DATA LABEL: Public

West Lothian Council

Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

9 June 2017

A meeting of the **Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Council Chambers, Civic Centre, Livingston** on **Friday 16 June 2017** at **8:30am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest - Members should declare any financial and non-financial interests they have in the items of business for consideration at the meeting, identifying the relevant agenda item and the nature of their interest.

3. Order of Business, including notice of urgent business and declarations of interest in any urgent business

4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on Friday 28 April 2017 (herewith)

5. Impact of EU Exit and Horizon Scan - June 2017 - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services and Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith)

6. Keeping Warm in Winter - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

7. Funeral Poverty - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

8. Mitigating the Impact of the Lower Benefit Cap - Report by Head of Financ e and Property Services (herewith)

9. Welfare Reform: Quarterly Update Report - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

10. Sickness Absence (1April 2016 - 31 March 2017) - Report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

11. Performance Report From the Corporate Performance Management System - Reort by Depute Chief Executive (herewith)

12. Lothian Valuation Joint Board - Report by Chief Executive (herewith)

13. Workplan (herewith)

NOTE **For further iinformation contact Anne Higgins, Tel: 01506 281601 or email: anne.higgins@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 28 APRIL 2017.

Present – Councillors John McGinty (Chair), Cathy Muldoon, Greg McCarra and George Paul

Apologies – Councillors Peter Johnston and Angela Moohan

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTE

The Panel approved the Minute of its meeting held on 17 March 2017. The minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOUR YEARLY ELECTIONS

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services advising of the arrangements for the four-yearly community council elections due to take place in October 2017.

The members were advised that in terms of the Scheme for Establishment of Community Councils in West Lothian, community council elections had to be held every four years in September/October on a date set by West Lothian Council.

In keeping with previous community council elections it was therefore proposed to hold elections in October and to set the date as Thursday 26 October 2017.

Attached to the report was a timetable which provided further details for acceptance and withdrawal of nominations, the date of election and the dates during which inaugural meetings would be held.

In early May all community councils would be sent advance notice of elections. In addition community council secretaries would be provided with a supply of nomination forms for distribution to current community council members. Arrangements would also be made to publicise the election in the Bulletin, in council premises and on the council's website/social media. Public notices would also be placed in the local press at the end of May and then repeated in August.

The Panel were also advised that an election would only be necessary if the number of nominations received exceeded the maximum prescribed number of places on a community council.

The Panel would be advised of the outcome of the community council elections and ward members would be kept informed of any local issues if they should arise.

It was recommended that the Panel note the timetable for the four yearly community council elections which would take place on 26 October 2017.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

4. EQUALITY OUTCOMES AND EQUALITY MAINSTREAMING PLAN

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services advising of the council's Equality Mainstreaming Plan and Corporate Equality Outcomes for 2017-2021.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 required public bodies to develop and publish an equality mainstreaming report and to report on progress against the report every two years. The council's Mainstreaming Equality Report and Corporate Equality Outcomes for the period 2013-17 were published in April 2013 with subsequent updates published in 2015

The Panel was advised that the council was committed to tackling discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and promoting good relations both within the workforce and wider community. Mainstreaming equality was the long term approach by which the council would integrate an equality perspective into the everyday work of the council.

Significant data, information and research had been resourced and utilised in the development of the council policy and practice related to equality. The council's Equality Mainstreaming Plan 2017-2021 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The council's Equality Outcomes reflected the commitment of fulfilling the council's statutory duties as well as pro-actively meeting the needs of the diverse community that it served.

The council's Corporate Equality Outcomes for the next four year period of 2017-2021 was attached to the report at Appendix 2. The Equality Outcomes had been developed through evidence gathering and engagement work. The engagement work was through face-to-face consultation with Community Equality Groups and an online survey which had resulted in small but meaningful changes to the Equality Outcomes.

Each Outcome had been designated to a responsible Head of Service with the outcomes being managed through the council's performance management system (covalent). This would allow the Equality Outcomes to be managed electronically and mainstreamed within council management plans.

It was recommended that the Panel note and comment upon the terms of the Equality Mainstreaming report and Equality Outcomes and that it was intended to forward the report to the Council Executive for approval.

Decision

1) To note the contents of the report; and

2) To agree that the report be forwarded to the Council Executive for approval.

5. CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017-18

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services providing a copy of the 2017-18 Management Plan for Corporate Services.

The Panel was informed that the plan took into consideration the medium term financial strategy developed under Delivering Better Outcomes and available resources for 2017-18. It also took into consideration council priorities identified within the Corporate Plan for 2013 to 2017. As an enabling service, Corporate Services would have a key role in supporting Delivering Better Outcomes and undertaking key actions identified in the Corporate Plan.

The outcomes, priorities and activities for Corporate Services for the forthcoming financial year were set out in the Management Plan. The plan also provided a summary of the work undertaken in previous years and the improvements achieved by the service. It would act as the control document against which the services would monitor progress during 2017-18.

It was recommended that Panel members consider the plan and provide comment as appropriate.

Decision

To note the report and the 2017-18 Management Plan for Corporate Services.

6. FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES MANAGEMENT PLAN 2017-18

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Property Services attaching a copy of the 2017-18 Management Plan for Finance and Property Services.

The Panel was informed that the plan took into consideration the agreed budgets, available resources for 2017-18 and council priorities identified within the Corporate plan for 2013 to 2018.

It was noted that the management plan outlined the specific activities and actions that the service intended to carry out during the year and detailed performance measures that would help judge performance in 2017-18.

It was recommended that Panel members consider the plan and provide comments as appropriate.

Decision

To note the report and the 2017-18 Management Plan for Finance and Property Services.

7. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT POLICIES

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services providing details of the annual review of council policies related to information management, together with the recommended updates, amendments and subsequent review dates.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the services delivered by the council were becoming increasingly information dependent. The council's policies related to information management and the Records Management Plan had established principles for the management of the council's information assets ensuring legal compliance, public confidence and best practice.

The council was required to conduct annual reviews of its policies related to information management. The policies had therefore been reviewed by the Information Management Working Group and the ICT Programme Board to ensure that they continued to support the council's compliance with statutory requirements and that they took account of modernising and developing business processes.

The report then provided a narrative on each of the policies as follows :-

Information Security Policy

A copy of the Information Security Policy was attached to the report at Appendix 1. The revised policy took account of the requirement for increased awareness of cyber security and had been updated to ensure that appropriate information management and security policies were referred to.

Records Management Policy

The Records Management Policy ensured effective management of records held by or on behalf of the council. Following an annual review of the policy no updates were being recommended and therefore the next review would be September 2017.

Data Protection Policy

The council's Data Protection Policy set out the overall principles required to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the proper arrangements for the handling and use of information within the council. Following an annual review of the policy no updates were being recommended. However online Data Protection training had been rolled out to all staff across all council services in December 2016/January

2017. The next review would be September 2017.

Records Management Plan

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (PRSA) strengthened governance and accountability for public records across the whole of the public sector. The council was required to collect evidence of reliable and accurate record keeping in the form of a Records Management Plan. The council's plan was approved by the "Keeper of the Records" Head of National Records of Scotland on 9 July 2013 until 9 July 2018.

An annual review of compliance was conducted during April and May 2016. As a result of the annual review no changes were required to the Records Management Plan however Improvement Plans had been compiled and approved with each service area.

