



The Gateshead Housing Company Resources Committee

Tuesday 8 September 2015 at 2pm
Room S20, Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead

Agenda

Item	Business
1.	Apologies for Absence
2.	Declarations of Interest
	<u>ITEMS FOR DECISION</u>
3.	Minutes and Matters Arising (Pages 3-7) To approve as a correct the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 5 May 2015
4.	Contract Procedure Rules (Pages 8-15) Report of Head of Corporate Services
	<u>ITEMS FOR INFORMATION</u>
5.	Management Accounts – First Quarter 2015/16 (Pages 16-33) Report of Head of Corporate Services
6.	Sickness Absence and Human Resources Update (Pages 34-48) Report of Support Services Manager
7.	Health and Safety Update (Pages 49-53) Report of Support Services Manager

Item	Business
8.	Equality and Diversity – Update (Pages 54-58) Report of Managing Director
9.	Items for Future Agendas
10.	Date and Time of Next Meeting The next meeting of the committee will be held on Tuesday, 5 November 2015 at 2pm in Room S20 at Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead
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 the indicated categories of the company's Access to Information Rules



The Gateshead Housing Company

Working with Gateshead Council

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

5 May 2015

PRESENT:

Directors

John Hamilton (Chair)
Sheila Bouitieh
Elizabeth Bird
George Clark
Mick Davison
Tracy Harrison

Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Managing Director
Neil Bouch	Director of Customers and Communities
Natalie Hewitt	Head of Corporate Services
Jennifer Aston	Support Services Manager
Louise Taylor	Involvement and Diversity Manager
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

Apologies

Robert Buckley
Kathryn Ferdinand
Joachim Moussouanda Mouanda

1 ROBERT BUCKLEY

The committee placed on record its best wishes to Robert Buckley for a full and speedy recovery following his recent stroke.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the committee held on 24 February 2015 were approved as a correct record.

3 MATTERS ARISING – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Social Media Policy has been rolled out to all TGHC employees who have a mandatory requirement to read and sign up to the Policy.

4 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

A draft Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2014/15 was submitted.

The report covers the key areas of how the Company is ensuring it works to embrace equality and work in accordance with the legislation and regulation.

It highlights some of the activities the Company has been involved in, including where it has worked with partner organisations to deliver on its objectives.

In this annual report and previous reports to this committee, the Company's approach to LGBT equality and in particular its entry to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index has been highlighted.

The framework for the index was revised this year which has seen the Company fall in the index, scoring 79 out of 200 this year, compared to 128 out of 200 last year. Whilst this may seem like a significant drop, this has been discussed with the Stonewall Workplace contact who has confirmed that following the update of the framework this has happened across the majority of organisations submitting information.

As entry to the index opens every September, this provides limited time from the date of the feedback meeting with Stonewall to implement any actions. It is therefore proposed that entry into the index is postponed until 2016 to allow the Company to spend the next 18 months implementing the recommendations.

The committee asked if other organisations were also delaying their entry and if the delay could damage the Company's reputation. It was noted that some organisations only entered every two years and it wouldn't damage the Company's reputation because it wasn't currently in the top 100. Postponing its entry and implementing the recommendations would provide the Company with a better chance of getting into the top 100 in 2016.

The committee asked what the benefits were of entering Stonewall compared to the resources it put into it. It was noted that there was no cost but it was intensive gathering the information. The Company did use the information however to check against other equality strands but for a real benefit it needed to be in the top 100. The committee suggested reviewing this also to ascertain whether it needed to enter it in a two-year cycle in future.

The committee asked if the increase in the number reporting mental health would have a knock on effect on services like gas servicing. It was noted that the Company used this information to help shape services in all areas. It also helped with bids for external funding in areas like supporting mental health.

- RESOLVED –
- (i) That the draft Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2014/15 be approved.
 - (ii) That the report be designed and made available on the TGHC website and issued on request.
 - (iii) That the proposal to defer entry into the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to 2016 be approved, subject to reviewing whether it needed to go to a two-year cycle in the future.

5 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – FOURTH QUARTER 2014/15

The committee received an update on the management accounts for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2014/15.

The Management Accounts Revenue shows a surplus for the fourth quarter of £224,000. This is due to an increase in income from properties owned by TGHC, slippage on vacant posts, one off credits for communal gas supplies and a credit from a reduction in the insurance provision held on the company's balance sheet of £150,000.

The £505,000 under spend on employee costs is mainly due to slippage on vacant posts.

The overhead costs are over budget by £252,000 to the fourth quarter. This was mainly due to increased costs being incurred at Keelman House, prior to it being handed back to the landlord, and a full year charge being made for the Civic Centre (when budgets were based on 8 months).

The overall position in relation to the Repairs Fee at the end of the fourth quarter is an under spend of £189,000. This is mainly due to demand in relation to boilers and winter maintenance being lower than forecast.

RESOLVED – That the update on the management accounts for the fourth quarter of the financial year 2014/15 be noted.

6 SICKNESS ABSENCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

The committee received an update on general human resources initiatives and developments from April 2014 to March 2015, including sickness absence and learning and development activity.

The total sickness absence for the period equates to 8.90 days per person, compared to 8.58 days for the same period last year, which is an increase of 3.60%.

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 3.91 days per person and long term absence was 5.00 days. This compares with 3.10 days short term absence and 5.48 days long term absence for the same period last year. This represents an increase of 20.72% in short term absence and a decrease of 8.76% in long term absence.

The biggest cause of absence for the period was stress related with 686 days lost compared to 630 days lost last year, an increase of 8.16%.

347 days of stress related absence was reported as non-work related stress. This equates to 49.45% as non-work related absence and 50.55% work related absence.

Of the 686 days lost to stress related absence, 22 employees reported non-work related stress and 10 employees reported work related stress.

In March 2015, the Board approved the appointment of Gateshead Council to deliver an Occupational Health Service via a Service Level Agreement (SLA). The SLA commenced on 1 March 2015 and quarterly meetings have been established to monitor the contract. The committee asked if the Council did anything different that it could learn in terms of managing stress. It was noted that it didn't do anything different but the Company was trying to get best out of situations to manage stress.

The committee was informed that research carried out by the Northern Housing Consortium had shown that increased sickness absence through stress is a trend throughout the sector and tended to relate to contact staff and linked to Welfare Reform.

The committee also received details of the work that the company had been doing during the period to manage sickness absence, health and wellbeing, other human resources initiatives and developments and learning and development activity.

RESOLVED – That the update on sickness and human resources initiatives be noted.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The committee received an update on the following health and safety activities for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015: -

- Partners Activity
- Accident Reporting
- Asbestos Management
- Fire Safety Management
- Legionella Control
- Fire alarm systems and sprinkler system
- Out of Hours
- Emergency lighting
- Non domestic gas boilers
- Bin Chute Fire Shut Off Tests and Inspections
- Cyclical Repair and Maintenance
- Lift Maintenance
- Company Construction Related Activity
- Health and Safety Legislation Changes

A breakdown of the accidents/incidents near misses and the violent incidents and warning alerts would be posted on the TGHC Website.

RESOLVED – That the update on health and safety activities be noted.

8 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee would be held on Tuesday, 8 September 2015 at 2pm at Gateshead Civic Centre.

9 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with Category 1 of the Company's Access to Information Rules.

10 MINUTES (Category 1)

The minutes of the last meeting of the committee held on 24 February 2015 were approved as a correct record.

11 MATTERS ARISING – WREKENTON HUB (Category 1)

The committee was informed that the teams were now working together in preparation for the library element of the HUB opening in June.



Report to Resources Committee

8 September 2015

Title: Contract Procedure Rules

Report of: Head of Corporate Services

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Committee with updated Contract Procedure Rules for approval to Board.

Background

2. The Contract Procedure Rules have been amended to ensure that they meet the new public sector procurement directive that became law early this year.
3. The amended Contract Procedure Rules have been attached in the Appendix.

Summary

4. The Contract Procedure Rules cover the way the company contracts with suppliers for goods, supplies and services.
5. All applicable EU and UK legislation applies to the contract procedure rules and all contractors/ suppliers are expected to comply with the relevant legislation also.
6. All employees are responsible for ensuring that the Contract Procedure Rules are complied with.
7. Internal audits are regularly carried out to ensure that these rules are met.
8. The Head of Corporate Services is responsible for keeping the Contract and Procedure Rules under review and making recommendations for changes to the Board.

Main Changes

9. The main changes from the previous Contract Procedure Rules include:
 - A contract should be awarded based on the “most economically advantageous tender”

- Where an external advertisement is made for contracts over £25,000, advertisements must also be placed on the governments “contracts finder” website, in line with new EU small procurement regulations
 - Emphasis on the European Union rules on procurement
 - Submission and opening requirements for electronic tenders
10. The revised Contract Procedure Rules have been reviewed by Gateshead Council’s legal team.

Link to values

11. This report is in line with the following values of the company :-
- Fair
 - Customer Focused
 - Open and Honest
 - Accountable

Impact on tenants

12. Whilst this report does not impact on tenants directly, appropriate procurement and monitoring of contracts will ensure efficiencies are maximised and redirected to services that directly impact on tenants.

Risk Management Implications

13. The Contract Procedure Rules ensure that the risk of contractor failure is effectively controlled.
14. The Contract Procedure Rules ensure that procurement is completed in line with EU and UK legislation.

Financial Implications

15. The Contract Procedure Rules ensure that the company appropriately manages its finances and awards contracts based on the “most economically advantageous tender”.

Health Implications

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

Equality and Diversity Implications

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

Value for Money implications

18. The Contract Procedure Rules will ensure that contracts are awarded based on the “most economically advantageous tender”.

Environmental Implications

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

Consultation carried out

20. No consultation has been carried out in relation to this report.

Recommendation

21. The Committee is recommended to request the Board approve the amended Contract Procedure Rules.

The Gateshead Housing Company Governance Handbook Contract Procedure Rules

1. Introduction and Interpretation

- 1.1 The following words within these Contract Procedure Rules shall be interpreted as follows:
- 1.1.1 “Board” shall mean the board of The Gateshead Housing Company.
 - 1.1.2 “Contract” shall mean a contract with a third party for works, goods or services.
 - 1.1.3 “EU Procurement Regulations” shall mean the Public Contract Regulations 2015, Directive 2014/24/EU, and any other amendment, re-enactment or subordinate legislation.
 - 1.1.4 “EU Threshold” shall mean the financial thresholds as prescribed by the EU Procurement Regulations.
 - 1.1.5 “Rules” shall mean these Contract Procedure Rules.
- 1.2 Every contract entered into by The Gateshead Housing Company shall be awarded in compliance with these Rules, unless any of the exceptions or exemptions set out at Rule 3 applies.
- 1.3 Every exception to these Rules, and the reasons for it, will be recorded in the minutes of the relevant Board meeting.

2. Tendering Procedure

- 2.1 Tenders and/or quotations shall be invited or negotiated for all contracts with an estimated value in excess of £2,500, in accordance with the following provisions.
- 2.2 The relevant Head of Service, or another employee with delegated power, will adopt one of the following tendering procedures:
- 2.2.1 If the contract value is between £2,500 and £20,000, quotations may be requested from at least three contractors, or if this is not possible, from all capable contractors.

- 2.2.2 If the contract value is above £20,000, but below £50,000, written tenders may be invited (either with or without advertisement) from a reasonable number of capable contractors.
- 2.2.3 If the contract value is above £50,000, tenders may be invited by advertisement, giving at least seven days' notice for potential bidders to respond. If the contract value in question is less than £50,000, an advertisement shall be published in at least one local newspaper, and an additional advertisement may also be published in a specialist, trade or professional journal. If the contract value in question is over £50,000, a trade or professional journal may be used instead of a local newspaper.
- 2.2.4 A tender may be invited from a contractor already engaged by the company, if that is in the company's interests, provided that the combined value of contracts awarded to the Company in accordance with this Rule does not exceed the relevant EU Threshold.
- 2.2.5 A tender or quotation may be obtained through a framework or consortium arrangement which is compliant with EU Procurement Regulations, provided that the Managing Director and the Head of Corporate Services are satisfied both with the procedures for the procurement, and with the terms of any appointment made through the framework in question.

