

# Housing Scrutiny Commission

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## **Void Performance Report**

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Andy Connelly

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 12<sup>th</sup>. March 2018

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

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**City Mayor**

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: all
- Report author: Simon Nicholls
- Author contact details: simon.nicholls@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: v.1

### 1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Division's performance on the completion of Void repairs to council properties for the third quarter of 2017/18.

The report will also update members on progress made on items previously raised in the last report dated 20<sup>th</sup>. November 2017

### 2. Summary.

So far in 2017/18 Voids performance against target is as follows:

Measure	Target	Actual performance as at January 2018
Routine Voids	45 days average	39.6
Long term voids	90 days average	91.7
All voids	Maximum 90 days average	51.6
No. Voids Held	Less than 2% (421)	1.8%
Total annual rent loss	No greater than £825k	£695k (£829k year-end projection)
Total annual council tax loss	£202,537	£171,526 (£200k year-end projection)
Ready to let to Occupation	10 days	6.5 days

See appendix A

Overall performance is good and we continue to deliver year on year improvements. Long term void performance has been slightly affected by the turnaround of properties for the tower block refurbishment project and other priority voids.

#### **What impacts on Void performance**

**Asbestos removal.** Delays due to the removal of licenced asbestos. This requires notification to the HSE and if not arranged in a timely manner can have significant impact on the planning of void work. Delays can also occur due to contractors who can't always work as quickly as we would like as they have built in delays due to lead in times i.e. asbestos, kitchens and rewires. This will form part of our ongoing process improvements and partnership working with other sections.

**Refusal rates.** Refusal rates are high, properties are offered correctly in accordance with policy and applicants bid for the properties they want. However, when some applicants have secured the property they have bid for they then refuse the actual offer. This is largely due to the property not being in the area they want, or they see a property advertised in the next cycle that they prefer, this is an issue nationally. We have increased the amount of information on the website so that applicants are fully informed on the location and the property attributes we even link to Google maps so they can physically see the property. Applicants are also encouraged to visit the area to view the outside of the property to be certain it is the area they want in order to mitigate refusals. This is an ongoing issue for us and nationally.

**Productivity measures:** Void repairs staff currently operates a manual work allocation system and are not currently mobile working. This does not allow easy access to productivity data which has to be manually calculated. We have put some systems in place to capture some data in this area and are just starting to record productivity information and need to be able to collate this over a period of time for it to have meaning and application. This will enable us to set realistic targets and carry out future resource/workforce planning and increase the efficiency of craft operatives.

**Peaks and Troughs:** Void repairs are a reactive service and we respond to the number of voids we have at any one particular time. Naturally there are peaks and troughs, we have agreed a protocol for prioritising voids and have stated issuing work to contactors when it has been identified that there are not enough in house resources to deliver priority cases.

#### **Progress and Future work areas:**

**Mobile working/works planning:** The roll out of the mobile working solution is eagerly anticipated by Voids, this will help automate systems and communicate more effectively within voids and other areas of the business that we work for and those that help us, eg. Asbestos team and stores. It will also streamline the ordering of materials making it more efficient and accurate.

**Target Setting:** We have introduced some manual systems to monitor productivity as an interim measure prior to mobile working being introduced, this will enable us to set more realistic individual and team targets which prior to the transformation did not exist.

**Performance Management:** There is ongoing work being carried out to improve the performance management data. We are looking at the time in between processes to ensure any dead time can be eliminated, for example by looking at one particular area in detail RTL(ready to let) to occupation we have been able to identify issues and put mitigating measures in place to ensure that this timescale could be reduced and it now stands at 6.5 days. This will continue with the look at other areas and the same approach will be applied

**Sheltered Housing:** In recent years Sheltered Housing schemes have proved unpopular and difficult to let. We have started a project to find out why, what the actual demand is for the schemes and re visit our offer, we have delivered an interim report that has made some recommendations from an operational view point and we continue to work on the full report, this is ongoing

**Decorating voucher scheme:** A soft market testing exercise has been carried out and a pilot scheme has been done. Unfortunately this didn't deliver the results we had hoped for, it was a 'paint pack' scheme but the feedback from the tenants was negative, we will now start to re procure a voucher scheme. The current B&Q scheme will continue until a new scheme is operational.

**The Stores review** is ongoing and not expected to go live until April 2019. This will potentially change the way materials are delivered in future, we will know more and if there is likely to be an impact on voids in the coming months.