It was recommended that the Panel note :-

1. That no updates were required to the Records Management and Data Policies and that the next review date would be September 2017;

2. The revised Information Security Policy and the next review date would be September 2017; and

3. The annual submission of the compliance statement and service improvement plans to the National Records of Scotland under the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

Decision

To note the contents of the report

8. WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the Workplan.

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

IMPACT OF EU EXIT AND HORIZON SCAN - JUNE 2017

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES AND HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Partnership and Resources Policy Development Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) an update on potential implications following the UK referendum vote to leave the European Union (EU) and to present a summary of the latest UK economic indicators and announcements.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the latest potential economic and financial position of the UK following the referendum decision to leave the EU.
2. Notes the potential financial implications for the council's future financial planning.
3. Notes the potential direct funding consequences on Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration resources, as a likely implication of EU funding programmes ceasing after 2019.
4. Notes the other potential implications for businesses and employability within West Lothian.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I.	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable, focusing on our customers' needs, making the best use of our resources, working in partnership
II.	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Leaving EU membership could have significant implications for West Lothian, the local economy, communities and the council.
III.	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV.	**Impact on performance and performance indicators**	The current EU programmes from 2014 to 2020 support a number of business development, community regeneration and employment projects and programmes.
V.	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Outcome 2 – we are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities Outcome 3 – our economy is diverse and West Lothian is an attractive place to do business

VI.	**Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Access to EU Structural and Investment Funds
VII.	**Consideration at PDSP**	None.
VIII.	**Other consultations**	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

This report provides the Panel with an update on key developments and potential implications following the UK referendum vote to leave the EU on 23 June 2016. The report also includes the latest update on economic factors that could have an influence on the council's financial strategy, focussing on debt and borrowing, economic growth, unemployment, inflation, and house prices.

D.2 PROCESS FOR LEAVING THE EU

On 29 March 2017 the UK formally triggered Article 50, giving two years notice of the UK's withdrawal from the EU. Negotiations are expected to start following the results of the general election in June 2017 and end in autumn 2018. MPs in Westminster, the European Council in Brussels and the European Parliament will then vote to approve any deal that has been proposed.

The UK has called for simultaneous discussions on the terms of the withdrawal and on future trade deals. EU representatives have stated their preference to progress discussions on the terms of the UK's exit before discussing any trade deals.

The two year time frame means the UK will cease to be a member of the EU from 29 March 2019 unless there is unanimous agreement from the 27 other EU countries to extend this. If no deal is reached in the two year timeframe, it is expected that World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules would apply which would involve tariffs being introduced on trade between the EU and UK. There has been speculation that transitional arrangements may be put in place to minimise disruption caused by the UK's exit. These could involve the phasing in of any new travel or trade arrangements.

D.3 UK ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Debt and Borrowing

Public sector net borrowing decreased by £23.4 billion to £48.7 billion in the financial year ending March 2017 (April 2016 to March 2017), compared with the financial year ending March 2016; this is the lowest year-to-date borrowing since February 2008.

On 8 March 2017 the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) published revised borrowing forecasts. The OBR forecast public sector net borrowing of £51.7bn this year, then £58.3bn in 2017/18, £40.8bn in 2018/19, £21.4bn in 2019/20 and £20.6bn in 2020/21.

The estimated deficit of £51.7bn in 2016/17 is down from the £68.2bn forecast from November with borrowing in 2017/18 now forecast to be higher than 2016/17 levels.

The key factors behind this include changes in the timing of contribution requests from the European Union, evidence of greater income shifting to beat the April 2016 rise in dividend taxation, and changes in the timing of corporation tax payments. Budget policy decisions will also push up public spending next year, whereas government departments appear to be underspending this year by more than expected.

Public Sector Net Debt is expected to rise from 86.6 per cent of GDP in 2016/17 to 88.8 per cent of GDP in 2017/18 before falling to 79.8 per cent in 2021/22.

Economic Growth

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released economic growth figures on 22 February 2017 which show for the fourth quarter of the year (October to December 2016) UK GDP was estimated to have increased by 0.7 per cent.

In February 2017, the Bank of England raised it's 2017 UK growth forecast to 2.0 per cent from 1.4 per cent and raised it's 2018 forecast to 1.6 per cent from 1.5 per cent. Growth in 2019 is forecast at 1.9 per cent. The Bank stated domestic demand had been stronger than expected following the EU referendum, however they noted real consumer spending is likely to slow over the coming few years as higher import prices and continued moderation in pay growth are likely to lead to weaker household income growth.

In March 2017 the OBR also upgraded their 2017 growth forecast from 1.4 per cent to 2.0 per cent. For the next three years, growth is now predicted to be lower than in their previous forecast at 1.6 per cent in 2018, 1.7 per cent in 2019 and 1.9 per cent in 2020.

In April 2017 the International Monetary Fund (IMF) upgraded its forecast of UK economic growth in 2017 to 2.0 per cent as a result of domestic demand being stronger than expected following the Brexit vote. Growth for 2018 is expected to slow to 1.5 per cent, this is a 0.2 per cent downgrade of their 1.7 per cent estimate last October, and is attributed to a more gradual materialisation of the anticipated negative effects of the impact of leaving the EU. By contrast global economic growth is forecast at 3.5 per cent in 2017 and 3.6 per cent in 2018.

Exports and Inward Investment

In the immediate wake of the referendum vote, sterling fell sharply to a 31 year low versus the dollar, and was down about six per cent against the euro. A weak pound makes goods that Britain buys from abroad more expensive, in turn pushing up the costs of living, but can also help to support UK exports. At 23 May 2017, the pound was $1.29 against the dollar and €1.15 against the euro.

The British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) published its Quarterly Economic Survey in April 2017. This showed that growth in domestic sales and orders in the services sector improving from 15% in quarter four of 2016 to 22% in quarter one of 2017. Firms in both sectors however are facing pressure to raise prices, mainly as a result of the increase in inflation increasing cost of materials and overheads.

The Head of British Bankers' Association (BBA) warned some banks were looking at relocating out of the UK as remaining in the UK could mean they lose the 'passporting' right which is part of the single market. Passporting allows banks and insurance companies to sell their services anywhere in the single market without having to establish a base in every country in Europe.

Inflation

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), was 2.7 per cent in the year to April 2017, according to the ONS, up from 2.3 per cent in March 2017.

The price of goods bought and sold by UK manufacturers, the Producer Price Index, rose by 3.6 per cent in the year to April 2017. The prices paid by companies for materials and energy rose at an annual pace of 16.6 per cent, down from the March rate of 17.4 per cent, following a downward trend from the high point in January 2017 of 19.9 per cent. It has also been suggested that manufacturers cost pressures are still to be fully passed down the supply chain to consumers, and therefore it is expected that CPI inflation could rise to 3 per cent in summer 2017 before falling back later in 2017.

The Bank of England forecast CPI inflation of 2.7 per cent in 2017, falling slightly to 2.6 per cent in 2018 before falling to 2.2 and 2.3 per cent in 2019 and 2020 respectively.

If a trade deal is not agreed with the EU, trade between the UK and EU would revert to the default World Trade Organisation (WTO) trade rules. The British Retail Consortium has warned that this would result in import tariffs being applied to goods coming to the UK with the overall effect being to increase prices and therefore inflation.

Interest Rates

The Bank of England cut interest rates for the first time in more than seven years in August 2016, as part of a package of measures designed to mitigate the impact of Brexit. Official interest rates were cut to a new record low of 0.25 per cent from 0.5 per cent. The Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) agreed on 11 May 2017 to maintain the interest rate at 0.25 per cent.

D.4 SCOTTISH IMPLICATIONS

Economy and Budget

The Scottish economy is likely to be affected by Brexit in a similar way to that of the UK in general terms, however changes to the Scottish rate of income tax taking effect from April 2017 will mean that Scotland's own economic performance will have a more direct impact on the Scottish Budget.

On 22 March 2017, Fraser of Allander published their latest economic commentary. This stated that the forecast for Scottish growth remains fragile over the coming period as the effects of the downturn in the North Sea and weak levels of consumer confidence impacts on spending levels. Forecast growth for Scotland is 1.2 per cent in 2017, 1.3 per cent in 2018 and 1.4 per cent in 2019.

EU Funding

Money from the EU to Scotland comes via a variety of funds that are in turn paid for by contributions from the member states. It is estimated that the UK receives back around £6-8 billion less than it pays in, after taking into account the UK's rebate and other indirect benefits.

Current EU funding available to Scotland is split between 'pre-allocated funds' and 'competitive funds'. Pre-allocated funds include the Common Agriculture Policy (€4.5 billion) the Fisheries Fund (€112 million) and Structural Funds (€795 million), whilst the competitive funds include Horizon 2020 which supports research and innovation (€500 million euros over 2007 to 2013) and COSME which supports competitiveness of small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurship.

