



The Gateshead Housing Company Resources Committee

Tuesday 7 May 2013 at 2pm
Board Room 2, The Gateshead Housing Company, Keelman
House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Fifth Avenue, Team Valley
Trading Estate, Gateshead NE11 0XA

Agenda

Item	Business
1.	Apologies for Absence
2.	Declarations of Interest
3.	Membership To note the appointment of Mick Davison onto the committee <u>ITEM FOR DECISION</u>
4.	Minutes (Pages 3-10) To approve as a correct the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the committee held on 14 February 2013 <u>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>
5.	Management Accounts – Fourth Quarter 2012/13 (Pages 11-25) Report of Head of Finance
6.	Sickness Absence and Human Resources Update (Pages 26-41) Report of Support Services Manager

Contact: Stuart Gibson Tel: (0191) 433 5308 Date: 1 May 2013

Item	Business
7.	Health and Safety Update (Pages 42-47) Report of Support Services Manager
8.	Equality and Diversity – Update (Pages 48-55) Report of Managing Director
9.	Items for Future Agendas
10.	Date and Time of Next Meeting Tuesday 10 September 2013 at 10am in Board Room 2
11.	Exclusion of the Press and Public The committee may wish to consider excluding the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with categories 1 and 4 of the company’s Access to Information Rules.



The Gateshead Housing Company

Working with Gateshead Council

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

14 February 2013

PRESENT:

Directors

John Hamilton (Chair)
Robert Buckley
George Clark
Kathryn Ferdinand

Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Acting Chief Executive
Neil Bouch	Director of Customers and Communities
Sarah Thompson	Head of Finance
Phil Gallagher	Head of Support Services
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

Apologies

Paul Foy

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared.

2 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The membership and terms of reference of the committee were submitted.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

3 APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIR

RESOLVED – That Kathryn Ferdinand be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Committee.

4 MINUTES OF RESOURCES AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the last meeting of Resources and Audit Committee held on 30 October 2012 were approved as a correct record.

5 TRANSFER OF ACCOUNTS – FORMER TENANTS' ARREARS

Periodically, the Council transfers former tenants' arrears considered irrecoverable into a debtors account. This entails setting off an amount against bad debts provision held in the Housing Revenue Account.

During this financial year the sum of £188,921 has been recovered from former tenants, including £37,997 relating to previously transferred accounts, which have been reinstated for recovery purposes.

Using the agreed criteria, it is proposed that 163 cases totalling £109,643 in value should be recommended for transfer.

Since April 2008, 975 cases considered unrecoverable through the internal recovery team and totalling £1,976,272 have been passed to external debt collection agencies. These agencies have managed to collect £78,640 so far from transferred cases.

There are currently 229 cases where tenants have been declared bankrupt or have applied for debt relief orders and debts on their rent accounts have been transferred to separate bankruptcy accounts. The total outstanding on these accounts is £245,449. None of the debts on bankruptcy accounts have previously been transferred to a debtors account. The Company is currently in discussion with Gateshead Council as to how these accounts will be treated in the future.

- RESOLVED –
- (i) That Gateshead Council be recommended to transfer £109,643 of former tenants' arrears into a debtors account.
 - (ii) That details of the proposed transfer of former tenants' arrears be reported to the next Board meeting for information.
 - (iii) That this committee be delegated to make future transfers of former tenants' arrears to the Council and details be reported to the Board for information.

6 REVIEW OF LEASEHOLD MANAGEMENT FEE

Under S.19 of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985, service charges must be reasonably incurred and management fees are subject to the same test of reasonableness.

The management fees were previously reviewed in 2008 to reflect the true cost of running the service. Details of these were reported.

The Company has undergone a major restructure since the original fee was calculated and it is important that these changes are reflected in the management fee.

In order to ensure that the management fee continues to be self financing and reflects the current management costs, a review of the actual costs to provide the service was undertaken based on the 2012/13 budget. Following this review, it was found that the costs of providing the service had fallen due to savings made within the Company.

It is proposed therefore that from 1 April 2013 the management fee should be reduced to:

- Low Rise Blocks (2 storey blocks) £135.00
- Mid Rise Blocks (3-4 storey blocks) £136.00
- High Rise Blocks (above 5 storey) £141.00

- Major Works management fee £75.00

RESOLVED – (i) That the implementation of the revised management fee charges, to be applied from 1 April 2013, be approved.

(ii) That the reduced management fee be publicised.

7 VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY

The previous Value for Money Strategy was approved by the VFM and Audit Committee on 8 May 2008. This strategy provided a 3-year programme of value for money activities.

A draft Value for Money Strategy update was approved by the Value for Money Service Improvement Group in July 2011. However, due to the proposed changes in the regulatory environment through the Localism Act, this was not formerly approved by committee.

An updated Value for Money Strategy was submitted. The Strategy has been produced to detail what Value for Money can be defined as and how this links to the regulatory framework as set out by the Homes and Communities Agency.

The Strategy details the Company's approach to meeting value for money and embedding a culture of value for money within the Company.

The Strategy has been consulted on and scrutinised by the Value for Money Service Improvement Group.

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the updated Value for Money Strategy for the period 2012 – 2015.

8 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations have been reviewed to ensure that they are reasonable and meet the needs of the Company. They have been found to be fit for purpose and have been amended slightly to ensure that they meet current financial practices.

The Financial Regulations cover the way the company manages its finances and safeguards its assets. Directors and Heads of Service y are responsible for ensuring that the financial regulations are complied with.

Internal audits are carried out annually to ensure that these regulations are met.

The new Head of Corporate Services will be responsible for the proper administration of the Company's financial affairs and will be the chief financial advisor to the Company and Board.

The amended Financial Regulations were submitted. The main changes from the previous financial regulations were also reported.

The financial regulations of a number of other public sector organisations were reviewed before the Company's Financial Regulations were renewed.

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the amended Financial Regulations, subject to a minor amendment to the income section.

9 CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

The Contract Procedure Rules have been reviewed to ensure that they are reasonable and meet the needs of the Company. They have been found to be fit for purpose and have been amended slightly to ensure that they meet current procurement practices.

The Contract Procedure Rules cover the way the Company contracts with suppliers for goods, supplies and services. The Company aims to promote sustainable, cost effective, smart procurement processes to achieve our objectives of delivery quality services while promoting 'value for money'.

All applicable EU and UK legislation applies to the Contract Procedure Rules and all contractors/suppliers are expected to comply with relevant legislation.

Internal audits are carried out annually to ensure that these rules are met.

The new Head of Corporate Services will be responsible for ensuring that the Contract Procedure Rules are promoted and followed by budget holders.

The amended Contract Procedure Rules were submitted. The main changes from the previous contract procedure rules were also reported.

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the amended Contract Procedure Rules.

10 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – THIRD QUARTER 2012/13

The committee received an update on the management accounts for the third quarter 2012/13 including the income and expenditure in relation to both revenue and repairs.

The accounts shows an under spend to date of £88,000. This is due to salary costs being under spent as posts have not yet been filled in some sections where restructures are taking place and due to the Felling Office closure and the reduction in staff following this closure.

The repairs accounts are under spent based on forecast budget, however, the income is matched against expenditure in repairs and so no under spend is shown. The under spend against forecast is due mainly to repair invoices not

yet being received from Mears. Work has been implemented to improve the interface between Mears and TGHC.

RESOLVED – That the management accounts for the third quarter of the 2012/13 financial year be noted.

11 SICKNESS ABSENCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

The committee received an update on general HR initiatives and developments for the period April to December 2012.

The total sickness absence for the period equates to 5.76 days per person compared to 6.09 days for the same period last year which is a reduction of 5.42%.

Short term absence for the period was 2.28 days per person and long term absence was 3.49 days. This compares with 3.57 days short term absence and 2.83 days long term absence for the same period last year. This represents a reduction of 36.13% in short term absence. However, long term absence increased by 18.91%.

The financial cost of sickness absence for the period was £190,079 as compared to £200,969 for the same period last year.

The biggest cause of absence continued to be stress with 746 days lost compared to 479 last year. It is a concern that the figure has increased by 35.86%. Of the 746 days of stress related illness, 46% was related to stress in an employee's personal life and 54% was work related.

It is often difficult to control outside stressors, however the need for a holistic approach to employee wellbeing and engagement is recognised. In the period, managers and employees across the company attended wellbeing awareness raising and resilience training.

Health and wellbeing is increasingly being acknowledged as a vital element in supporting and developing workforces and keeping employees healthy. As part of the Company's commitment to ensure it manages the award process and continues to deliver a full health and wellbeing service across the company, in the period October to December 2012, 15 volunteer Health and Wellbeing Advocates were appointed. Training for the advocates has commenced and further training is planned in 2013.

The Employee Health and Wellbeing Zone was also launched on the Company's internal intranet site and 29 employees took up offer of flu vaccinations at a discounted rate.

The Company will continue to investigate initiatives that will help it better understand the causes of depression, anxiety and stress.

The Company has held 34 short term sickness absence review meetings in the period, which resulted in 15 employees being issued with first written cautions. The Company has also held 13 long term sickness absence reviews in the period. These consider an employee's health and their future employability with the Company.

The committee received details of the following HR initiatives and developments during the period: -

- In 2012 the Government introduced workplace pension reforms to help people plan for their later years. The Pensions Act 2008 set out the initial framework for these reforms with further amendments under the Pensions Act 2011. Employers are required to comply with the pension duties which are being introduced in stages from October, starting with the largest employers. Every employer is being allocated a 'staging date' from which the duties will first apply. The Company's staging date is 1 January 2014.

Under the new duties employers will be required to automatically enrol 'eligible jobholders' into a pension scheme with effect from the staging date. An eligible jobholder is defined as a worker aged between 22 and state pension age who earns more than £8,105 per year. Any new employees who meet the criteria, or existing employees who become 'eligible jobholders' for the first time, must be auto-enrolled.

- HM Revenue and Customs is introducing a new way of reporting pay as you earn (PAYE) information which is to be Real Time Information (RTI). Under RTI, information about PAYE payments will be submitted electronically to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs each time a payment is made as part of the payroll process, rather than at the end of the year as it is now.

All employers will be legally required to start sending PAYE information in real time between April and September 2013. The Company will be implementing the new arrangements with effect from June 2013.

Detail of work life balance applications, formal/informal investigations, recruitment and the childcare scheme were also reported.

The committee received an update on learning and development activity during the period. These included the SUMO event, absence minded workshops, the Employment Law Conference, Welfare Reform and the impact on TGHC and health & safety and ICT training. Details of planned activity were also reported.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

12 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The committee received a report on the Company's health and safety activities for the period September to December 2012.

An audit by Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents has taken place during the period. The findings will assist in focusing the team and the organisation on medium to long term priorities.

Reviews of the Accident and Violent Incidences Reporting and the Warning Markers System have taken place. The new reporting system will allow employees and managers to record and manage the incidents via the intranet and provide regular management updates.

Joint health and safety site visits with Mears Safety Advisers have taken place. Recommendations and areas of improvement have been agreed and the implementation of the relevant action plans will be monitored by the Company.

Details of violence/aggression and accidents/incidents to TGHC employees and 3rd party/sub-contractors were reported. During the period, requests were received for asbestos surveys to support a number of areas and details of the number processed were reported.

The Corporate Asbestos Management Plan has been reviewed, which with the implementation of the new Asbestos Management Procedures will be finalised and rolled out across the Company by the end of this financial year.

One near miss relating to the accidental disturbance of asbestos containing materials has taken place during the period.

During the period, the Company and the Tyne and Wear Fire Service (TWFRS) have reviewed the Partnership Agreement between the organisations with no changes to be reported.

Fire safety improvement works to multi storey blocks have been completed in line with the TWFRS deadline.

No positive Legionella tests were reported in the period. Over a third of all managed properties have been audited during 2012 and with one exception all have satisfied the criteria laid down within Legionella Policy and Plan.

It is two years since the last Water Hygiene Risk Assessments review and the review process is due to start again in March 2013.

In respect of the Company construction related activities, there are presently 13 F10 notifications to the HSE in place. Nine sites have started and the works are progressing. The remaining four sites are in varying states of development and all still require various documents to be produced by the principle contractor before permission can be given to commence with the construction phase.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

13 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – UPDATE

The committee received a summary of the equality and diversity work within the organisation for the third quarter of 2012/13.

In response to the requirement to demonstrate it carries out equality analysis in any decision making or policy forming, the Company continues to use an updated Equality Impact Assessment to provide the basis for its equality analysis.

In the last quarter, arrangements have been made with Assessment North East to deliver a joint equality event for contractors. The event will take place in March and findings will be reported to a future committee. The Company continues to use existing methods available to collect and update the information it holds on tenants and leaseholders. In the last quarter, customer records were updated on 2,999 occasions.

In November 2012, the Company, as a partner of the Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board, took part in an event aimed at raising officers' awareness and understanding of what dignity means in Gateshead. The Company will be supporting Dignity Week in Gateshead between 28 January and 1 February 2013. Further information will be provided at the next committee.