#### **4. Details of Scrutiny**

This report is to update members of the Housing Scrutiny Commission

#### **5. Financial, legal and other implications**

##### 5.1 Financial implications

None sought

##### 5.2 Legal implications

None sought

##### 5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

None sought

##### 5.4 Equalities Implications

None sought

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

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**7. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix A, Void Performance

**8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

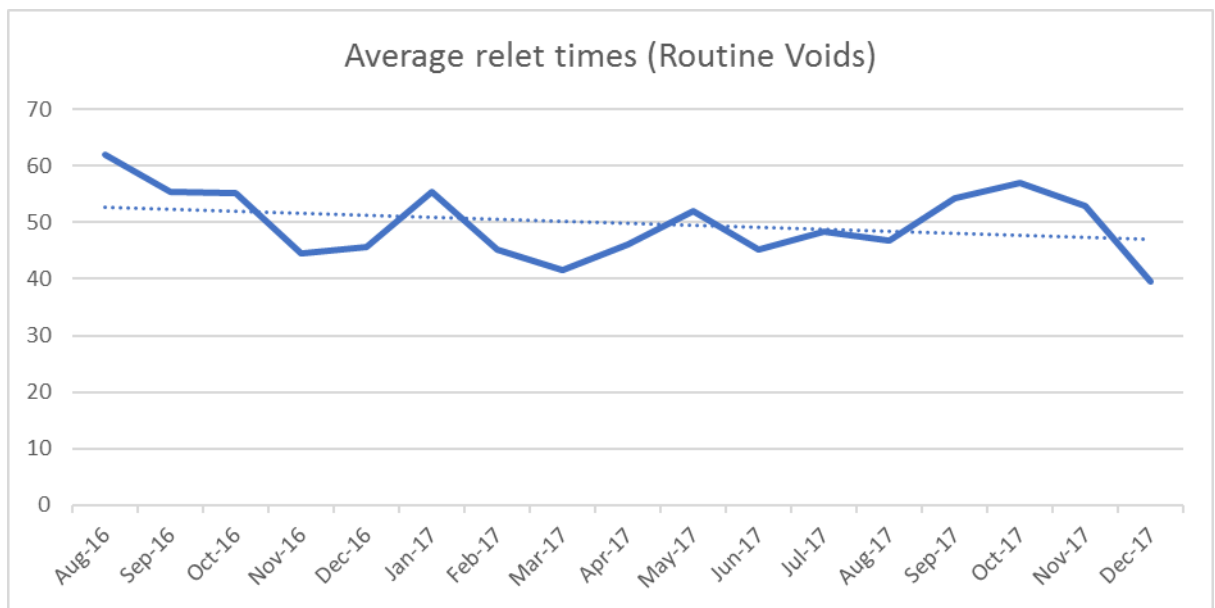
No

**9. Is this a “key decision”?**

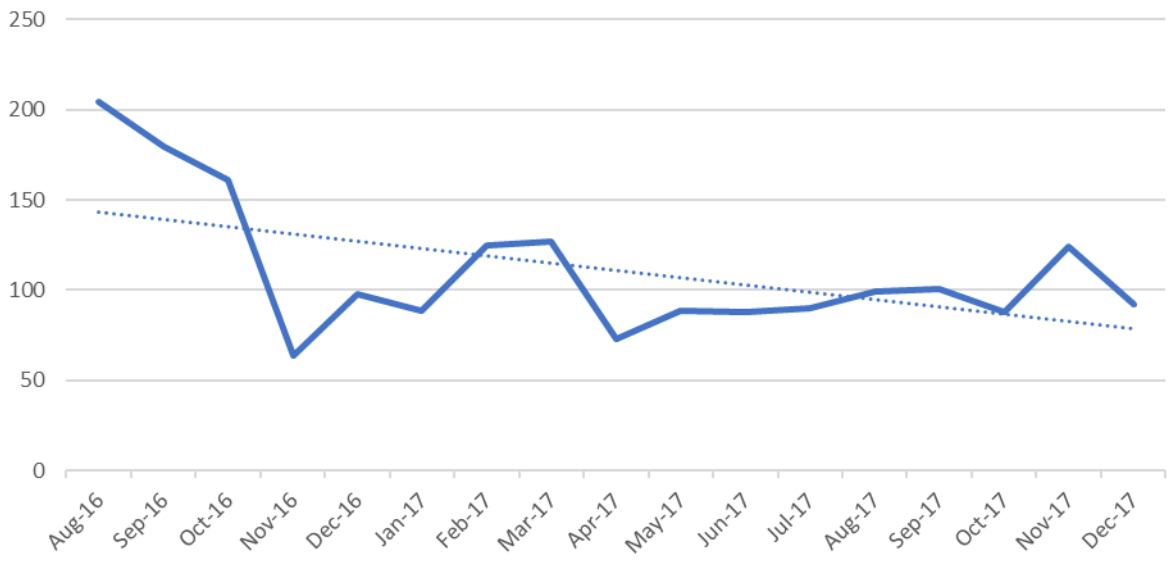
No

## Appendix 1

### Void Performance since April 2016



Average relet times (Long Term Voids)



Average relet times (Long All Voids)

