of the proposed project.</p> <p>£193k of grant funding was drawn down in 2017/18, £90k of grant funding was drawn down in March 2019 and the residual £700k will be drawn down by March 2020.</p>	
<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 national target of 40,000 homes to be connected to a District Heating Network (DHN) by 2020.</p> <p>Further consultation/briefing events have taken place informing tenants and owners of the proposed project. The project started on site in April 2019.</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
03.01-CHS17 Work with local SMEs (small to medium enterprises) to maximise public sector procurement business opportunities.	<p>The Procurement and Commissioning Unit (PCU) hosted monthly Procurement Clinics during 2018 with 11 local SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) attending appointments during the year. Following an increase in the promotion of Procurement Clinics by both PCU and Business Gateway, 11 suppliers have attended appointments within the first three months of 2019. Monthly procurement clinics continue to be scheduled during the remainder of 2019 and shall be further promoted through electronic publications.</p> <p>PCU continue to work closely with the Supplier Development Programme with representatives from PCU attending two quarterly SME workshops since October 2018. A further event is scheduled at Falkirk Stadium on 23 May 2019. Opportunities to win business within the Council are discussed at the workshops and contacts within the Council for future Quick Quote opportunities are shared with attendees.</p> <p>The PCU uses Quick Quotes to improve opportunities to local SMEs. The Council's Procurement Procedures mandate the use of Quick Quote for procurement exercises valued between £10,000 and £49,999. PCU continues to review the effectiveness of Quick Quotes for supporting local business and reports progress to each meeting of the Procurement Board. Within the period 1 November 2018 to 31 January 2019, twenty two local suppliers responded to Quick Quote requests and 14 of those suppliers were awarded business by Falkirk Council.</p> <p>To further enforce the requirement to invite local suppliers to quote, PCU have implemented a Contract Reference Request Form for Quick Quote spend valued at £10,000 and over. The form reiterates the need to invite local suppliers to quote and officers are reminded of this requirement when requesting a contract reference.</p> <p>Quick Quote training was delivered to 65 Council officers during 2018 and 20 have attended training so far within 2019. An online training course is currently being developed for publication on the Council's OLLE solution to make training more accessible and to extend the training coverage.</p>	

### 04 Place - Improving the neighbourhoods we live in


Action	Progress	Status
04.01-CHS17 Provide new and additional affordable housing.	SG advised grant assumption for 2019/20 is £12, 143, 000. Annually years 2020/21 to 2023/24 grant is £12, 882.00. Increase of £4m anticipated.	

Action	Progress	Status
04.02-CHS17 Invest and improve our housing and estates.	<p>The 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.</p> <p>The approved 2018/19 budget was revised to £38.5m to reflect accelerated spend in 2017/18. The forecast spend for 2018/19 is currently £35.150m but this is subject to adjustment as part of the end of year reconciliation exercise.</p> <p>The Housing Investment Programme for the period 2019/20 – 2023/24 was approved by Council on 23 January 2019. The approved budget includes a total investment of £280m over the five years, with a budget of c. £47.7m allocated for 2019/20.</p>	
04.03-CHS17 Develop area based regeneration strategies in partnership with registered social landlords (RSLs) and the local community.	Joint Working Group between Falkirk Council, Link and Paragon identified a small state management project and considering options for delivery.	

## 05 Place - Promoting vibrant town centres



Action	Progress	Status
05.01-CHS17 Review our approach to CCTV, safer streets etc.	The assessment of our public realm CCTV system to go digital has been completed. The report arising from the assessment recommended that a further feasibility study be undertaken on a new service concept to establish a digitally enabled integrated alarms monitoring service. Work on this has commenced with the distribution of a structured survey to premise key holders. The information from the survey will be used to collate a baseline for the study. The feasibility studies of both the digitisation of the CCTV system and the concept of an alarms monitoring hub will be reported to Committee in August.	

## 06 Partnership - Working with communities to deliver better services

Action	Progress	Status
06.02-CHS17 Deliver locality planning underpinned by community action plans within specific communities.	<p><b>Locality Planning</b></p> <p><i>Eastern Locality</i></p> <p>The Making Places project for Grangemouth is being progressed by Community Links (South Lanarkshire) to develop a new vision for the town centre and Charlotte Dundas Court. This project also engaged with people from local areas which experience multiple deprivation, which will contribute to the development of a new Community Action Plan for the town. The outputs from Making Places will report soon.</p> <p>Improvement actions with regard to Community Action Planning in Grangemouth have been implemented. These include engaging with local officers from different Community Planning partners on issues featuring within Community Action Planning, and seek their participation in the process. Work is also on-going with CLD and CVS Falkirk and District to establish a local network of community groups.</p>	




Action	Progress	Status
	<p>Preparations continue to commence conversation with communities within the eastern locality, regarding local assets. These conversations will commence shortly.</p> <p><b><i>Western Locality</i></b></p> <p>The Locality Planning Group considered a substantive paper on 10 April making recommendations for Community Action Planning to be established within Denny, Dunipace and Dennyloanhead, on a range of issues. In the meantime, preparations continue for Community Action Planning. This includes engaging with local community groups, establishing a local network of these groups, and building their capacity to participate in Community Action Planning.</p> <p><b><i>Central Locality</i></b></p> <p>Preparatory work has started for Locality Planning in the central locality. This includes the preparation of local profiles, a draft issues paper, and the mapping of local community organisations.</p> <p><b><i>Improving Locality Planning</i></b></p> <p>A report on improving Locality Planning has recently been considered by the Locality Planning Group and the Community Planning Executive Group. Further and more specific recommendations have been requested, for inclusion within a further report for the next meetings of these groups.</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.	An update on the Council's mainstreaming objectives was approved for publication by the Executive in April 2019. This fulfils our statutory obligation in terms of reporting mainstreaming activity.	
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 and elected members in relation to this.	

## 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.	
09.02-CHS17 Increase the availability and supply of accessible homes.	Design Guide has been drafted and will be discussed at Strategic Housing Group in June. As per Strategic Housing Investment Plan, 56% older/ ambulant and 15% wheelchair accessible properties.	
09.03-CHS17 Ensure our workforce package is modern, fair and attractive to current and future employees.	Discussions continue with Trade Unions to develop a workforce package that is aligned to the Council of the Future agenda. In line with the collective agreement on 35/37 hours, employee individual responses are now being processed and systems updated. c35% responses remain outstanding and work will continue to chase responses from this group.	

### 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.	The assessment of our public realm CCTV system to go digital has been completed. The report arising from the assessment recommended that a further feasibility study be undertaken on a new service concept to establish a digitally enabled integrated alarms monitoring service. Work on this has commenced with the distribution of a structured survey to premise key holders. The information from the survey will be used to collate a baseline for the study. It is anticipated that a report will be submitted to committee in June, outlining options for both the CCTV service on a stand-alone basis and within an integrated alarms monitoring service.	