The Company entered the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in September 2012 for the third year to understand how inclusive its workplace is for lesbian, gay and bisexual employees. This year, 376 employers entered the index with the company placing 181. This shows an improvement since last year when it was placed 212 out of 363 organisations. As a member of the Diversity Champions programme, the Company will receive detailed feedback regarding its strengths and areas for development in February. This will help form an action plan for improvements which will not only benefit LGB employees but also helps to create a more inclusive workplace for all employees. Further information on this will be brought to the next committee.

As a member of Gateshead Council's Corporate Equality Working Group, one of the priorities for this year has been to strengthen the role of the Staff Groups. Gateshead Council supports the Deaf and Disabled Group, LGBT Group and BME Group. The Involvement and Diversity Team have attended the last meetings of each of the groups to understand the issues and agenda items discussed to identify how the Company could work more closely with them.

In June 2012, the Company signed up to Gateshead Carer Friendly Employer Charter Mark demonstrating its commitment to supporting employees within the organisation who may also be carers. Following this, in October 2012, Gateshead Carers Associations held a series of drop in sessions at Keelman House and Blaydon Housing Office to provide employees who have caring responsibilities with information and advice.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

14 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be agreed.

15 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with the indicated categories of the Company's Access to Information Rules.



Report to Resources Committee

7 May 2013

Title: Management Accounts – Fourth Quarter 2012/13

Report of: Head of Corporate Services

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Committee with an update on the management accounts for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2012/13.

Background

2. The Accounts Team produces monthly management accounts which detail the actual charges for the month, the year to date charges and the budget year to date. This shows the variance and the forecasted budget. This report has been included in the Appendix to this report.
3. The Board agreed the budget for 2012/13 at its meeting on 15 March 2012.

Management Accounts

4. The Council initially agreed to pay the company fees totalling £31.429m for the 2012/13 financial year, consisting of £13.334m for the management fee and £18.095m for the repairs fee. As detailed in the budget report, the proposed budget initially provided a deficit of £609,000 however, following a review of current vacancies and by including some of these in the budget at zero cost we reduced the deficit to £9,000.
5. Following further meetings with the Council, potential savings of £318,000 were identified, reducing the management fee to £13.017m. However, it was agreed with the Council that should these savings not materialise then negotiations would be held with the Council around any changes to the fee.
6. One of the efficiency savings identified within the £318,000 related to the relocation of Felling Housing Office. The estimated savings during 2012/13 associated with the office move were £107,000. Subsequent agreement with the Council on the level of service to be provided has resulted in a reduced level of saving. The Council have agreed that the management fee will not reduce by the initial amount in order to reflect the agreed level of service.

7. The agreed repairs fee was slightly increased by £70,000 to reflect the tendered price from Mears for the Repairs contract as well as the other repair costs budgeted for. The total repairs fee agreed was £18.165m.
8. The Management Accounts for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2012/13 are included within the Appendix to this report. The Management Accounts include the income and expenditure in relation to both revenue and repairs up to the end of March 2013.
9. The Management Accounts provide the draft year end position of the company, however, we are still awaiting some information in relation to the interest received figure and the year end pension position. Therefore, the final position will not be known until these figures are identified
10. The Revenue Management Accounts show an under spend for the year of £18,000. This is due to salary costs being under spent in some sections where posts have been vacant and not yet filled.
11. The Repairs Management Account is under spent for the year by £10,000, full detail of this is shown in the Appendix.
12. The audit of the Financial Statements will take place at the end of May and beginning of June and the finalised Financial Statements will be brought to the Audit Committee meeting in July for approval.

Link to values

13. This report is in line with the following values of the company :-
 - Being honest, accountable and transparent
 - Being motivated, trained and committed across the company

Impact on tenants

9. Appropriate financial monitoring and control will ensure efficiencies are maximised and redirected to services that directly impact on tenants.

Risk Management Implications

10. Regular and accurate monitoring will ensure that the strategic risk within the business plan (insufficient available financial resources) is effectively controlled.

Financial Implications

11. The financial implications are contained within the report and appendices.

Health Implications

12. There are no direct health implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

13. There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report.

Value for Money implications

14. Regular financial monitoring and control will ensure efficiencies are maximised and then utilised in the most appropriate manner.

Environmental Implications

15. Environmental consideration is given during the day to day management of financial resources through the drive to ensure that purchasing methods are sustainable and through the reduction of energy costs through energy efficient measures being introduced in working practices.

Consultation carried out

16. None directly for this report.

Recommendations

17. The Committee's views are sought as to whether it is satisfied with the financial management of the Revenue and Repairs budgets for the fourth quarter of the 2012/13 financial year and for the year overall.

**The Gateshead Housing Company
Management Accounts – March 2013**

Revenue and Repairs Executive Summary

1. The management accounts for the fourth quarter of the 2012/13 financial year are shown below:

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
Management Fee				
Income	14,768	14,738	30	14,738
Employee Costs	9,304	9,441	137	9,441
Overhead Costs	5,446	5,305	(141)	5,305
Surplus/(Deficit)	18	(8)	26	(8)
Repairs Fee				
Repairs Management Fee	19,732	19,665	67	19,665
Repairs Costs	19,722	19,665	(57)	19,665
Surplus/(Deficit)	10	0	10	0
Overall Annual Surplus/(Deficit)	28	(8)	36	(8)

2. Overall, the fourth quarter position shows an underspend of £28,000; this has changed from an underspend at the end of the third quarter of £88,000. The underspend is mainly due to staff savings in relation to restructures that are yet to occur.
3. The surplus will be added to our general reserves which were £588,000 at the start of 2012/13. Therefore, taking into account the draft surplus figure, the reserves would increase to £616,000.
4. Repairs are under spent for the year by £10,000. Work has been implemented to improve the interface between Mears and TGHC, and to speed up the invoicing process. This work has allowed us to accrue costs for jobs that have been completed by Mears but where we have not yet received the invoice.

Income

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
INCOME				
Management Fee	13,017	13,017	0	13,017
Officer Costs	1,000	1,000	0	1,000
Management Fee from external bodies	19	18	1	18
Gardening Service Income	2	3	(1)	3
Rent	55	0	55	0
Performance Fee	665	700	(35)	700
Welfare Reform Officers	7	0	7	0
Other Income	3	0	3	0
Total Income	14,768	14,738	30	14,738

5. Overall income for the fourth quarter is above target for the year. The Management Fee is in relation to the management of Gateshead Council's properties. This was calculated based on the previous year's fee less an efficiency target of 2.38% savings.
6. The Officer Costs are for the work carried out in relation to managing the capital programme on behalf of the Council. This fee covers the staffing and overheads required to manage the programme and equates to 4% of the overall capital programme.
7. The Management Fee from external bodies relates to the fee received by the company for undertaking the day-to-day management of properties on behalf of the company's subsidiary Keelman Homes and another local housing provider.
8. Gardening Service income is an additional income amount agreed with Gateshead Council's Housing Options section. This income is received for the use of the Handyperson service to undertake grass cutting and other gardening services for the homeless section properties.
9. Rent income relates to £38k rent received from NEPO for the section of Keelman House that has been sub-leased to them. This was agreed post budget setting. The remaining £17k relates to rent received for the new build properties situated at the High Lanes scheme.
10. The Performance Fee is in relation to the work that the rent and income teams undertake in the collection of rent and service charges. We have reached an agreement with the Council that if the rent and income teams collect rent and service charges, over and above the national collection rate target, we have a profit sharing arrangement where we receive 50% of the income collected over and above this target. This is paid annually in arrears and this is the fee paid for collection rates in 2011/12.

11. The Welfare Reform Officer income is funding we have received from the Council to employ 2 Advice and Support Officers to assist tenants who will be affected by the Welfare Reform changes. The 2 officers started in their posts in February and the income will pay for the salary costs incurred in 2012/13. This income was not budgeted for as it was unknown.
12. The other income includes £2k for the feed in tariff associated with the photovoltaics situated at the High Lanes new build scheme. Finally, it also includes £804 funding received from the Local Community Fund to carry out specific approved schemes within some of the Sheltered Schemes – this income matches expenditure exactly. This income was not budgeted for as was unknown.

Staff Costs

13. Staff Costs are broken down as follows:

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
Employee Costs				
Customer Services	2,176	2,345	169	2,345
Neighbourhood Services - HQ	1,019	1,038	19	1,038
Property Services	1,147	1,168	21	1,168
Customers and Communities sub total	4,342	4,551	209	4,551
Support Services	812	854	42	854
Finance	1,225	1,212	(13)	1,212
Corporate Services sub total	2,037	2,066	29	2,066
Neighbourhood Services - areas	2,925	3,075	150	3,075
Efficiency Savings	0	(251)	(251)	(251)
Total Employee costs	9,304	9,441	137	9,441

14. Salary costs are underspent for the year. The staff budget is based on the current structure but a number of vacant posts have been held at zero budget and therefore, have not been appointed to during the year. This was to enable budgets to breakeven. As service areas are reviewed, restructures will be brought to this committee for approval to ensure that any vacant posts which are not required are deleted.
15. One of the main areas where staff costs are underspent is in Neighbourhood Services – areas, which mainly relates to a number of vacant posts being held in the concierge service to assist with the restructure plans. There has also been a small reduction in staff from the closure of Felling Office.
16. Another area where we have underspent on staff costs is in the Customer Services section. This is mainly due to the restructure being carried out within

the Repairs Section and therefore vacant posts being held whilst the restructure and subsequent filling of posts takes place.

17. Finance salary costs for the year are over budget. This is mainly due to early retirement costs incurred following the concierge review being charged to the finance budget rather than to the individual service areas.
18. During the financial year we have spent £54,000 on agency staff; this is in comparison to spend in 2011/12 of £168,000 on agency staff. The cost of agency staff this year has been partly offset in the month end figures due to a number of vacant posts being held.
19. The agency staff costs relate mainly to work in the Repairs Contact Centre and in Housing Offices whilst staff are seconded to posts elsewhere in the organisation.

Overhead Costs

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
Overhead Costs				
Customers and Communities HQ Total	353	345	(8)	345
Corporate Services Total	3,798	3,841	43	3,841
Customers and Communities Area Costs	1,295	1,145	(150)	1,145
Efficiency Savings	0	(26)	(26)	(26)
Total Overhead Costs	5,446	5,305	(141)	5,305

20. Overhead costs are overspent for the financial year; this is mainly due to utility costs which were higher than anticipated. We are continuing to actively reduce gas bills through monitoring of building maintenance systems to ensure that gas is not overused. We are also looking to fit energy efficient light bulbs in buildings.
21. The other main area of overhead cost overspend is insurance. Due to the increase in the number of claims we have received, the provision in the accounts for potential settlement of insurance claims has increased by 70%.
22. An analysis of overhead spend against budget is included within Appendix 1. Appendix 2 shows a pie chart of areas that the HQ Overheads have been spent on.
23. Budget holders are accountable for their budgets and receive monthly management accounts. This enables them to review spend in more detail. The finance section monitor all areas of spend and ensure that costs are controlled effectively. It should be noted that not all costs can be controlled, especially in relation to utility costs and insurance claims. Finance monitors these costs on a

monthly basis and highlights to the Management Team any areas causing concern.

Repairs Summary

24. An analysis of the repairs costs is provided below.

	Budget £000's	YTD Actual £000's	Variance £000's
REPAIRS			
Fixed Costs (Contractors' Prelim's)	4,781	4,785	(4)
Responsive – Mears	3,995	4,887	(892)
Responsive – LES	1,000	798	202
Responsive – Other	800	646	154
Relets – Mears	3,484	3,640	(156)
Relets - Other	700	221	479
Cyclical Repairs – Servicing	500	398	102
Cyclical Repairs – Remedial Works	150	0	150
Water Hygiene Testing	150	36	114
Painting	639	635	4
Gas Servicing	2,555	2,122	433
Electrical Circuit Testing	139	37	102
Solid Fuel Testing	2	0	2
Lift Maintenance	135	121	14
Security	200	105	95
Environmental Works	225	241	(16)
Energy Performance Certificates	50	30	20
Aids & Adaptations	90	152	(62)
Contingency	70	868	(798)
	19,665	19,722	(57)
Insurance Funded Repairs	0	67	67
Repair Management Fee Income	19,665	19,665	0
Income Total	19,665	19,732	67
REPAIRS TOTAL	0	10	10

Responsive Repairs

25. Responsive repair costs have been split between Mears, Local Environmental Services and other costs associated with repairs. Mears carry out the repairs and maintenance at properties. LES carry out all drainage and highways repair works. Other costs are in relation to asbestos testing and removal works, the repairs freephone number and postage for any postcards/letters, as well as other sub-contractor costs for works Mears are unable to carry out.
26. Overall the responsive repair costs are over budget for the year. Interface systems which allow any variations to jobs completed and job status to be updated in Northgate have meant we have been able to accrue into this financial year all works that have been completed by Mears but are not yet invoiced.

However, under spend on the LES works and other repairs works has increased since the third quarter. The reduction in other responsive works is due to more works being directed through Mears rather than using other specialist contractors. The under spend with LES is due to less jobs being carried out compared to previous years.