A Joseph Rowntree Foundation analysis of allocated European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) between 2014 and 2020 shows that Scotland receives £720 million, equivalent to £134 per head of population. By comparison, Wales receive £627 per head whilst the position in England is complicated, with London receiving a large amount (£600 million) but not in per head terms (£69 per head), while the rest of southern England receives little, although Cornwall receives £863 per head.

Following the Brexit vote, the Scottish Government set up a standing council of experts to provide the First Minister advice on the all of the options open to Scotland in securing its relationship with the EU.

D.5 IMPACT ON WEST LOTHIAN

In the 2011 Census the total number of West Lothian residents from other EU countries was 5,112 with 85 per cent of the total EU group of working age. Within West Lothian, social care services are supported considerably by a large EU migrant workforce.

It is currently unclear what will happen to EU citizens living in the UK, and likewise UK citizens living in the EU. The UK government has not provided a firm guarantee about the status of EU nationals living in the UK, other than saying that EU nationals with a right to permanent residence, which is granted after they have lived in the UK for five years, will be able to stay. What happens to UK citizens working in the EU will depend on the nature of any deal the UK agrees with the EU.

Employment & Business

Total West Lothian employment sustained by exports to the EU is estimated to be between 4,500 and 5,000 jobs. Excluding retail, around 40 companies of scale are European owned and based in West Lothian with total employment approaching 2,000, with strengths in manufacturing and food and drink. Due to its relatively strong manufacturing base, the proportion of West Lothian's international trade with its EU partners is estimated to be higher than the Scottish level.

Economic Development are currently in the process of developing an import / export survey of West Lothian businesses. The survey will also ask about the employee profile of their businesses. The results of the survey will be reported in the next quarterly Horizon Scan report.

D.6 IMPACT ON WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

Immediate impact – Borrowing

In the immediate aftermath of the Referendum result, the borrowing rates available from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) fell to record lows which allowed the council to borrow £65 million of planned borrowing to support the councils capital programme at rates of 2.09 per cent to 2.72 per cent

Medium to Long Term impact - Borrowing

The pace at which future increases in the interest rate take place will depend on how strongly, and on how soon, the UK economy makes a gradual recovery. Increases in the interest rate are likely to be very gradual and over a prolonged period of time.

Impact on Future Financial Years 2018/19 to 2022/23

Economic implications of the decision to leave the EU remain highly uncertain and may not become clearer for some time. It is likely however that any downturn in economic activity within the UK would lead to further public sector expenditure reductions. Officers will continue to monitor key announcements in relation to public spending, in order to assess the likely impact on the council's budget position for 2018/19 to 2022/23.

ERDF and ESF projects

Over 2016/17 and 2017/18 the council will manage EU funded programmes totalling £5.95 million. Of this, £1.888 million supports council business competitiveness, employability, and poverty and social inclusion programmes, which employ 39.0 FTE council staff. The council helps administer the remainder of the funding, which is paid out as external funding to Edinburgh and Midlothian councils, as well as the third sector.

With regards to Structural Funds, Scottish Government officials have indicated the Scottish Government has legally committed European funds to projects up until the end of 2018 and in some cases 2019.

HM Treasury confirmed that all EU funding activity that has been legally committed before the Chancellors Autumn statement will be fully honoured. On 3 October the Treasury extended this guarantee to projects committed up to the point at which the UK departs the EU. The Government will also match the current level of agricultural funding until 2020, providing certainty to our agricultural community.

D.7 ECONOMIC UPDATE

Unemployment

The latest figures from the ONS published on 17 May 2017 show over the period January 2017 to March 2017 the UK unemployment rate was 4.6 per cent, down from 5.1 per cent for a year earlier. The equivalent figure for Scotland over the same period is 4.4 per cent. Across the UK, this equates to 1.54 million unemployed people (people not in work but seeking and available to work), 152,000 fewer than a year earlier.

On 8 March 2017 the OBR updated their Economic and Fiscal Outlook. This shows the 2017 unemployment forecast as 4.9 per cent, rising to 5.1 per cent in 2018, 5.2 per cent for both 2019 and 2020, before falling to 5.1 per cent in 2021.

Unemployment at local authority level is measured by a different indicator which is the proportion of resident working age people not in work. In West Lothian this measure is 2.0 per cent for April 2017. This is lower than the Scotland rate of 2.4 per cent and the same as the Great Britain rate (2.0 per cent). The Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimant count figure is 2,295 at April 2017.

House Prices

The latest ONS House Price Index published on 21 March 2017 showed that in the year to January 2017 average house prices in the UK increased by 6.5 per cent, up from 5.7 per cent in the year to December 2016. The increase in Scotland in the year to January 2017 was 4.0 per cent.

The average selling price in East Central Scotland between November 2016 and January 2017 has increased by 4.7 per cent when compared with the same period last year. The number of homes sold in East Central Scotland between November 2016 and January 2017 however decreased by 0.5 per cent annually.

In West Lothian the number of house completions in April 2017 was 55, up from 45 in April 2016. The total number of house completions from April 2016 to March 2017 was 549, down from 756 over the same period the previous year.

E. CONCLUSION

The report provides a high level overview of the latest economic indicators and other announcements likely to have a financial impact on the council. Following the outcome of the EU referendum, the negotiations required for the UK to leave the EU and to negotiate Britain's new trade relationships with the EU are still to commence. In the meantime, there continues to be uncertainty as to the impact of the vote to leave the EU. The outcome of the negotiations and the latest economic indicators will continue to be monitored on a regular basis, as part of the horizon scanning of factors that could have an impact on the council's medium term financial strategy.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: None
Contact Person: David Maule, Corporate Finance Manager 01506 281302,
Alice Mitchell, Economic Development Manager 01506 283079

Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services

Craig McCorriston
Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

16 June 2017

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

KEEPING WARM IN WINTER

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) of the recent activity undertaken by the West Lothian Advice Network to ensure West Lothian residents have access to advice and support to keep warm in winter.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes:

1. a continuing improving picture in West Lothian in relation to extreme fuel poverty;
2. that customers were helped to maximise their income to a value of £76,870 and 278 homes were insulated through the Home Energy Efficiency Programme;
3. the reduction in partners ability to offer fuel advice due to withdrawal of external funding, and
4. the intention to build on the success of the Keep Warm in Winter campaign.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	None
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The work of the West Lothian Advice Network has a positive impact on indicators relating to Anti-Poverty
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Outcome 7 – We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society.

		Outcome 13 – We take a pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None
VIII	**Other consultations**	West Lothian Advice Network.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

Fuel poverty in Scotland is defined as spending more than 10% of disposable income on fuel in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime of temperature of 21°C in the living room and 18°C in other rooms. The temperature is higher for those households which are considered to be vulnerable. If over 20% of income is required, then this is termed as being in extreme fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty is caused by a combination of rising energy costs, low disposable household income and poor energy efficiency in the home. The consequences of fuel poverty can be misery, discomfort, ill health and debt. Those who experience fuel poverty are more likely to live in energy inefficient homes which are poorly insulated and prone to dampness. Increased winter mortality is also associated with low indoor temperatures. Excess winter mortality figures for 2014/15 in Scotland were 4,060, which was the highest level for 15 years.

Appendix 1 shows fuel poverty by data zone in West Lothian and, although West Lothian has the lowest rate of extreme fuel poverty in Scotland, 29% (21,460) of all households in West Lothian are in fuel poverty.

D2 Winter Energy Advice

During the winter months of 2016/17, partners worked collaboratively to promote the benefits of energy advice through the ‘Keep Warm in Winter’ campaign. While some partners were unable to secure continued funding to retain an energy advisor, from October to December 2016 the Advice Shop offered energy advice to 699 customers, which resulted in fuel savings of £64,226. Other partners also continued to offer energy advice which secured annual savings of £12,644 comprising of £8,602 from fuel billing advice and £4,042 from energy savings. Other targeted winter energy provision included:

- Warm Home Discount scheme campaign
- Energy Advice Forum activity

The Warm Home Discount Scheme is an annual one off discount of £140 applied to the customer’s electricity bill available for households defined as vulnerable. Although this is a government scheme, it is administered by energy suppliers and each supplier sets their own qualifying criteria for eligible households. There are two main qualifying conditions both of which need to be met to qualify; low income and evidence of vulnerability such as long term illness, disability, a young child or older person in the household.