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

Action	Progress	Status
11.01-CHS17 Develop a younger peoples housing plan.	Consultation complete and draft Young Persons Plan written. This will be referenced within LHS Update in June. Final YPP will be informed by Children's Services Integrated Children Services Plan.	

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



Action	Progress	Status
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.	Housing Contribution Statement sub group considering options for an application to the Integrated Care Fund in summer 2019. One further Make A Difference project awarded since January 2019.	



## 14 Our area will be a safer place to live


Action		Progress	Status
14.01-CHS17	Further develop how we share information with partners to identify risks within our communities.	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.	
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.	The draft consultant's report on going digital has now been received with comments having been received from service colleagues. These will be incorporated into the report for the Executive Committee to be considered no later than 12th March 2019.	
14.03-CHS17	Encouraging our communities to participate in preparations for emergency events through community resilience.	<p>The Council continues to support the Major Incident Co-ordination Committee in Grangemouth with their biannual testing of the public warning system in Grangemouth. This was mainly done through the use of social media to reach thousands in the local area and to make them aware of what they should do in the event of an emergency at the petro-chemical plant.</p> <p>We continue to attend Regional Resilience Partnership Public Communications Group to discuss wider ramifications of issues such as Brexit as well as other high level concerns raised at national government level.</p> <p>We're updating part of our emergency response procedures for chief officers to reflect current best practice and to give them reassurance of how we manage communications in a crisis/disruption situation.</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><b>Scope:</b> 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><b>Progress:</b> The development work on the new online asset register has now been tested and is being used by the Governance Team. Information Assets continue to be verified and loaded. Good progress was made in March, but April is likely to be impacted by Easter holiday period. The <a href="#">asset register</a> is available now to view.</p> <p>There are a few returns that are outstanding for the amended retention schedules for the new Business Classification Scheme (BCS). These are being chased with Services.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> There are currently gaps in the completion of the information asset audit. Information Management Working Group representatives will be asked to refocus service attention on this once the Business Classification Scheme is complete.</p> <p>Resourcing concerns due to activity that has to be completed the end of April 2019 and the balance between project work and BAU.</p>	
COTF17.D2	Procuring for the Future	<p><b>Scope:</b> 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"> <li>• Council employees involved in contracting activities</li> <li>• Customers receiving services and benefits from contracts arranged by the Council</li> <li>• Suppliers tendering for new contracts and already doing business with the Council</li> <li>• Elected Members</li> <li>• Trade Unions</li> </ul> <p>Impact: transparent, streamlined and more efficient processes, potential contract savings, compliance with legislation.</p>	



Action		Progress	Status
COTF17.D2	Procuring for the Future cont...	<p><b>Progress:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3 PCS-T training sessions have been delivered through March and the 1st tender has been published through the system. A final training session to cover remaining staff is scheduled for mid April.</li> <li>The Integrated Catalogue Expert and Punch-out modules have been configured within Integra's TEST environment and training has been provided to staff within Finance and PCU.</li> <li>PCU met with Children's services to promote the current procedures and services. Denny High has agreed to be included in phase 1 roll out of the Integra Punch out functionality in June 19 to encourage efficiencies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b> 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>	
COTF17.D3	Breaking the Mould	Superseded by Services of the Future.	
COTF17.EEC1	Implementation of the Advice Hub & Spokes – Phase 2	<p><b>Scope:</b> Delivery of a Central Hub.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b> A plan for the Central Hub on the ground floor of the library has been presented to the Library and Hub teams. A decision on the location of the central hub has still to be agreed and this has been escalated to Directors and Chief Executive.</p> <p>A Central Hub 'Lite' service opened on 13<sup>th</sup> May in Callendar Square.</p> <p>The West Hub outreach service for Stenhousemuir started March 5th.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> The lack of agreed programme for the central hub means that the completion of the central hub is approximately 12 months behind original planned timescales. Consideration should be given to the significant work and costs to create a temporary hub lite option while awaiting an agreed way forward with Falkirk Community Trust.</p>	


Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.EEC2      Locality Planning	<p><b>Scope:</b>  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><b>Progress:</b>  Community Links (South Lanarkshire) has begun consulting with the Grangemouth public. They are discussing issues in relation to the themes identified during the general consultation last year, and are focussing specifically on areas with higher levels of deprivation. They have been collecting views in an empty unit from the 5th March to 5th April, carried out 9 focus groups, and have completed a door-knocking exercise to advertise a series of community events that will take place in early April. At the end of this process a design team will be brought in to assist with new designs for the Town Centre and Charlotte Dundas Court.</p> <p>A number of interviews have taken place with Council and Partner employees that work in the local community in order to assess service provision, partnership working and any gaps in services or opportunities for improvements. There has also been work ongoing in order to set up a network of Community Groups who will be supported to coproduce the final Community Action Plan, though this will progress once Community Links has finished some of their work so as not to confuse community groups about the overlapping work streams.</p> <p>A number of delivery groups have responded to the Chair of the Locality Planning Group's request to review and validate the draft issues paper for the western locality. A revised issues paper and recommendations for Community Action Planning will be considered at the next meeting of the Locality Planning Group on 10 April 2019. Preparation for Community Action Planning in the western locality continues.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b>  None Reported</p>	









Action	Progress	Status												
Housing of Tomorrow	<p><b>Scope:</b> 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><tr><th>Workstream</th><th>Outcome</th></tr><tr><td>Provide long term stability for staff</td><td>Modernising how we deliver our services, being innovative by design and delivering services that are more accountable, flexible and efficient.</td></tr><tr><td>Improve access to housing to all out customers</td><td>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>Improve communication getting it right first time</td><td>Working together to improve outcomes for the people of the Falkirk Area.</td></tr><tr><td>Helping our tenants and communities</td><td>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>Support and developing staff</td><td>Enabling communities, members and officers to use data and information to make decisions based on shared priorities and real-time information.</td></tr></table> <p><b>Progress:</b> Work undertaken includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan was submitted to Scottish Government in December 2018. Feedback has been received and a meeting to discuss the commentary has been arranged in April after which a final response will be provided in May.</li><li>• Falkirk Council has been working with all Scottish Local Authorities to develop a national training toolkit to provide staff with the right training to deliver effective housing options advice to customers. A contractor has recently been appointed to work with subject matter experts across all local authorities to create the training which is expected to be available to staff in the 2nd half of this year.</li><li>• A survey was commissioned to gather tenants' views on the services that the Council provides and its performance of these services. The findings from the survey show that in the six key indicators around customer satisfaction, all have increased since the 2016/17 survey, each have improved between two to six percentage points and all are above target.</li><li>• The procurement process has now concluded for the lone working technology and a preferred supplier has been selected. The lone worker risk assessment has been completed and agreed with the staffing group. The contract and risk assessment are with the project sponsor for review and signature.</li></ul>	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
Housing of Tomorrow cont...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capita have provided a response with costings against the specification document. A meeting is arranged with the Head of Service and IT for the 12th April to review the costings and discuss options as the costing is circa £190K over the indicative costs which included 5 years of annual maintenance costs.</li> <li>The main areas of risk report required for accreditation has been completed including the appropriate preventative actions. The agenda has been confirmed with British Standards Institute (BSI) for the ISO audit in May 2019.</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing change and helping teams to adapt to these changes to maintain performance and morale and minimise the impact on frontline services.</li> <li>Ensuring any changes meet local needs, are aligned with Council policy and Government legislation.</li> </ul>	
COTF17.MD01 Digital Strategy	<p><b>Scope:</b> 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><b>Progress:</b> Digital Skills survey went live 15th March 2018 running until May 3rd. A programme of advertising the survey is underway to encourage as many staff to complete as possible. As of 31st March 463 people have completed the survey. Results from the survey will help to define training and skills required going forward.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b> Need to ensure that employees complete the survey to deliver meaningful results which can be translated into an appropriate development programme.</p>	

Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.MD02      Rock Solid Technology	<p><b>Scope:</b>  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><b>Progress:</b>  Good progress continues to be made on the individual projects that collectively make up the Rock Solid Technology programme of projects.</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 and rollout has been completed for Suite 2, the Forum. The rollout will continue with Carronbank House on 24<sup>th</sup> April and Municipal Buildings planned for 1<sup>st</sup> May.</p> <p>Video conferencing (part of unified communications) is currently available between fixed sites across the Council. Jabber is being tested for unified comms. There are challenges with the deployment approach through citrix. BT and in house team working together to find a resolution.</p> <p>Falkirk Cloud – Education – Hardware installation for the network has begun with configuration work to be completed through April. Citirix connections to be created through April – July 2019 to allow rollout of Citirix to Education.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b>  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. The PID has been developed for Phase 2 and will be included in Wave 2 of the COTF Project Reporting.	

Action	Progress	Status
<p>COTF17.MD06      Redesign of BMD Services - Phase 2</p>	<p><b>Scope:</b></p> <p>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"> <li>- Appointments are available when customers need a repair</li> <li>- Increased customer satisfaction by getting things right first time</li> <li>- Employees have digital devices for real time updates on jobs</li> </ul> <p><b>Progress:</b></p> <p>The workflow team continues to focus on scheduling repairs to maximise employee productivity and improved customer service. Customer satisfaction for repairs is circa 98%.</p> <p>Non-emergency repairs performance has continued to improve throughout the year, with the average time to complete a repair of 7.1 days compared to 8 days last year.</p> <p>The relocation of the Joinery Manufacturing Unit within Inchyra Depot is nearly complete and is expected to conclude by end April.</p> <p>The roll-out of home to work arrangements are still ongoing, but progressing positively. The finalised agreement has been submitted to the Trade Unions and implementation is expected to progress during April and May 2019.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b></p> <p>None reported.</p>	

Action		Progress	Status
COTF17.MD08	Integrated Resource Management System	<p><b>Scope:</b> Phase 1 of this project is to improve the Council's HR &amp; Payroll system to support our employees in making sure our customers get the right services at the right time.</p> <p><b>Progress:</b>  <u>Myjobscotland Interface:</u>  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. There have been delays in progressing this due to the Recruitment Process review and availability of resource in the Improvement Team. The Improvement team are now conducting a scoping exercise to understand the extent of the work required to be completed. Expected to be complete by end of April.</p> <u>Barrachd Monthly Payroll Reports</u> 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. This element of the project was due to complete 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2019, however due to network issues affecting schools and the lack of input from SW Adult Services on required users this has been delayed. The school network issue is now dependent on the Rock Solid Technology project around the education network being completed during the summer. <u>System Hosting</u> Discussions have commenced with the software supplier regarding having the system hosted by them at their secure Data Centre. Following agreement by the Director of Corporate & Housing to enter contractual negotiations with supplier, a meeting has been arranged during April to discuss how to proceed with the externally hosting the system. <p><b>Challenges:</b>  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).</p> <p>Resource availability of the Improvement Team is impacting timescales. Once the Improvement Team have scoped the work required for the Myjobscotland interface a project change request may need to be raised to scope out the implications.</p>	
	Falkirk Community Trust	Phase 1 now complete. A report <a href="#">Falkirk Community Trust – Options Appraisal</a> was approved by Council in September 2018.	
	Fees & Charges	A report on <a href="#">Fees and Charges</a> 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.	

Action	Progress	Status
COTF17.OC01      Fit for the Future	<p><b>Scope:</b>  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 &amp; 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><b>Progress:</b>  Internal communications  A campaign to promote the external employee website is being rolled out. A poster campaign showing staff from all services access the site has been rolled out along with face-to-face session with frontline staff to show staff how to access the site from any internet abled technology. 230 employees have been spoken to and further events with Homecare have been scheduled for May. There has been a significant increase in access of the pay and benefits pages since going live.</p> <p>Anytime Anywhere  Report submitted to CMT approved. Furniture spec agreed, although further consultation required on office chairs. Rollout of Anytime Anywhere agreed by CMT across all locations. Work to start on identifying current working arrangement in all council locations. Milestones to be determined to fully implement.</p> <p>CANs to support and champion the rollout.</p> <p>Organisational Development  More 360 degree feedback reports have been completed. All SUM have completed. As of March 31<sup>st</sup> There were 4 CO 360 feedback outstanding. Phase 2 of the OD development plan has been sent to all services for comment. Awaiting update from Development Services. Plan not complete for Children's Services as requires further 360 feedback returns.  The OD report for phase 2 was agreed with CMT.</p> <p><b>Challenges:</b>  Full benefits resulting from 360 degree feedback may not be realised and as a result development plan may not be address all training requirements.</p>	
COTF17.OC02      Business Support	Phase 1 complete.	
COTF17.OC03      Strategic Planning	Project now complete. Report " <a href="#">Projected Financial Position 2018/19</a> " was approved by Executive in October 2018.	