2.3 Any invitation to tender will specify that all tenders must be submitted either:

- 2.3.1 Electronically through an approved electronic tendering system; or
- 2.3.2 In a plain sealed envelope addressed to a nominated officer and marked 'Tender', stating the closing date for return of the tenders and description of the contract, without any mark revealing the tenderer's identity.

2.4 The table below summarises the requirements of the tendering procedure:

Threshold	Requirement
£0 - £2,500	No formal tendering procedure
£2,501 - £20,000	Written quotations invited (minimum of 3)
£20,001 - £50,000	Written tenders invited (reasonable number) Discretion to advertise – and potential requirement to advertise on Contracts Finder
£50,001 - EU Threshold	Advertise & obtain written tenders, or use framework/consortium. Requirement to advertise on Contracts Finder
Above EU Threshold	European Union (EU) tender process, or EU compliant framework/consortium

As at the date these contract procedures rules were adopted, the relevant EU Thresholds were Goods & Services- £172,514 and Works- £4,322,012

3. Exemptions and Exclusions

- 3.1 These Rules do not apply to any Contracts:
- 3.1.1 For goods, works or services which are obtainable only from one contractor;
 - 3.1.2 For the procurement of information technology supplies and services, in which case the Head of Corporate Services may invite quotations and tenders in accordance with procedures agreed with the Managing Director;
 - 3.1.3 Where the Board authorises an exception to the Rules;
 - 3.1.4 The matter is so urgent that it is not feasible to comply with these Rules; in which case the Managing Director shall have delegated authority to act on behalf of the Board and authorise an exception to these Rules, and will report the reasons (and the details of the contract award) to the next meeting of the Board.

4. Opening Tenders

- 4.1 All electronic tenders and all envelopes containing paper-based tenders will be held by the relevant Head of Service, or by their nominated representative, until they are opened.
- 4.2 All electronic tenders and all envelopes containing tenders for the same contract will be opened at the same time by a representative of the officer who invited the tenders, and a representative of the Head of Corporate Services.
- 4.3 Any tender received after the deadline for the receipt of tenders will not be considered, unless the other tenders have not yet been opened and the employees referred to in paragraph 4.2 are satisfied that:
- 4.3.1 In the case of an electronic tender, the tender could not have been submitted by the deadline for reasons outside of the tenderer's control; or
 - 4.3.2 In the case of a paper-based tender, the tender was posted in sufficient time for it to have been received in the ordinary course of post.

5. Evaluation of Tenders and Award of Contracts

- 5.1 Award criteria must be clearly set out in the invitation to tender or equivalent documentation, together with the weighted scoring methodology.
- 5.2 A contract should be awarded based on the "most economically advantageous tender", which may not necessarily be the lowest priced tender. A record of the tender award

decision and the reason for it being made should be included in the minutes of the next meeting of the Board.

- 5.3 A tender for works, supplies or services £50,000 or above in value may not be accepted without the approval of the Board. In urgent situations, a tender above £50,000 may be accepted by the Managing Director, in consultation with the Chair of the Board, with the reasons being reported at the next meeting of the Board.

6. Alterations

- 6.1 Where an examination of competitive tenders reveals an error or discrepancy which would affect the sum payable by or to the company, in a tender which might otherwise be accepted, the tenderer may be given the opportunity of confirming or withdrawing his/her tender.
- 6.2 Where the appropriate employee is satisfied that the error or discrepancy is an arithmetical error, the tenderer may be given the opportunity to correct it.
- 6.3 Where an error or discrepancy is not an arithmetical error, or further information is required, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Services, an employee may ask the tenderer to clarify his/her tender or to provide additional information.

7. Form and Content of Contracts

- 7.1 Every contract above £20,000 in value and any other contract where the Managing Director so decides, must be in writing and must be signed by him/her on behalf of the company.
- 7.2 Every contract shall be reviewed and approved by Gateshead Council's legal team prior to being signed.
- 7.3 Every such contract will:
- 7.3.1 Specify the work to be carried out, or the supplies or services to be provided, the price to be paid (including any discounts), and the timetable for performing the contract; and
 - 7.3.2 Where relevant, require that the goods and materials must comply, at a minimum, with any relevant specification issued by the British Standards Institution or equivalent European or International standard.

8. Common Seal of the Company

- 8.1 The Common Seal of the Company will be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Managing Director.
- 8.2 The Common Seal will be affixed to those documents which in the opinion of the Managing Director should be sealed. The affixing of the Common Seal will be attested by the Managing Director and another Director.

9. Communication

- 9.1 These Rules will be published on The Gateshead Housing Company's intranet.
- 9.2 If the contract value is over £25,000 and an external advertisement is made, an equivalent advertisement must also be made on the government's "Contracts Finder" website, in accordance with EU Procurement Rules.

10. Revision

- 10.1 The Head of Corporate Services shall keep these Rules under review, and may make recommendations to the Board to amend the Rules from time to time where considered necessary.



Report to Resources Committee

8 September 2015

Title: Management Accounts – First Quarter 2015/16

Report of: Head of Corporate Services

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Committee with an update on the management accounts for the first quarter of the financial year 2015/16.

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 forecast spend at year end. This report has been included in the Appendix to this report.
3. The Board agreed the budget for 2015/16 at its meeting on 19 March 2015.

Management Accounts

4. The Council agreed to pay the company fees totalling £35,858,691 for the 2015/16 financial year. This consists of £13,484,483 for the Management Fee, £1,000,000 for the Company to manage the capital programme and £21,374,208 for the repairs fee (£19,229,208 from HRA Revenue and £2,145,000 from HRA Capital).
5. The Company has also budgeted to receive £164,060 income in 2015/16 in relation to new build management fees, management fees for managing other properties, rental income for the TGHC owned properties and some miscellaneous income.
6. The total revenue budget for 2015/16 is therefore £14,648,543 and the repairs budget £21,374,208.
7. As detailed in the budget report, the proposed budget, similar to the prior year, includes a review of current vacancies. We have removed costs associated with some of our current vacant posts that we do not expect to fill to enable the budget to balance.

8. The 2015/16 repairs fee has been agreed as an overall increase on the 2014/15 fee. It reflects the increased costs agreed as part of the 2 year extension to the Mears contract and a £800,000 increase in the painting programme to allow a 7 year cycle to be implemented.
9. The Management Accounts for the first quarter of the financial year 2015/16 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 June 2015.
10. The Management Accounts Revenue shows a surplus for the first quarter of £292,000. This is due to slippage on vacant posts and overhead budgets where spend will not be realised until later in the year.
11. The £197,000 under spend on employee costs is mainly due to slippage on vacant posts. Some of these posts were new posts that the company received additional management fee to fund, as the posts could not be advertised until the funding was agreed they were not filled for the start of the year.
12. The overhead costs are under budget by £97,000 to the first quarter. This is mainly due to budgets that are traditionally not spent until later in the year and lower utility bills during the summer months. We are forecasting that overheads will come in £37,000 over budget for the year due to the Health & Safety SLA which was not budgeted for, however a vacant post within the Health & Safety team is being held to fund the SLA so there will be a corresponding under spend on employee costs.
13. The overall position for repairs at the end of the first quarter is an under spend of £361,000. Although the position at the end of the first quarter would suggest that spend is on target there are a couple of areas of concern. Mears responsive repairs and relets are both overspent, this is partly due to Mears completing work they received last financial year for which the budget has now transferred to Construction Services. Construction Services budget have underspent which partly offsets the over spend, but this area will need to be monitored closely to ensure it comes in on budget by the year end.
14. Spend on the painting programme is currently underspent for both Mears and Construction Services. Mears are currently on site and we would expect spend to increase and be back on budget during the next quarter as works progress over the summer months. Construction Services aren't due to start their painting programme until the end of July, however they are confident they can complete the full programme this year, therefore we still expect this to spend to budget.

Link to values

15. This report is in line with the Company values of being: -
 - Fair
 - Customer Focused
 - Open and Honest
 - Accountable

Impact on tenants

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

Risk Management Implications

17. Regular and accurate monitoring will ensure that the strategic risk within the business plan (insufficient available financial resources) is effectively controlled.
18. Current and proposed changes as part of Welfare Reform have impacted on void expenditure and will need to be closely monitored throughout the year to ensure any potential overspends are mitigated.

Financial Implications

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

Health Implications

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

Equality and Diversity Implications

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

Value for Money implications

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

Environmental Implications

23. 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

24. None directly for this report.

Recommendation

25. The Committee's views are sought as to whether it is satisfied with the financial management of the Revenue and Repairs budgets for the first quarter of the 2015/16 financial year.

**The Gateshead Housing Company
Management Accounts – June 2015**

Revenue and Repairs Executive Summary

1. The management accounts for the first quarter of the 2015/16 financial year are shown below:

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Year End Variance Forecast £'000
Management Fee					
Income	3,661	3,663	(2)	14,649	0
Employee Costs	2,253	2,450	197	9,795	32
Overhead Costs	1,116	1,213	97	4,854	(37)
Surplus/(Deficit)	292	0	292	0	(5)
Repairs Fee					
Repairs Management Fee	4,807	4,807	0	19,229	0
Capitalisation	393	536	(143)	2,145	0
Insurance Funded Repairs	32	0	32	0	32
Repairs Costs	4,871	5,343	472	21,374	(32)
Surplus/(Deficit)	361	0	361	0	0
Overall Annual Surplus/(Deficit)	653	0	653	0	(5)

2. The overall surplus at the end of the first quarter is £653,000.
3. The revenue budget to the first quarter shows a surplus of £292,000. The surplus is mainly due to slippage on vacant posts and overhead budgets that traditionally have low levels of spend during the first quarter.
4. The repairs budget is underspent at the end of the first quarter by £361,000, however Mears responsive repairs and voids are overspent (partially offset by the underspend in relation to Construction Services contract mobilisation) and will be monitored closely over the next few months to ensure that the overspend is reduced and if required measures will be put in place to control the spend to within budget.

Income

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Year End Variance Forecast £'000
INCOME					
Management Fee	3,371	3,371	0	13,484	0
Officer Costs	250	250	0	1,000	0
New Build Management Fee	22	22	0	88	0
Management Fee from External Bodies	6	6	0	25	0
Gardening Service Income	1	1	0	2	0
Feed in Tariffs	0	1	(1)	2	0
TGHC Properties Rent	10	10	0	40	0
Solicitors Packs	1	1	0	4	0
Laundry Income	0	1	(1)	4	0
Total Income	3,661	3,663	(2)	14,649	0

5. Overall income for the first quarter is under target by £2,000. This is due to timing issues in receiving feed in tariff and laundry income. However we would expect this income to be on budget at the year end.
6. The Management Fee is in relation to the everyday management of Gateshead Council's properties. The fee has increased by 2.1% from the 2014/15 management fee.
7. 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. This fee equates to 6% of the overall capital programme.
8. The New Build Management Fee relates to the fee paid by Keelman Homes for managing the development of its new build properties throughout Gateshead. The fee has been calculated based on the salary costs of the employees involved in managing the builds. The fee will be reconciled at the end of the year to ensure it covers the actual costs of the relevant employees.
9. 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 Keelman Homes and another local housing provider. The contract to manage the properties on behalf of Thirteen Group and Gateshead Council's Empty Homes now sits with Keelman Homes, however the company has a management agreement with Keelman Homes from which it receives £200 per property for each of these properties. Should any new properties come under our management during the year then this fee could potentially change.
10. The 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.