27. There have been 51,910 repair orders invoiced this year and average repair costs for the financial year were £73.93.
28. An analysis of the type of responsive repairs carried out is included within Appendix 3 and a comparison of responsive repairs costs and the number of jobs is included in Appendix 4.

Relets

29. The relet budget is split between the costs of the works carried out by Mears and other costs associated with relets. Other costs relate mainly to costs associated with asbestos works, security costs and decoration vouchers provided to new tenants.
30. Mears relet costs are slightly over budget for the year. Interface systems which allow any variations to jobs completed and job status to be updated in Northgate have meant we have been able to accrue into this financial year all works that have been completed by Mears but not yet invoiced.
31. Weekly operational meetings are held with Mears to discuss the relet works being undertaken and we monitor closely the number of voids sent through to Mears on which to undertake relet works.
32. Average relet cost for jobs completed and invoiced in the year was £2,117.47 and the number of relets in the year was 1,222. In 2011/12, the average cost was £2,103.27 and there were 1,732 jobs carried out and invoiced.

Painting

33. The painting programme is slightly under budget for the year by £4,000. A revised painting programme will be produced for 2013/14 which will link to the Asset Management Strategy and the Window Replacement Programme.

Gas Servicing

34. Gas servicing is under budget for the financial year. This budget line includes both the budget for the Gas Care Plan which is a fixed monthly cost of £152,000 and the budget for gas repairs.
35. Gas appliances are required to have a gas service carried out every 12 months. At the end of the year, 99.97% of properties had a gas service within the previous 12 months. 6 properties were out of date by 1 to 4 weeks at the end of the financial year.

Cyclical Maintenance

36. There are a number of repair costs in relation to the cyclical maintenance programme which has been developed for our properties. This is particularly in relation to cyclical repairs, water hygiene testing, lift maintenance, environmental works, electrical circuit testing and solid fuel testing.
37. We have a programme of works for these areas of maintenance. We have separated out the cyclical works - remedial works, as this is a responsive element of costs, so we can build up our ability to assess the expenditure. However, no spend has been carried out this year in this area. The security budget is underspent at the year end as there has been a reduced requirement to place security onto void properties. The electric circuit testing budget is underspent due to delays in starting the programme of works during the year. The cyclical repairs servicing budget is also underspent for the year, which is partly due to the demolition of some multi-storey's and sheltered schemes reducing the level of works that we are required to carry out.
38. Following the appointment of the cyclical repairs manager by the company, we will be reviewing all areas of cyclical maintenance and the service level agreements we have in place during 2013/14.

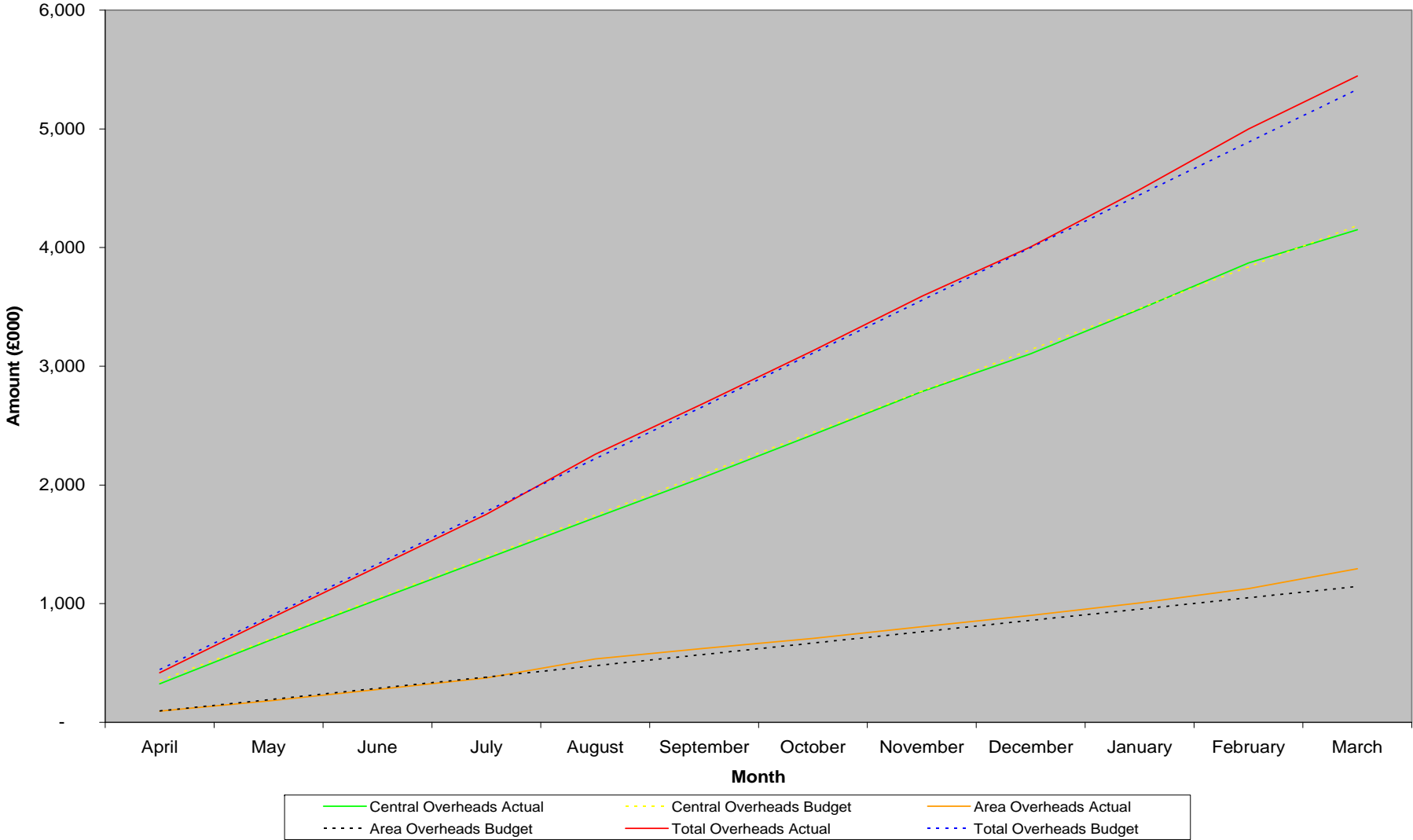
Contingency

39. The overspend against the contingency budget is in relation to the flooding caused by the severe weather in June and August. The costs incurred are for repair works to the properties, drying out of the properties and temporary rehousing and subsistence claims from tenants. The finance team are working with Gateshead Council to submit a claim for costs via the Bellwin scheme.

Detailed Management Accounts

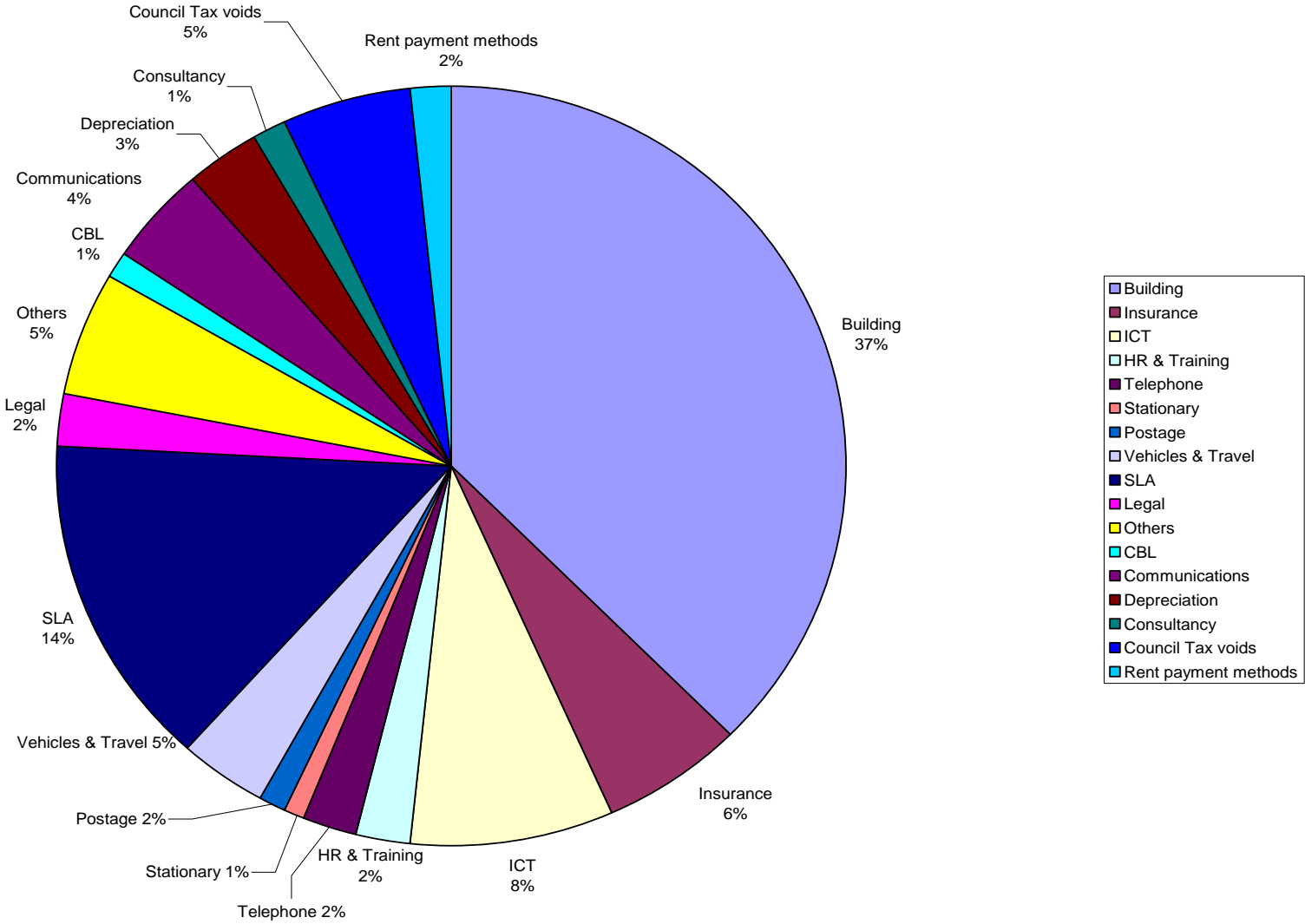
	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000
INCOME				
Management Fee	13,017	13,017	0	13,017
Officer Costs	1,000	1,000	0	1,000
Management Fee from external bodies	19	18	1	18
Gardening Service Income	2	3	(1)	3
Rent	55	0	55	0
Performance Fee	665	700	(35)	700
Welfare Reform Officers	7	0	7	0
Other Income	3	0	3	0
Total Income	14,768	14,738	30	14,738
Employee Costs				
Customer Services	2,176	2,345	169	2,345
Neighbourhood Services - HQ	1,019	1,038	19	1,038
Property Services	1,147	1,168	21	1,168
Customers and Communities sub total	4,342	4,551	209	4,551
Support Services	812	854	42	854
Finance	1,225	1,212	(13)	1,212
Corporate Services sub total	2,037	2,066	29	2,066
Neighbourhood Services - areas	2,925	3,075	150	3,075
Efficiency Savings	0	(251)	(251)	(251)
Total Employee costs	9,304	9,441	137	9,441
Overhead Costs				
Customers and Communities HQ Total	353	345	(8)	345
Corporate Services Total	3,798	3,841	43	3,841
Customers and Communities Area Costs	1,295	1,145	(150)	1,145
Efficiency Savings	0	(26)	(26)	(26)
Total Overhead Costs	5,446	5,305	(141)	5,305
Surplus/(Deficit)	18	(8)	26	(8)
Repairs Fee				
Repairs Management Fee	19,732	19,665	67	19,665
Repairs Costs	19,722	19,665	(57)	19,665
Surplus/(Deficit)	10	0	10	0
Overall Annual Surplus/(Deficit)	28	(8)	36	(8)

