Housing Scrutiny Commission

Void Performance Report

Assistant Mayor for Housing: Cllr Andy Connelly

Housing Scrutiny Commission: 25th June 2018

Lead Director: Chris Burgin

City Mayor

1. Purpose of the report

Is to provide the Housing Scrutiny Commission with an update on the Division's performance on the completion of Void repairs to council properties for the year 2017/18.

2. Summary.

Year end 2017/18 Voids performance against target is as follows:

Measure	Target	2016/17	2017/18
Routine Voids	45 days average	53.8	50.8
Long term voids	90 days average	169.9	96.8
All voids	Maximum 90 days average	86.1	64
No. Voids Held	Less than 2% (421)	213	269
Total annual rent loss	No greater than £825k	£818k (incl Tower Block)	£840k (incl £170k tower block*)
Total annual council tax loss	£202,537	£202k (incl Goscote House)	£227k (incl Goscote House)
Ready to let to Occupation	10 days	16.7	7.8

See appendix A

*£170k is associated to vacant properties due to the Tower Block refurbishment project

Long term performance is good and we continue to deliver year on year improvements. However, progress has slowed in the final quarter of 17/18 due to the cumulative effect of the severe weather we experienced. Operatives were relocated from void repairs to assist with day to day repairs, this has impacted on the time taken to complete void repairs and delayed the start of new tenancies due the availability gas trained operatives responding to tenant's request who had not heat or hot water. Obviously, this was the right thing to do.

We also received a higher number that usual or 'priority voids' in the final quarter of 17/18 that has had an impact on the overall performance figures.

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.

Refusal rates. This is an ongoing issue, refusal rates continue to be 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 7.8 days. We have now rolled this out to the Void Technicians so that we have data on the time taken from receiving the keys to the work being started..

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. However, in readiness Void have taken over management responsibility for the Driver Labourers, we are now going to be responsible for the admin function for the delivery of materials for voids and day to day repairs.

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?)