During winter 2016/17, 295 customers were supported to make an application for Warm Home Discount scheme. If successful, these applications would increase income for customers by a total of £41,300 to help towards winter fuel bills. This is an increase of 75 supported applications from the Winter Warm campaign 2015/16.

Energy Advice Forum

The Energy Advice Forum is a platform for West Lothian's energy professionals to meet, network and share information and knowledge.

The forum has continued to work collaboratively to address the issue of fuel poverty through events, campaigns, sharing resources, as well as referring the customer to the most appropriate energy professional to ensure that the customer can access the best advice timeously.

The Advice Shop has worked closely with Home Energy Scotland, which is also a member of the West Lothian Energy Advice Forum, allowing issues to be raised at a Scottish Government level. Working with Home Energy Scotland allows local energy professionals to have instant access to any new schemes/funding deals for householders to make their homes more energy efficient. The two main funding schemes currently being offered are:-

1. Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland (HEEPS): Warmer Homes Scotland, and
2. HEEPS: Loans

During this year's Keep Warm in Winter Campaign, 14 referrals were made to Home Energy Scotland for advice and assistance with Warmer Homes Scotland funding and four referrals were made for further information on HEEPS: Loans

D3 West Lothian Advice Network

The Community Planning Partnership Better Off: Anti-Poverty Strategy recognises that the nature and causes of poverty are changing and the combined resources of partners are needed to help further support actions and activities to mitigate the effects of poverty. The strategy has seven themes and under the housing theme, outcome 1 states: "West Lothian residents are less at risk of fuel poverty through increased knowledge and understanding of energy issues and are supported to budget better".

The Advice Shop has taken the lead role in bringing providers together to further map provision, avoid duplication, pool resources and ensure better access to advice and support. Advice providers have formed a partnership under the banner of the West Lothian Advice Network.

The network recognises that, with limited resources, there is a need for services to be able to respond flexibly in order to cope with shifting demand. One of the key aims of the network is to target resources to help people living in the most disadvantaged life circumstances. The network has developed a targeted winter campaign using the information contained in appendix one to help tackle fuel poverty. The network has continued to:

- use one central point of contact.
- triage all referrals to the appropriate advice provider.
- undertake a 'Keep Warm in Winter' campaign.

D4 HEEPS: Area Based Scheme and the new Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP), pilot project

The HEEPS: Area Based Scheme 2016/17 programme had a budget allocation of £1.22m to perform external wall insulation measures aimed at owners of no fines construction houses in West Lothian. The 2016/17 programme has seen external wall insulation measures performed in Pumpherston, Longridge and Deans at 77 owner properties and 48 council houses which has improved the energy efficiency of the properties. It is anticipated that external wall insulation will provide owners and council tenants with an approximate annual reduction in their fuel bills of 20-25%.

The Advice Shop has supported the delivery of the HEEPS: Area Based Scheme through the provision of energy advice and income maximisation checks. A short survey is conducted with all homeowners and council tenants to gather monitoring information about fuel consumption and identify if a household may be experiencing fuel poverty. A further visit is made some months after the insulation work has been completed and the survey fully completed to compare and note any savings made as a result of the external wall insulation works done. The results to date have shown savings in energy, the cost of heating their home and improved income maximisation through applications for attendance allowance and personal independence payments.

E. CONCLUSION

Through working collaboratively, partners have ensured that over 700 households have been supported to be better off in relation to keeping their homes warm. The success of the HEEPS scheme continues to make a significant impact in supporting householders to reduce fuel bills over the longer term, and the addition of specific fuel poverty questions on the existing questionnaire will help identify those who need further or more in-depth support with their fuel costs

The network has evaluated the campaign and it is the intention to continue with an annual winter warm campaign, building on good practice and continuing to promote different projects, ensuring a wider reach of energy advice in West Lothian. The energy forum will continue to meet regularly to discuss best practice and learn from one another and work more collaboratively on specific projects and campaigns.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix One: Fuel Poverty by data zone in West Lothian.

Contact Person: Elaine Nisbet, Anti-Poverty and Welfare Advice Manager, 01506 282921 elaine.nisbet@westlothian.gov.uk

Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

16 June 2017

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

FUNERAL POVERTY

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to update the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) on the actions taken by the Anti-Poverty Development Group to mitigate the effects of funeral poverty.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Panel notes:

1. the national and local context of funeral poverty; and,
2. the actions taken by the Anti-Poverty Development Group to raise awareness and mitigate the impact of Funeral Poverty.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	None.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The activity contained in the report contributes to the outcomes contained in the anti-poverty development plan.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Not applicable.
VIII	**Other consultations**	West Lothian Council Services: Advice Shop, Cemeteries and Registration along with

members of the Community Planning Partnership Anti-Poverty Strategy Group, NHS bereavement co-ordinator and Funeral Directors Union.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

In January 2016, Citizens Advice Scotland published ‘Funeral Poverty: A Review for Scottish Government’. The report highlighted that many bereaved families find it hard to pay the costs of burying their loved ones. The report evidenced that, as funeral costs have risen over the past ten years, a postcode lottery has developed with regard to burial and cremation fees across Scotland. Research indicated that there is four times the difference between the cheapest and most expensive places to be buried in Scotland.

The impact on households of paying for a funeral can be complex and can often come as part of wider issues including welfare reform changes, servicing unsustainable debt and struggles with family relationships. In 2015, there were over 57,000 deaths in Scotland which was a 6.1% increase on the previous year. With the projected increase in the population over the next decade, and the blurred lines of familial obligation and responsibility, there are implications which stigmatises those who need support with funeral costs at a time when they are under pressure to ensure that the deceased person receives a ‘dignified’ send off.

D2 Definition of Funeral Poverty

Funeral Poverty is a generic term used to encompass a range of issues around the difficulties experienced by people with insufficient funds faced with paying the cost of a funeral.

Funeral Poverty comprises:

- Funeral debt: the inability to pay timeously and in full the cost of a funeral for which a person is responsible.
- Funeral debt burden: the contribution responsibility for the costs of a funeral plays in a person’s overall unsustainable debt.
- Bereavement poverty: the effect of financial debt on the grief experience of the person responsible for arranging and paying for the funeral.

For those families which fall into Funeral Poverty, after the options of benefits/finance have been explored and they still are unable to afford the funeral, they may be eligible for a National Assistance Funeral paid for by West Lothian Council.

D3 Department of Work and Pension: Funeral Payments

In March 2016, the Scottish Government published its paper ‘A New Future for Social Security in Scotland’. The paper sets out the aim for a new social security system with its vision that “Social security is important to all of us and able to support each of us when we need it”. The total spend in Scotland on social security in 2014/15 was £17.5 billion and the UK Government will remain responsible for 85% of this spend. The 15% of benefit spend which will be devolved to Scotland will include funeral payments.

In 2014/15 there were 6,300 applications for national assistance funerals in Scotland of which just over 4,000 were awarded; around 40% qualified by pension credit. The recent National Conference on Funeral Poverty highlighted the increased costs associated with funerals:

- £3,594 is the average cost of a funeral in Scotland;
- £2,300 is the average cost of a "basic" funeral in Scotland;
- £1,000 is the average cost for a cremation with no service; and
- 2003 is the last time the UK government's Bereavement Payment Scheme was increased.

People are increasingly taking on unmanageable debt to pay for funerals. 'Funeral services' is amongst the top reasons for credit card usage. In recent years funeral directors have begun to require customers to make an advance payment when arranging a funeral. This is normally based on the cost of disbursements, but also gives the funeral director an indication if there are going to be problems paying the full account. Research by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management found that 19% of respondents struggled to meet funeral costs. The nature of a funeral is that it is often an unexpected purchase because the death was unexpected, but also because the cost was unexpected. Factors such as welfare reform, reduction in the availability of credit and the freezing of wages have impacted people's available resources to meet such sudden and unexpected expenditure.

