

REPORT TO: Policy and Performance Review Committee

MEETING DATE: 14 December 2023

BY: Executive Director for Place

SUBJECT: Homelessness Performance Report 2022/23

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1. To update Elected Members on the Council's performance regarding homelessness.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report and consider whether any aspect of the performance is in need of further analysis.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Local Authorities are required to submit quarterly homelessness returns to the Scottish Government via HL1, HL2/3 and Prevent1 reporting systems and to also report separately on breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. This report captures a range of performance and contextual information across a range of key indicators, with key areas outlined, to highlight key trends and changes in performance, for the period 2022/23 as well as the first 2 quarters for 2023/24.
- 3.2 This report comprises the first formal report to PPRC on homelessness performance and clarity is sought on the extent to which key headline figures are set out appropriately and this reporting framework meets the needs of PPRC.
- 3.3 **Key Homelessness Performance Data 2022/23 and 2023/24 to Date**
 - 3.3.1 ***Homeless Applications / Assessments (Appendix 1, Tables 1.1–1.4)***

Homeless applications show an increase per annum from 627 in 2020/21 (the lowest annual figures in over a decade) to 695 in 2022/23.

During the first two quarters of 2023/24, 394 homeless applications were made, and if this trend continues, applications are likely to be significantly higher in 2023/24, potentially higher than levels prior to the pandemic. In accordance with this, the homeless assessment figure is 98% of applications for 2022/23, reflecting previous years.

3.3.2 *Assessment Decisions (Appendix 1, Tables 1.5–1.6)*

Prior to the pandemic, intentionally homeless decisions typically comprised around 7-10% of homeless assessments; however, a significant reduction is evident from 2021 onwards.

During 2022/23, there were 17 intentionally homeless decisions, compared with the peak of 83 in 2017/18. While this aligns with legislative change and good practice, it is acknowledged that this results in increased requirements for the provision of temporary and permanent accommodation. 'Not homeless' decisions have also seen a significant reduction, with an average of 48 per annum, over the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 compared with an average of 11 per annum, over the period 2021/22 to 2022/23. During 2022/23 there were 12 'not homeless decisions', although this has increased to 14 over the first two quarters of 2023/24, indicating a higher figure for this year.

3.3.3 *Time to Assess Cases are set out in Appendix 1, Tables 1.7–1.8.*

3.3.4 *Reason for Homeless Applications (Appendix 1, Tables 1.9–1.10)*

Over the last decade, reasons for homelessness have followed a similar pattern each year. Reflecting this, during 2022/23, the primary reason for homelessness is 'asked to leave' comprising 39% of applications, followed by 'dispute within household (violent or abusive)' at 23% and 'dispute (non-violent)' at 16%. There was a notable reduction over the last three years regarding 'termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on mortgage payments' and 'other action by landlord resulting in termination of tenancy' compared to previous years, because of action during and beyond the pandemic to prevent homelessness in respect of evictions. There was also a significant reduction in the last two years compared with previous years of 'discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution' reflecting an improved preventative approach, particularly regarding people leaving prison.

These trends have continued during the first two quarters of 2023/24.

3.3.5 *Homelessness by Banded Age (Appendix 1, Tables 1.11–1.12)*

Over the last five years, homeless applications made by young people aged 16-35 have averaged 30% of all applications, and 2022/23 saw a

slight reduction to 26% which has been maintained in the first two quarters of 2023/24. 2022/23 saw the highest number of homeless applicants age 60+ in the last decade, equating to 7% of all applications, with 7% also seen in the first two quarters of 2023/24. In previous years, typically, homeless applicants age 60+ comprise circa 4% of applications.

