

<b>Committee:</b> Housing Management & Almshouses Sub-Committee	<b>Date:</b> 30/09/2020
<b>Subject:</b> Estate Inspections Performance – November 2019 to March 2020	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Community and Children’s Services	<b>For Information</b>
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### Summary

In November 2019, the Housing Service introduced new objective standards for estate cleaning and grounds maintenance on its housing estates. A new regime of scheduled estate inspections was started and Estate Officers now complete inspections on handheld devices.

The attached report shows performance data from the first five months of the new inspection regime (November 2019 to March 2020).

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The Housing Service introduced a new set of standards (“the Estate Service Standards”) for cleaning and caretaking in November 2019, as part of a review of its estate management procedures.
2. The Estate Service Standards form the basis of a new inspection regime, in which Estate Officers conduct regularly scheduled inspections of communal areas on the City’s housing estates, using online inspection forms. These inspections can then be monitored centrally by senior management. The system used, iAuditor, allows us to monitor performance and direct resources to the right tasks and locations. It also allows officers to report on statistical data and identify trends in the completed inspections.

3. There are two estate inspection templates (one for communal areas within buildings, and another for external areas). The new procedure is also used to inspect children's playgrounds, communal fire doors and fire boxes (the red boxes at each site containing relevant information for the emergency services in the event of a fire).
4. Members requested a progress report on the first six months of the new regime. Due to the introduction of lockdown, full estate inspections were suspended at the end of March 2020, so the attached report is based on five months' worth of data (November 2019 to March 2020). This still offers an accurate picture of performance.
5. Inspection reports and performance summaries are available to view online on the Housing pages of the City's website (under 'Estate Services Reports').

### **Current Position**

6. A report summarising the results of the various inspections is contained in **Appendix One**.
7. Overall, it can be noted that our estates are generally maintained at a very good standard of cleanliness, with a high (80%+) average score overall.
8. The inspections have enabled us to identify areas for improvement and, following the implementation of improvement plans in some areas, standards have increased.
9. Members may also wish to note that:
  - 522 individual inspections were carried out over the reporting period
  - The average score for internal areas across all sites was 84.3%
  - The highest scoring estate overall was Avondale Square Estate
  - The most common issue of anti-social behaviour was graffiti and criminal damage
  - The most common repairs issues logged on internal inspections were faults with main entrance doors; on grounds inspections, the most common repairs related to car parks and roads
10. The full inspections regime recommenced in September 2020, having been suspended during lockdown. During this time, estates were still regularly inspected but full scheduled inspections were not completed due to staff workloads.
11. It is proposed that officers submit a regular update to Committee as part of the twice-yearly Housing Update and Risk Register report, as the performance data gathered during the inspections can easily be incorporated into the performance dashboard used in that report.

## **Future Developments**

12. This is a new way of working for the Housing Service and we want to make the inspections system as useful as possible and continuously improve on working practices and performance reporting. As we get more accustomed to the new procedures, we want to look at further improvements such as:
  - Resident involvement in scrutinising results and performance
  - Improving the way we publicise inspection results and the improvements we make in response
  - Improving how anti-social behaviour is logged during inspections
  - Looking at ways of including the quarterly resident and Member estate walkabouts in the inspection regime, to better track actions and outcomes, and improve how these are communicated
13. Once we have more comprehensive data, we can use it to identify trends and issues, which can then be used as a basis for directing resources. For example, the data we have collected so far identifies main entrance doors as being a major source of repairs raised during inspections. This could be used as a basis for identifying and surveying hotspots in order to plan potential improvements to security and inform a repair or replacement programme.
14. Officers welcome ideas from Members on how the inspections regime (and reporting of performance and results) might be improved.

## **Conclusion**

15. The new estate inspections regime introduced in November 2019 has been successfully embedded and officers are confident that it is going to prove to be a useful tool for managing our housing estates.
16. The data shows that, overall, our estates are maintained to a very good standard of cleanliness. Where standards are not being met, the inspections data allows us to put in place action plans to address specific concerns.
17. As we continue with the inspections from September 2020, thought will be given to how the inspections regime can be improved, in order to ensure that it provides the best information possible to enable us to report on performance.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Estate Services Performance Report, Nov. 2019 – Mar. 2020

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