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)?
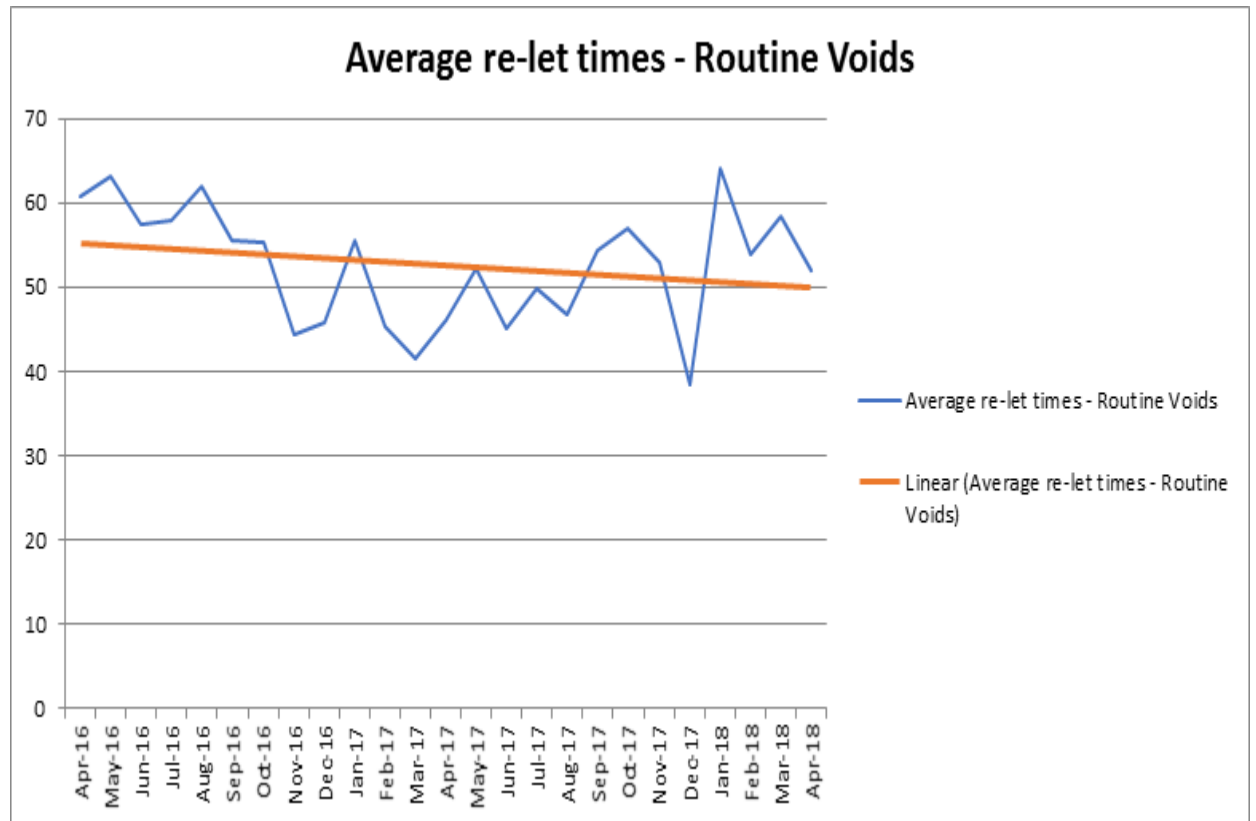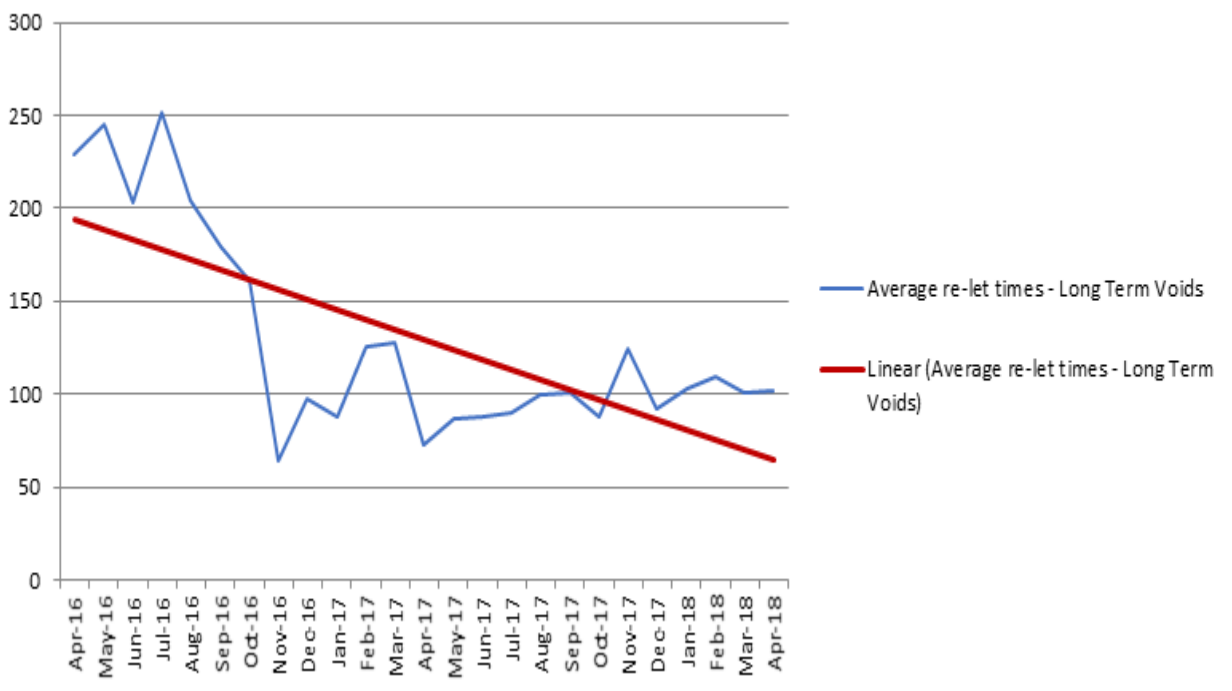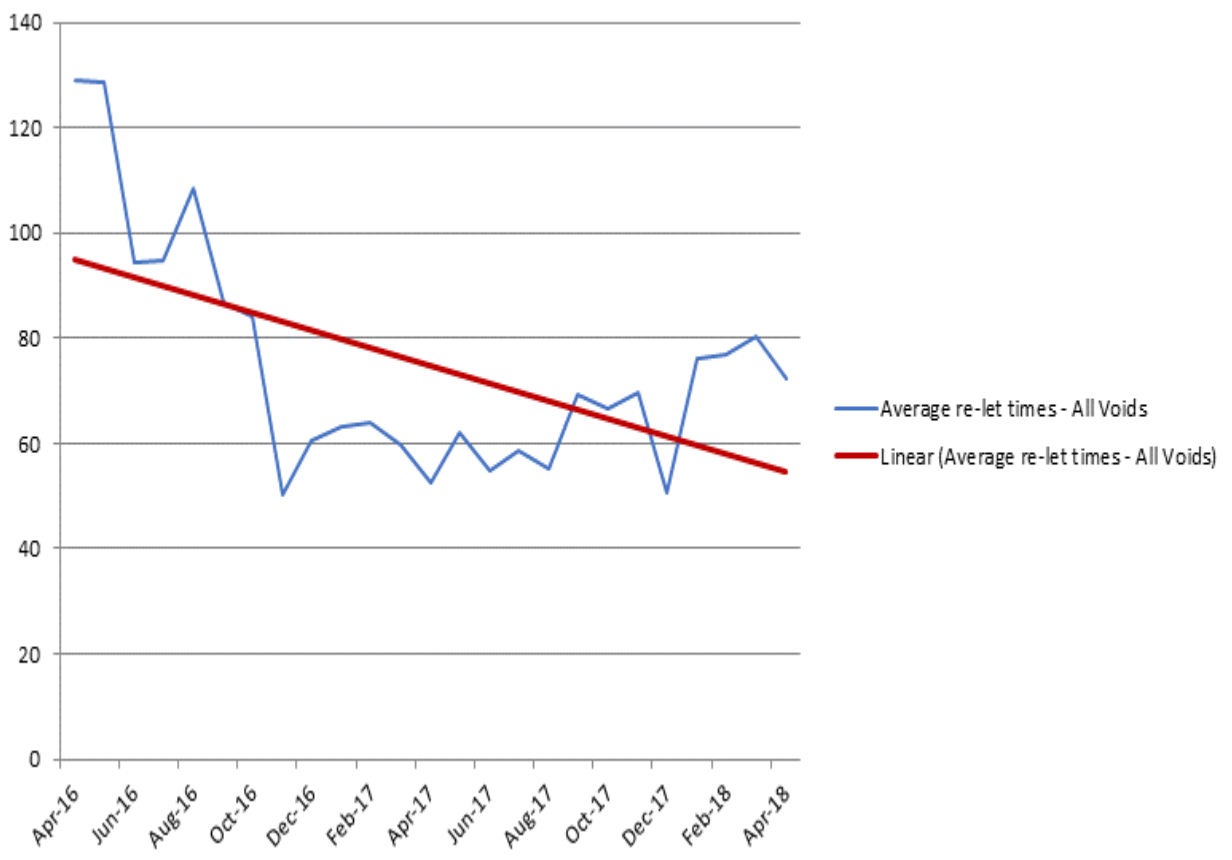
No

9.   Is this a "key decision"?

No

Appendix A

Void Performance since April 2016

Average re-let times - Long Term Voids

Average re-let times - All Voids

Appendix B

Priority order

Prioritisation of Voids Criteria / Key

	Extremely urgent SRP Harassment Cases (Border House) Risk and Bed Blocking
	Urgent Any other harassment Case Hostels Generally Risk of eviction (insecure accommodation with risk of homelessness) Vulnerable applicants in imminent need of rehousing.
	More urgent than normal Non-urgent decants including Goscote House
PLT 1	Cases identified with PLT/RTL as a priority following analysis of offer status and case type usually harassment or homelessness (may coincide with above) included on sheet.
PLT 2	Not shown on sheet as not yet a priority - normal offers, insecure accommodation or u/occupied or overcrowded.
PLT 3	Not shown on sheet as not a priority as not yet advertised or offered.
*	Escalation to HOS for decision if required.

Note that prioritisation means a property will commence sooner, however it will not necessarily shorten the time it takes to carry out the works.

PLT 1, 2 3 assists RTLs to prioritise workloads over and above the priorities received.