11. The Feed In Tariff income relates to income we receive for the electricity generated by the photovoltaic panels on the 3 new build properties at High Lanes.
12. The TGHC Properties Rent income relates to rent and service charge income received for the 8 properties that are owned by The Gateshead Housing Company.
13. The Solicitors Pack income is in relation to information provided to solicitors by our Leasehold Services Team whenever a leasehold property is sold or mortgaged. Due to the increase in Right To Buy applications over the last year, we increased this budget from 2014/15 to a more realistic level.
14. The Laundry income relates to the coin-operated washing machines and dryers based at Warwick Court. The actual income is currently under budget however we expect it to come in on budget by the year end.

Staff Costs

15. Staff Costs are broken down as follows:

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Year End Variance Forecast £'000
Employee Costs					
Customer Services	663	726	63	2,903	0
Neighbourhood Services - HQ	249	249	0	994	0
Investment & Development Services	264	332	68	1,326	0
Neighbourhood Services - areas	687	717	30	2,870	0
Customers and Communities Sub Total	1,863	2,024	161	8,093	0
Corporate Services	390	426	36	1,702	32
Total Employee Costs	2,253	2,450	197	9,795	32

16. Salary costs are underspent for the first quarter due to salary slippage. The salary budget is based on the current structure and a number of vacant posts have been held at zero budget and will not be appointed to during the year 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.
17. The Customer Services section is currently underspent by £63,000. This is partly due to a vacant post within the repairs reporting centre that we are currently in the process of recruiting to. In addition, the council provided us with

additional management fee to create new posts within the voids, lettings and rent and income teams, to deal with the additional workload caused by welfare reform and universal credit, and for an additional post in the repairs team to assist in the management of the repairs contract extension. As we couldn't begin recruitment to these posts until the management fee was agreed, the posts weren't filled at the start of the year leading to the salary slippage.

18. There is an under spend of £68,000 in the Investment and Development Services section. This is mainly due to vacant posts pending a restructure of the teams and transfer of the cyclical maintenance team from the Customer Services section to the Investment and Development section.
19. There is an underspend of £30,000 in Neighbourhood Services – areas due to vacant posts and savings from reduced maternity leave pay across the housing office network.
20. Corporate Services is currently under spent by £36,000 due to vacant posts within the Health & Safety, Performance and ICT teams. It is expected that this budget will be underspent by £32,000 at year end as a post in the Health and Safety team is being held vacant to fund the Health and Safety Service Level Agreement (SLA).
21. During the first quarter we incurred agency costs of £20,000. This is an increase on the same period in 2014/15 when the spend was £14,000. The spend on agency staff this year has been offset in the month end figures due to a number of vacant posts being held.
22. The agency staff costs relate to a post in the Lettings and Gas Servicing Team to cover maternity leave and to cover vacant posts in the Rent and Income and HR & Admin Teams.

Overhead Costs

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Year End Variance Forecast £'000
Overhead Costs					
Customers and Communities HQ Total	59	73	14	294	(1)
Corporate Services Total	852	912	60	3,646	(33)
Customers and Communities Area Costs	205	228	23	914	(3)
Total Overhead Costs	1,116	1,213	97	4,854	(37)

23. Overhead costs are underspent at the first quarter. This is mainly due to costs not yet being incurred. We are forecasting that this budget will be overspent by £37,000 at year end, which will be offset by the forecasted underspend on salary costs.

24. An analysis of overhead spend against budget is included within Appendix 1. Appendix 2 shows a pie chart of areas on which the HQ Overheads have been spent.
25. Budget Holders are accountable for their budgets and receive monthly management accounts. This enables them to review their spend in more detail. The Finance Section monitor all areas of spend and ensure that costs are effectively controlled. It should be noted that not all costs are fully controllable, especially those in relation to utilities and insurance claims. Finance monitors these costs on a monthly basis and highlights to the Management Team any areas causing concern.
26. The current under spend within the Corporate Services section is due to low spend on some budgets which traditionally don't spend until later in the year. The main areas are training, which incurs spend when employees begin qualification courses at the start of the new academic year, communications, tenant involvement and ICT.
27. We are forecasting an over spend of £33,000 for Corporate Services by the year end, £32,000 of this is due to the Health & Safety SLA which was agreed after budget-setting. The SLA is being funded via a vacant post within the H&S staffing budget and there is therefore a corresponding £32,000 underspend showing within Corporate Services salaries costs.
28. The current underspend on Customer and Communities is mainly due to utility costs being under budget, however this is expected during the summer months and we expect the costs to increase during the winter months.

Repairs Summary

29. The repairs budget was set taking in to consideration the changes to the repairs contract following the agreement of a 2 year extension to the Mears Contract. As part of the extension, responsive repairs to boundary walls, fencing and flat roofs will now be carried out by Construction Services as will Relets in the East and Central Neighbourhoods. The relevant budget to cover these works has now transferred to Construction Services.
30. As part of the contract extension a 2% inflationary increase on all Schedule of Rates (SOR codes) was agreed and the relevant budgets have therefore been increased by 2% to account for this. No inflationary increases had previously been applied to the rates during the first 3 years of the contract.
31. An analysis of the repairs costs is provided below:

	YTD Actual £000's	YTD Budget £000's	YTD Variance £000's	Annual Budget £000's	Year End Variance Forecast £'000
REPAIRS					
Fixed Costs (Mears Prelim's)	952	952	0	3,810	0
Fixed Costs (CS Prelim's)	152	152	0	606	0
Responsive – Mears	1,319	1,124	(195)	4,494	(32)
Responsive – CS	253	394	141	1,575	0
Responsive - External Specialist	34	26	(8)	102	0
Responsive - Others	14	58	44	230	0
Relets – Mears	1,055	751	(304)	3,003	0
Relets – CS	255	420	165	1,679	0
Relets - Other	78	99	21	394	0
Cyclical Repairs - Servicing	129	89	(40)	357	0
Cyclical Repairs - Remedial Works	0	25	25	102	0
Water Hygiene Testing	6	38	32	153	0
Painting – Mears	60	179	119	714	0
Painting – CS	0	200	200	800	0
Gas Servicing	467	489	22	1,956	0
Electrical Circuit Testing	20	25	5	102	0
Solid Fuel Testing	0	1	1	2	0
Lift Maintenance	29	25	(4)	102	0
Security	10	25	15	102	0
Environmental Works	15	57	42	230	0
Energy Performance Certificates	6	11	5	46	0
Aids & Adaptations	17	38	21	153	0
Software Development	0	12	12	50	0
Repairs Contingency	0	153	153	612	0
Expenditure TOTAL	4,871	5,343	472	21,374	(32)
Insurance Funded Repairs	32	0	32	0	32
Capitalisation	393	536	(143)	2,145	0
Repair Management Fee Income	4,807	4,807	0	19,229	0
Income Total	5,232	5,343	(111)	21,374	32
REPAIRS TOTAL	361	0	361	0	0

Overall Summary

32. The repairs budget is underspent at the end of the first quarter by £361,000 however this is unlikely to continue and we are forecasting spend to come in on budget by the year end. We are prudently forecasting that all budgets underspent at the end of the first quarter will come in on budget at the year end.
33. The underspend in the first quarter is mainly due to low spend on the painting programme. The painting budget has been increased this year and works are now being carried out by both Mears and Construction Services. There has been no spend by Construction Services in relation to painting due to the mobilisation period required before they can start on site. Mears spend to date has also been low but we would expect this to increase over the summer months when the majority of the external painting will be carried out.

34. The spend with Mears on responsive repairs and relets has been high in the first quarter, however this appears to be due to the completion and invoicing of jobs that were work in progress at the end of 2014/15. The budget for these now sits with Construction Services under the new contract extension. It is expected that this overspend will be mainly offset by a corresponding underspend by Construction Services as they start on the works passed across from April.

Responsive Repairs

35. Responsive repair costs have been split between spend with Mears, spend with Construction Services (CS) and spend with other providers. Mears remain the main repairs contractor and they carry out the majority of the repairs and maintenance works at our properties. Construction Services carry out all drainage works, highways repair works, works to flat roofs and boundary fencing and walls.

36. To reflect operational delivery and to allow for closer monitoring of the budgets, we have split the repairs other costs budget into smaller budgets:

- External Specialist Works - for asbestos work and any other subcontractors used to provide specialist work (that Mears/CS do not have the ability to carry out)
- Responsive Other - for the repairs freephone number, postage for postcards/letters and removal and accommodation costs incurred due to repair works

37. There have been 13,530 repair orders invoiced to the end of the first quarter and the average repair cost for the period was £100.44. This compares to 12,961 invoiced repairs, at an average cost of £93.13, for the same period 2014/15.

38. Mears Responsive Repairs are overspent by £195,000 at the end of the first quarter. This is partly due to Mears completing and invoicing for works to flat roofs and boundary walls and fences that were started by Mears prior to April. The budget for these works has now transferred to Construction Services who are responsible for any new jobs raised from April. A corresponding underspend is expected by Construction Services at the year end, due to low spend in the first few months during mobilisation.

39. The majority of the outstanding works with Mears should now be completed and invoiced, therefore we would expect Mears responsive repairs to be on budget each month for the rest of the year. We will continue to monitor this closely and if spend continues to be over budget, we may have to introduce measures to reduce and control spend on responsive repairs, similar to those utilised in previous years.

40. The Mears overspend has been partly offset by the £141,000 underspend on Construction Services Responsive Repairs. The spend in the first few months was expected to be low as a mobilisation period is expected between jobs being raised, completed and invoiced.

41. An analysis of the type of responsive repairs carried out is included within Appendix 3 and a comparison of responsive repairs costs and number of jobs is included in Appendix 4.

Relets

42. The relet budget is split between the costs of the works carried out by Mears, Construction Services and the other costs associated with relets. Other costs mainly relate to costs associated with asbestos works, security costs and decoration vouchers provided to new tenants.
43. Mears relet costs are £304,000 over budget at the first quarter however 63 jobs at a cost of £199,000 were for the Central and East neighbourhoods, for which the budget now sits with Construction Services. These jobs were raised with Mears during 2014/15 and were in progress at the year end and not completed until 2015/16. There were 490 properties let to the end of the first quarter (443 at the end of July 15), compared to 375 for the same period in 2014/15.
44. Construction Services relet costs are £165,000 under budget which will offset some of the Mears overspend. Due to the time it takes to complete a relet there were only a few jobs completed and invoiced in the first months of the new contract due to this mobilisation period. We would expect this to change now the first quarter is finished and for jobs to be completed and invoiced steadily for the rest of the year to bring spend within budget in the remaining periods.
45. Weekly operational meetings are held with Mears and Construction Services to discuss the relet works being undertaken and we closely monitor the number of voids being sent through to both contractors in order to manage overall expenditure.
46. The average relet cost for jobs completed and invoiced to the first quarter was £2,605.45 and the number of relets invoiced to the first quarter was 385. At the first quarter of 2014/15, 344 jobs had been invoiced at an average cost of £2,206.78. The 2015/16 statistics do not currently include any of the Construction Services jobs as we are awaiting the detail of the work that has been completed.
47. In some areas of the borough where we have multiple vacant properties, and demand for these properties is low, we have taken the decision to slow down relet works until the properties that are currently ready to let have been let. There are currently 21 void properties being held back which has reduced from a high of 52 properties in September 2014.

Painting

48. An additional £800,000 has been added to the painting budget this year to allow a 7 year painting cycle to be introduced. The budget has been split between Mears and Construction Services.
49. The Mears painting programme budget is under spent by £119,000 to the first quarter. There is a programme in place based on the budgeted figure which Mears are currently working to and we would expect this programme to be complete and the budget to spend by the year end. The majority of the external

painting programme will be carried out over the summer when the weather is more favourable so we would expect spend to increase during the second quarter.

50. Works in relation to the Construction Services painting programme are due to start on site in July 2015, therefore there is no spend against this budget to date. A full programme is in place however based on the budgeted figure, which Construction Services have confirmed they will complete by the end of the year.