TGHC Overheads Budget 2012/13



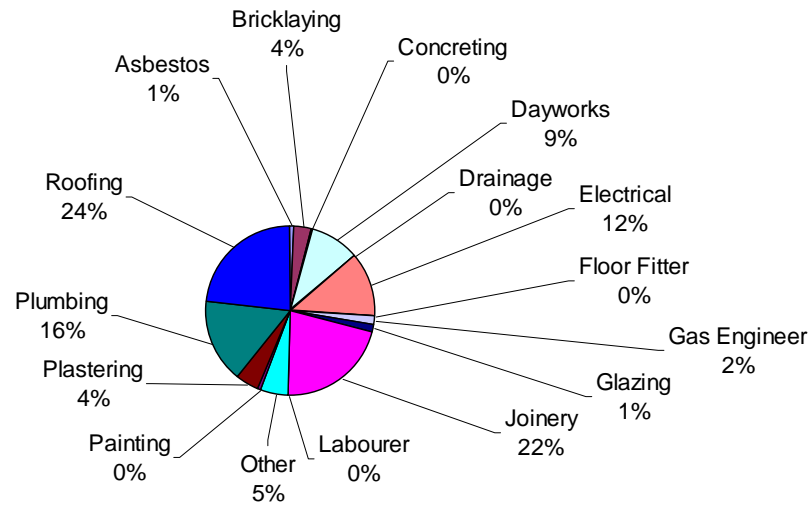
Appendix 2

Central Overheads expenditure cumulative 31st March 2013



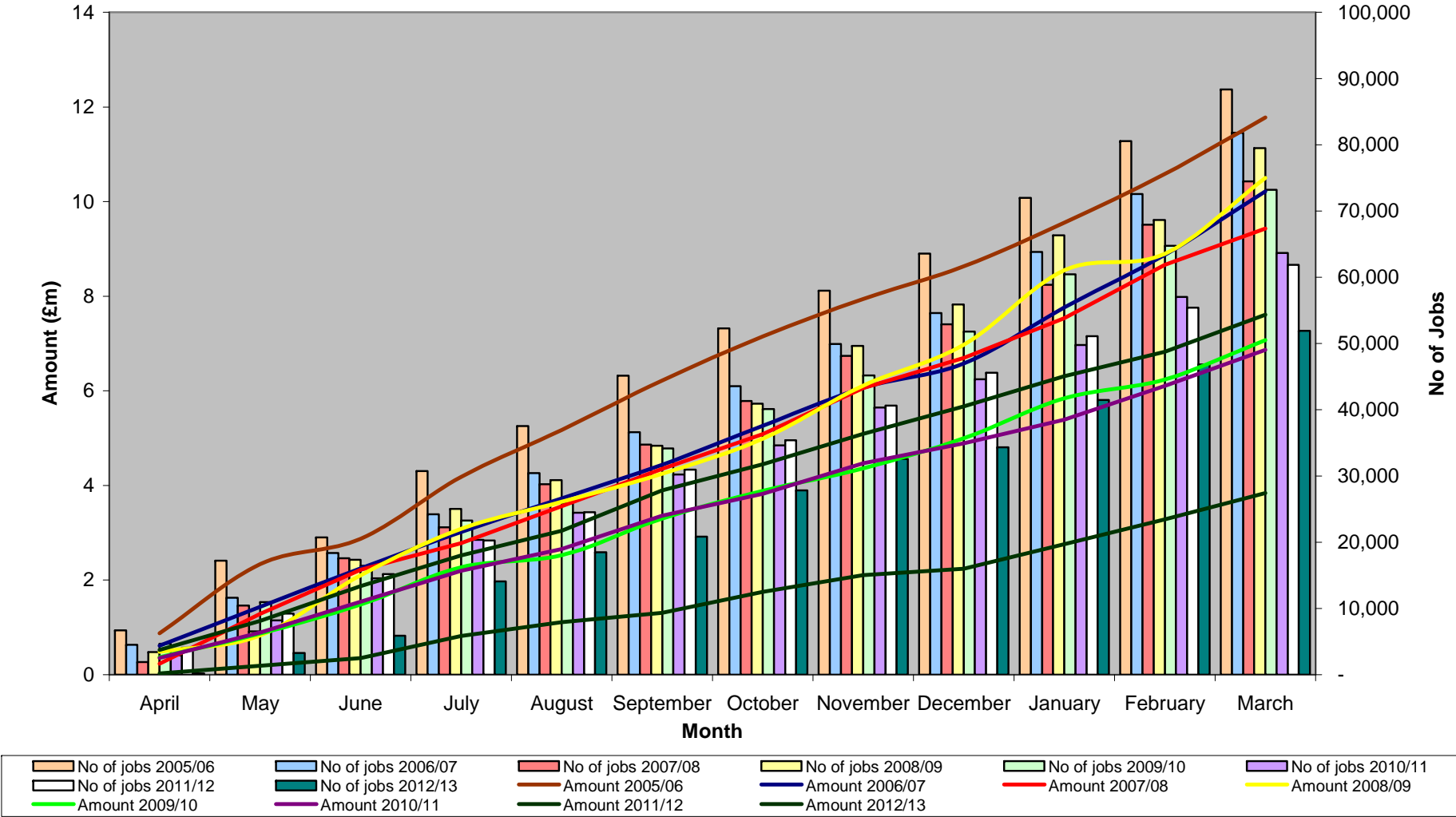
Appendix 3

Mears invoiced Repairs by trade for the period April 2012 - March 2013



Trade	2011/12	2012/13
Asbestos	-	24,386
Bricklaying	522,050	122,257
Concreting	-	2,445
Dayworks	562,416	322,057
Drainage	-	1,308
Electrical	553,839	423,094
Floor Fitter	-	74
Gas Engineer	-	55,291
Glazing	175,976	46,087
Joinery	1,202,273	723,559
Labourer	-	64
Other	346,098	179,072
Painting	-	15,318
Plastering	371,394	152,672
Plumbing	1,685,811	554,616
Roofing	638,435	792,159
Subcontractor	764,318	-
TOTAL	6,822,610	3,414,459

Comparison of Responsive Repairs to Previous Years



Report to Resources Committee

7 May 2013



Title: Sickness Absence and Human Resources Update

Report of: Support Services Manager

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the committee with an update on general HR initiatives and developments from April 2012 to the end of March 2013.

Background

2. This report provides the Committee with an update in sickness absence, general HR initiatives/developments and learning and development activity for the period April to March 2013.

Employee and HR Monitoring Digest

3. Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is an analysis of the key employee data and HR monitoring to provide the Committee with an overview of the company's performance and key priorities.

Sickness Absence Update

4. Attached at Appendix 2 is an analysis of the sickness absence levels for the period from April 2012 to March 2013.
5. Appendix 3 provides in a graphical format the reasons for absence within each directorate of the company for the period April 2012 to March 2013
6. In comparing absence between April 2012 and March 2013 with same period in the previous year, the following trends have occurred.
7. The total sickness absence for the period equates to 7.67 days per person compared to 8.30 days last year which is a reduction of 7.6%.
8. Short term absence is defined as a period of less than 15 working days in duration and long term absence is greater than 15 days in duration. Short term absence for the period was 3.34 days per person and long term absence was 4.34 days. This compares with 4.71 days short term absence and 3.60 days long

term absence for the same period last year. This represents a reduction of 29.1% in short term absence. Long term absence has however increased by 17%.

9. The biggest cause of absence has continued to be stress with 918 days lost compared to 698 last year. It is a concern that the figure has increased by 24%. Of the 918 days of stress related illness, 79% was related to stress in an employee's personal life and 21% was work related.
10. Health and wellbeing is increasingly being acknowledged as a vital element in supporting and developing workforces and keeping employees healthy. The Gateshead Housing Company is clear that when our employees are well and satisfied, the experience of our customers also improves. As part of our continued commitment to develop further in this area the company is participating in a three-year 'Better Health at Work' award.
11. In January, 8 Health and Wellbeing Advocates attended the Bronze Level Induction Day facilitated by Amacus. Amacus have been appointed to support employers through the Health and Wellbeing Award in the North East and aim to provide company's with essential signposting, training and networking opportunities during the process.
12. The first advocate's group meeting was held on 26 February 2013 with 13 advocates in attendance. During the meeting the group agreed the terms of reference and Jon Mallen-Beadle, Managing Director was confirmed as owner of the group.
13. In March 2013 employees were encouraged to complete an online survey (Health Needs Assessment). Employees who could not access the survey online were offered the option of completing the survey in paper format. The aim of the survey was to understand the following:-
 - What issues are important to employees
 - The ways in which employees would like to receive information
 - How they would like to take part in health improvement activities.

158 online surveys and three paper surveys were returned which equated to a 50% response rate.
14. The results of the Health Needs Assessment survey will inform the basis of health and wellbeing activity during 2013/14.
15. In January 2013, 14 Advocates attended Understanding Health Improvement training which is accredited by the Royal Society of Public at Level 2.
16. The training covered:-
 - Inequalities in health
 - How effective communication can support health messages
 - Importance of promoting improvements in health and wellbeing
 - Impact of behaviour change on health and wellbeing
17. In January 2013 the Company took part in the British Heart Foundations Rock it Red Campaign. As part of the campaign during the week of the event the

advocates visited outlying sites with information leaflets, posters and props relating to looking after your heart. An area was set out in café escape to display props and other heart related resources. The week was concluded with a dress down day where employees showed their support to the cause by dressing in red and donating a pound.

18. We continue to investigate initiatives that will help us to better understand the causes of depression, anxiety and stress. We aim to use the knowledge gained in this area to research new initiatives to assist employees to manage their condition and remain in work.
19. A personal support package continues to be provided to employees who are absent due to stress to include occupational health, home visits, counselling, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and First assist 24/7 helpline for employees and their families.
20. Heads of Service are provided with monthly sickness information and guidance detailing sickness absence triggers, action required and the early intervention of human resources.

Managing Sickness Absence – updated ET

21. The company has held 44 sickness absence review meetings (short term) in the period. These meetings are triggered in response to four periods of absence or two periods of 15 days or more in a rolling 12 month period.
22. As a result of the absence review meetings held, 18 employees were issued with first written cautions.
23. The company has held 13 sickness absence reviews (long term) in the period of April 2012 to March 2013 triggered in a response to four or more continuous weeks of absence.
24. The absence management review for long term absence considers an employee's health and their future employability with the company. Options discussed at the absence reviews include phased return to work, redeployment, work life balance, reduced hours, reasonable adjustments to the working environment and ill health retirement.
25. In the period April 2012 to March 2013, nine employees attended an occupational health physician's appointment as a result of absence review meetings.
26. In the period April 2012 to March 2013, 73 cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)/counselling sessions were supported by the company.
27. In the period April 2012 to March 2013, one employee attended physiotherapy sessions supported by the company.
28. In the period April 2012 to March 2013, 58 employees were referred to occupational health for an initial assessment. Forty-three employees attended an occupational health review.

29. Sixteen employees returned to work on phased hours and duties in the period April 2012 to March 2013.

Information Sharing

30. The company continues to work with Gateshead Council to more closely align our services through sharing information about measures and initiatives.

Other HR initiatives and developments

31. The chiropodist has attended Keelman House on ten occasions in the period April 2012 to March 2013. 71 appointments were attended by employees. The chiropodist also carried out appointments at Birtley housing office where two employees attended and Blaydon where 6 employees attended.

Work Life Balance - Updated

32. In the period April to March 2013, the following work life balance applications have been approved:

No of Applications	Type of Work Life Balance Request
8	Applications to reduce working hours
5	Application to change work pattern
3	Application for compressed hours

Investigation and Disciplinary

33. In the period April to March 2013 the following activities have taken place:

Investigation	Outcome
6	4 Progressed to disciplinary 2 No further action 3 involved a suspension to enable the investigation
Disciplinary	Outcome
4	3 Final Written Warning, 1 First Written Warning
Appeals	Outcome
0	

Grievances

34. In the period April to March 2013, three Stage 1 grievances were investigated. No grievances were upheld.

Bullying and Harassment

35. In the period April to March 2013 there were no allegations of bullying or harassment.

Whistleblowing

36. In the period April to March 2013, there were two reported incidents. The incidents have been investigated and there was no basis on which to take action. The employees that raised concerns have been updated on progress.

Other HR Initiatives and Developments

Recruitment - Updated

37. In the period April to March 2013, the company has advertised 22 jobs, details of which are set out in Appendix 4.

Child Care Scheme

38. The company continues to offer a salary sacrifice scheme. In March 2013, 12 employees were in the scheme.

Learning and Development Activity

Mediation

39. A number of employees attended a 2 day mediation training course delivered by ACAS. Mediation is an informal way of resolving disagreements or disputes in the workplace. It can avoid the need to use more formal or legal procedures. It involves a neutral third person working with those in dispute to help them reach an agreement and is a confidential and voluntary process. Policies and procedures will be developed to support the process.

Business Continuity Planning Training

40. During January 2 half day training sessions were delivered by Price Waterhouse Coopers on Business Continuity Planning to the relevant managers within the organisation. The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is part of The Gateshead Housing Company's (TGHC) overall approach to Risk Management and compliments the Risk Management Strategy and Risk Registers. Business continuity management is the process for managing risks to ensure the smooth running of the organisation and the delivery of services, ensuring continuity of critical functions in the event of a disruption and effective recovery afterwards. The training was designed to prepare TGHC employees to cope with the effects of an emergency or crisis by simulating a crisis which as a group they had to respond to.

Data Protection E-learning

41. The company have had access to a data protection e-learning package for 1 year. The license has now expired with 282 employees successfully completing the training.

Assessments

42. Psychometric assessments continue to provide valuable information to appointing officers during the recruitment process. During the quarter appointments have been made to 9 posts with 52 employees undertaking assessments. Feedback is

available to the candidates and those requesting feedback are provided in a timely manner.

Qualifications

43. Each year a proportion of the training budget is allocated to supporting employees wishing to undertake professional qualification courses. Employees have been invited to apply with applications to be submitted by the 28th June. This will allow employees the opportunity to discuss their career aspirations and learning and development opportunities during their annual appraisal.