3.3.6 *Homeless Applications by Property Type (Appendix 1, Tables 1.13–1.14)*

In accordance with previous years, 38% of homeless applications are made from people living in the 'parental / family home / with relatives' followed by 21% living with 'friends and partners', during 2022/23. These trends are continued into the first two quarters of 2023/24. Applications from prison are lower over the last two years than previous years, with this also evident in the first two quarters of 2023/24. There was a notable rise in 2022/23 from people living in owned properties, compared with the previous two years and this trend is continued into the first two quarters of 2023/24.

3.3.7 *Rough Sleeping Prior to Assessment (Appendix 1, Tables 1.15–1.18)*

2020/21 and 2021/22 saw a significant increase in rough sleeping prior to assessment from previous years, and 2022/23 showed a reduction; however, it is clear from the first two quarters of 2023/24 that this is increasing again. In 2022/23, 18 households slept rough on the night preceding application and this figure for the first two quarters of 2023/24 was 17 households, indicating the annual figure is likely to be substantial. In 2022/23, 31 households slept rough within three months of making a homeless application and this figure for the first two quarters of 2023/24 was 26 households, indicating again that this figure is likely to be significant.

3.3.8 *Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation by Accommodation Type (Appendix 1, Tables 1.19–1.20)*

Prior to 2020, there are over 400 homeless households in temporary accommodation (excluding 2018, with 398 households), at a snapshot on 31 March each year. This figure has reduced annually since 2020, with a notable reduction to 388 on 31 March 2023 and similar figures seen at the end of each quarter in 2023/24 to date.

3.3.9 *Children in Temporary Accommodation (Appendix 1, Tables 1.21–1.22)*

There has been a notable reduction in the number of children in temporary accommodation, evident via a snapshot on 31 March each year, with this figure reducing from 250 in 2017 to 143 in 2023. The number of children in temporary accommodation has reduced further in 2023/24, with 117 and 121 in quarter 1 and 2 respectively.

3.3.10 Breaches of Unsuitable Accommodation Order (Appendix 1, Table 1.23)

The Council remains one of circa five authorities, breaching the Order on a regular basis, since implementation of the revised Order, October 2021, placing the Council at high risk in respect of failure to meet statutory duties. There are typically around 30 new breaches each quarter, increasing to 50 in quarter 2 of 2023/24 and a cumulative total of 152 breaches. Emergency accommodation fails to meet Scottish Government requirements applicable to the Unsuitable Accommodation Order and the subsequent Temporary Accommodation Standards Framework (2023), for two main reasons. Firstly, the legislation specifies there should be a maximum number of five people sharing a property under the 'shared tenancies' model, and the Council continues to use a small number of establishments having 6-10 bedrooms, comprising a breach. Secondly, the Council continues to use a small number of 'shared tenancies' with no separate living room, which also comprises a breach.

3.3.11 Cases Closed (Appendix 1, Tables 1.24 – 1.25)

Over the four years prior to the pandemic, cases closed averaged 770 per annum and in 2017/18 this figure was significantly higher at 838. However, in 2022/23, only 672 cases were closed, averaging around 600 per annum over the three-year period 2020/21 – 2022/23, leading to a backlog of cases and effectively a 'queue' in temporary accommodation. To date, 254 cases were closed during quarter 1 and 2 of 2023/24. This figure requires to significantly increase going forward, to alleviate pressures on temporary accommodation.

3.3.12 Time to Discharge Duty (Tables Appendix 1, 1.26–1.27)

2022/23 saw the longest period to discharge duty in over a decade, at 65.5 weeks, which reflects the reduction in cases closed, set out at section 4.9. To date, 2023/24 shows a figure of 57.7 weeks, which is positive, and reflects several cases closed quickly in areas of low demand.

3.3.13 Allocations (Appendix 1, Table 1.28)

Council allocations to homeless households peaked in 2018/19 at 299 (59%), reducing each year thereafter to 204 in 2021/22 (42%). This increased to 294 (58%) in 2022/23. At end of quarter 2 2023/24, 160 allocations have been made to homeless households to date, equating to 57%.