## Important Indicators on target (CHS)

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
	Value	Value	Value		
<b>AHS 1 Percentage of New Tenancies sustained for more than a year</b>	88.0%	88.8%	88.6%	90.0%	91.2% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>AHS 12 Percentage of settled accommodation secured by unintentionally homeless applicants</b>	94.3%	91.9%	92.1%	89.0%	69.0% (Scottish Government report on Operation of Homeless Persons Legislation 2017/18) Average
<b>FIN_IMP_001 Number of days to process new Housing Benefit claims</b>	23	23	16	23	22 days DWP Scottish average 2017/18
<b>CHS062 Number of customer accounts created on My Falkirk</b>	3496	13817	24528	21000	No benchmark - target locally determined
<b>CHS063 Average customer ratings on My Falkirk experience (from a score out of five)</b>	n/a	4	4.1	4	No benchmark - target locally determined
<b>HQM 1 Percentage of Stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard</b>	92.65%	97.42%	n/a	95.00%	97.48% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>HQM 3a Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (in hours)</b>	4.5	5	3.8	4.2	3.3 hours Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>HQM 4a Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (in working days)</b>	8.9	8	6.7	7	6.7 days Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>HQM 9 Percentage of Tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in</b>	89.29%	89.66%	89.26%	91.00%	92.08% 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 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%	93.67%	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
CHS033 Sickness Absence: Craft Staff	5.67%	5.61%	6.00%	5.50%	5.55% APSE Performance Network (BMD Family Group) Average 2017/18

#### Progress

January 2019 - 5.12% a decrease of 0.4% from December 2018.  
February 2019 - 7.21% an increase of 2.09% from January 2019.  
March 2019 - 7.95% - an increase of 0.74% from February 2019.

Q3 split of short, medium and long term absence is:

Short: 18.24% (Q2 15.07%)  
Medium: 10.93% (Q2 11.65%)  
Long: 70.83% (73.28%)  
Q4 split not yet available.

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. 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.

CMT agreed absence statistics will be produced on a quarterly basis.

#### Improvement Action

A number of measures have been taken to minimise sickness absence across the Service. These include:

- 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
<b>CHS047 Percentage of 1st stage complaints responded to within timescales</b>	85%	87%	90%	100%	100% SPSO Target
<b>Progress</b>					
Performance levels continue to be closely monitored on a monthly basis. 1st stage complaints received during March was 172 with 164 closed within 5 working days.					
January 97%. February 92%. March 97%.					
Year to date performance is 90%.					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
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. The Customer First system has been further developed to automatically send out reminders for cases and continues to do so on a daily basis until the case has been closed.					

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
<b>CHS060 Percentage of FOI enquiries dealt with in 20 working days</b>	93%	93%	92%	100%	No Benchmark applicable, however expectations would be 100% as per FOI timescales.
<b>Progress</b>					
Performance levels continue to be closely monitored on a monthly basis.					
YTD Number of FOI's received: 611					
YTD Number within statutory timescale: 561					
January 92%, February 88%, March 95%.					
Year to date performance 92%.					
This indicator will be a month in arrears due to 20 working day timescale.					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
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. The Customer First system has been further developed to automatically send out reminders for cases and continues to do so on a daily basis until the case has been closed.					

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
<b>FIN_IMP_002 Number of days to process Housing Benefit change events</b>	7	6	11	8	5 days DWP Scottish average 2017/18
<b>Progress</b>					
<p>2017/18 target revised to 8 days to bring us more in line with the annual Scottish average of 6 days in 2016/2017. 2017/2018 annual DWP published figures are 6 for Falkirk, 5 for Scotland and 7 days for the UK. We have decided to keep our target of 8 days for 2018/2019 as Full Service Universal Credit rolls out it will have an impact on the administration of housing benefit.</p> <p>Internal estimates for April 2018 show 8.87 with further slippage to 9.59 days in May. Dropped further to 10.82 days in June but then improved to 10.64 in July with another improvement to 10.42 in August. Again, this can be attributed to peak holiday period and an increase in universal credit administration.</p> <p>Further drop in performance in September at 11.17 making the Q2 stat 10.72 with an overall performance to date of 10.17 days which is out with target. Staffing levels had improved but then school holidays in October have an impact on our stats and the performance has fallen to 11.78 days with an overall performance to date of 10.37 days. The training of staff for the West Hub has also contributed to reduced performance.</p> <p>Pleased to report an improvement in the November performance to 7.24 days making our overall performance to date at 10.15 which is still out with the target but should improve through the year end uprating process.</p> <p>A further improvement of 5.20 days in December bringing the Q3 performance to 8.47 days and an overall performance to date of 9.72 days.</p> <p>We processed over twice as many change events in January and achieved 4.26 days bringing the overall performance to date to 8.91 days, just outwith the 8 day target but this should be achieved as all claims will be auto recalculated at annual billing.</p> <p>In February we processed 7,105 change events taking on average 4.28 days to do so bringing our overall performance to 8.47 days, just outwith the 8 day target but will be achieved in March re annual billing.</p> <p>In March we achieved 1.58 days for change events bringing our Q4 performance to 2.31 days and our overall performance for the year to 5.85 days, well within target.</p>					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
<p>Benefit Work is managed through our Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) with each Area Office / Hub Manager reviewing and prioritising cases on a daily basis supplemented by daily / weekly reports. Continuing to expand the processing skills of staff on the various types of claims / changes as we face ever increasing demands due to Welfare Reform changes and seasonal variations in workloads. Monthly Performance Scorecard issued to all staff highlighting performance in all areas of Revenues &amp; Benefits work.</p>					