Gas Servicing

51. Gas servicing is under budget for the first quarter by £22,000 as the number of gas repairs required has been lower during the summer months. We would expect these to increase during the winter months and the current underspend to reduce. This budget line also includes the Gas Care Plan (which is a fixed monthly cost of £150,000), the budget for gas repairs and the no access team and any warrant required to secure access to a property.
52. Gas appliances are required to have a gas service carried out every 12 months. At the end of the first quarter, 99.73% of properties had a gas service within the previous 12 months. 50 properties were non-compliant, of these 27 were serviced in early July, 14 have been visited by the contractor but have outstanding compliance paperwork and 9 properties are still outstanding and warrants are being sought to gain access to these properties .

Cyclical Maintenance

53. There are a number of budgets headings in relation to the cyclical maintenance programmes which have been developed for our properties; this includes cyclical repairs, water hygiene testing, lift maintenance, environmental works, electrical circuit testing and solid fuel testing.
54. The cyclical repairs – servicing budget is £40,000 over budget to the end of the first quarter, however this is partly offset by a £25,000 underspend on cyclical repairs – remedial works. The current system does not allow the costs to be easily split between servicing and works, however implementation of the new BARIS interface should make this possible and costs will be correctly allocated to each budget heading once this is in place.
55. The environmental budget is underspent to the end of the first quarter by £42,000. However the May and June invoices have not yet been paid as the charges on the two invoices are being reviewed and queried with Construction Services. We would expect this to spend to budget by year end.

Others

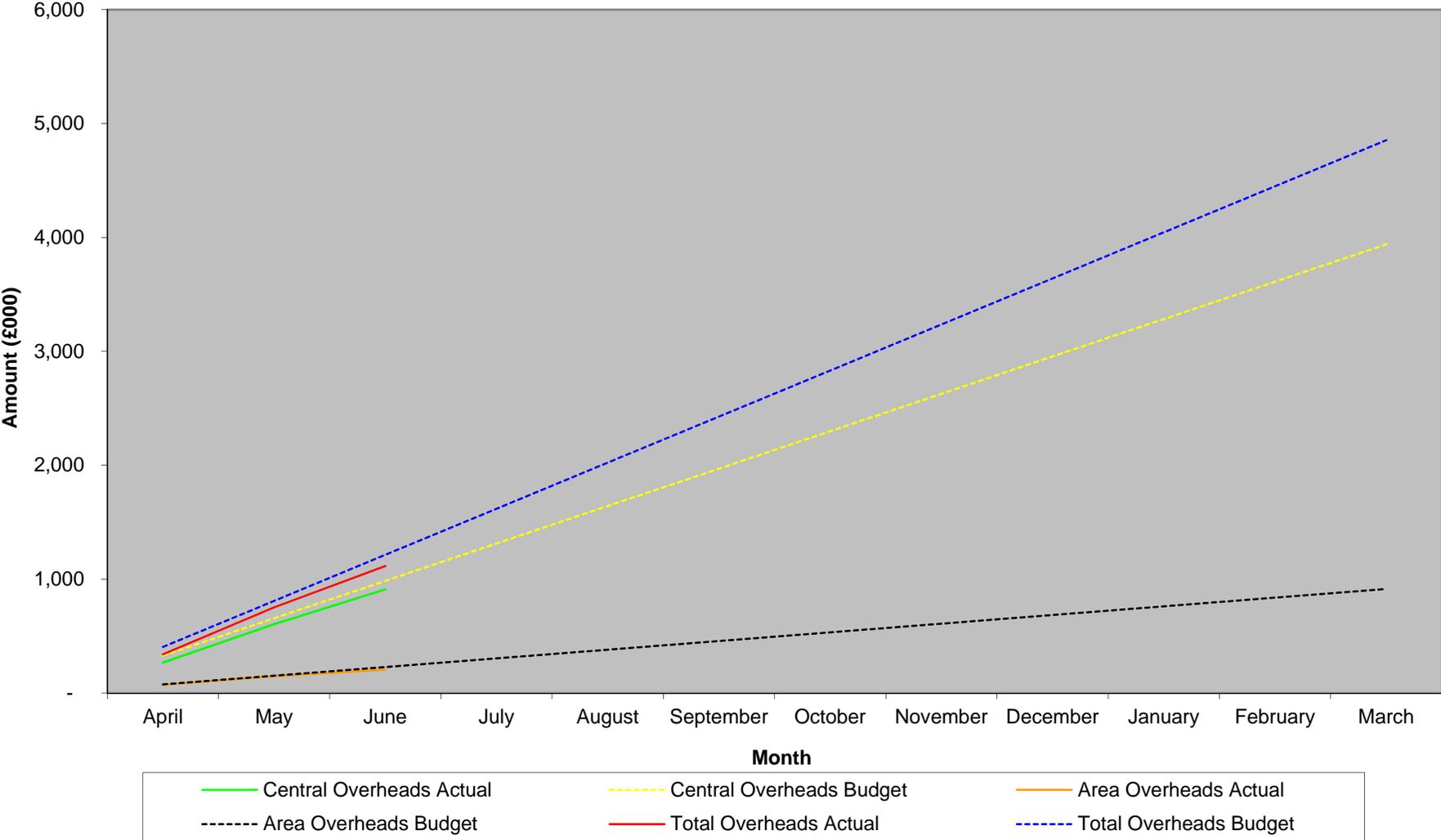
56. The software development budget relates to the contribution from the repairs budget for the purchase of the BARIS interface. The interface will be used to improve the flow of information between Northgate, the Mears Repairs Management System (MCM) and Construction Services Repairs Management system (TOTAL). The costs for the interface have been charged to the company's fixed assets on the balance sheet and will be depreciated over the next 4 years. Development and testing of the interface is still ongoing with Mears and Construction Services.

57. The repairs contingency budget of £612,000 will be used to offset any potential overspends or any unforeseen one-off expenditure items arising in year. There is no spend against this budget to date, however we are currently taking the prudent view that spend will be to budget by the year end.

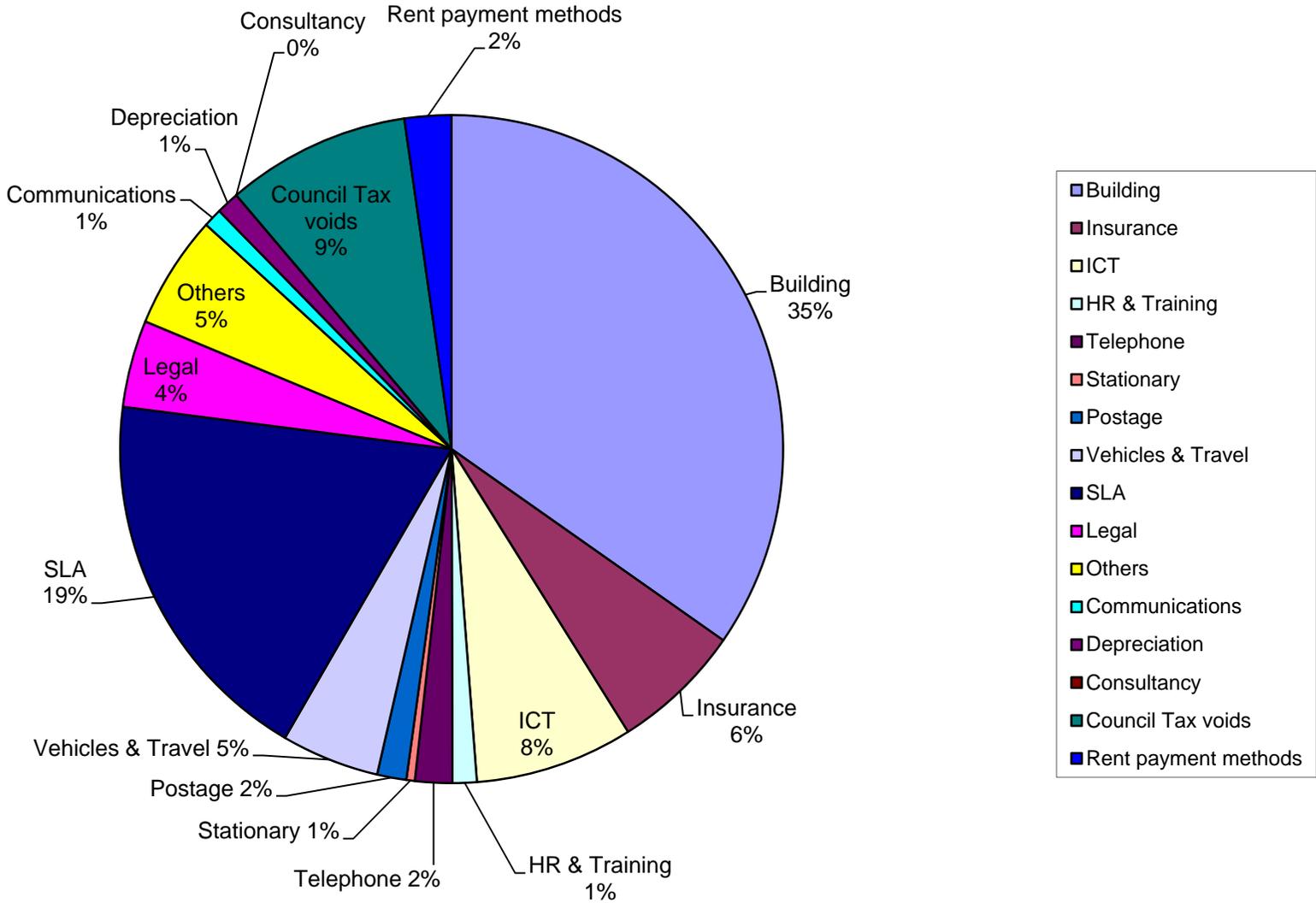
Detailed Management Accounts

	YTD Actual £'000	YTD Budget £'000	YTD Variance £'000	Annual Budget £'000	Y/E Variance Forecast £'000
INCOME					
Management Fee	3,371	3,371	0	13,484	0
Officer Costs	250	250	0	1,000	0
New Build Management Fee	22	22	0	88	0
Management Fee from external bodies	6	6	0	25	0
Gardening Service Income	1	1	0	2	0
Feed in Tariffs	0	1	(1)	2	0
TGHC Properties Rent	10	10	0	40	0
Solicitors Packs	1	1	0	4	0
Laundry Income	0	1	(1)	4	0
Total Income	3,661	3,663	(2)	14,649	0
Employee Costs					
Customer Services	663	726	63	2,903	0
Neighbourhood Services - HQ	249	249	0	994	0
Investment & Development Services	264	332	68	1,326	0
Neighbourhood Services - areas	687	717	30	2,870	0
Customers & Communities sub total	1,863	2,024	161	8,093	0
Corporate Services	390	426	36	1,702	32
Total Employee costs	2,253	2,450	197	9,795	32
Overhead Costs					
Customers and Communities HQ	59	73	14	294	(1)
Corporate Services	852	912	60	3,646	(33)
Customers and Communities Area	205	228	23	914	(3)
Total Overhead Costs	1,116	1,213	97	4,854	(37)
Surplus/(Deficit)	292	0	292	0	(5)
Repairs Fee					
Repairs Management Fee	4,807	4,804	0	19,229	0
Capitalisation	393	536	(143)	2,145	0
Insurance funded repairs	32	0	32	0	32
Repairs Costs	4,871	5,343	472	21,374	(32)
Surplus/(Deficit)	361	0	361	0	0
Overall Annual Surplus/(Deficit)	653	0	653	0	(5)