Health and Safety Training

44. In the period April to March 2013 the following health and safety training has been delivered:

- Asbestos Awareness
- Defibrillator training
- Manual Handling
- Conflict Resolution and Personal Safety
- Stress Awareness
- First Aid
- Fire Safety
- Conflict Resolution

45. In the period April to March 2013 the following health and safety e-learning has been rolled out:

- COSHH Interactive
- DSE Interactive
- Fire Safety Interactive
- Manual Handling
- Office Safety
- Risk Assessment Interactive
- Slips, Trips and fall
- Stress Management

ICT Training

46. In the period April to March 2013 the following ICT training and development has been delivered:

- Contributing to the Intranet, Creating Download Documents
- Microsoft Excel, Filtering Data and Pivot Tables
- Contributing to the Intranet, Managing Tenancies
- Training on Northgate Housing Management System version 6

Link to Values

47. This report links to the following company values: -

- Being honest, accountable and transparent

- Being motivated, trained and committed across the company
- Being caring and respecting
- A commitment to all our employees
- Embracing equality

Impact on Customers

48. Sickness absence impacts on the level of service provided to customers. Every effort is taken to keep this to a minimum. Managing absence and delivering in our commitment to have a well trained and responsive workforce will directly lead to improved services to customers.

Risk Management Implications

49. Manager's not managing sickness in accordance with Policy has been identified as an operational risk and controls and future actions are in place to mitigate the risk.
50. Absence due to an epidemic has also been identified as an operational risk and if there was an epidemic which significantly reduced the workforce, this would be addressed through the Business Continuity Plan once it has been launched and gone live.

Financial Implications

51. The financial cost of sickness absence to the company for the period April to March 2013 was £265,276 as compared to £310,931 for the same period last year.

Equality and Diversity Implications

52. The company's commitment to being an equal opportunities employer is an integral part of every aspect of the company's activities. All training is designed to meet the diverse needs of the community and employees.

Value for Money implications

53. We continue to manage sickness absence in order to maximise service delivery to tenants and customers. Through an increased use of internal delivery and development value for money is being achieved. We aim to use the most beneficial methods of delivery to maximise the return for the benefit of the company and customers. Value for money principles are followed in all aspects of the service to include work life balance requests, recruitment and selection.

Health Implications

54. The initiatives and prevention work that has been introduced over the past year have had a positive impact on the health of our employees. The clearest measure of this is the achievement Investors in People (IiP) Gold award and Health and wellbeing award.
55. The company's commitment to learning and development is embedded in the Investors in People award (IiP) and is applied consistently across the company.

Our approach to provide tailored learning will have a positive impact on employee's health and overall wellbeing and will minimise any stress.

Environmental Implications



56. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Consultation carried out

57. The company's HR consultants EEF Northern and Unions have been consulted on aspects of the report. Trade Unions are always consulted prior to any changes being implemented and we continue to enjoy a good relationship with them. A number of the courses delivered and developed were identified by employees, as part of the annual appraisal process.

Recommendation



58. The views of the committee are sought on whether the committee is satisfied with the update on general HR initiatives and developments.

					
Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13					
Performance Measure		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Number of people employed by TGHC					
Male		150	144	142	136
Female		197	193	189	186
Permanent Employees		331	324	320	318
Temporary Employees		16	13	12	4
Full Time		286	277	272	261
Part Time		60	60	59	61
Number of starters (since 01 April 2012)		4	1	1	1
Number of leavers (since 01 April 2012)		4	11	6	11
Ill health retirements		0	0	0	0
Number of employees seeking redeployment		1	0	0	1
Diversity Monitoring					
Gender					
Male		150	144	142	136
Female		197	193	189	186
Age					
Under 18		0	0	0	0
18 – 25		25	22	21	19
26 – 35		112	109	104	103
36 – 45		81	77	75	74
46 – 55		89	89	88	88
56 – 65		39	39	41	38
66 +		1	1	2	0
Disability					
Perceived themselves as disabled		38	36	36	36
Do not perceive themselves as disabled		309	301	295	286



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13

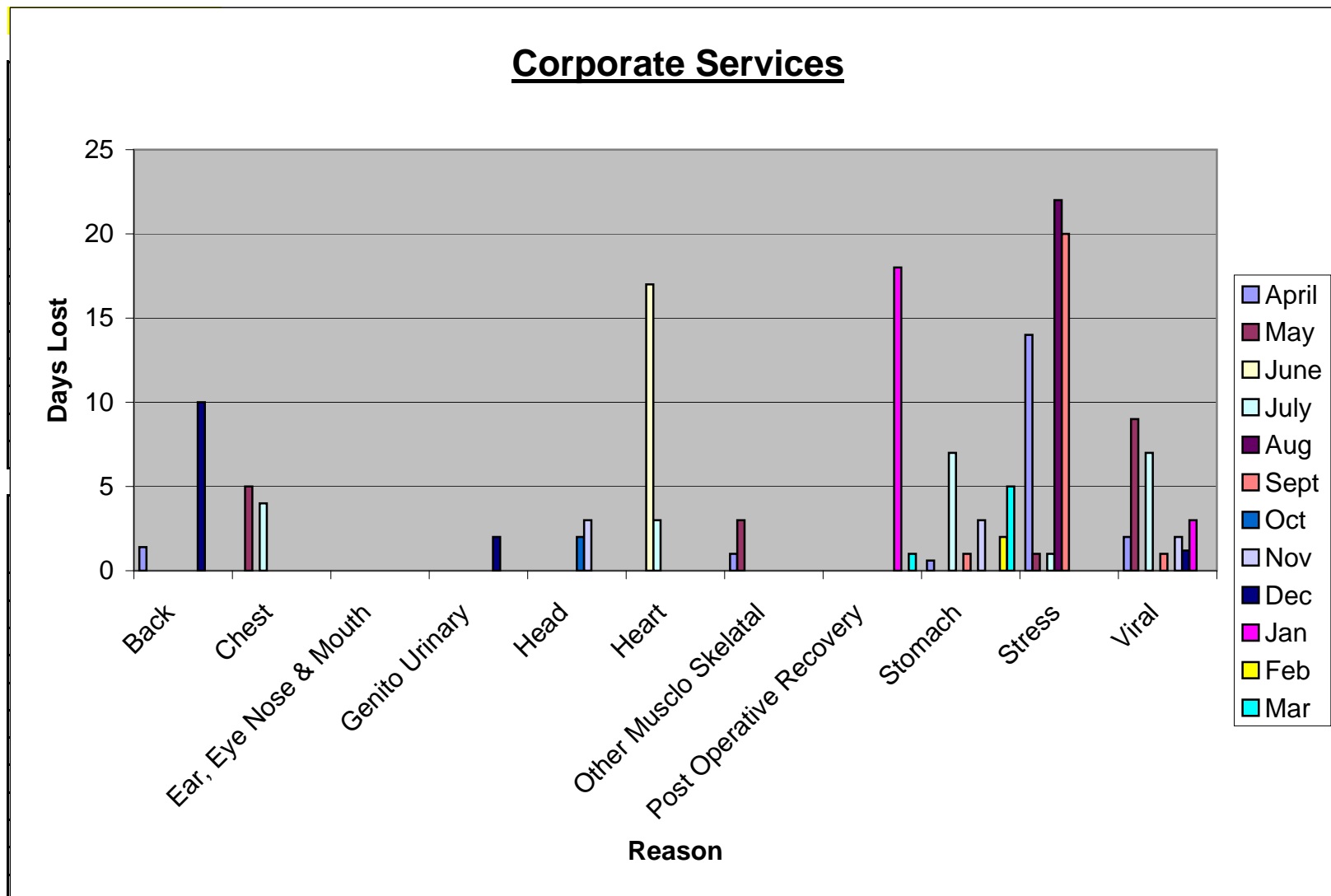
Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Ethnicity				
White British	331	323	317	308
White Irish	2	2	2	2
White Other	1	1	1	1
White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0	0
White and Black African	0	0	0	0
White and Asian	0	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British Indian	1	1	1	1
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	3	1	1	1
Asian or Asian British Other	1	1	1	1
Black or Black British Caribbean	0	0	0	0
Black or Black British African	4	4	4	4
Black or Black British Other	1	1	1	1
Chinese	1	1	1	1
Other	2	2	2	2
Recruitment Monitoring				
Number of BME applicants for posts				
Application for employment	3	1	1	2
Short listed for interview	2	1	1	2
Offered post	0	0	0	1
Number of disabled applicants for posts				
Application for Employment	0	0	0	1
Short listed for interview	0	0	0	0
Offered post	0	0	0	0
HR advisory issues				
Investigations	0	0	4	2
Disciplinary	0	0	2	2

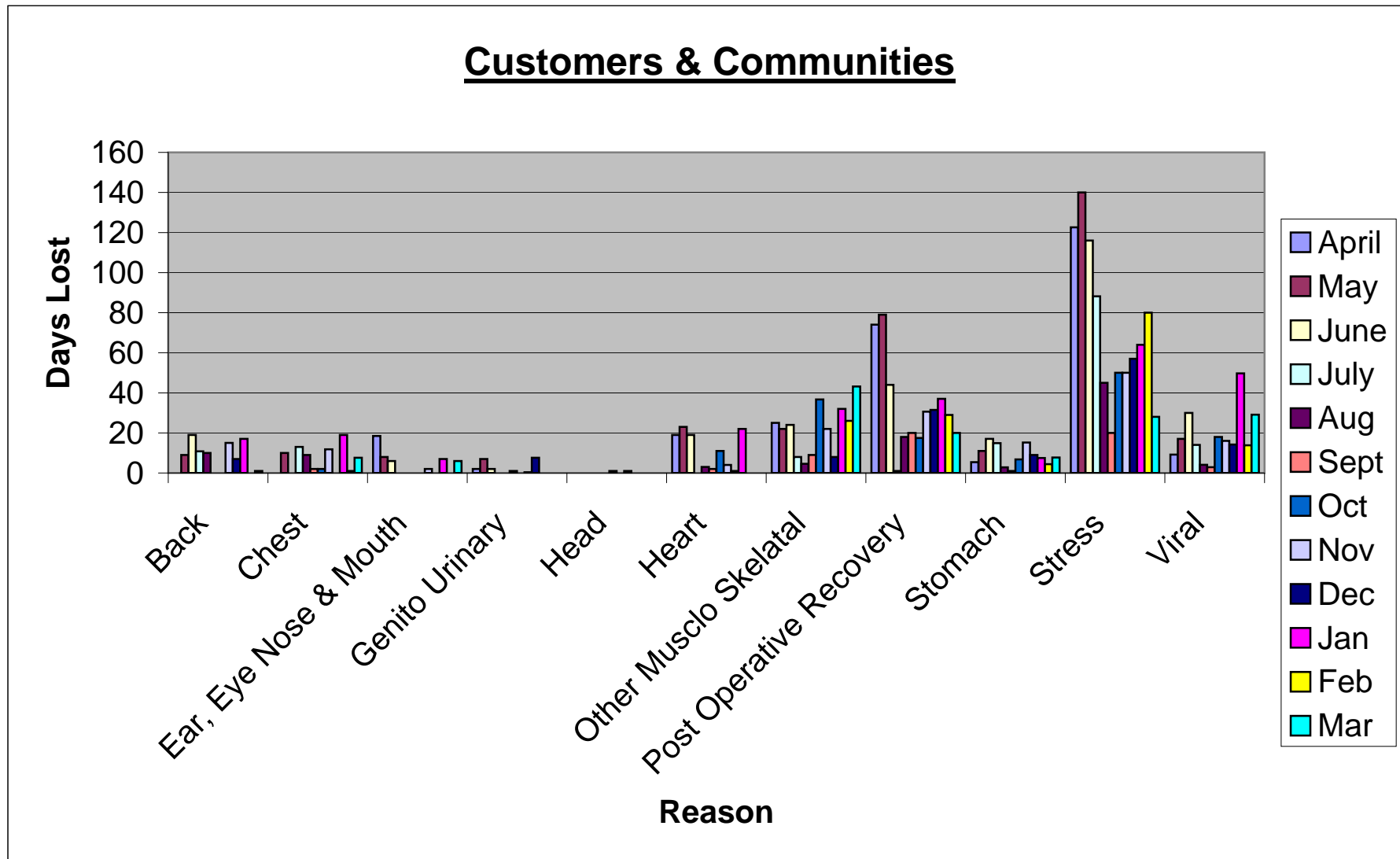
 The Gateshead Housing Company Working with Gateshead Council					
Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13					
Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	
Suspensions	1	0	2	0	
Oral Warning	0	0	0	0	
First Written Warning	0	0	0	1	
Final Written Warning	0	0	2	1	
Dismissals	0	0	0	0	
Appeals Submitted	0	0	0	0	
Stage 1 Grievance	3	0	0	0	
Stage 2 Grievance	0	0	0	0	
Bullying and Harassment	0	0	0	0	
Whistleblowing	1	0	0	1	
Capability	0	0	0	0	
Health and Wellbeing					
Total number of working days lost per employee (target 7.50 April to March 2013)	3.01	1.21	1.54		
Total number of working days lost to sickness	932.70	371.30	468.50		
Number of Occupational Health appointments					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New referrals • Review appointments 	17 7	15 5	15 8	11 23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgery appointments • Home appointments 	25 0	20 0	23 0	34 0	
Number of employee counselling/CBT sessions	39	14	6	14	
Number of Absence Management Reviews					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Long Term 	12 5	17 5	5 3	10 0	
Number of employees who have had a phased return	5	3	3	5	
Learning and Development					
Number of new staff receiving induction	4	1	1	1	
Number of staff undertaking professional Qualifications (report in Qtr 2)	11	11	11	11	