## Important Indicators significantly below target (CHS)

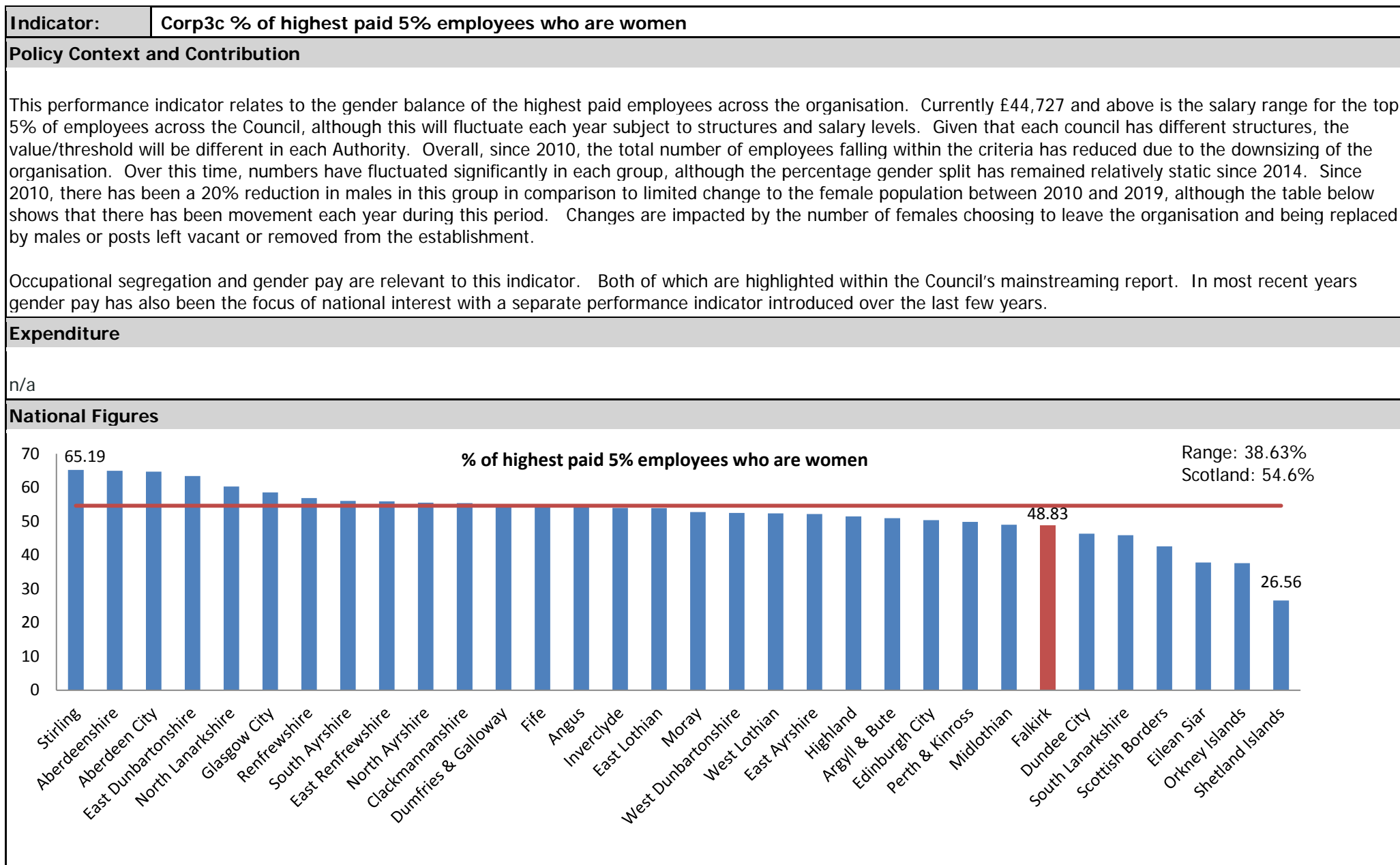
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
<b>CHS061 Sickness Absence: Corporate &amp; Housing Services</b>	4.45%	4.35%	4.20%	4.00%	No benchmark - target locally determined
<b>Progress</b>					
<p>January 2019 - 4.23% - an increase of 1.02% from December 2018.  February 2019 - 5.12% - an increase of 0.89% from January 2019.  March 2019 - 5.60% - an increase of 0.48% from February 2019.</p> <p>Q3 split of short, medium and long term absence is:  Short: 18.25% (Q2 15.13%)  Medium: 13.46% (Q2 8.80%)  Long: 68.30% (Q2 76.07%)  Q4 not yet available</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>					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
<p>A number of measures have been taken to minimise sickness absence across the Service. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barrachd rolled out and provides additional management information including trigger levels and highlights possible areas for closer assessment.</li> <li>• A Council wide working group was set up to review the Managing Sickness Absence Policy and this has now been approved by committee.</li> </ul>					

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
<b>GGV 5a Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year</b>	7.79%	7.70%	8.09%	6.25%	2.86% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>Progress</b>					
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.					
At the end of March 2019 arrears were 8.09% which is a slight downturn from the 7.70% reported at same point in 2018.					
There is an underlying improvement in non-Universal Credit cases but we have a growing Universal Credit caseload, with a clear short-term increase in arrears, having a material impact on global performance.					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
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.					

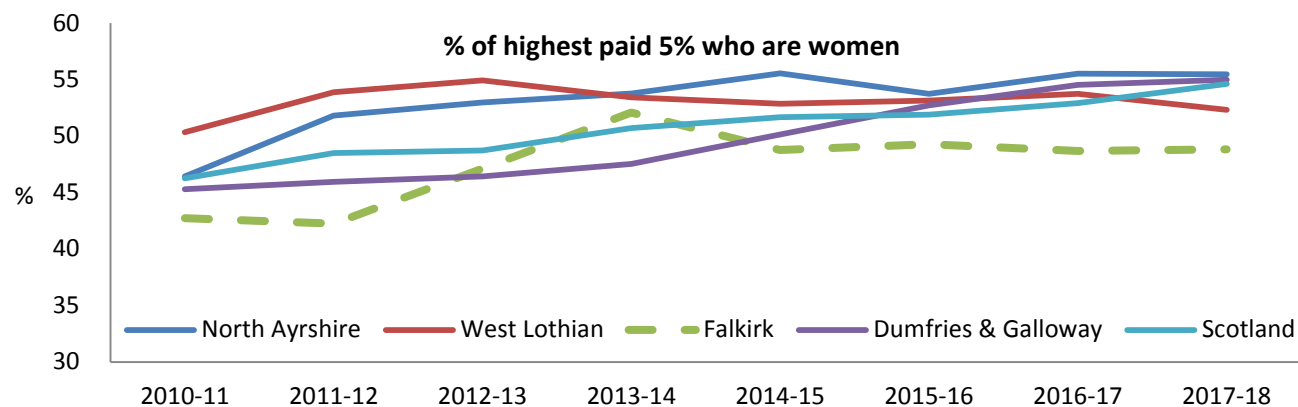
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Target	Benchmark
<b>GGV 6 Percentage of Rent Lost through properties being empty during the last year</b>	0.89%	0.91%	1.04%	0.90%	0.70% Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>Progress</b>					
Total rent due year to date was £55,942,707.63. Of this £581,873.52 was rent lost due to voids.					
The percentage rent loss for the month of March is 1.12%.					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
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
<b>GGV 7 Average length of time taken to relet properties in the last year (days)</b>	33.41	31.8	35.58	31	28.12 days Scottish Local Authority Upper Quartile (2017/18) as reported by Scotland's Housing Network (SHN)
<b>Progress</b>					
<p>At the end of March 2019 we had let a total of 1,424 properties with the total number of days taken to let the properties reported at 50,664 days.</p> <p>Our performance in March decreased to an average of 37 days. There has been an increase in the number of void properties in recent months, partially as a result of new build properties increasing turnover. As per our allocations policy, all new build properties are allocated to current tenants whose properties then become empty and need to be brought up to the void standard to be available for let. We have also seen an increase in the number of buybacks, and several properties requiring major works following fire and floods. This has impacted on timescales in returning void properties.</p>					
<b>Improvement Action</b>					
<p>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.</p> <p>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. As part of this process we are looking at the number of pre termination inspections currently being completed. This part of the process will be completed by the end of June 2019. We have recently had an audit of the voids service carried out by our Management Systems Officer, as part of our ISO accreditation, and they have recommended an end-to-end process review be carried out.</p>					