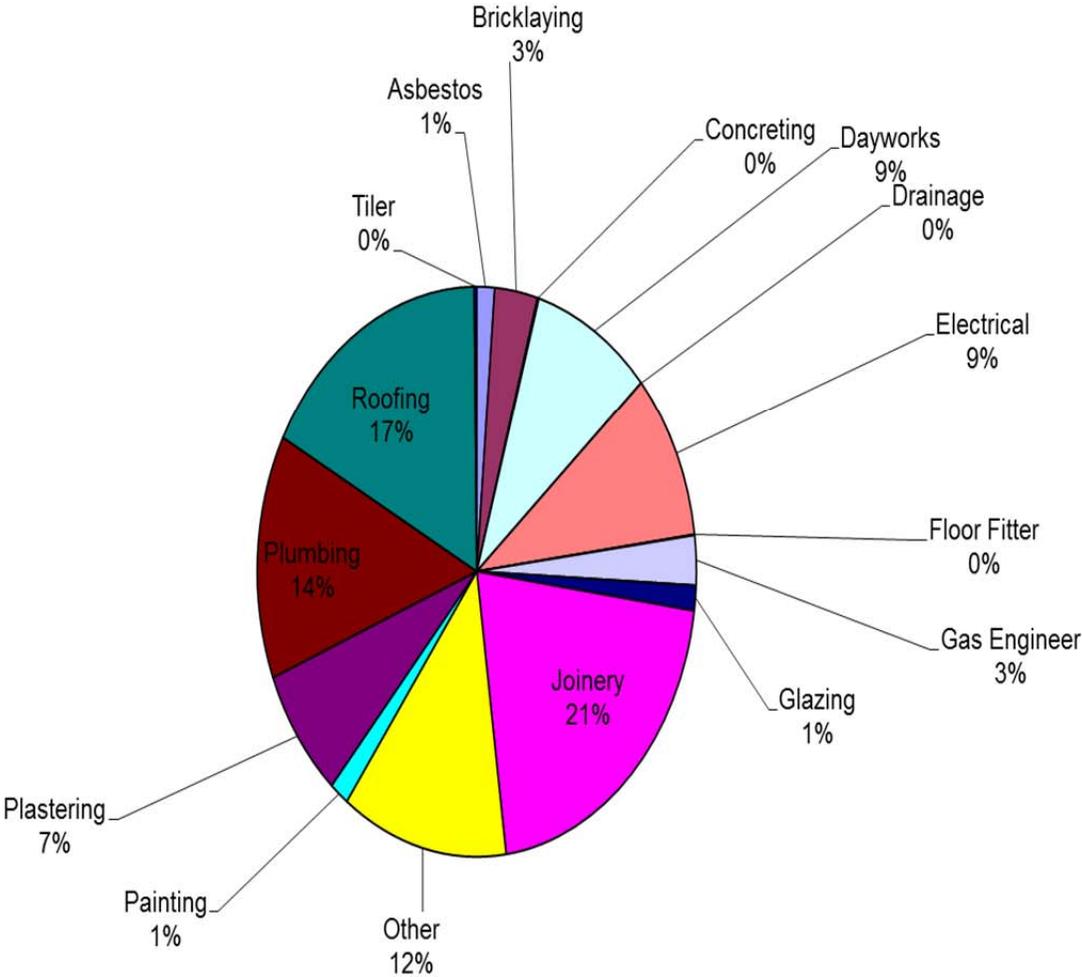
TGHC Overheads Budget 2015/16



Central Overheads expenditure cumulative 30th June 2015

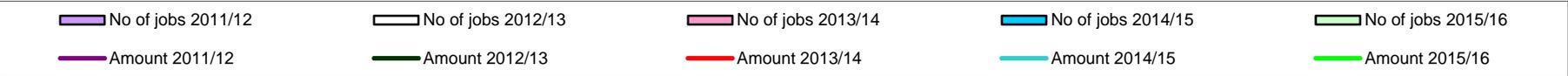
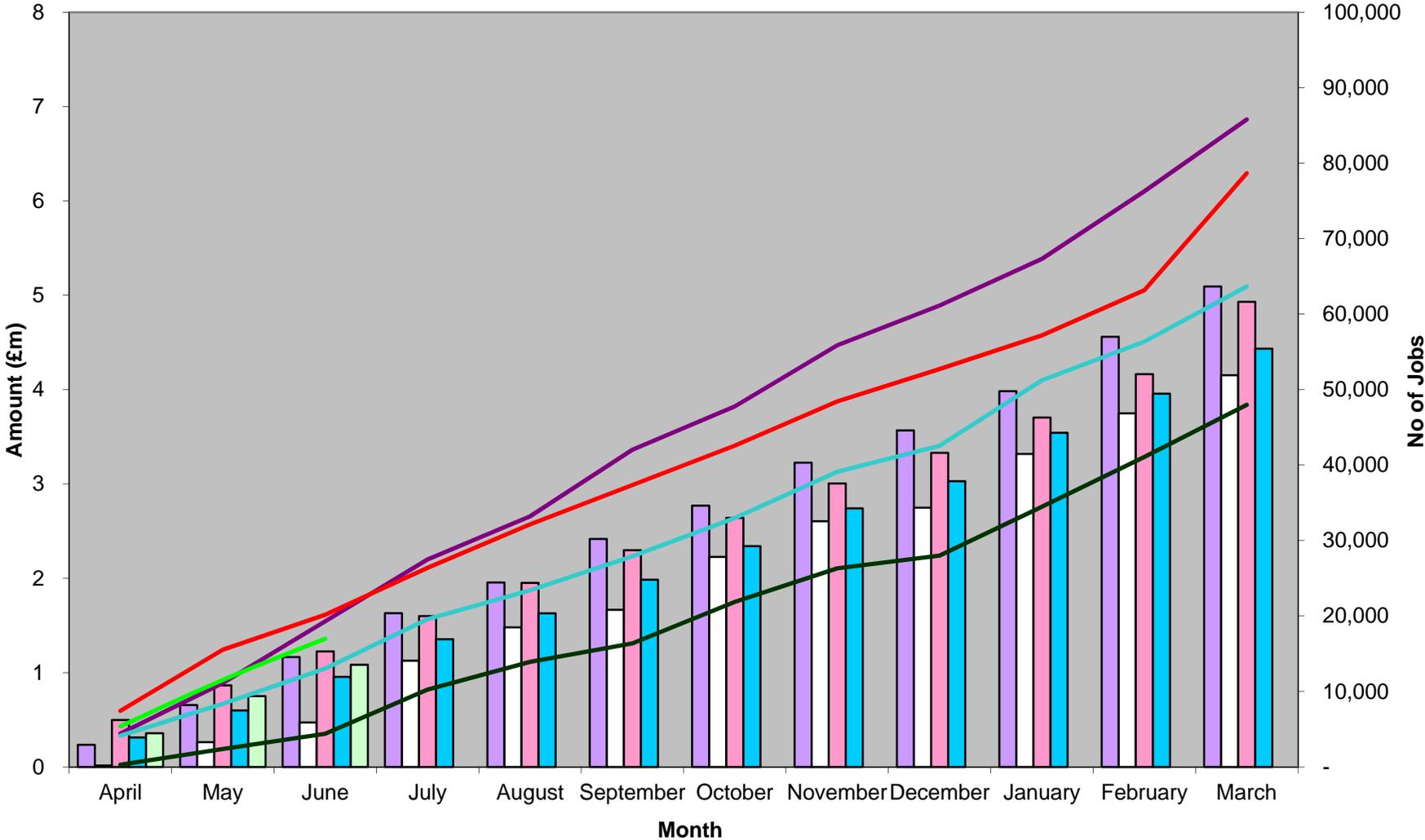


Mears invoiced Repairs by trade for the period April 2015 - March 2016



Trade	2015/16
Asbestos	17,222
Bricklaying	41,567
Concreting	1,390
Dayworks	117,298
Drainage	69
Electrical	124,782
Floor Fitter	531
Gas Engineer	37,129
Glazing	18,735
Joinery	272,408
Other	161,173
Painting	18,583
Plastering	98,007
Plumbing	182,566
Roofing	224,666
Tiler	2,416
TOTAL	1,318,542

Comparison of Responsive Repairs to Previous Years





Report to Resources Committee

8 September 2015

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 to June 2015, including sickness absence and learning and development activity.

Employee and HR Monitoring Digest

2. 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

3. Attached at Appendix 2 is an analysis of the sickness absence levels for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2015.
4. Appendix 3 provides, in a graphical format, the reasons for absence within each directorate of the company for the period 1 April to 30 June 2015.
5. Appendix 4 provides in a graphical format, the reason for absence and the number of occurrences and the number of days. An additional report is provided on stress related absence for the month of April, May and June 2015, in the service areas where stress related absence has occurred and the number of people absent with stress in the period 1 April to 30 March 2015.
5. In comparing absence between 1 April and 30 June 2015 with the same period in the previous year, the following trends have occurred:
6. The total sickness absence for the period equates to 1.62 days per person, compared to 2.00 days for the same period last year, which is a decrease of 19%.
7. 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.

8. Short term absence for the period was 0.82 days per person. This compares with 0.76 days for the same period last year. This represents an increase of 7.32%.
9. Long term absence for the period was 0.80 days per person this compares with 1.24 days for the same period last year. This represents a decrease of 34.48%
10. The biggest cause of absence for the period 1 April to 30 June 2015 was stress with 168.50 days lost compared to 171.5 days lost last year. This is a decrease of 1.57%.
11. Of the 168.50 days of stress related absence 115 days was reported as non-work related stress. This equates to 67.87% as non-work related absence and 32.13% work related absence.
12. Of the 168.50 days lost to stress related absence, six employees reported non-work related stress and four employees reported work related stress.
13. A personal support package continues to be provided to employees who are absent due to stress to include occupational health, occupational therapy, home visits, counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

Managing Sickness Absence

14. The Company has held five sickness absence review meetings (short term) in the period 1 April to 30 June 2015. 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.
15. Four first written cautions were issued following absence review meetings.
16. Under procedure two, an absence management review (long term absence) considers an employee's health and future employability with the company. Options discussed at the absence reviews include phased return to work, redeployment, work life balance, reduced hours, and reasonable adjustments to the working environment and ill health retirement.
17. Six absence review meetings were held in line with procedure two in the period 1 April to 30 June 2015.
18. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, four occupational health physician appointments have been attended as a result of an absence review meeting.
19. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, one employee was referred to occupational health to receive cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)/counselling support.
20. Two employees returned to work on phased hours and duties in the period 1 April to 30 June 2015.
21. Management information and guidance on managing sickness absence is provided to managers on a monthly basis.

22. Four weekly meetings are established with an Occupational Health Physician and an Occupational Health Nurse to review complex cases.

Sickness Absence Benchmarking

23. We continue to report sickness absence quarterly to the Housemark Benchmarking Club.
24. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, 121 organisations submitted data to Housemark. The Company's sickness absence of 1.62 days lost in the same period places us in the upper median quartile range.
25. We share our absence data with Gateshead Council. In the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015, Gateshead Council report 10 days sickness absence compared to 8.9 days in the company. It is to be noted that our organisations differ in size and occupational work groups and no like for like comparison can be made.

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Absence Management Annual Survey Report 2014

26. The CIPD annual survey 2014 reports that the average level of employee absence has fallen compared with last year from 7.6 to 6.6 days per employee. Data from the last five years suggests a fluctuating downward trend in absence levels in all sectors except manufacturing and production, which has seen little change.
27. Average absence levels are highest in the public services and non-profit sectors and lowest in the private services sector. Whilst public sector absence has fallen by almost a day at 7.9 days per employee this figure is still markedly higher than in the private sector of 5.5 days.' *Source CIPD 2014*
28. We are confident that our approach to managing absence compares well to organisations identified in the report as good performers. We will maintain a commitment to maximise attendance and reduce stress related absence through fair and consistent application of our absence policies.

Health and Wellbeing

29. 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.
30. The Company continues to work towards the Better Health at Work Award – Gold level and will be assessed against the criteria in December 2015.

Other HR initiatives and Developments

31. The Company continues to offer a 'pay day pamper' and chiropody service from the Occupational Health suite at Gateshead Civic Centre. Employees are offered a wider range of appointment dates and times. We will continue to offer these initiatives off site, subject to demand, whenever possible.

32. Thirteen employees have applied to purchase a cycle via a salary sacrifice Cycle to Work scheme. Applications are processed via Cycle Solutions who administer the scheme on behalf of the company.