Actual Days lost per employee per month to date

2012/2013	Customers & Communities Customer Services	Customers & Communities Neighbourhood Services	Customers & Communities Property Services	Corporate Services Finance	Corporate Services Support Services	All employees TGHC	TGHC cumulative	2011/12 TGHC Cumulative	Days Lost per month	Days Lost Short Term Absence	No of Occurrences Short Term	Days Lost Long Term Absence	No of Occurrences Long Term
April	0.96	0.96	1.79	0.07	0.71	0.95	0.95	0.62	294.70	0.35	29.00	0.60	10.00
May	1.16	1.23	1.70	2.26	0.04	1.11	2.06	1.47	344.00	0.34	36.00	0.77	11.00
June	1.02	0.78	2.48	0.00	0.71	0.95	3.01	2.56	294.00	0.18	16.00	0.77	13.00
July	1.02	0.23	1.06	0.69	0.17	0.56	3.57	3.27	171.90	0.34	26.00	0.22	3.00
August	0.30	0.30	1.02	0.00	0.92	0.39	3.96	3.94	118.50	0.19	14.00	0.20	3.00
September	0.45	0.01	0.68	0.04	0.88	0.26	4.22	4.67	80.90	0.07	11.00	0.20	3.00
October	0.85	0.38	0.68	0.00	0.08	0.47	4.69	5.18	144.00	0.25	19.00	0.22	3.00
November	1.44	0.36	0.07	0.15	0.17	0.58	5.27	5.78	176.00	0.26	31.00	0.32	5.00
December	0.95	0.40	0.13	0.05	0.50	0.49	5.76	6.09	148.50	0.30	27.00	0.19	3.00
January	1.02	1.17	0.32	0.69	0.34	0.91	6.67	6.73	276.20	0.56	39.00	0.35	5.00
February	0.90	0.59	0.06	0.08	0.00	0.51	7.18	7.56	156.20	0.20	18.00	0.31	5.00
March	0.38	0.74	0.38	0.25	0.00	0.49	7.67	8.47	148.60	0.30	26.00	0.19	3.00
Cumulative by Service Area	10.45	7.15	10.37	4.28	4.52	7.67	55.01		2353.50	3.34	292.00	4.34	67.00

* Days Lost = No of days absence / FTE in the service







Appendix 4



Recruitment



In the period April to March 2013, the company has advertised 22 jobs as follows: -

Job title	Method of recruitment	Number of applications
Estate Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	18
Customer Service Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	6
Quantity Surveyor/Contract Administrator – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council initially then external	14
Payments Officer – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	5
Accounts Assistant – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	11
Temporary Housing Management Assistant – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	3
Temporary Older Persons Housing Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	2
Temporary Older Persons Admin Assistant – Customers & Communities	Internal to TGHC employees only	0
Neighbourhood Relations Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal to TGHC employees only	6
Furnished Tenancy Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal to TGHC employees only	6
Advice & Support Officer (2 posts) – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	8
Home Repairs Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal – Post ring Fenced to specific teams within TGHC	1
Residential Caretaker – Customers & Communities	Ring Fenced to Concierge & Operational Support employees only	Closing Date: 11/01/2013

Job title	Method of recruitment	Number of applications
Concierge Supervisor – Customers & Communities	Ring Fenced to Concierge & Operational Support employees only	Closing Date: 11/01/2013
HomeRepairs Team Leader – Customers & Communities	Internal – Ring fenced to employees in Repairs Reporting Team & Improvement/Customer Care Team	4
Head Of Corporate Services – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	5
Residential Caretaker – Customers & Communities	Advertised Externally	14
Cyclical Maintenance Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	2
Clerical Assistant Accounts/Leasehold – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	10
Customer Service Assistant (2posts) – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	3
Estate Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	10
Senior Customer Care Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal – Ring fenced to existing staff within the Improvement Team & Repairs Reporting Team	6

 The Gateshead Housing Company Working with Gateshead Council					
Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13					
Performance Measure		Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
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Gender					
Male		150	144	142	136
Female		197	193	189	186
Age					
Under 18		0	0	0	0
18 – 25		25	22	21	19
26 – 35		112	109	104	103
36 – 45		81	77	75	74
46 – 55		89	89	88	88
56 – 65		39	39	41	38
66 +		1	1	2	0
Disability					
Perceived themselves as disabled		38	36	36	36
Do not perceive themselves as disabled		309	301	295	286

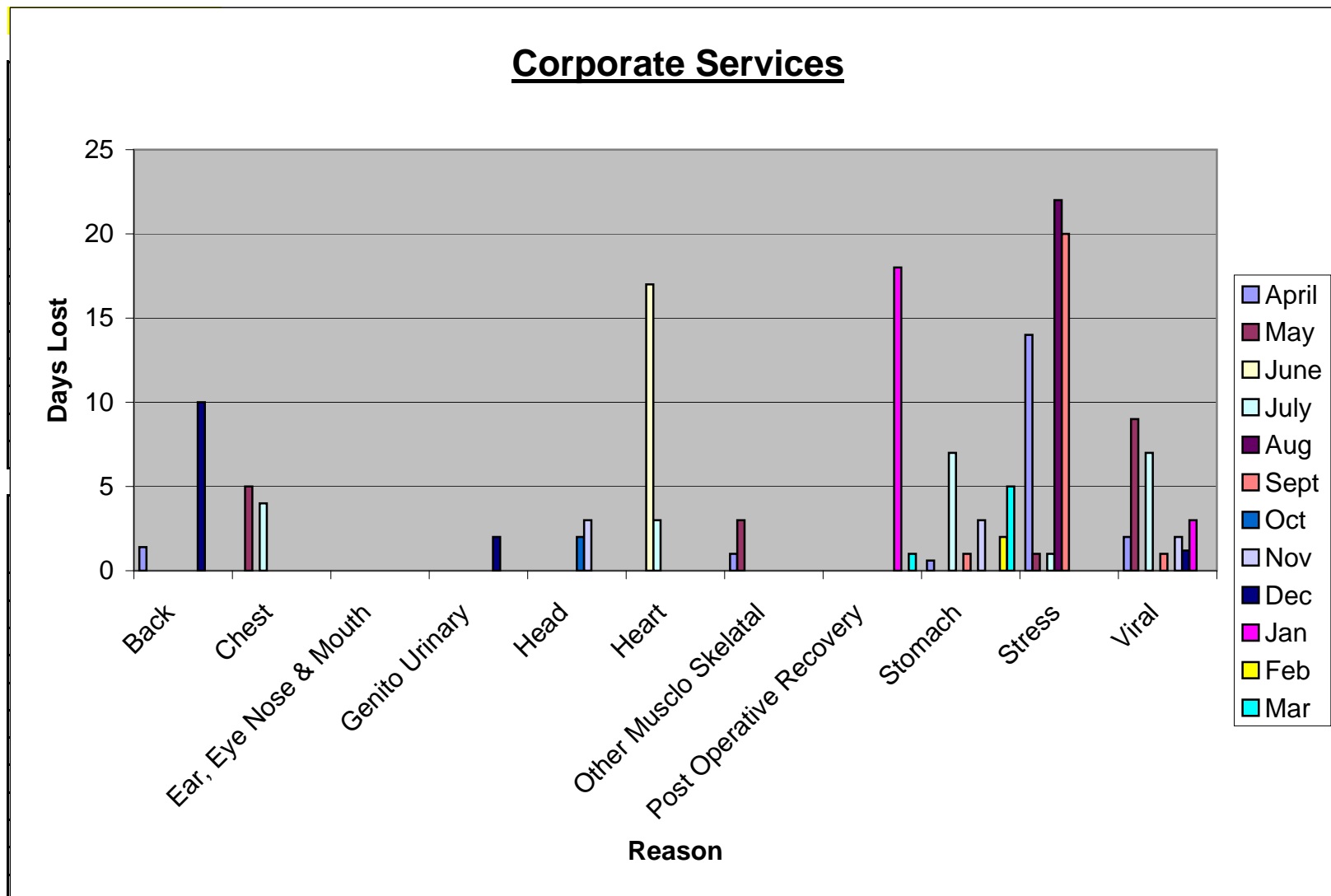
					
Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13					
Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	
Ethnicity					
White British	331	323	317	308	
White Irish	2	2	2	2	
White Other	1	1	1	1	
White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0	0	
White and Black African	0	0	0	0	
White and Asian	0	0	0	0	
Asian or Asian British Indian	1	1	1	1	
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0	0	0	0	
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	3	1	1	1	
Asian or Asian British Other	1	1	1	1	
Black or Black British Caribbean	0	0	0	0	
Black or Black British African	4	4	4	4	
Black or Black British Other	1	1	1	1	
Chinese	1	1	1	1	
Other	2	2	2	2	
Recruitment Monitoring					
Number of BME applicants for posts					
Application for employment	3	1	1	2	
Short listed for interview	2	1	1	2	
Offered post	0	0	0	1	
Number of disabled applicants for posts					
Application for Employment	0	0	0	1	
Short listed for interview	0	0	0	0	
Offered post	0	0	0	0	
HR advisory issues					
Investigations	0	0	4	2	
Disciplinary	0	0	2	2	

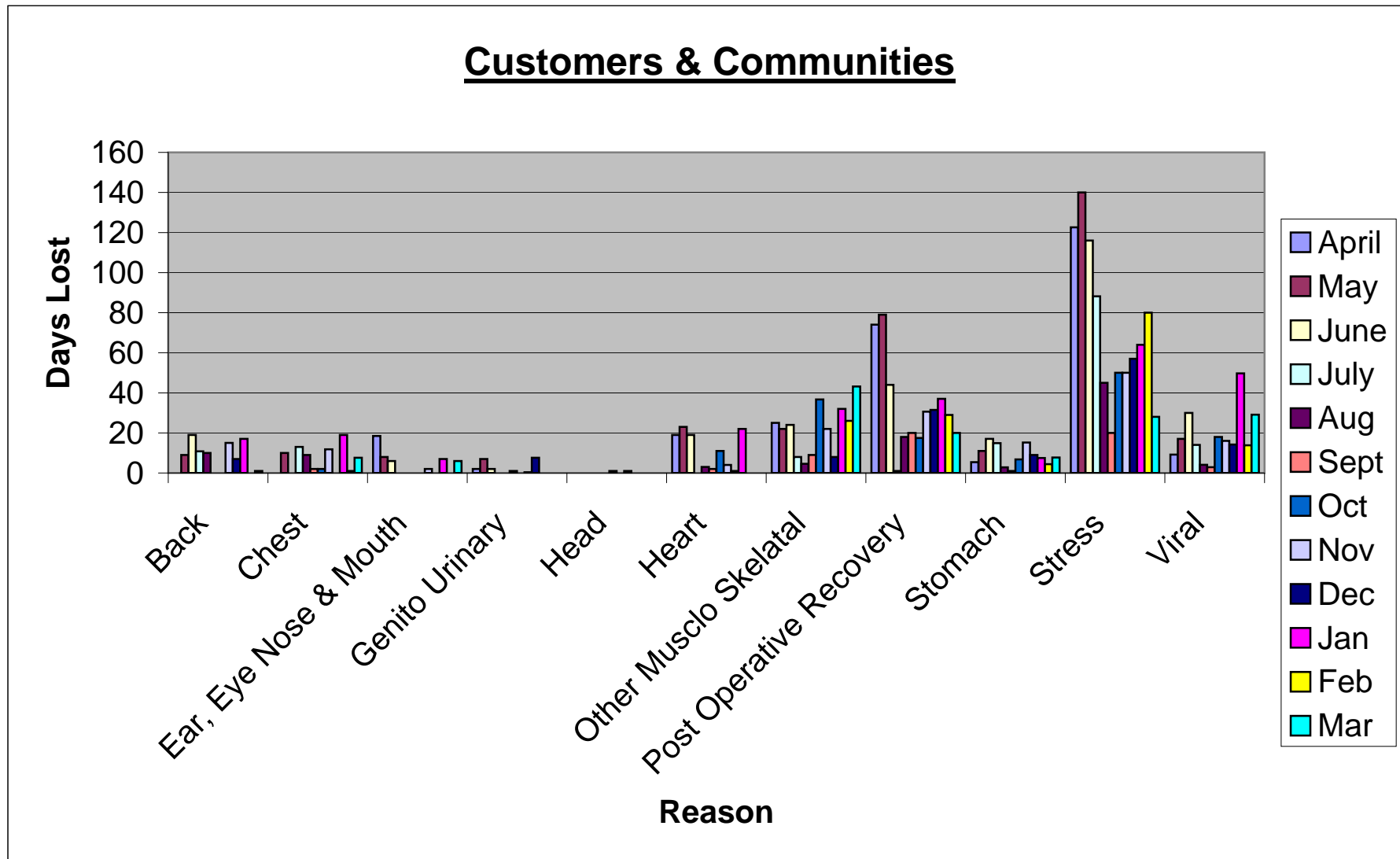
 The Gateshead Housing Company Working with Gateshead Council					
Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2012/13					
Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	
Suspensions	1	0	2	0	
Oral Warning	0	0	0	0	
First Written Warning	0	0	0	1	
Final Written Warning	0	0	2	1	
Dismissals	0	0	0	0	
Appeals Submitted	0	0	0	0	
Stage 1 Grievance	3	0	0	0	
Stage 2 Grievance	0	0	0	0	
Bullying and Harassment	0	0	0	0	
Whistleblowing	1	0	0	1	
Capability	0	0	0	0	
Health and Wellbeing					
Total number of working days lost per employee (target 7.50 April to March 2013)	3.01	1.21	1.54		
Total number of working days lost to sickness	932.70	371.30	468.50		
Number of Occupational Health appointments					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New referrals • Review appointments 	17 7	15 5	15 8	11 23	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgery appointments • Home appointments 	25 0	20 0	23 0	34 0	
Number of employee counselling/CBT sessions	39	14	6	14	
Number of Absence Management Reviews					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Long Term 	12 5	17 5	5 3	10 0	
Number of employees who have had a phased return	5	3	3	5	
Learning and Development					
Number of new staff receiving induction	4	1	1	1	
Number of staff undertaking professional Qualifications (report in Qtr 2)	11	11	11	11	