## Local Government Benchmark Framework (Improved / Deteriorated)



## Benchmarking

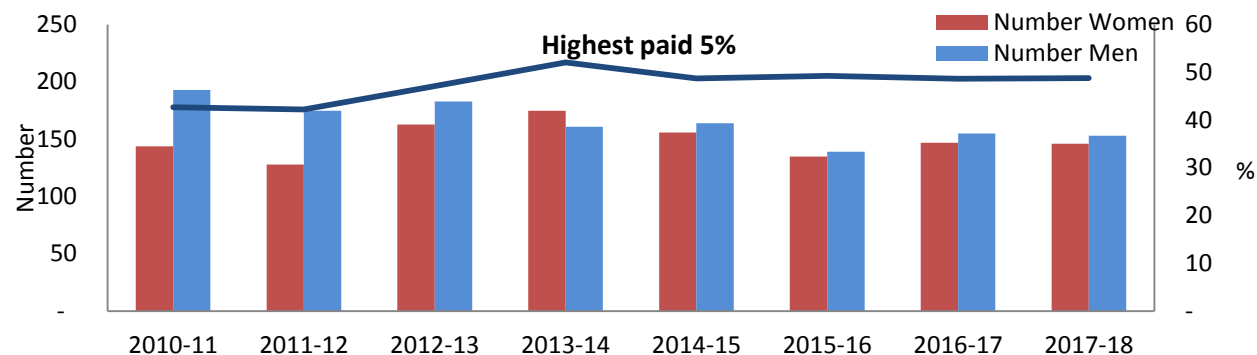


	Top 5% 2017-18	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
North Ayrshire	265	46.42	51.80	52.96	53.75	55.56	53.74	55.51	55.47
West Lothian	281	50.33	53.87	54.92	53.42	52.86	53.13	53.74	52.31
<b>Falkirk</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>42.73</b>	<b>42.24</b>	<b>47.11</b>	<b>52.08</b>	<b>48.75</b>	<b>49.27</b>	<b>48.68</b>	<b>48.83</b>
Dumfries & Galloway	322	45.28	45.95	46.42	47.52	50.15	52.71	54.52	54.97
Scotland	10,013	46.26	48.50	48.71	50.70	51.66	51.89	52.90	54.60

The table above provides comparison with councils have that the closest number of 5% staff to Falkirk and Scotland.

Differences across organisations are due to the total number of males/females employed in higher paid posts. Fluctuations occur and due to females choosing to leave the organisation and being replaced by males or posts left vacant or removed from the establishment. This can therefore be difficult to influence. Whilst it is important for the Council to be aware of data within other local authorities, the priority has to be ensuring that Council policies and practices in relation to recruitment of the best candidate and also equality duties are met.

## Our Performance



	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<b>% Women</b>	42.73	42.24	47.11	52.08	48.75	49.27	48.68	48.83
<b>Number Women</b>	144	128	163	175	156	135	147	146
<b>Number Men</b>	193	175	183	161	164	139	155	153

The table above shows data over time, and demonstrates that since 2010-11 Falkirk has closed the gap between the number of women and men in the highest paid 5%.

Over past few years has seen a change in the gender balance of posts at Chief Officer level, with a number of female Chief Officers leaving the Council with their posts either being deleted or replaced with a post holder of a different gender. This has an impact on this indicator.

## Improvement

It is important to ensure that our recruitment practices continue to be transparent and robust and that the best person for the post, regardless of gender, is appointed. The recruitment and selection policy allows for positive action to address any issues of under representation across protected characteristics, including gender. Where appropriate this could be used to address any significant shortfall.

The Council's Mainstreaming Report also highlights a number of Equality Outcomes to ensure reporting and recording of recruitment statistics in relation to the various protected characteristics, including gender, as well as identifying any job segregation issues. This information will help identify relevant issues and provide the statistical data to support future equality outcomes.

We will continue to promote part time, flexible and mobile working including in higher level positions to increase attractiveness to a wider pool of applicants, specifically those with caring responsibilities.

We will continue to monitor this area via the annual LGBF reporting and highlight any areas of concern where relevant.



## Inequalities

It is important to ensure that our recruitment practices are transparent and robust and that the best person for the post, regardless of any protected characteristic, including gender, is appointed. Recruitment and Selection training promotes equality of opportunity.

The recruitment and selection policy allows for positive action to address any issues of under representation across protected characteristics, including gender.

**Indicator:** HSN1b Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year

## Policy Context and Contribution

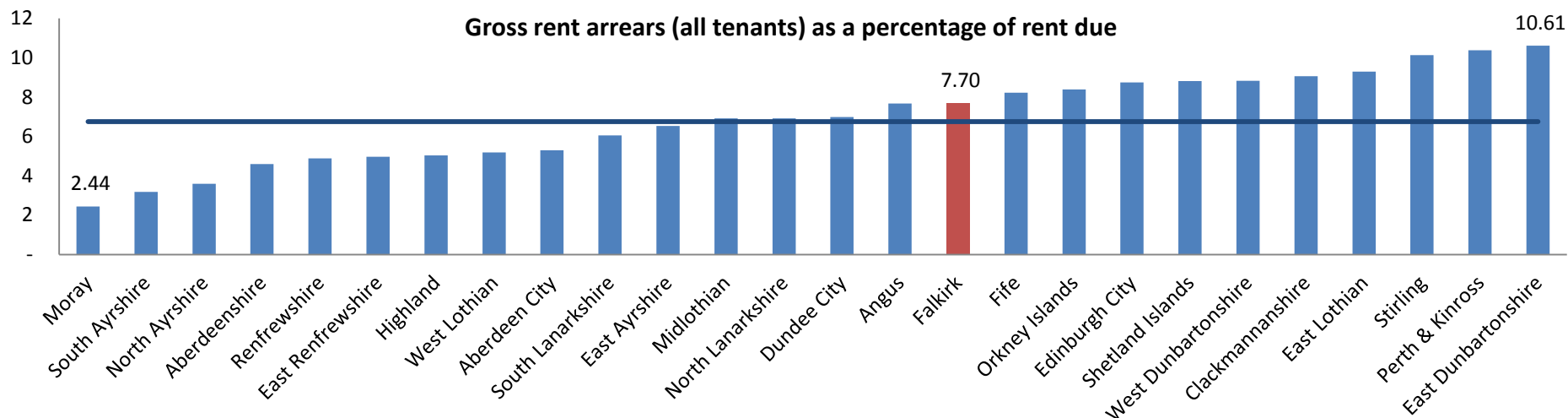
While rent arrears don't have a direct financial impact to the Council it is likely future irrecoverable debt will be, to some extent, in proportion to the level of rent arrears. This, in turn, will impact on the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Just under 1% of rent levied is currently not recovered and equates to a write-off of c.£500k per annum. Any improvements that achieve a reduction in the debt to be written off will increase funds available to deliver housing services to tenants. This could allow for improvements in service or limit the scale of annual rent increase.

## Expenditure

This is an income indicator. Any change in expenditure would be expected to generate an income in excess of the costs incurred.