Work Life Balance

33. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, the following work life balance applications have been approved:

No of Applications	Type of Work Life Balance Request
2	Application to reduce working hours
1	Application to change working pattern

To date, 30 June 2015, we are pleased to report that 61 of 332 employees have a work life balance. This equates to 18.37% of the workforce. Approved work life balance requests are as follows:

- 9 employees work compressed hours
- 39 employees work reduced hours
- 1 employee works increased hours
- 11 employees have changed their working pattern
- 1 return to full time working from term time working

Bullying and Harassment

34. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, there was one investigation into bullying and harassment associated to the protected characteristics. This investigation has concluded and appropriate and proportionate action taken.

Other HR Initiatives and Developments

Recruitment

35. Based on data submitted to Housemark by 454 social housing landlords over a three year period ending March 2015, employee turnover is 14.6% in housing associations and 9.6% in local authority/ALMO. In the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015, our employee turnover was 6.31% in the upper quartile range along with 21 of 211 organisations.
36. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, the Company has advertised nine jobs. Six jobs were advertised across the Company and Gateshead Council and three jobs were advertised externally due to no interest internally.
37. We are providing our vacancies to Gateshead Council and Unions for a period of one week to support with the redeployment of employees. At the end of one week jobs not suitable for redeployment will be advertised following our recruitment process.

Child Care Scheme

38. The company continues to offer a salary sacrifice scheme. In June 2015, nine employees were in the scheme.
39. The Government were set to introduce a new Tax-Free Childcare scheme in Autumn 2015 which was to benefit self-employed parents and those with more than one child who earn less than £150,00 each but can't get child care vouchers.
40. Two providers of the existing Employer Supported Childcare voucher scheme mounted a legal challenge against the Government's new scheme following concerns about how it would be delivered and the effect it would have on parents trying to access childcare support. The judgement found the process to be 'lawful' however, as the court placed a suspension on the scheme being developed during the 15 month legal proceedings, the new Tax-Free Childcare scheme now won't come into force until 2017.

iTrent System

41. Gateshead Council has procured a software system to replace PSE. The new system iTrent is due to go live in February 2016. The system is used to process employee related activity.
42. In the period April 2015 to December 2015 the new system will be designed, built and then tested with parallel runs on data to take place in December 2015 to January 2016.
43. We have identified a key contact to represent the company at meetings. This means that our specific requirements are communicated and that we respond to requests for information and data gathering in a timely manner.

Learning and Development Activity

44. In the period April to June 2015 the following courses have been delivered:-
 - Management of Health and Safety
 - Asbestos Awareness
 - Principles of COSHH
 - Ipad training
 - Fire safety principles and practice
 - Safeguarding adults and reporting concerns
 - Workshop to raise awareness of Prevent (WRAP)

45. Behavioural Framework

In March 2015, the Board approved the five year strategic plan 2015-2020, which included a revised mission, vision and values for the company. To support the delivery of objectives we have developed a behavioural framework that links directly to our key priority "Investing in our employees and developing new and innovative ways of working to deliver this plan." Behaviours define 'how' we are expected to approach our work and sit alongside 'what' we do, as outlined in job descriptions. Following consultation with employees at all levels across the

organisation, the behavioural framework has been distributed to managers to discuss with their teams prior to a launch in September 2015.

46. The Company is working in partnership with the Learning Curve Group to enrol 13 employees into a variety of fully funded distance learning courses accredited with NCFE this has meant we have been approved £7,150 worth of courses to include; level 2 Team Leading, Mental Health Awareness, Nutrition and Health and Dementia Awareness.
47. The Company is working in partnership with Newcastle College to enrol 12 employees into fully funded microsoft office specialist training.

Investors in People (IiP)

48. In 2015 a sixth generation of the Investors in People(IiP) management Standard will be introduced with organisations accredited against the new framework.
49. The sixth generation reflects the very latest workplace trends, to help every organisation be the best they can be. The Framework sets out the criteria which must be met to achieve accreditation and focusses on 'Outperformers'- the organisations that can offer great services, inspire fantastic loyalty from employees and customers and deliver impressive results.
50. We have attended the Regional Investors in People (IiP) Networking Group which looked at changes to the standard and the impact for the organisation.

Link to values

51. This report links to the following company values:
 - Fair
 - Customer focused
 - Open and honest
 - Accountable
 - Inclusive, valuing diversity
 - Innovative
 - Passionate about what we do

Impact on Customers

52. 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

53. Manager's not managing sickness in accordance with the policy has been identified as an operational risk and controls and future actions are in place to mitigate the risk.
54. 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

49. The financial cost of sickness absence to the Company for the period April to June 2015 was £56,605.83 compared to £68,358.24 for the same period last year.

Equality and Diversity Implications

50. 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

51. 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 have accessed fully funded Microsoft specialist training and £7,150 of fully funded distance learning courses. This demonstrates our commitment to invest in our employees and follow value for money principles. We aim to use the most beneficial methods of delivery to maximise the return on our investments for the benefit of the company and customers. Value for money principles is followed in all aspects of the service to include work life balance requests, recruitment and selection.

Health Implications

52. The initiatives and prevention work that has been introduced over the past year has had a positive impact on the health of our employees. The clearest measure of this is the achievement of Investors in People (IiP) and Health and Wellbeing Award and the North East Better Health at Work Silver Award.
53. 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 stress.

Environmental Implications

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

Consultation carried out

55. The Company's HR consultants EEF Northern and Trade Unions have been consulted on aspects of the report.

Recommendation

56. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with the update on the Human Resources update.

Contact: Jennifer Aston, Support Services Manager

Tel No: (0191) 433 5388



The Gateshead Housing Company
Working with Gateshead Council



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2014/15

Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Number of people employed by TGHC				
Male	140			
Female	192			
Permanent Employees	313			
Temporary Employees	19			
Full Time	258			
Part Time	74			
Number of starters (since 01 April 2015)	3			
Number of leavers (since 01 April 2015)	8			
Ill health retirements	0			
Number of employees seeking redeployment	0			
Diversity Monitoring				
Gender				
Male	140			
Female	192			
Age				
Under 18	0			
18 – 25	17			
26 – 35	94			
36 – 45	87			
46 – 55	84			
56 – 65	47			
66 +	3			
Disability				
Perceived themselves as disabled	34			
Do not perceive themselves as disabled	298			



The Gateshead Housing Company
Working with Gateshead Council



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2014/15

Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Ethnicity				
White British	321			
White Irish	1			
White Other	1			
White and Black Caribbean	1			
White and Black African	1			
White and Asian	1			
Asian or Asian British Indian	1			
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0			
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	1			
Asian or Asian British Other	1			
Black or Black British Caribbean	0			
Black or Black British African	2			
Black or Black British Other	1			
Chinese	1			
Other	0			
Recruitment Monitoring				
Number of BME applicants for posts				
Application for employment	23			
Shortlisted for interview	2			
Offered post	0			
Number of disabled applicants for posts				
Application for Employment	23			
Shortlisted for interview	1			
Offered post	0			
HR advisory issues				
Investigations	0			
Disciplinary	0			
Suspensions	0			
No Further Action	0			
Oral Warning	0			
First Written Warning	0			
Final Written Warning	0			
Dismissals	0			
Appeals Submitted	0			
Stage 1 Grievance	0			



The Gateshead Housing Company
Working with Gateshead Council



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2014/15

Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Stage 2 Grievance	0			
Capability	0			
Bullying and Harassment	1			
Whistleblowing	0			
Employment Tribunals	0			
Health and Wellbeing				
Total number of working days lost per employee (target 7.50 April 2015 to March 2016)	1.62			
Total number of working days lost to sickness	472.7			
Number of Occupational Health appointments	4			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New referrals • Review appointments 	4			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgery appointments • Home appointments 	0 0			
Number of employee counselling/CBT sessions	1			
Number of Absence Management Reviews	11			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Long Term 	5 6			
Number of employees who have had a phased return	2			
Learning and Development				
Number of new staff receiving induction	3			
Number of staff undertaking professional Qualifications	4			

2015/2016	Customers & Communities - Customer Services	Customers & Communities Neighbourhood Services	Customers & Communities Property Services	Corporate Services Finance	Corporate Services Support Services	All employees TGHC	TGHC cumulative	2014/15 TGHC Cumulative	Days Lost per month	Days Lost Short Term Absence	No of Occurences Short Term	Days Lost Long Term Absence	No of Occurences Long Term
April	0.82	0.47	1.87	0.00	0.06	0.64	0.64	0.91	187.40	0.39	33.00	0.25	4.00
May	0.71	0.24	1.78	0.00	0.13	0.50	1.14	1.65	144.70	0.25	24.00	0.25	4.00
June	0.45	0.40	1.83	0.00	0.00	0.48	1.62	2.00	140.60	0.18	18.00	0.30	4.00
July								2.62					
August								3.30					
September								4.13					
October								4.68					
November								5.45					
December								6.25					
January								6.99					
February								8.01					
March								8.90					
Cumulative by service area	1.98	1.11	5.48	0.00	0.19	1.62							

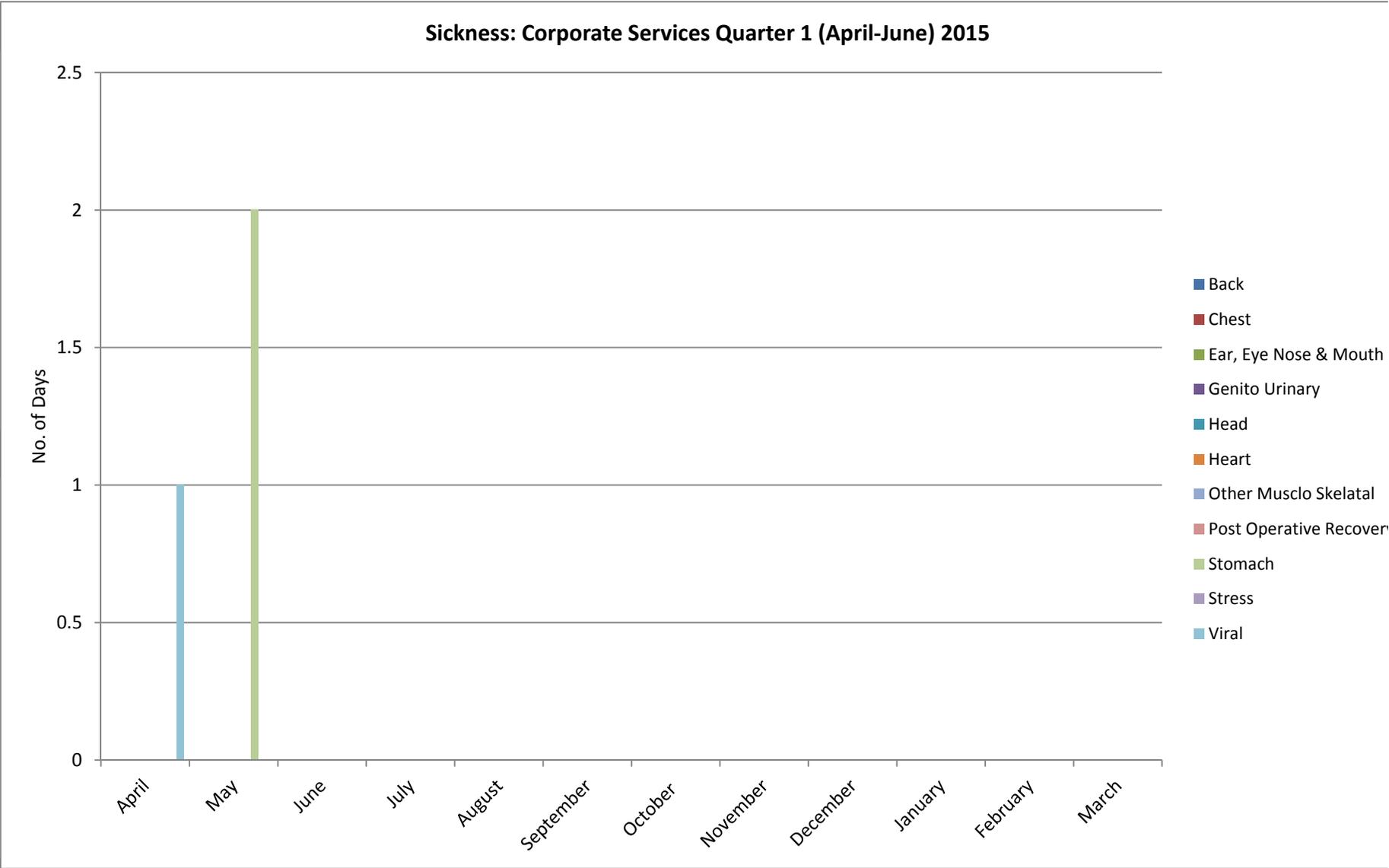
* Days Lost = No of days absence / FTE in the service