Actual Days lost per employee per month to date

2012/2013	Customers & Communities Customer Services	Customers & Communities Neighbourhood Services	Customers & Communities Property Services	Corporate Services Finance	Corporate Services Support Services	All employees TGHC	TGHC cumulative	2011/12 TGHC Cumulative	Days Lost per month	Days Lost Short Term Absence	No of Occurrences Short Term	Days Lost Long Term Absence	No of Occurrences Long Term
April	0.96	0.96	1.79	0.07	0.71	0.95	0.95	0.62	294.70	0.35	29.00	0.60	10.00
May	1.16	1.23	1.70	2.26	0.04	1.11	2.06	1.47	344.00	0.34	36.00	0.77	11.00
June	1.02	0.78	2.48	0.00	0.71	0.95	3.01	2.56	294.00	0.18	16.00	0.77	13.00
July	1.02	0.23	1.06	0.69	0.17	0.56	3.57	3.27	171.90	0.34	26.00	0.22	3.00
August	0.30	0.30	1.02	0.00	0.92	0.39	3.96	3.94	118.50	0.19	14.00	0.20	3.00
September	0.45	0.01	0.68	0.04	0.88	0.26	4.22	4.67	80.90	0.07	11.00	0.20	3.00
October	0.85	0.38	0.68	0.00	0.08	0.47	4.69	5.18	144.00	0.25	19.00	0.22	3.00
November	1.44	0.36	0.07	0.15	0.17	0.58	5.27	5.78	176.00	0.26	31.00	0.32	5.00
December	0.95	0.40	0.13	0.05	0.50	0.49	5.76	6.09	148.50	0.30	27.00	0.19	3.00
January	1.02	1.17	0.32	0.69	0.34	0.91	6.67	6.73	276.20	0.56	39.00	0.35	5.00
February	0.90	0.59	0.06	0.08	0.00	0.51	7.18	7.56	156.20	0.20	18.00	0.31	5.00
March	0.38	0.74	0.38	0.25	0.00	0.49	7.67	8.47	148.60	0.30	26.00	0.19	3.00
Cumulative by Service Area	10.45	7.15	10.37	4.28	4.52	7.67	55.01		2353.50	3.34	292.00	4.34	67.00

* Days Lost = No of days absence / FTE in the service





Appendix 4

Recruitment

In the period April to March 2013, the company has advertised 22 jobs as follows: -

Job title	Method of recruitment	Number of applications
Estate Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	18
Customer Service Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	6
Quantity Surveyor/Contract Administrator – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council initially then external	14
Payments Officer – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	5
Accounts Assistant – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	11
Temporary Housing Management Assistant – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	3
Temporary Older Persons Housing Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	2
Temporary Older Persons Admin Assistant – Customers & Communities	Internal to TGHC employees only	0
Neighbourhood Relations Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal to TGHC employees only	6
Furnished Tenancy Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal to TGHC employees only	6
Advice & Support Officer (2 posts) – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	8
Home Repairs Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal – Post ring Fenced to specific teams within TGHC	1
Residential Caretaker – Customers & Communities	Ring Fenced to Concierge & Operational Support employees only	Closing Date: 11/01/2013

Job title	Method of recruitment	Number of applications
Concierge Supervisor – Customers & Communities	Ring Fenced to Concierge & Operational Support employees only	Closing Date: 11/01/2013
HomeRepairs Team Leader – Customers & Communities	Internal – Ring fenced to employees in Repairs Reporting Team & Improvement/Customer Care Team	4
Head Of Corporate Services – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	5
Residential Caretaker – Customers & Communities	Advertised Externally	14
Cyclical Maintenance Manager – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	2
Clerical Assistant Accounts/Leasehold – Corporate Services	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	10
Customer Service Assistant (2posts) – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	3
Estate Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal TGHC and Gateshead Council	10
Senior Customer Care Officer – Customers & Communities	Internal – Ring fenced to existing staff within the Improvement Team & Repairs Reporting Team	6

Report to Resources Committee

7 May 2013



Title: Health and Safety Update

Report of: Support Services Manager

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the committee with a report on the company's health and safety activities for the fourth quarter of the year.

Background

2. The Safety, Health and Environmental Team ("SHE Team") are responsible for a number of activities designed to eliminate, reduce and mitigate accidents in the workplace and to ensure, safety of residents and members of the public who access our services and premises.
3. In addition to this the team act in an advisory role to ensure company wide compliance with a number of statutory and regulatory requirements including: -
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Health and Safety Training
 - Occupational Hygiene
 - Environmental Management
4. They also have responsibility for ensuring the company's compliance with statutory regulatory requirements as follows: -
 - Water Management - Risk assessments and water testing.
 - Electrical Safety - Cyclical electrical testing, fixed wire testing, portable appliance testing and emergency lighting testing.
 - Fire Safety - Risk assessment, maintenance, repair and testing of fire alarms and fire appliances.
 - Passengers Lifts Operations - Lift Repairs, maintenance, refurbishment and upgrade to DDA standard.
5. They are also responsible for the coordination and monitoring of health and safety on construction sites including:
 - CDM Coordination (Construction, Design, Management) and Control of Contractors

- Site Waste Management Plans

Policy, Procedure and Safe Systems of Work Update

6. Internal and external health and safety audits have now taken place. An action plan has been developed based on the findings and recommendations and is being implemented across the organisation.
7. During this reporting period we have been working with MEARS in reviewing and developing our approach to Asbestos Management, to ensure that planned works requiring either asbestos surveys or removal of licensed material is appropriately identified, approved and proportionate having due regard to statutory obligations.
8. Staff Briefings are being developed with HR to provide Managers with regular updates on health and safety topics relevant to their service and are due to start in May 2013.

Partner Activity

9. As reported previously, the condensed mobilisation period for the Repairs and Maintenance contract led to a focus on service delivery and improving performance during the first half of the financial year. Joint Health and Safety site visits with Mears Safety Advisers have taken place during this period in the following areas of operations :-
 - Voids
 - Painting Programme
10. There were no significant areas of weakness but recommendations and areas of improvement have been agreed with Mears Safety Advisers and the implementation of the relevant action plans will be monitored by the SHE Section.

Accident Reporting

11. The revised approach to accidents reporting procedures was implemented during this reporting period, and it is felt that this increased awareness has contributed to an increase on reported incidents.
12. During the quarter (January to March 2013) the following accidents / incidents were reported: -

Violence and Aggression to TGHC Employees

- 11 Cases of Verbal abuse
- 6 Cases of Threatening Behaviour
- 1 Cases of Physical Assault tenant pushed a door onto the hand of the Estate Officer.

Violence and Aggression to 3rd Party / Subcontractors

- None Reported

Accidents / Incidents Miss TGHC Employees

- 1 Case of Scalding
- 2 Cases of Slip, Trip and Fall
- 2 Case hit by object
- 1 Scald
- 1 Dog Bite

Accidents / Incidents Miss to 3rd Party / Subcontractors

- None Reported

All accidents and reported violent incidents have been investigated by the H&S and NRT team and where appropriate follow up action is taken including the review of safe systems of work.

Asbestos Management

13. During the period January to March requests were received for Asbestos Surveys, to support the following areas of work; Void and Gas Sections, Maintaining Decency, Painting Program, Repairs, Adaptations and Maintenance and Fire Improvement Works.
14. We have processed the following requests for refurbishment and demolition surveys (R&D): -
 - Maintain Decency – 207 R&D Surveys, 29 Putty Samples, 25 Window Pilots
 - Gas – 3 R&D Surveys
 - R&M – 16 R&D Surveys
 - Major Works – 37 R&D Surveys
 - Voids – 20
15. As previously reported the review of the Corporate Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) has been completed incorporating the MEARS revised asbestos management procedures. For the next reporting period we will be focusing in developing individual buildings AMPs and introducing a new monitoring regime with the support of the Caretakers Service.
16. During the period four incidents relating to the accidental disturbance of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's) have taken place. Findings and Recommendations from the investigations are been discussed with our Partners to prevent further reoccurrences.

Fire Safety Management

17. The SHE Section and the Tyne and Wear Fire Service (TWFRS) have meet regularly during this period and progressed with the review of the Gateshead Housing Fire Safety Strategy.
18. During this quarter the SHE Section and the TWFRS have jointly visited several Sheltered Housing units to carryout the periodical fire safety audits. Findings and recommendations will be reviewed and an action plan will be developed to rectify any deficiencies identified.
19. As previously reported the fire safety improvement works to 19 Multi Storey Blocks have been carried out and although there some minor snagging works

outstanding, the TWFRS are comfortable that the works are being concluded to comply with their deadline and requirements.

20. A work program has been developed for the Sheltered Housing buildings and is due to start in the next reporting period to be completed by April 2014.
21. A bespoke sprinkler solution for Regent Court as previously reported is progressing with the installation and it is on target to be completed in October 2013.

Legionella Control

22. Monthly meetings with our maintenance contractor are ongoing and no significant risks have been identified.
22. No positive tests were reported in the period.
23. As previously reported the Water Hygiene Risk Assessments review are due to start during 2013. Joint sites visits with the Gateshead Council Control Officer are planned to take place in May with the aim of completing the process by October 2013.

Cyclical Repair and Maintenance Update

24. The periodical monitoring meetings with Gateshead Council Local Environmental Services and the Gateshead Housing Company have been re-established.
25. An immediate action was identified requiring a full rewiring of emergency lighting system at St. Cuthbert's Court. Designs and remedial works have been commissioned in partnership with the repairs and maintenance team and are due to start as soon as reasonably possible.

Lift Maintenance

26. Our insurance company carry out lift inspections on a 6 monthly basis and reports are then submitted to the company with remedial action identified and timescales for completion.
27. Through the insurance inspections, there were no relevant immediate actions reported during this period.
28. During this reporting period we have seven reported entrapments, with passengers released within the lift company agreed service standard response time. In only one instance the response has exceeded the prescribed time and the findings have been discussed with the lift company and procedures amended to prevent this reoccurrence.

Update on the Company Construction Related Activities

29. When a construction project commences the Company are required to Notify the HSE using an F10. There are presently 17 F10 notifications to the HSE in place.

30. We have 15 sites started and the works are progressing, the works involved are;
- Bungalow conversion works in Kibblesworth,
 - Sprinkler installation to Regent Court,
 - Insulation works to non traditional properties in Springwell (2 sites)
 - Maintaining decency works covering various estates across the Borough (2 sites)
 - Planned painting works across various sites
 - Fire safety improvement works to high-rise blocks
 - Tunstall Telecare upgrades across the Borough
 - Lifts Replacement at Barnes Close Flats and Pleasant Place unit C
 - Brandling caretaker's house Refurbishment
 - Barnes close electrical upgrade works
 - Mcerlane square electrical upgrade
 - Stoneygate conversion works
31. In the next reporting period two construction sites are due to start and preliminary F10 notices have been issued. One is the second tranche of maintaining decency comprising of 281 properties and the other is for fire safety improvement works in sheltered housing and communal lounges.

32. During this reporting period all working sites have been visited and were found to be working to agreed site rules and regulations.

Update on Health and Safety Legislation Changes

33. Since the last Committee meeting, no legislative changes have taken place that will have an impact on our policies and procedures.

Links to Values

34. This report links to the following company values: -
- Being honest, accountable and transparent
 - Being motivated, trained and committed across the company
 - Being caring and respecting
 - A commitment to all our employees
 - Embracing equality.

Impact on Customers

35. The improvements identified and actions carried out will help us to provide healthy and safe environments for employees, residents and members of the public.

Risk Management Implications

36. Not meeting the requirement of current and new Health and Safety legislation has been identified as an operational risk for the company.

Financial Implications

37. The Head of Finance confirms that a budget is available to support the activities mentioned in this report through revenue or capital budgets.