## National Figures

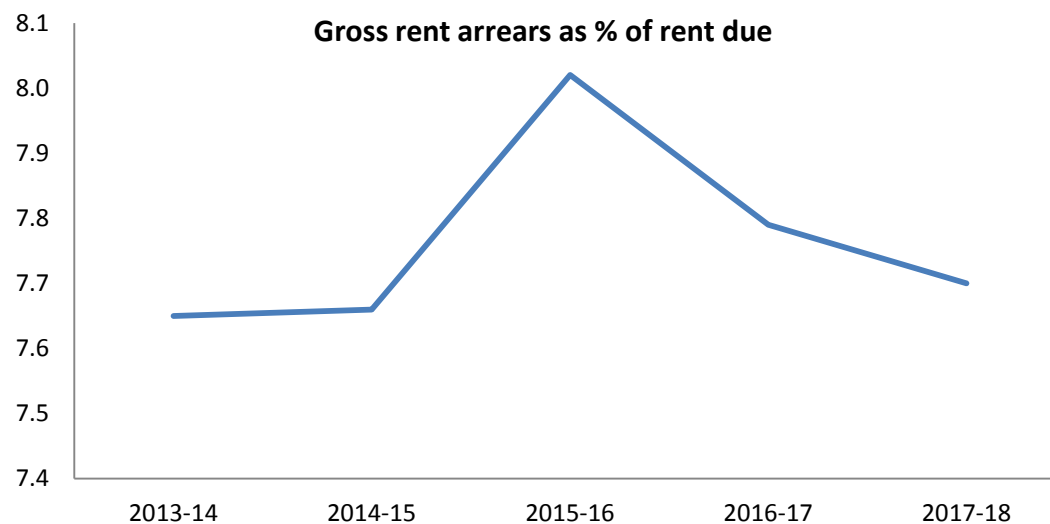


Family Group members – Dumfries & Galloway, Fife, South Ayrshire, West Lothian, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Clackmannanshire

## Benchmarking

We surveyed all local authorities, therefore engaged with all the best performers (both in terms of local authorities and Registered Social landlords) to establish best practice. We carried out visits to Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), Fife Council and Dundee City Council. GHA was chosen as it is an exemplar in Housing management; Dundee and Fife were chosen because of their scale / stock profile and, at the time, had seen recent improvements in performance. GHA have exceptionally good performance in this area and while Fife and Dundee were not top of the table they had both shown recent improvement at the time of our visits. The GHA visit was integral in not only improving how we collect rent but also with the wider delivery of the housing service. Over the last two years we have deployed improvements. These improvements include implementation of the Corporate Debt Policy and improved communications with tenants when they fall into debt. One of the key areas moving forward, to help us further improve, is embedding rent focus, early intervention and support in the role of Housing Officers.

## Our Performance



	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Difference	
Arrears as % of rent due	7.65	7.66	8.02	7.79	7.70	0.05	<b>0.7%</b>
Gross rent arrears year end	£3,751,663	£3,883,448	£4,209,571	£4,141,392	£4,140,687	£389,024.39	<b>10.4%</b>
Rent due in year	£49,061,700	£50,680,165	£52,507,145	£53,165,314	£53,774,381	£4,712,681.07	<b>9.6%</b>

Since the roll-out of Universal Credit (since May 2015) our performance has improved against national trend. In 2015/16 we were 2.02% behind the national average (8.02% compared to 6.0%). We narrowed this to 1.69% in 2016/17 (7.79% compared to 6.1%) and again to 1.45% in 2017/18 (7.70% compared to 6.25%). We also improved our ranking in 2017/18 to 16<sup>th</sup> in Scotland having been 18<sup>th</sup> in 2016/17.

As at end of March 2019 around 15% of our tenants were in receipt of Universal Credit but these same tenants were responsible for around 50% of the current tenant rent arrears.

Improvement	
We want to improve in this area and in doing so we will bring more households out of debt, and reduce the risk of eviction. Given the impact of Universal Credit it may be that we see a headline downturn in the performance indicator but we actually get closer to Scottish Average and move up national rankings. We want to be in top half nationally and as only 26 authorities have housing stock this means aiming to top 13.	
Inequalities	
We will remain at a disadvantage in this indicator, compared to most landlords as they seek rent payment in advance (i.e. at start of rent period) but we seek rent payment in arrears (i.e. by end of rent period).	
While we are continually seeking to improve our performance in this area we cannot expect immediate results. To do so would likely result in undue pressure being applied to tenants. We would rather see a long-term gradual reduction in debt rather than a tenant borrowing, and potentially paying significant interest, to address the rent debt more quickly.	

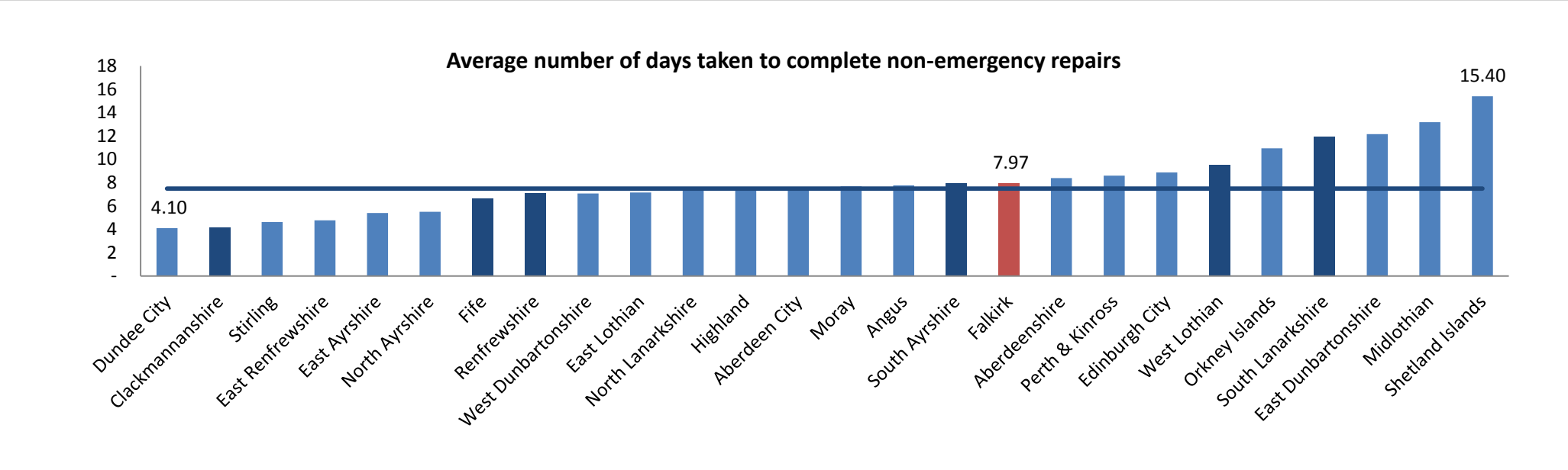
Indicator:	HSN4b Average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs
Policy Context and Contribution	
<p>The Redesign of Building Maintenance Division (BMD) services Wave 2 is a Council of the Future (CoTF) project. The main driver for the project is to ensure BMD continues to provide the highest quality of customer service, in a cost effective and efficient manner. The review aims to improve the customer experience of the property repair and maintenance service, whilst delivering efficiencies, to ensure BMD remains fit for purpose going forward.</p> <p>BMD operates within a highly competitive environment, with performance and value for money scrutinised by customers and regulatory bodies. The review will implement improvements in operating practice and customer service to ensure BMD can clearly evidence being the “Provider of Choice” for customers.</p> <p>Employees will have digital devices for real time updates on jobs which will further improve the use of modern, digital and mobile working practices. This is in keeping with the overall move toward being a more modern and digital council which makes better use of mobile working technologies. The above also fits in with key priorities set out in the Digital Strategy and the Business Plan including the CoTF Wave 2 Services of the Future. The Housing of Tomorrow CoTF project including the procurement of a new Integrated Housing Management System will also support the redesign of BMD service.</p> <p>The indicator relates to the timescales taken to complete non-emergency repairs. It also ensures that our homes continue to be maintained to the standards set out in the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. <u>The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) bases its assessment of risk based on three key areas including housing stock quality. The SHR assesses the quality of tenant’s home by focusing on where social landlords do not meet the Scottish Social Housing Standard (SHQS) and the reason for this. By maintaining and repairing tenants homes’ we are ensuring we continue to meet the priority set out by SHR in terms of how they assess risk.</u></p> <p>There is a requirement for the Housing Service to meet the outcomes and standards contained in the Scottish Social Housing Charter including those related to repairs and maintenance. We submit our statutory return each year to the SHR which provides evidence of where we are achieving against these outcomes and standards. This includes an indicator on the average time to complete non-emergency repairs.</p>	