D4 West Lothian

In 2015, there were 13 National Assistance Funerals which has increased by 53% from 2006 when there were six National Assistance Funerals. By contrast, Edinburgh Council averaged 138 per year. There are more hospitals in the Edinburgh area and it is the responsibility of the local authority to pay the funeral costs based on where the person dies (if no one accepts responsibility for costs or cannot afford the costs).

The costs associated with a National Assistance Funerals vary for each council. South Lanarkshire has the lowest costs in Scotland of £450 and East Lothian has the highest costs of £3,148 and the national average is £1,142. Out of the twenty-four councils who responded to requests for this data, West Lothian Council sit 7th with an average cost of £1,542. There is anecdotal evidence that many families are getting into debt rather than request a National Assistance Funeral.

In November 2016, a short life working group was set up to explore how to mitigate the effects of funeral poverty. Participants included: West Lothian Council Advice Shop, Cemeteries and Registration services alongside Citizens Advice Bureau, West Lothian Credit Union, NHS Bereavement Co-ordinator and the Chair of the National Funeral Directors Association. The group considered:

- Better partnership working between services
- Building awareness of help and support available
- Listening and learning from carers and older people about their experiences
- Ways to reach those who may be impacted by funeral poverty

It was agreed that consultation should take place to include the above groups, front line staff and also Macmillan Cancer Support. A survey was issued to the attendees of the Senior People's forum; and the Advice Shop attended each service team meeting.

As a result of feedback and discussion, the following actions have been taken:

- Development of a leaflet (Appendix 1) to be distributed to partners and to be provided to the public
- Setting up of a joint partnership arrangement between Registration services and the Advice Shop to ensure that all members of the public registering a death are giving the option of a referral for support.

This leaflet will be widely available including: Funeral Directors, hospitals, health centres, Carers of West Lothian, Council offices and other local partners, and will be provided by Registrations staff when customers are registering a death.

E. CONCLUSION

Partners have come together to take the first steps in raising awareness to ensure residents who have had a bereavement are able to think about the financial implications of paying for a funeral. West Lothian Council Registration and Advice Shop services will work together to offer access to support and benefits which they are entitled to, consider 'shopping around' for a fairer funeral deal and access affordable credit in order to mitigate the effects of funeral poverty.

The Scottish Government has already agreed that when the new devolved social security powers come into force there will be changes to how this is administered.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Stirling CAB- Unmarked: National Assistance Funerals and the Consequences of Funeral Poverty
Citizens Advice Scotland: 'Funeral Poverty: A Review for Scottish Government'
http://www.cas.org.uk/system/files/publications/funeral_poverty_in_scotland_0.pdf

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1: Funeral Cost Leaflet

Contact Person: Elaine Nisbet, Anti-Poverty and Welfare Advice Manager, tell: 01506 282921 elaine.nisbet@westlothian.gov.uk

Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

16 June 2017

Better off
Advice Shop

Struggling with
Funeral Costs?
There are ways to reduce costs and make funerals more affordable

Shop around:

Costs vary hugely between funeral directors, get three itemised quotes or use comparison websites like **yourfuneralchoice.com**

Ask about a simple funeral:

Ask for the most affordable package. Often this is called a “simple” or “basic” funeral.

Avoid paying for items not needed:

Do you need a limousine? Do you need flowers or a service? Costs can be reduced by providing cars and flowers yourself or by holding a service in your home.

westlothian.gov.uk West Lothian Council

Are you eligible for financial help?:

To apply call the Department for Work and Pensions bereavement service on **0345 606 0265** or to check if your eligible for financial support contact the Advice Shop on **01506 283000**.

Are you eligible for grants or assistance from charities?

Use the website **turn2us.org.uk** to search and apply for grants based on your personal situation. Your energy provider may have a charity that could help, or your previous employer may have a benevolent fund.

Loans:

Finance from funeral directors may be expensive so shop around and compare prices. If you claim benefits you may be eligible for an interest free budgeting loan. Apply online or phone the Department for Work and Pensions on **0345 608 6967**. To check if your eligible for financial support contact the Advice Shop on **01506 283000**.

If no one can pay:

If no one can pay and the steps above have been considered and/or you feel that you just cannot afford to pay for the funeral you may be eligible for a simple, dignified, national assistance funeral paid for by West Lothian Council, phone them about this on **01506 282490**.

Contact us at the Advice Shop for further advice:

Telephone: 01506 28 3000

Face to face: Bathgate Partnership Centre, South Bridge Street Bathgate, EH48 1TS - outreach appointments are available, contact us for an appointment

Email: advice.shop@westlothian.gov.uk

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF THE LOWER BENEFIT CAP

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) of the work undertaken to mitigate the impact of the lowered benefit cap which came into effect on 7 November 2016.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes the impact of the lowered overall benefit cap and the actions which the council has taken to mitigate this impact on affected households in West Lothian.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	None.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Performance is measured via a range of performance indicators on covalent.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Outcome 7 – We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society. Outcome 8 – We have improved the life chances for people at risk. Outcome 13 – We take a pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None.

VIII Other consultations None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 introduced a new, lower overall benefit cap. The cap applies to certain working age benefits including Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseekers Allowance, Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit. The new lower benefit cap reduced the overall level of benefit income from £500 per week for couples and claimants with children to £384.62 per week. Single claimants with no dependent children had the cap reduced from £350.00 to £257.69 per week.

The benefit cap campaign in West Lothian is a joint project involving a range of council services and external partners with the aim of engaging families affected to support them to manage the reduction in their Housing Benefit award and, in turn, to manage payments to their rent account to sustain their tenancy and avoid eviction.

D2 Approach

The Benefit Cap Partnership Group comprised of representatives from: West Lothian Access 2 Employment, Advice Shop, Revenues and Social Policy services along with registered social landlords and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The Group agreed on a triage approach to offering support to individual households affected by the benefit cap. Households were prioritised based on a number of factors including; anticipated financial loss as a result of the cap, the number of children in the household, involvement with Social Work and level of corporate debt owed to the council. Households were assigned a red, amber or green status depending on assessed level of vulnerability.

'Green' households identified as lowest risk of financial or social exclusion as a result of the lower cap were contacted and invited to attend group information sessions at their local Jobcentre Plus office. Group sessions were delivered in partnership by DWP and advisors from the Advice Shop and Access2Employment.

'Amber' households were identified as more vulnerable and have been contacted individually by letter inviting customers to attend an individual appointment with an advisor from the Advice Shop.

The most vulnerable households have been identified 'red' and have been offered a home visit to discuss options with advisors from both Advice Shop and Access2Employment.

All households were offered advice tailored to their individual household circumstances. This advice was then followed up by referrals to specialised advice providers, where appropriate, to assist them to successfully manage the reduction in their income.

A recent visit was carried out to a neighbouring local authority to discuss approaches to supporting households affected by the benefit cap. The visit highlighted that the approach of offering tailored advice to individual households, using methods of direct contact for those considered vulnerable, is regarded as good practice.

It was recognised by the neighbouring local authority that the aspect of partnership working within West Lothian has increased the ability for households to easily access advice from a range of services and has allowed planned and considered efforts to contact individual households, particularly those considered vulnerable, to ensure they are informed and advised accordingly.

This neighbouring local authority has taken a similar approach of an initial assessment of each household. This is followed by referrals to appropriate agencies for specialised advice using the FORT system, an online system they have in place to initiate and manage referrals between agencies to ensure households gain access to the range of advice they require.

D3 Outcomes

The aim of the benefit cap campaign has been to offer tailored advice and support to those affected with a focus on income maximisation and employability.

Initial contact has been made with 86 households affected by the lower benefit cap. Engagement has been most successful with the most vulnerable households by means of home visit with 26 out of 32 customers engaging with advice and support through this channel.

Five group information sessions were held in Jobcentre offices in Bathgate, Livingston and Broxburn. In total, eight customers attended group sessions and a further three have contacted the Advice Shop to request a one to one appointment with an advisor.

The households who have engaged with the support have accessed several options to mitigate the impact of the benefit cap including; claims for exemption benefits, housing advice to secure a more affordable tenancy, budgeting support and help to look for or prepare for employment.