3.4 Brief Commentary on Performance for 2022/23 and 2023/24 to Date

- Increasing number of homeless applications (695 in 2022/23 and 394 to date in 2023/24)

- Continued low levels of intentionally homeless (17) and not homeless (12) decisions in 2022/23. 4 intentionally homeless and 14 not homeless decisions to date in 2023/24
- Ongoing trend regarding reasons for homelessness, with 'asked to leave' comprising 39% of applications, followed by 'dispute within household (violent or abusive)' at 23% and 'dispute (non-violent)' at 16%.
- Youth homelessness is reducing (26% during 2022/23 and to date in 2023/24) while homelessness among older households is increasing. 2022/23 saw the highest number of homeless applicants age 60+ in the last decade, at 7% of all applications.
- Regarding property type, 38% of applications from people living in 'parental / family home / with relatives' followed by 21% living with 'friends and partners', in 2022/23 and similar trend shown in 2023/24 to date. Applications from people in prison declining, while applications from people living in owned properties is increasing.
- Reduction in rough sleeping, 3 months prior to application in 2022/23 (31) from previous year, with an increase in the first two quarters of 2023/24 (26).
- Notable reduction in numbers in temporary accommodation (388) at 31 March 2023 and similar figures in 2023/24. A significant reduction in children in temporary accommodation (143 in 2022/23) and average figure of 119 in 2023/24 to date. However, the Council continues to breach the Order, with circa 30 breaches per quarter.
- Low level of case closures (672 in 2022/23 and 254 to date in 2023/24) is contributing to the backlog in temporary accommodation. Similarly, 2022/23 saw the longest period to discharge duty in over a decade, at 65.5 weeks.
- Allocations increased to 294 (58%) in 2022/23, with 160 to date in 2023/24 (57%).

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Performance as stated in the report is good in some areas; however, homelessness pressures are clear: a backlog in temporary accommodation is evident, which requires to be addressed, and increasing applications are concerning. Improvement work is underway to tackle areas where performance requires to improve.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is not applicable for this report.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – None.

6.2 Personnel – None.

6.3 Other – None.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Appendix 1 Homelessness Performance Data – 2022/23 and 2023/24 to date

AUTHOR'S NAME	Wendy McGuire
DESIGNATION	Head of Housing
CONTACT INFO	Nicola Sandford 01620 827592
DATE	December 2023

Appendix 1 Homelessness Performance Data – 2022/23 and 2023/24 to date

Table 1.1: Homeless Applications (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. Applications	770	794	795	728	627	646	695

Source: HL1 Homeless Applications

Table 1.2: Homeless Applications (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No. of Applications	154	199	153	189	198	196

Source: HL1 Homeless Applications

Table 1.3: Homeless Assessments (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. Assessments	761	791	790	753	618	627	678

Source: HL1 Homeless Applications

Table 1.4: Homeless Assessments (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No. of Assessments	163	186	167	162	194	167

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.5: Assessment Decisions (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Homeless unintentional	591	573	607	598	513	517	555
Homeless intentional	65	83	52	41	22	9	17
Not homeless nor potentially homeless	43	54	50	44	10	11	12
Resolved prior to assessment decision	21	26	21	28	31	17	18
Lost contact before assessment decision	26	28	29	15	19	40	20
Withdrew application before assessment decision	16	26	28	27	23	33	24
Ineligible for assistance	0	1	2	0	0	0	1
All	761	791	790	753	618	627	678

Source HL1: Homeless Assessments

Table 1.6: Assessment Decisions (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Homeless unintentional	132	150	144	129	160	124
Homeless intentional	2	3	3	9	0	4
Not homeless nor potentially homeless	4	5	2	1	7	7
Resolved prior to assessment decision	3	7	4	4	11	5
Lost contact before assessment decision	0	0	11	9	4	12
Withdrew application before assessment decision	6	5	3	10	12	15
Ineligible for assistance	0	1	0	0	0	0
All	163	186	167	162	194	197