BV12

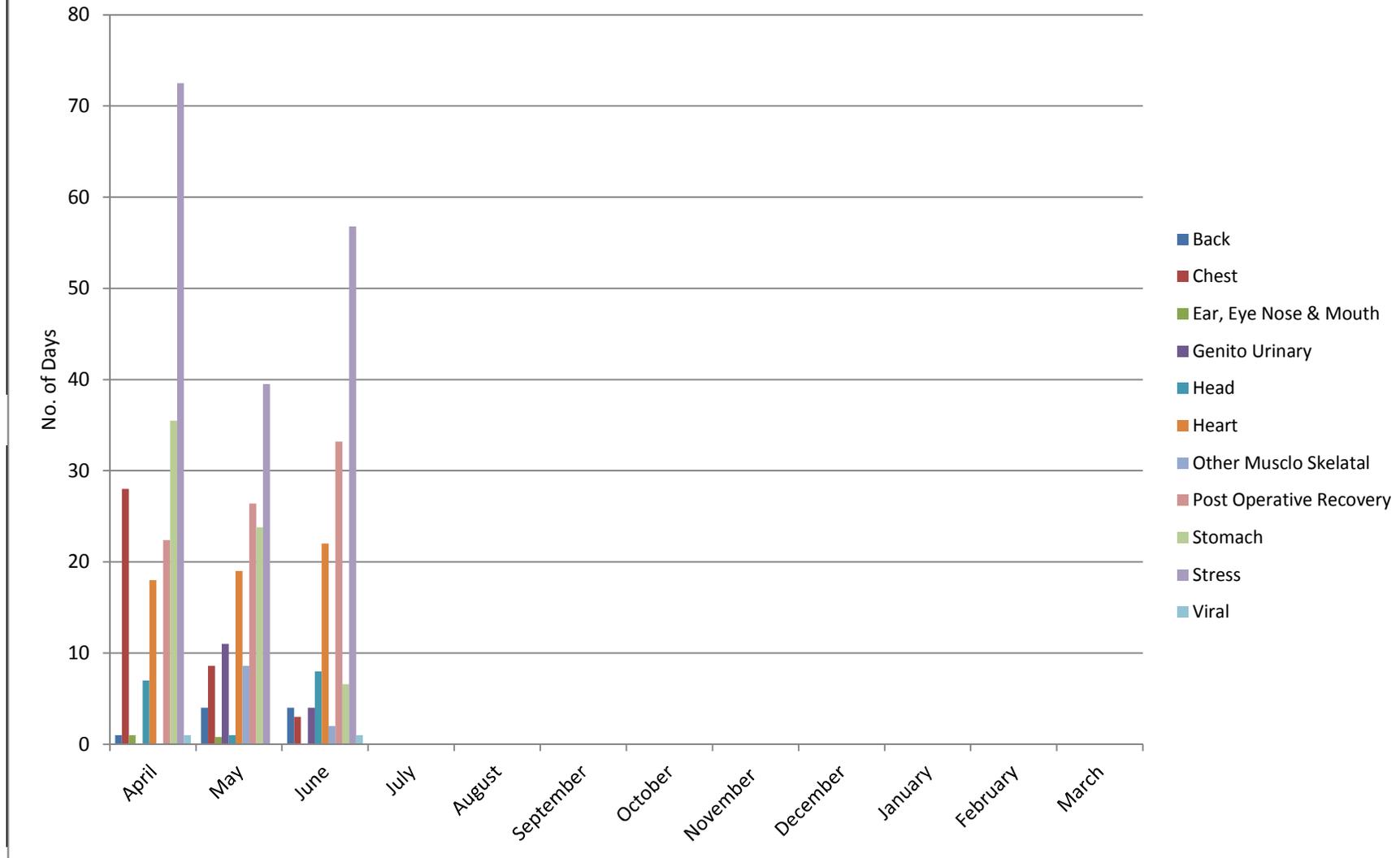
excludes temp employees with <12 months service

Benchmarking

2015	TGHC rolling 12 months	Gateshead Council	CIPD Public Sector Survey Oct 14	CIPD Private sector Survey Oct 14
March	8.9	10	7.9	5.5
April	8.6	not available		
May	8.4	not available		
June	8.5	not available		
July	8.7	not available		

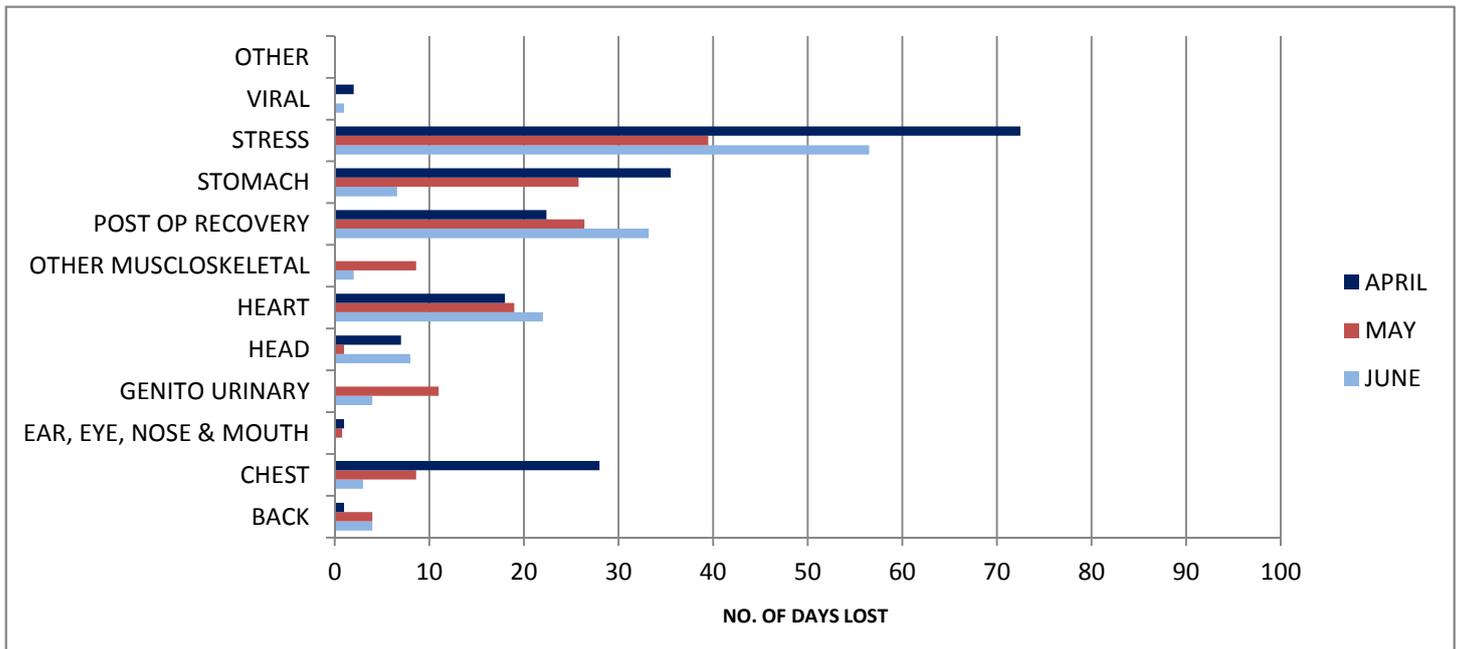


Sickness: Customers & Communities Quarter 1 (April-June) 2015

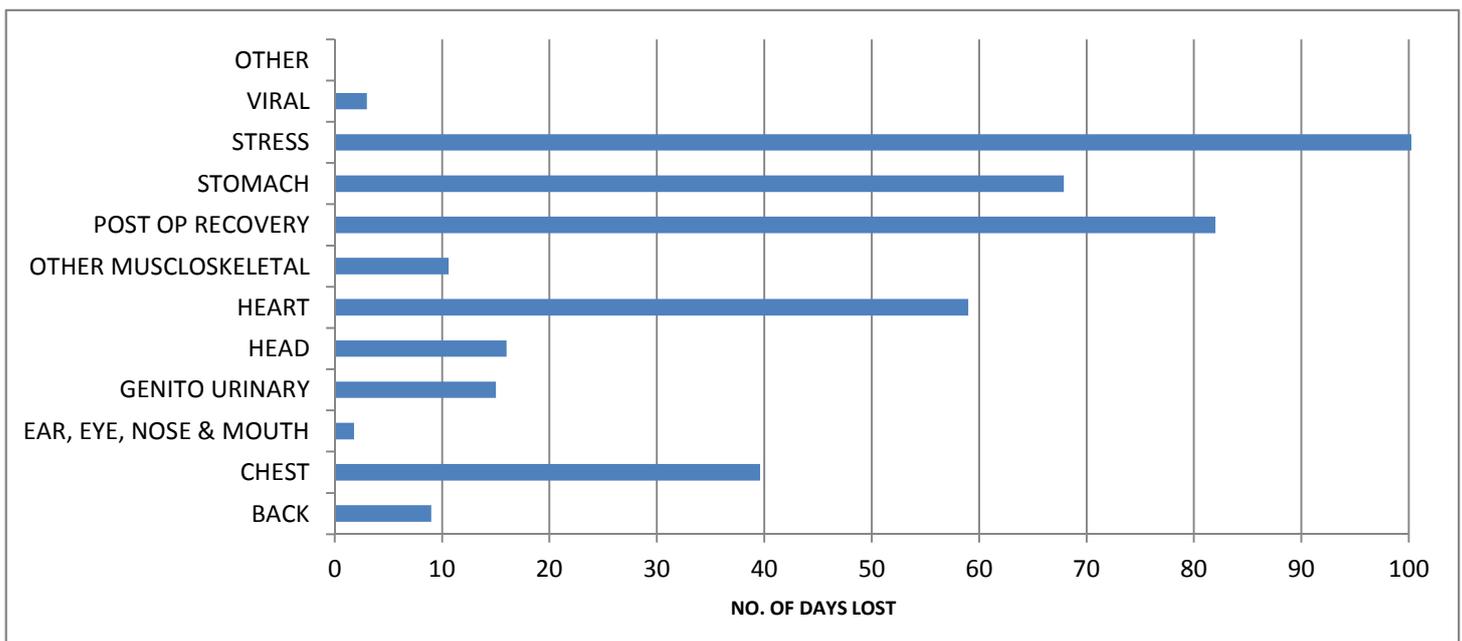


SICKNESS BY REASON (DAYS LOST)	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	TOTAL
BACK	1	4	4	9
CHEST	28	8.6	3	39.6
EAR, EYE, NOSE & MOUTH	1	0.8	0	1.8
GENITO URINARY	0	11	4	15
HEAD	7	1	8	16
HEART	18	19	22	59
OTHER MUSCLOSKELETAL	0	8.6	2	10.6
POST OP RECOVERY	22.4	26.4	33.2	82
STOMACH	35.5	25.8	6.6	67.9
STRESS	72.5	39.5	56.5	168.5
VIRAL	2	0	1	3
OTHER	0	0	0	0

SICKNESS: DAYS LOST BY REASON/BY MONTH



SICKNESS: DAYS LOST BY REASON OVERALL (QUARTER 1)



Report to Resources Committee**8 September 2015**

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 period 1 April to 30 June 2015.