All customers engaged with advice have been given a Benefit Health Check and advised regarding potential entitlement to benefits that would exempt the household from the cap, and where applicable, supported to make claims. In total 17 Benefit Claims have been submitted. To date, these claims have resulted in customers being supported to maximise their income by £24,784.

Of the households successfully engaged, 10 were referred for specialised money advice to assist with multiple debt issues with outcomes ranging from sequestration to arranging pro-rata repayment to creditors. Eight households were provided with advice on budgeting their reduced income, with three of these households being referred to the Advice Shop Budgeting Support services for one-to-one and ongoing support.

Individuals have also engaged with Access2Employment with a view to improving their longer term outlook with regard to employability. 22 of the engaged households were offered support from Access 2 Employment with 18 of these households accepting this offer of support. Engagement with Access 2 Employment has ranged from one-to-one appointments with an advisor, to attendance at work clubs and also one customer registering and participating in the Women n2 Work course.

Housing security was identified as a key issue for a number of the households affected by the lower benefit cap. Seven of the engaged households were given advice on homelessness due to risk of eviction based on level of rent arrears or unaffordability of their current tenancy. There was also a further 17 households who were provided with advice and information on their housing options with a view to increasing their prospects of securing more affordable housing in the future.

E. CONCLUSION

Households affected by the lower benefit cap in West Lothian are likely to be comprised of large families, many with lone parents and high housing costs. The benefit cap campaign has successfully engaged with 81% of households in West Lothian assessed as being at the highest risk of financial and social exclusion as a result of the application of the lower cap.

Moving forward the focus will be on encouraging engagement with appropriate services for households assessed as less high risk.

Discretionary Housing Payment is currently available to fully mitigate the impact of the cap for households affected by more than £5 per week. This level of financial support has been implemented until March 2018.

In order to ensure that those impacted have the ability to adjust to the cap in the longer term, continued partnership work is required to ensure that customers have access to appropriate support to maximise income, sustain their tenancy and meet longer term employability goals.

Encouraging households to seek and accept advice and support has the potential to be challenging whilst financial support is in place. It is therefore expected that particular effort will need to be made to engage households between January and March 2018, when they are likely to accept potential shortfall in income and therefore want this support.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services
16 June 2017

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WELFARE REFORM: QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Panel of the recent developments in, and the continuing implications of, the ongoing programme of welfare changes.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes the impacts of the welfare changes in West Lothian and the actions which the council and community planning partners are taking in response.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provided for significant changes to Housing Benefit, a Benefit Cap, and the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction scheme and the Scottish Welfare Fund, both administered by local authorities in Scotland. In addition further Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) led welfare changes are continuing to be introduced. The Scotland Act 2016 also devolved certain aspects of welfare in Scotland to the Holyrood Parliament.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Corporate and service performance indicators are being reviewed as implications of the reforms become clear.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Outcome 1 - Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed. Outcome 2 - We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning

and employment opportunities.

Outcome 3 - Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business

Outcome 4 - We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities

Outcome 5 - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances

Outcome 7 - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.

VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group is continuing to assess the financial and staffing implications for the council.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Regular quarterly updates on welfare reform have been reported to the Panel since 2012.
VIII	**Other consultations**	With services, through the Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group, ongoing consultations with the voluntary sector and other partners.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Overview

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provided for the introduction of several major changes to the welfare system.

The implementation and administration of many of the initial changes were the responsibility of local authorities. These changes were implemented within the timescales set by the DWP and are now operational.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 also provided for major DWP-led reforms to the welfare system, notably the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) which replaces six current working age benefits/credits. The full national roll out of Universal Credit has been subject to delay and the timetable has been revised on a number of occasions.

The Scotland Act 2016 also devolved certain aspects of welfare in Scotland to the Holyrood Parliament. These have been subject to wide-ranging consultations and the Scottish Government has now announced draft timetables and arrangements to implement the devolved welfare powers over the course of the current term of the Scottish Parliament.

D.2 Discretionary Housing Payment Fund

The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Fund can provide additional support to households where a tenant is entitled to Housing Benefit but where there is a shortfall between their rent and the amount of Housing Benefit paid.

DHP can be paid to alleviate short term hardship, or to assist those most affected by the welfare changes, particularly those affected by the size criteria restrictions (also termed the spare room subsidy or the bedroom tax) in the social rented sector.

In 2016/17 the total DHP awarded was **£2,193,463.**

The funding for DHP is no longer provided by the Department for Work and Pensions but has transferred from April 2017 to the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government will reimburse councils for mitigating the impact of the spare room subsidy so the funding for that is not reflected in the first table below. In addition to the budget allocation from Scottish Government, West Lothian Council has committed an additional £115,000 which has to be used to minimise the impact on tenants affected by the Benefit Cap. This additional funding is reflected in the table below which shows the available budget in 2017/18.

DHP Budgets for 2017/2018	
Core DHP	£130,000
Local Housing Allowance	£26,160
Benefit Cap	£290,000
Total	£446,160

All applicants affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy or bedroom tax, and the benefit cap who are entitled to Housing Benefit, will continue to be awarded full DHP to cover the shortfall in 2017/18.

The current DHP spend to date in 2017/18 is summarised as follows:

	Number of Awards	Spend to date £'000
Benefit Cap	75	20
Bedroom Tax	3426	243
Local Housing Allowance/Combination	174	33
Total	**3675**	**296**

D.3 Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) is a scheme covering the whole of Scotland, but delivered by local authorities who are responsible for administering Community Care Grants and Crisis Grants.

The budget for 2016/17 was £1,064,220 and total spend for 2016/17 was £1,078,920. As in previous years, the budget was carefully managed to fully utilise the SWF budget by 31 March 2017. To achieve this, there was liaison with a range of stakeholders, and priority levels were adjusted to help maintain the budget throughout the financial year.

The budget for 2017/18 is £1,068,689 and the priority level was set for April at medium for Community Care Grants and low for Crisis Grants. The priority level will remain under review and amended depending on the monthly spend.

The 2017/18 SWF spend to 30 April 2017 is as follows:

	Number of Awards	Expenditure £'000
Crisis Grants	300	21
Community Care Grants	76	60
Total	**376**	**81**

A tender exercise has recently been completed in relation to the procurement of a new furniture contract from May 2017. The contract was re-awarded to First Furnishings.

D.4 Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) involves the integration of six core benefits and tax credits into a single payment. The UC payment brings together: income-based (means-tested) Job Seekers' Allowance; income-based Employment Support Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit.

UC is delivered by the DWP. Whilst local authorities will not have a role in the administration of Universal Credit, it is recognised by the DWP that local authorities will be important partners in assisting customers to make and maintain a UC claim and to manage the requirements that Universal Credit will bring. UC will also affect the administration of those benefits retained by local authorities, including the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), DHP, and SWF.

The UK wide expansion of UC began in February 2015. Initially this involved the roll-out of the UC "Live System" which deals with simple claims usually from new, single, job seekers with no partner, no children, and no complicating factors. This is the system currently operated by the three Job Centres in West Lothian.

The latest UC Official Statistics published by the DWP on 17 May 2017 state that, as at 13 April 2017, a total of 1360 people in West Lothian are on UC. These are all "Single claimants only". Broxburn Job Centre has 167 UC claimants, Livingston has 587, and Bathgate has 606.

The DWP official statistics of 17 May 2017 show 397 UC recipients in West Lothian are in employment and 963 are "searching for work".

As previously reported, in addition to the "Live System" which deals with simple claims there is the second, developing, more sophisticated "Full Digital Service". This will deal with all UC claims including the more complex cases and cases involving families. Currently only a small number of Job Centres throughout Britain operate the "Full Service"

A number of public bodies, third sector organisations, and landlords, have made representations to the DWP drawing attention to the serious issues and delays in the "Full Service" system and calling for changes to be made or indeed for a halt to further roll out until the issues are resolved.

This has included the Westminster Work and Pension Committee's submission in January 2017, the Holyrood Social Security Committee in November 2016, and many others – local authorities, including West Lothian Council, social landlords, Child Poverty Action Group, Chartered Institute of Housing, COSLA etc., through the various recent consultations.