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.7: Time to Assess Cases (annually)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Same day	63	61	55	60	17	15	32
1-6 days	256	203	204	226	89	74	115
7-13	136	155	140	131	136	132	112
14-27	207	236	200	188	246	319	344
28-55	82	108	144	110	97	74	65
56+	17	28	47	38	33	13	10
All	761	791	790	753	618	627	678

Source HL1: Homeless Assessments

Table 1.8: Time to Assess Cases (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Same day	6	8	8	10	8	4
1-6 days	36	23	21	35	28	16
7-13	22	36	24	30	35	26
14-27	71	97	100	76	92	88
28-55	27	20	9	9	25	29
56+	1	2	5	2	6	4
All	163	186	167	162	194	167

Source HL1: Homeless Assessments

Table 1.9: Homeless Applications by Technical Reason for Application (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on mortgage payments	27	44	26	20	4	9	4
Other action by landlord resulting in termination of tenancy	139	130	94	74	27	37	35
Applicant terminated secure accommodation	34	45	42	36	18	27	22
Loss of service / tied accommodation	3	2	6	4	5	2	5
Discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution	12	18	16	19	15	4	7
Emergency (fire, flood, storm etc.)	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Forced division and sale of matrimonial home	5	7	8	5	2	3	1
Other reason for loss of accommodation	12	9	11	13	12	7	8
Dispute within household (violent or abusive)	93	140	142	141	132	159	162
Dispute (non-violent)	90	94	129	112	99	86	111
Fleeing non-domestic violence	10	10	14	12	5	12	11
Harassment	12	10	7	8	4	6	9
Overcrowding	3	6	3	2	12	3	8
Asked to leave	302	260	273	257	259	263	270
Other	26	19	24	23	33	26	40
All	770	794	795	726	627	646	695

Source: HL1 Homeless Applications

Table 1.10: Homeless Applications by Technical Reason for Application (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Asked to leave	59	77	54	80	66	79
Dispute within household (violent or abusive)	43	40	36	43	48	35
Dispute (non-violent)	18	38	28	27	36	33
Termination of tenancy / mortgage due to rent arrears / default on mortgage payments	0	0	2	2	3	3
Other action by landlord resulting in termination of tenancy	9	9	9	8	9	17
Discharge from prison / hospital / care / other institution	1	4	2	0	2	1
All	154	199	153	189	198	196

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.11: Homeless Applications by Banded Age (annual)							
Age	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
16-17	44	30	25	22	15	22	25
18-25	228	209	201	212	205	159	158
26-59	479	525	526	456	383	429	462
60+	19	30	43	38	24	36	50
All	770	794	795	728	627	646	695
No. applications age 16-25	272	239	226	234	220	181	183
% applications age 16-25	35	30	28	32	35	28	26

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.12: Homeless Applications by Banded Age (quarterly)							
	2022/23				2023/24		
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	
16-17	4	10	4	7	7	10	
18-25	41	40	33	44	47	36	
26-59	95	140	105	122	128	137	
60+	14	9	11	16	16	13	
All.	154	199	153	189	198	196	
No. applications age 16-25	44	50	37	51	54	46	
% applications age 16-25	29	25	24	27	29	23	

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.13: Homeless Applications by Property Type (annual)							
Property Type	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Own property – LA tenancy	72	81	75	69	64	86	78
Own property – RSL tenancy	24	44	36	27	22	35	27
Own property – private rented tenancy	188	191	143	118	63	72	75
Own property – tenancy via employment	7	3	6	7	6	3	5
Own property – owning / buying	33	37	41	51	32	29	45
Parental / family home / relatives	284	259	281	266	246	255	262
Friends / partners	123	138	152	136	149	135	146
Armed services accommodation	0	1	3	2	1	1	1
Prison	11	18	15	18	13	4	7
Other	28	22	43	34	31	26	39
All	770	794	795	728	627	646	695