Background

2. Following a review of Support Services, Health and Safety is managed by the Support Services Manager, supported by the Health and Safety Officer, Fire Safety Advisor and a Service Level Agreement with Gateshead Council. The Health and Safety activities are designed to reduce and mitigate accidents in the workplace and to ensure the safety of residents and members of the public who access our services and premise
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 a supporting role in ensuring the company's ongoing 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 upgrades to DDA standard.
5. The team 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 (Revised CDM regulations 6 April15)
- Refurbishment and New Build Works.

Corporate Health and Safety Groups

6. A Corporate Health and Safety Group has been established to assist in the management and embedding of health and safety. Head of Investment and Development is Chair of the group. An inaugural meeting was held 6 July 2015 to agree Terms of Reference and standing agenda items.
7. A time limited Corporate Fire Safety Group has been established to assist in the management of Fire Safety. The Head of Investment and Development is Chair of the group. A meeting was held 19 August 2015 to agree our approach to the management of fire risk assessments in multi storey dwellings and sheltered schemes.

Partners Activity Update

8. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, we have monitored our partner's activities and reviewed all asbestos related incidents and working practices. Repairs works are visited weekly to ensure compliance with policy and procedures and good working practices. We continue to work closely with Mears Safety Advisors for compliance and safe systems of working.
9. During the period, monthly joint Health and Safety site inspections visits have taken place with Mears. The works visited have included void property refurbishments, gas boiler installations, bathroom adaptations, painting programmes, window replacement and general repairs.
10. Inspections include a check of operatives understanding of asbestos information, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
11. There were no significant areas of weakness identified on the site visits. A number of minor recommendations and areas for improvement were identified to include issue of identification badges and a first aid box on site.
12. Spot checks are carried out weekly on capital works to ensure compliance with policy and procedures and good working practices.

Accident Reporting

Accidents / Incidents near misses TGHC Employees

13. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, three non reportable Accidents and two Near Misses were reported. There were no reportable accidents under RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Accidents / Incidents near misses to 3rd Party / Subcontractors

14. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, there was no non-reportable Accidents/ Near Misses reported. There were no reportable accidents under RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Asbestos Management

15. As mentioned earlier in this report we have established a Corporate Health and Safety group chaired by the Head of Investment and Development. This group will review and monitor progress with asbestos management as a standing agenda item.
16. An internal audit of asbestos management has been carried out in August 2015 and we are awaiting the final report.

Fire Safety Management

17. Proactive monitoring of our Fire Safety strategy continues to take place through joint working and regular meetings with the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS).
18. 21 of 24 fire risk assessments (FRA) have been carried out in multi storey dwellings. Risk assessments from Crowhall Towers, Tennyson Court and Newbold Court are planned as a priority for completion by the end of August 2015.
19. As mentioned earlier in this report, a cross service Fire Safety Group has been established to manage fire risk assessments, action plans and monitoring. The group will meet in September to review 24 completed FRA 's and action plans

Legionella Control

20. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, 187 of 189 (99%) water hygiene inspections/ treatments have been completed by Construction Services.

Fire Alarm Systems and Sprinkler System

21. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, 24 of 24 (100%) quarterly inspections have been carried out to multi storey blocks and sheltered housing communal areas.
22. 450 of 481 (94%) of weekly fire alarm tests have been carried out to multi storey blocks and sheltered housing communal areas.

Out of Hours

23. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, six calls were received out of hours. Six calls were managed over the telephone with advice and support. Two of six calls required attendance on site by a member of the out of hours team for the following incidents:
 - 11/05/2015 19:30 Stretford Court (8th Floor), broken window
 - 16/05/2015 12:45 Willerby Court, access to electric key cupboard
 - 23/06/2015 22:45 Warwick Court, access for leak
 - 09/06/2015 02:40 Millford Court, burst from basin flexi pipe in bathroom
 - 23/05/2015 14:35 Aycliffe Avenue, bypassed electric meter
 - 20/05/2015 23:40 Warwick Court, leak from property
24. Regular meetings are held with the Out of Hours (OOH) team to review incidents, share learning points and to ensure compliance with policy and procedures and safe systems of work

Emergency Lighting

25. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, 178 of 181 (98%) monthly inspections have been carried out to emergency lighting systems.
26. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, 31 of 31 (100%) quarterly emergency light invertors (battery) checks have been carried out.

Non domestic gas boilers

27. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, four of four (100%) non domestic gas service checks were carried out in sheltered scheme buildings, communal lounges and multi storey blocks with non-domestic gas boilers.

Bin Chute Fire Shut Off Tests and Inspections

28. 25 of 25 (100%) Certificates of Compliance have been issued. Annual inspection takes place in May 2015 and is valid for a period of 12 months.

Cyclical Repair and Maintenance Update

29. Bi-monthly meetings with Gateshead Council Construction Services and the Gateshead Housing Company are continuing along with the monitoring of the delivery of the cyclical maintenance programme.

Lift Maintenance

30. In the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, there have been 24 instances of lift breakdown in the 62 lifts in operation. Of the 24 breakdown instances there have been 4 reports of entrapment. The total downtime for lifts was 17 days and services were affected by breakdown for 41 days.

Update on the Company Construction Related Activities

31. The following constructions related projects are ongoing with notifications to the HSE: -
 - Maintaining decency works across various sites Planned painting works across various sites
 - Windows, roofing and boiler improvements
 - Window renewal programme borough wide
 - Pilot for the installation of steel work in butterfly properties
 - Accessibility improvement works on Multi Storey and sheltered properties across various sites
 - Door entry upgrade (Tunstall)
 - South End Road garage clearance
 - New Build development across a number of sites through Keelman Homes, to provide 29 affordable homes

Links to Values

32. This report links to the following Company values of being: -

- Customer focused
- Open and honest
- Accountable
- Inclusive, valuing diversity

Impact on Customers

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

Risk Management Implications

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

Financial Implications

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

Equality and Diversity Implications

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

Value for Money Implications

37. Value For Money principles are followed in all health and safety activity.

Health Implications

38. 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, partners and of employees and do not cause undue stress to either party.

Environmental Implications

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

Recommendation

40. 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 Committee

8 September 2015



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 in the first quarter of 2015/16.

Background

2. The Company continues to place equality and diversity at the heart of everything it does with one of our values being 'inclusive, valuing diversity'.
3. Our Single Equality Scheme provides the overall approach to the Company's work on equality covering both the organisation as an employer and service provider.
4. The scheme and associated actions help to ensure that we are meeting our requirements under the Equality Act 2010.
5. The Company contributes to the wider equality agenda in Gateshead as a member of Gateshead Council's Corporate Equality Working Group, ensuring that the Company is contributing to the equality objectives set by the council.
6. An Equality and Diversity Report is produced annually setting out our key achievements and demonstrates how we are working in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Knowing our Customers

7. We continue to collect a range of information about our customers to ensure that we understand the makeup and needs of the communities we are working in. This information is used in a range of ways including:
 - Tailoring service delivery or helping to forecast need for services in the future
 - Targeting customer groups to promote specific services
 - Measuring and comparing satisfaction with services across different groups
 - Communicating with individual customers in the most appropriate method.

8. Information is collected from the outset of someone applying to be a tenant and followed up at sign up and then periodically during their tenancy. This ensures that the information we hold is accurate.
9. The information collected includes the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act as well as information on communication and contact preferences. In order to help us prepare for issues such as digital inclusion and Universal Credit we have also started to collect information on access to the internet and use of bank accounts. This information will be reported to a future committee as the level of data held increases.
10. As at 30 June 2015, the profile of our main tenants (19,111 tenancies) was as follows:
 - 58.94% female
 - 3.34% under 25, 39.11% are over 60
 - 3.07% Black Minority Ethnic (BME) with highest proportion consistently Black or Black British African
 - 28.49% of households have at least one person indicating they have a disability with the highest reported being mobility and mental health
 - 16.85% (3,221) customers have told us that they have mobility issues followed by 5.89% (1,126) customers informing us they have a mental health disability.
11. We have now collected information from over 40% of customers on sexual orientation and religion which will allow us to start using this information to monitor and compare services. We will continue to collect this information through the methods outlined previously to increase the data held. From the data provided we know that:
 - 8,355 customers have declared their sexual orientation, 2.0% of which have indicated that they are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual
 - The highest proportion of our tenants have indicated that they are Christian (61.37%), followed by 1.81% stating they are Muslim. 11.84% of tenants have stated they have no religion.

Single Equality Scheme

12. Forum members requested at least one joint meeting to be held every year. As a result we held one in June 2015 with all members from the BME, LGBT and Disabled Persons' Housing Forums being invited.
13. This year's joint forum focused on a review of the Single Equality Scheme to ensure it is up to date and relevant based on current legislation and company priorities. Attendees were split into groups each looking at different sections of the scheme. Feedback was gathered to help inform the review with several members wanting to be part of the focus group to continue with this piece of work.
14. It was proposed to change the name of the scheme to the 'Equality and Inclusion Scheme' as it will refer to digital and financial inclusion information, and members felt the new title was more reflective of the revised content.
15. A focus group of forum members will continue to meet on a regular basis until the document is finalised.

Training and Guidance

16. In June 2015, an Involvement and Diversity Officer attended a Mental Health Market Place held in Newcastle to gather relevant information about available support to help us deal effectively with mental health conditions of customers and staff. We also established positive links with relevant support organisations.
17. In June, we also attended a training event facilitated by Stonewall called 'Supporting your trans staff'. This helped us to gain a greater understanding of how to put policies into practice in the workplace and information gathered was fed back to our Human Resources team. We were also able to establish positive links with local trans organisations for our future support.

Hate Crime

18. During the last period, we have worked in partnership with Gem Arts and Gateshead Council to deliver arts projects in senior schools around hate crime.
19. Intelligence information on where hate crimes were occurring more frequently was used to help select the schools to engage with. As a result, Heworth Grange Comprehensive School and Joseph Swan Academy were approached and agreed to be part of this project.
20. Both schools began work in June with an artist to produce pieces of artwork about hate crime awareness, which can then be used more widely across Gateshead. These pieces of artwork will be both a poster and animation campaign. The final artwork will be launched and presented in their assemblies in September.

Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Equality

21. We have continued to undertake a range of activities to make the organisation more LGBT inclusive, both as an employer and a service provider.
22. We continue to be a member of Stonewall and are actively working on recommended actions following last year's submission into the Workplace Equality Index. As a result we will defer our entry until 2016/17, to ensure recommended processes are implemented accordingly.
23. As a method to further promote our LGBT Network group, in May an Involvement and Diversity Officer attended an 'LGBT Plus' group made up of 16-25 year olds, to raise awareness of the network's achievements to date and encourage new members. The network is due to meet again in the next period.

Link to values

24. This report relates to the following Company values:
 - Fair
 - Customer focused
 - Open and honest
 - Inclusive, valuing diversity
 - Passionate about what we do.

Impact on tenants

25. 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

26. 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. Regular monitoring and reporting on our progress helps to ensure that we continue to meet our requirements.

Financial Implications

27. 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

28. This report relates to our approach to equality as a whole, ensuring that we are considering the impact on our employees and customers of the decisions we take.

Value for Money Implications

29. 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.
30. 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

31. 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.
32. A number of the initiatives included within our overall approach to equality has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of either employees or customers.

Environmental Implications

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

Consultation carried out

34. Progress on equality issues are provided to the Involvement Service Improvement Group, Disabled Persons' and BME Housing Forums.

35. Consultation took place with forum members to review the Single Equality Scheme in the joint forum, and following this a focus group will continue to meet until the final document is produced.

Recommendation

36. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with the progress activity relating to Equality and Diversity carried out in the first quarter of 2015/16.