The Scottish Government wrote to the UK Government in March 2017 requesting an immediate halt to the roll-out of the Full Service of Universal Credit until problems with its implementation are fully resolved. Issues highlighted included the six week delay in receiving a payment with longer delays for some being experienced which has the potential to push low income households into further hardship and homelessness. In some areas, landlords are advertising properties as 'No UC' due to their experience with the system and the serious increase in rent arrears and financial strain.

As previously reported, on 16 November 2016 the next stage of UC Full Service roll out was published. All Job Centres throughout Britain will go live by September 2018. It was announced, on 16 November 2016, that the West Lothian Job Centres will go live and implement the UC Full Service in February 2018.

It is hoped that some of the administration and I.T. difficulties experienced by those in a "Full Service" may be resolved before West Lothian Job Centres begin implementation. Council officers will be working with colleagues in East Lothian and Midlothian, who are now live with the Full Service and have experienced real difficulties, to seek to assist in these developments.

Those local authorities in Scotland, with Full Service, are being invited to meet COSLA and the Scottish Government to discuss the current position and their concerns regarding UC.

Although UC is a reserved matter, in January 2017 the Scottish Government published its draft Regulations concerning two aspects of the payment of UC which are being devolved:

- Providing more frequent payments - twice monthly rather than monthly, to assist in budgeting, and:
- Giving the option of paying the Housing Support (rent) element direct to the landlord, to minimise rent arrears.

These draft Regulations were subject to a consultation process and West Lothian Council's response was agreed by Council Executive on 28 February 2017.

D.5 Further Welfare Changes

Reductions to Universal Credit from April 2017

As previously reported, in the Autumn Statement of 23 November 2016, the Chancellor of the Exchequer confirmed that planned reductions to the UC Work Allowance would proceed from April 2017. Independent analysis suggests that the reduction in the Work Allowance (the amount people can earn before their UC is reduced) will affect more than three million people, reducing their income by an average of over £1,000 per year.

The Chancellor reduced the UC Taper with 65% Taper being reduced to 63% from April 2017. This modest change means that for every pound of income which a person earns, above the UC Work Allowance, they will lose 63p rather than 65p.

Benefit/Credit Freeze

The previously proposed two-year freeze on working age benefits, including Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowance, has now been extended to four years and, will last until the 2019/20 financial year. This is expected to save £4bn a year by then. It will not affect payments to sick and disabled people.

Reduction in the Household Benefit Cap

As reported to the Panel, the UK Government has proceeded with plans to reduce the Household Benefit Cap.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 allowed for the government to cap benefits at the median earnings level after tax. The benefit cap was introduced on 1 April 2013, and set an overall cap on benefit income at £26,000 per household and £18,200 for single claimants with no children.

The new reduced benefit cap introduces limits of £20,000 per household, or £13,400 for single claimants with no children.

The new lowered benefit cap was implemented in West Lothian from 7 November 2016 and has affected some 100 households.

The households currently identified by the DWP are a mixture of West Lothian Council, Housing Association, and Private Tenants.

The lowered benefit cap predominantly affects families/ households with children, and a large proportion of these families (82%) will have three or more children.

Council officers from the Advice Shop, Revenues Unit, Housing Services, and Access 2 Employment, are assisting those affected. Budgeting advice, employability support, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) awards and other co-ordinated assistance is being provided on an ongoing basis.

Housing Support for 18 to 21 year olds

Automatic entitlement to Housing Benefit, or the Housing Support element of Universal Credit, for jobless 18 to 21 year-olds, was removed from April 2017.

However this will only affect new UC claimants in “Full Service” areas of UC, and there are a number of exemptions for vulnerable people.

When the Regulations were published the Scottish Government announced that they would ensure that support for housing costs is not taken away from young people aged 18 to 21.

However, new Scottish Regulations will not be in place for some time. Until then, following consultation with local authorities, COSLA, and the IRRV, guidance has been issued on using the Scottish Welfare Fund, through Community Care Grants, to address this issue.

As previously reported, the Jobcentres in West Lothian will not implement UC Full Service until February 2018 so no 18 to 21 year olds in West Lothian will be affected until then. Also the numbers involved are likely to be relatively small. The estimated impact document, published in March 2017, predicts that 19 households in West Lothian would be affected.

Two Child Limit

From Thursday April 6 2017 child tax credits and universal credit across the UK will be restricted to the first two children in a family. This measure will affect all households with two or more children that have an additional child after this date.

Analysis by the consultancy Policy in Practice reveals a low-income family whose third or additional child is born before midnight on Wednesday April 5 2017 would qualify for up to £50,000 in tax credit support over 18 years whereas a similar family whose third child is born on, or after, Thursday 6 April will not receive this benefit.

However, the relevant explanatory circular issued by the DWP outlines some exceptions to the policy, including: where the parent can demonstrate that the child was born as part of a multiple birth, or prove that the child was adopted from local authority care, where the child was conceived as a result of a non-consensual sexual act (including rape).

Other limits to welfare entitlements:

- Extending job search Claimant Conditionality to a further 1.3 million claimants per year by 2020/21. This may result in an increase in benefit sanctions if these claimants do not meet their Claimant Commitment obligations.

- New claimants of Job Seekers Allowance attending weekly Job Centre appointments for the first three months of their claim.

- New social housing tenants will have their Housing Benefit limited to the current levels of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) in the private sector in the area. Although in the majority of cases, in Scotland, the LHA rates are generally higher than rents in the social sector, certain tenants, for example single people under 35, are likely to be adversely affected as the LHA level for these tenants is limited to the cost of a room in shared accommodation.

- Limiting Housing Benefit and Pension Credit payments to four weeks for claimants who are outside Great Britain.

D.6 The Scotland Act 2016 and the Devolution of Welfare

As previously reported to the Panel, the Scotland Act, which received Royal Assent on 23 March 2016, includes provisions to devolve eleven benefits to Holyrood, and also to give Holyrood the power to top up any benefits, reserved or devolved, provided the funding is met by the Scottish Government.

Overview of responsibility for social security powers:

Benefits reserved to the UK Government	**Benefits devolved to the Scottish Government**
Universal Credit which replaces: • Jobseeker's Allowance • Employment Support Allowance • Income Support • Working Tax Credits • Child Tax Credits and • Housing Benefit	Ill Health and Disability Benefits: • Disability Living Allowance • Personal Independence Payment • Attendance Allowance • Severe Disablement Allowance • Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
Contributory Job Seekers Allowance	Carers Allowance

Benefits reserved to the UK Government	**Benefits devolved to the Scottish Government**
Contributory Employment Support Allowance	Sure Start Maternity Grant (to be replaced by the Best Start Grant)
Child Benefit	
Maternity Allowance	Funeral Expenses
State Pension	Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel Payments
Pension Credit	Discretionary Housing Payments
Bereavement Benefits: • Bereavement Allowance • Bereavement Payment • Widowed Parents Allowance	Some powers in relation to Universal Credit (i.e. to split payments between household members or to increase the frequency of payment)

As stated in paragraph D.4 above, in January 2017 the Scottish Government published its draft Regulations concerning two aspects of the payment of UC which are being devolved. These draft Regulations were subject to a consultation process and West Lothian Council's response was agreed by Council Executive on 28 February 2017.

In addition on 29 July 2016 the Scottish Government announced a three month consultation on social security in Scotland: *A New Future for Social Security - Consultation on Social Security in Scotland.* This consultation period ended on 28 October 2016. Council officers, together with a range of community planning partners, were involved in this consultation and the response document was approved by the Council Executive at its meeting of 25 October 2016 and was submitted to the Scottish Government.

The independent research was carried out by Research Scotland and involved the analysis of the 521 written responses to the Scottish Government's consultation on social security. Outputs generated by the consultation, and a number of stakeholder events, were taken into account and, in February 2017, the Scottish Government published the *Analysis of Written Responses to the Consultation on Social Security in Scotland* document which outlines the approach to be taken during the development of both the new Scottish Social Security Bill and the secondary legislation (the 'Regulations') which will follow the Bill.

It is recognised that some elements of devolved welfare may take some time to implement and that the relationship between devolved and reserved benefits will necessitate close working with the DWP and other local partners over a period of time.