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.14: Homeless Applications by Property Type (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Own property – LA tenancy	17	24	20	17	25	19
Own property – RSL tenancy	7	10	5	5	11	10
Own property – private rented tenancy	21	18	14	22	18	18
Own property – tenancy via employment	3	0	2	0	0	1
Own property – owning / buying	9	5	13	18	15	9
Parental / family home / relatives	54	76	53	79	66	87
Friends / partners	32	42	33	39	46	36
Armed services accommodation	0	1	0	0	1	0
Prison	1	4	2	0	2	1
Other	10	19	11	9	14	15
All	154	199	153	189	198	196

Source: HL1 Homeless Applications

Table 1.15: Homeless Applicants – Slept Rough on Night Preceding Application (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No	754	780	784	713	599	610	641
Yes	16	14	11	15	28	36	18
All	770	794	795	728	627	646	659

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.16: Homeless Applicants – Slept Rough on Night Preceding Application (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No	153	191	148	185	186	191
Yes	1	8	5	4	12	5
All	154	199	153	189	198	196

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.17: Homeless Applicants – Slept Rough During Three Months Preceding Application (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No	746	775	775	702	588	596	628
Yes	24	19	20	26	39	50	31
All	770	794	795	728	627	646	659

Source: HL1 Homeless Applications

Table 1.18: Homeless Applicants – Slept Rough During Three Months Preceding Application (quarterly)

	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No	149	187	146	182	183	185
Yes	5	12	7	7	15	11
All	154	199	153	189	198	196

Source HL1: Homeless Applications

Table 1.19: Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation by Accommodation Type (Snapshot at 31 March)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
LA dwelling	313	297	296	288	253	237	204
B&B / emergency accommodation	76	63	76	91	125	132	155
Hostel	45	32	29	30	28	27	29
Other	6	6	4	13	13	11	0
Total	440	398	405	422	419	407	388

Source: HL3 Temporary Accommodation

Table 1.20: Homeless Households in Temporary Accommodation by Accommodation Type (Snapshot at end of quarter)

	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
Temporary accommodation	226	222	217	204	201	197
B&B / emergency accommodation	136	141	142	155	158	160
Hostel (Other)	24	28	29	29	31	28
Total	386	391	388	388	390	385

Source: HL3 Temporary Accommodation

Table 1.21: Children in Temporary Accommodation (Snapshot at 31 March)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
No. Children	250	228	194	197	172	181	143

Source: HL3 Temporary Accommodation

Table 1.22: Children in Temporary Accommodation (Snapshot at end of quarter)

	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No. Children	181	168	178	143	117	121

Source HL3: Temporary Accommodation

Table 1.23: Breaches of Unsuited Accommodation Order (quarterly)

	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No. New Breaches	24	30	29	37	30	50
Cumulative Total (end of quarter)	-	97	116	125	129	152

Source: HOT figures

Table 1.24: Cases Closed (annual)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. of Cases Closed	711	838	765	756	556	582	672

Source HL1: Summary

Table 1.25: Cases Closed (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No. Cases Closed	184	159	151	178	167	187

Source: HL1 Summary

Table 1.26: Average Time to Discharge Duty (annually)							
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
No. Weeks to Discharge Duty	52.7	61.9	58.9	58.4	59.9	61.8	65.5

Source: HL1 Summary

Table 1.27: Average Time to Discharge Duty (quarterly)						
	2022/23				2023/24	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
No. Weeks to Discharge Duty	60.74	62.91	75.69	62.55	53.9	61.4

Source: HL1 Summary

Table 1.28: East Lothian Council Allocations								
	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Homeless allocations	168	201	237	299	276	242	204	294
Existing tenants	127	126	147	123	130	118	121	123
Housing list applicants	108	109	109	87	105	101	108	76
% Homeless allocations	42	46	48	59	54	52	42	58
Total allocations	403	436	493	509	511	461	433	503

Source: East Lothian Council