**Expenditure**

The Council has an integrated management structure, where by BMD operational management and Housing Property Services are under the same line management.

The main functional areas undertaken by BMD in relation to non-emergency repairs are provided within the Council's HRA General Maintenance budget (£7m) based on 18/19 budget.

**National Figures**



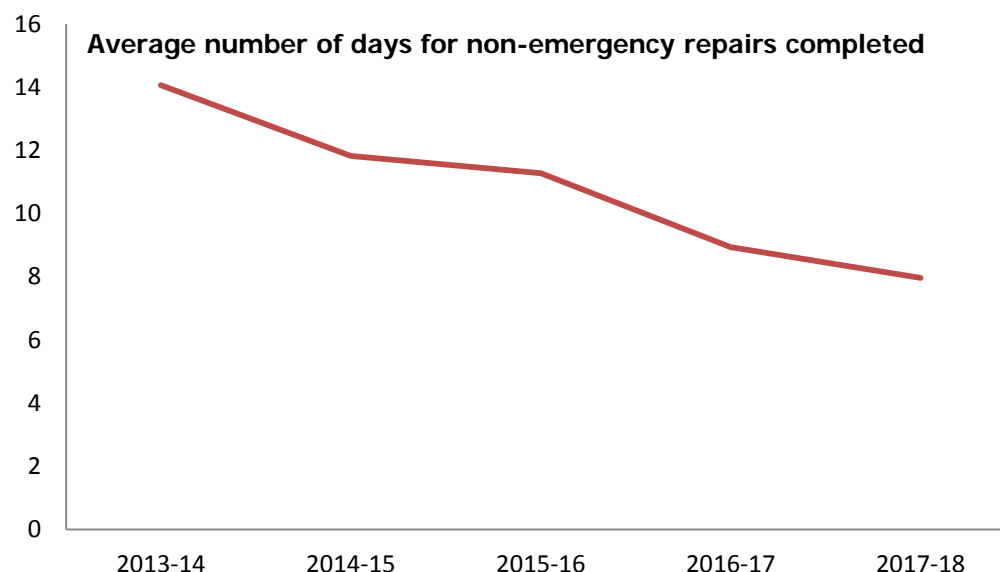
We are in the Third quartile for this indicator and below the Scottish rate of 7.5 days based on 17/18 figures.

Our Family Group members are, Fife, South Ayrshire, West Lothian, South Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Clackmannanshire. We have the third highest average within this family group.

## Benchmarking

We benchmark against all 26 Scottish local authorities and Glasgow Housing Association Upper Quartile level. We use Scotland's Housing Network's benchmarking tool to generate these figures. We also benchmark quarterly by submitting data to the Scotland's Housing Network. As part of the redesign of BMD we have engaged with other local authorities including West Lothian and East Ayrshire to look at how they schedule responsive repairs so we can use examples of good practice during the introduction and further roll out of the Workflow Team.

## Our Performance



	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Reduction	% Reduced
Non-emergency repairs completed	46,254	41,641	44,200	40,959	34,241	12,013	26.0%
Working days to complete non-emergency repairs	650,501	492,265	497,924	366,163	272,813	377,688	58.1%
Average Number of days	14.06	11.82	11.27	8.94	7.97	6.09	43.3%

The table above provides a clear indication that performance for this indicator has improved considerably year on year. We have a higher percentage than we would like of repairs classed as an emergency currently sitting at around 40% of all repairs. This means that resources are being directed to deal with this high level of emergency repairs which has an impact on the timescales to complete non-emergency repairs.

Our 18/19 figures show we have improved our performance to 6.7 days.

## Improvement

We will look to improve our performance for this indicator as part of the redesign of BMD services. We run an appointment system for responsive repairs and we are also looking to extend this to offer tenants appointments at more suitable times, such as after work. By improving the way we appoint repairs and improve our use of mobile working practice, we will look to reduce the timescales to complete non-emergency repairs.

The introduction of the Workflow Team assisted in reducing the time taken to complete a non - emergency repair within the east and central areas. The Workflow Team expanded into the West area on 4 March 2019, and so is now covering the whole Council area for reactive repairs.

We are reviewing the diagnostic tool used to identify a repair as an emergency to see if we can reduce the overall percentage. If less repairs are being classed as an emergency this will free up resources to work on non-emergency repairs.

The redesign on BMD aims to implement a range of service improvements to provide a more efficient and effective property maintenance and repairs service to Falkirk Council tenants and Service users. Implementation of service improvements will also help to ensure the future viability of BMD over the next 5-10 years.

The review of the Building Maintenance Division is to ensure it is more effective and efficient whilst improving the customer experience. The impacts included are:

- reduced non-productive time
- reduced overhead costs
- motivated and skilled workforce
- quicker response times for repairs
- appointments are available when customers need a repair
- increased customer satisfaction by getting repairs right first time.

## Inequalities

Under the equalities outcome of the Scottish Social Housing Charter we have a duty to:

“perform all aspects of their housing services so that: every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.”

This includes the repairs and maintenance services provided.