Equality and Diversity Implications

38. Detailed Equality Impact Assessments are carried out on all Health & Safety policies and procedures to ensure that they do not adversely impact on any customers.

Value for Money Implications

39. Value for money principles are followed in all health and safety activity.

Health Implications

40. The company's approach to Health and Safety, embedded within everything that we do and the actions specifically mentioned within this report, ultimately will have a positive impact on people's health and overall wellbeing. By working to ensure that any services we provide meet the needs of the customers and of employees and do not cause undue stress to either party.

Environmental Implications

41. The work detailed in this report will be carried out to ensure we meet our ISO 14001 standards and principles. We will make choices that reflect our social responsibility to improve the environment in which we work and live.

Recommendation

42. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with the update on health and safety activities and developments.



Report to Resources and Audit Committee

7 May 2013

Title: Equality and Diversity - Update

Report of: Managing Director

Purpose of Report

1. To provide a summary of Equality and Diversity work within the organisation for the last quarter of 2012/13.

Background

2. The company continues to place equality and diversity at the heart of everything it does with one of the values being 'embracing equality'.
3. The Single Equality Scheme acts as the overarching document for the company's work on equality, bringing together a number of plans to provide a clear outline for Board members, employees and customers.
4. The scheme is based around three main goals:
 - Maintaining a corporate commitment to equality issues
 - Working in partnership with customers and stakeholders to deliver equitable services
 - Being an equal opportunities employer with a representative workforce
5. The Single Equality Scheme is currently under review to ensure that it reflects current legislation and our approach to equality, taking into account the progress we have made over the last three years.
6. The company is also part of the Gateshead Council's Corporate Equality Working Group, ensuring that the company is contributing to the equality objectives set by the council.
7. Committee receives an update at each meeting on the company's activity around equality and diversity as well as receiving information on any key changes to legislation which would affect the way we operate.
8. An E&D Annual Report, capturing our achievements, progress towards our objectives and priorities for 2013/14 will be produced in the next quarter and reported to a future committee.

Summary

9. There are a number of activities that have taken place within the last period which support our overall goals.

Maintaining a corporate commitment to equality issues

Procurement and contractors

10. In previous committee reports we have noted the priority set out in the Single Equality Scheme to ensure that our procurement practices reflect our overall approach to equality and that we take steps to fulfil the expectations of the Public Sector Equality Duty in procurement exercises. More recently the Equality and Human Rights Commission has published guidance for public authorities on mainstreaming equality considerations into procurement called 'Buying Better Outcomes'.
11. On 1 March, 38 attendees took part in an event called 'Equality and Diversity: It Pays to Know'. This was a joint event between the housing company and Assessment North East, a local organisation specialising in equality and diversity. Attendees at the event represented the company's two main contractors, Mears and Local Environmental Services as well as a range of smaller contractors and sub contractors.
12. The aim of this event was to make sure that any organisations who are delivering services partly or wholly funded by the company were aware of their responsibilities and support them to identify and implement areas for improvement.
13. The programme for the day included an E&D quiz, the legal and business case for equality, TGHC's perspective and experiences of procurement, statutory codes of practice and facilitated exercises on the challenges and how to overcome these.
14. Overall the event was a success providing a unique opportunity for contractors, the housing company and council to share experiences and ideas together, ultimately to provide the best possible service to customers and employees. A summary of the information collected through the evaluation forms is provided in the appendix to this report.
15. Following this event, all attendees have been contacted to encourage them to undertake a self assessment of where they are currently in terms of their equality practices and what they need to do to ensure they are complying.

Train the trainer

16. During this reporting period, the Involvement and Diversity Manager attended an E&D 'Train the Trainer' session, aimed at providing officers with information and advice to deliver training and awareness on equality issues within individual organisations. Whilst it is not intended that this should replace existing arrangements for training including the online programme and 'Respect and Dignity' training provided in 2012 to all employees, this does provide the opportunity to provide more tailored sessions during the year on particular equality issues that may arise without the need for an external trainer.

17. As a result, this method will also be used to deliver the customer equality session 'Understanding Differences in People' delivering a cost saving, whilst also providing the opportunity to tailor this training to make it much more directly related to the housing company and the community it serves.

Working in partnership with customers and stakeholders to deliver equitable services

Knowing our Customers

18. We continue to collect and update the information held on our customers to ensure that we respond appropriately to individual needs such as communicating in the most appropriate way to them. In addition to this, collecting up to date information helps to monitor satisfaction and take up of services to understand if any groups are impacted differently by the services we deliver or the decisions we take.

Tenants

19. In the last quarter we have updated customer records on 3528 occasions, with the majority of these being updated through the Tyne and Wear Homes application, sign ups and contact at housing offices. The updates can range from updating contact details through to communication preferences or disability information.
20. As of 31 March 2013, the profile of our main tenants (19867 tenancies) was:
- 58.40% female
 - 2.65% Black Minority Ethnic (BME) with highest proportion being Black African
 - 3.58% are under 25, 40.98% are over 60.
 - 28.26% of households with at least one person who has a disability, with the most common reported being mobility issues and mental health.

21. We have collected 31.89% of sexuality information and 35.32% of religion, and continue to collect this through the ways detailed previously. As the level of information held increases, this will help us to look at where satisfaction with services or take up of services may differ based on people's protected characteristics. This collection exceeds the targets set for the year.

Leaseholders

22. Historically, it has been more difficult to collect and maintain the level of information held on leaseholders, particularly where properties have been sold on and the information not collected or the company not made aware of the new leaseholder.
23. In order to assist in this, an external organisation, have been employed to carry out a telephone based exercise to increase the data held on leaseholders. Increased levels of information will allow improved analysis of satisfaction with the service and allow a more tailored service where people provide communication details or disability information.

24. This work will be completed in the first quarter of 2013/14.

Community Fund

25. The company's Community Fund supported by Mears and Local Environmental Services provides cash and in kind support to a range of community groups for projects that make a difference for the communities we work in.

26. Groups are encouraged to make applications to the fund during the year and are successful where the projects can demonstrate that they will either:

- Support people to overcome disadvantage
- Create stronger communities
- Make Gateshead an even better place to live.

27. In the last quarter, support has been agreed for the following projects relating to equality:

- Inspiring Events Community Interest Company – funding secured to provide equipment for Zumba activities for people with learning disabilities.
- Bringing Words to Life – Delivering community literacy project for young mothers and young carers.
- Gateshead Crossroads Caring for Carers – Homework club for young carers
- Gateshead Muslim Society - Asian Community Healthy Living Project
- Gateshead and South of Tyne Sight Service – In kind support offered to upgrade reception and equipment display at centre for visually impaired people.

Being an equal opportunities employer with a representative workforce

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index

28. In the last committee it was reported that the company had increased its placing in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index. This index measures how inclusive the workplace of the organisation is of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Employees.

29. As part of the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme, in February, representatives of the Involvement and HR teams met with the Stonewall workplace contact to discuss our results, highlighting areas of strength and areas for development for the coming year. Officers will also be meeting with representatives of Gentoo, who were placed second overall in the index to learn from their experiences.

30. Some of the strengths of this year's submission were:

- Having the Single Equality Scheme and associated policies in place to outline our approach to equality
- Having a dedicated resource within the company for equality including LGB equality supported by the Managing Director as the Corporate Lead for Equality.
- Providing equality and diversity training to all employees which specifically includes LGB issues such as bullying and banter in the workplace.

- Working with suppliers to ensure that they promote the same values of equality as those of the housing company.

31. An action plan is currently being developed to ensure we make year on year improvements with some of the actions including:

- Concluding a review of the Single Equality Scheme and ensuring that LGB issues are reflected within this.
- Reviewing some employee benefits policies to ensure that the wording is inclusive of same sex partners.
- Increasing the visibility of the Managing Director as the Corporate Lead for Equality, e.g. through press releases, attendance at network events or key LGB events such as Newcastle Pride.
- Using opportunities throughout the year to collect profiling information on employees to help monitor starters, leavers and promotions and identify any trends or issues to be investigated.

Link to values

32. This report relates to the following company values: -

- Being a listening and learning organisation
- Being motivated, trained, and committed
- Being customer focused, innovative and professional
- Caring and respecting
- Embracing equality
- A commitment to all our employees.

Impact on tenants

33. Through ensuring that equality and diversity is at the heart of how we deliver services, it ensures that we provide services based on a sound understanding of the needs and priorities of our customers.

Risk Management Implications

34. Not meeting the requirements of current and new diversity legislation has been identified as an operational risk for the company, which if breached could lead to significant financial loss and risk of reputation.

Financial Implications

35. There are no financial implications directly relating to this report. There is an allocated budget to progress equality and diversity work within the company. Any future financial implications would be reported to this committee.

Equality and Diversity Implications

36. The Single Equality Scheme provides a focus for our approach to being an equal opportunities employer and service provider, promoting equality in relation to access to goods, facilities and services and helping us to ensure that no individual or group experiences direct or indirect discrimination.

Value for Money Implications

37. The Single Equality Scheme provides a focus for our approach to being an equal opportunities employer and service provider, promoting equality in relation to access to goods, facilities and services and helping us to ensure that no individual or group experiences direct or indirect discrimination.
38. Carrying out equality analysis when planning a project or service delivery allows us to identify any issues at the outset and find solutions where possible, rather than having to make potentially costly changes retrospectively.

Health Implications

39. The company's approach to equality and diversity, embedded within everything that we do will ultimately have a positive impact on people's health and overall wellbeing.

Environmental Implications

40. There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Consultation carried out

41. Consultation on the update of the Single Equality Scheme will be carried out with tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders.

Recommendation

42. The views of the committee are sought on the progress activity relating to Equality and Diversity carried out in the last quarter of 2012/13.

Evaluation of 'Equality and Diversity: It Pays to Know'

Background to event

This event was the result of officers responsible for equality and procurement in the company attending a joint event between Assessment North East and The Equality and Human Rights Commission called 'Buying Better Outcomes'. This event brought officers from public organisations to hear about forthcoming guidance expected from the EHRC on equality in procurement as well as discussing the experiences of private organisations tendering for work in the public sector and what the barriers to this maybe.

Following this event, a number of issues were highlighted to be considered by The Gateshead Housing Company, to ensure that we were meeting our legislative requirements under the public sector equality duty, and ultimately through effective procurement exercises ensuring that we are delivering the best possible service to tenants living in our homes.

Two areas identified were how we deal with our existing contractors and how we improve the procurement process for future contracts. There was also some experience of recent tendering exercises where all organisations had failed the equality sections, in some cases by simply not providing any information.

The event was entitled 'It pays to know', highlighting that through attending and taking on board the information provided, contractors would be able to protect themselves and ensure that they are meeting their legislative requirements, preventing potential discrimination cases being brought against them. In addition, this could also benefit them in future tendering processes through improving their equality practices and being able to demonstrate this in submissions.

Summary of Event

The event was jointly facilitated with Assessment North East on Friday 1st March.

38 people attended the event, 28 evaluations completed.

Organisations represented at the event included direct contractors of the housing company plus sub contractors and suppliers of our two main partners Mears and LES.

The programme for the day included an E&D quiz, the legal and business case for E&D, TGHC's perspective and experiences of procurement, including examples of issues that have occurred in the past, statutory codes of practice and facilitated exercises on the challenges and how to overcome these.

Feedback from evaluation:

Length of event:

	Too Long	Just Right	Too Short
Responses	1	26	1

Rating of event:

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Slightly Dissatisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Facilitators	0	0	0	3	9	16
Materials	0	0	0	3	12	13
Venue	0	0	0	2	13	13
Enjoyment	0	0	0	0	19	9

What did you find most useful?

- Awareness of E&D
- Shared information
- Insight into new legislation – avoidance of future disputes / claims
- Other business needs
- As an employee of TGHC, meeting and engaging with current and prospective suppliers
- Better understanding of the implications of E&D
- How to engage with SME's
- Understanding how to run a similar event
- Position of different businesses in understanding of E&D
- Legal requirements
- Interaction with different people
- Understanding legal requirements/challenges and how to overcome these
- Thought it was broken down into sections which were well explained
- Information provided
- Understanding the responsibilities and companies and their staff
- Each session was informative and useful
- Information on the changes to legislation in the Equality Act 2010.
- Problems faced by contractors and sub contractors
- Legal information in particular the PSED
- Understanding of challenges faced by smaller organisations in the supply chain and how we can assist
- Sharing information and best practice and ideas for challenges to E&D
- Info re NEPO and relevance to tendering

What did you find least useful?

- Not much interaction
- Continuing sales pitch of consultants

Suggestions for improvement

- More case studies
- Suggest getting information from attendees prior to the event on what they would like covered. Most people will have walked away scratching their heads on what is required to satisfy TGHC procurement needs.
- More training for employees on what is required

Any other comments?

- Requires a follow up session
- Well worth the experience
- Enjoyable and informative
- Prepare information upfront on attendees to assist with networking
- Quiz was a good introduction
- Very good
- Need to ensure that the feedback from the group work is collated and practical steps that will be taken to address the challenges need to be communicated to all participants
- Very informative