On 27 April 2017 the Scottish Government published the outline business case for the agency for social security in Scotland. Following the extensive consultation the conclusion was that the preferred option is a central agency with enhanced phone and online support, which incorporates face-to-face pre-claims and support services locally, in existing public sector locations with current local partners.

The new social security agency will not use private companies to carry and the system will be based on dignity and respect and an assessment process which is not demeaning or deliberately difficult.

A Ministerial statement of 27 April 2017 stated the location of the new agency will be announced in the autumn, together with the next steps on the assessment model for determining eligibility for benefits.

E. CONCLUSION

As the welfare changes are rolled out, and as further changes take effect, officers will assess the cumulative effects of these challenges in order to develop and shape work going forward. This will include further analysis of the measures in the Scotland Act and engagement with the Social Security Committee of the Scottish Parliament and with COSLA, and the IRRV, as the practicalities of the proposed changes are considered.

The results of this work will continue to be reported to elected members via the PDSP process and relevant action will be proposed by the council and community planning partners to pro-actively address issues arising.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Contact Person: Ian Alcorn, Welfare Reform and Legislation Advisor
Tel: 01506 282522 Email: Ian.alcorn@westlothian.gov.uk

Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services
16 June 2017

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2016 – 31 MARCH 2017)

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report sickness absence rates for the 12 month period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 and to provide an update on the ongoing application of the council's Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel notes the content of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable Providing equality of opportunities Developing employees Making best use of our resources Working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The policy seeks to strike a balance between effective management of sickness absence and the promotion of a healthy workforce taking into account the council's obligations under Equality legislation.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The sickness absence SPI for 2016/17 is higher than it has been in any of the last 3 years.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	National Outcome 15: Our Public Services are high quality, continually improving and responsive to local people's needs. Reduced sickness absence levels increase the efficiency and productivity of the council.

VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Sickness absence is managed within service budgets.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None
VIII	**Other consultations**	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

The council introduced a revised Policy & Procedure on Sickness Absence Management on 1 May 2010. Further revisions were approved by Council Executive on 13 December 2011 and 13 November 2012. This report provides an update on how the policy has operated over the 12 month period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

D.2 SICKNESS ABSENCE RATES

<u>Standard Performance Indicator – Council Wide</u>

The sickness absence Standard Performance Indicator (SPI) for the full council for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 (2016/17) is set out at Appendix 1 of this report together with the SPI performance indicators for the full years (2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16).

The SPI for March 2017 is 5.17%. A total of 4601 employees were absent from work in 2016/17 financial year.

<u>Standard Performance Indicators – Services</u>

The sickness absence SPI for each service area (figures for teaching and non-teaching staff shown separately), for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 is set out at Appendix 2.

Of the seven council service areas (Education Service is counted as one service although the chart reflects teaching and non-teaching figures separately), five reported sickness absence rates above the council target of 3.6% (CEO, Finance & Property Services, Housing Customer & Building Services, Operational Services, Planning & Economic Development, and Social Policy).

Only Corporate Services and Education Services have reported below the Council target of 3.6%.

<u>Long –Term Absence (1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017)</u>

Of the days lost due to sickness absence during this period, a significant proportion of those absences are attributable to long term absence. Provision 4.9.2 of the council's Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence, defines a period of continuous (long term absence) as; *'a period of absence in excess of 4 weeks.'*

A further breakdown of days lost for the four services with rates above the council sickness absence target indicates the following:

- Of the total number of 2,540 days lost in CEO, Finance & Property, 1,742 (68.58%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by

26 employees.

- Of the total number of 13,239 days lost in Housing Construction & Building Services, 9,959 (75.22%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by 173 employees.

- Of the total number of 25,415 days lost in Operational Services, 20,218 (79.55%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by 314 employees.

- Of the total number of 1,735 days lost in Planning & Economic Development, 1,298 (74.81%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by 16 employees.

- Of the total number of 17,672 days lost in Social Policy 13,306 (73.77%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted by 236 employees.

The average percentage days lost due to long term absence across the five services was 76.32%. The average percentage of sick days lost due to long term absence across the council as a whole was 65.57%

The average length of long term absence during the period was 59 days with the longest absence lasting 261 days.

Disregarded Absences (1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017)

One of the key changes to the Policy & Procedure on Sickness Absence introduced in December 2011 and further developed in November 2012, relates to the disregarding of periods of absence relating to hospital treatment, industrial injury or bereavement of a family member or dependant. Employees absent due to those reasons do not have that period of absence taken into account in determining whether or not they should progress to the relevant stage of the sickness absence procedure.

From 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, of all days lost to sickness absences 19.26% were disregarded under this provision; however these days lost still count towards the sickness absence SPI. A total of 674 employees’ absences were disregarded.

The four most common reasons for disregarded absences in the quarter are Surgery (30.63%), Accidents & Injuries (18.59%), Mental & Behavioural (11.62%) and Musculoskeletal (8.18%).

The average length of a disregard absence was 34 days, with the longest period of absence lasting 261 days.

Analysis of Categories of Absence (1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017)

The most common reason for long term absence across the council during the period fell within the category of Mental and Behavioural (11,271 days). This category constituted 24.37% of all long term absence and 18.93% of all absences for the period (long and short term).

The next four most common categories of long term absence across the authority were:

- Accidents, Injuries and Poison (7,406 days) constituting 16.01% of all long term absence and 12.37% of all absence.

- Gastrointestinal (6,934 days) constituted 14.99% of all long term absence and 18.88% of all absences.

- Musculoskeletal (5,446 days) constituted 11.77% of all long term absence and 10.73% of all absences.

- Surgery (3,049 days) constituted 6.59% of long term absence and 5.64% of all absences.

D.3 MANAGEMENT OF SICKNESS ABSENCE

i) Sickness Absence Case Management

The absence management team within HR Services has continued to work closely with managers across the council, providing advice and guidance on the management of sickness absence and monitoring the application of the Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence.

Table 1 below shows the number of employees at each stage of the Policy & Procedure as at 31 March 2016, compared to the previously reported positions.

Table 1

	Counselling	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Total at 31 March 2017	544	397	187	1128
Total at 31 March 2016	548	412	245	1205
Total at 31 March 2015	488	249	109	846

A breakdown of live cases as at 31 March 2017 is set out in Table 2 in comparison with 31 March 2016 which is set out in Table 3.

Table 2

	Counselling	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Cases on going from 31 March 2017	273	312	173	758
New cases since 31 March 2017	271	85	14	370
Total	**544**	**397**	**187**	**1128**

Table 3

	Counselling	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Cases on going from 31 March 2016	344	320	210	874
New cases since 31 March 2016	204	92	35	331
Total	**548**	**412**	**245**	**1205**

ii) Targeted Service Interventions

Occupational Health Tender

The OH Contract is being tendered as job lots for occupational health services and surveillance, employee assistance programmes and physiotherapy. Discussions have been held with non-teaching trade unions and comments noted. Similar discussions with the teaching trade unions took place on 23 May 2017.

Mentally Healthy Workplace Training

Of the Services who nominated managers to attend the bespoke training event four demonstrated reduced levels of mental and behavioural sickness absence from March 2016 to March 2017, with absences overall within the council reporting 2.35% from 2015/16 leave year.

Stress resilience training is continuing to be introduced on a voluntary basis although discussions ongoing with services to nominate attendees.

HR Adviser Input – Management Meetings

Following intensive input from Human Resources during 2016/17, three of the seven areas targeted for specific action, have reported reductions in overall sickness absence in comparison with the same period in 2015/16. It is therefore intended that this targeted approach by HR is continued going forward.

iii) Employee Health and Wellbeing

Service Employee Health and Wellbeing Action Plans for 2016/17 and information from the council's Employee Wellbeing Survey are driving a range of activities and support for employee wellbeing. There is a particular focus on groups with higher levels of sickness absence and the reasons for absence.

In this quarter and specifically during the May Employee Health Week, there was a focus on mental health given that mental health is the highest cause of absence in the council. Employees were given opportunities to attend events and training as well as the provision of appropriate health literature at multiple council sites.

E. CONCLUSION

Following the introduction of the revised Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence in May 2010 the council reported significant reductions in sickness absence rates.

2016/17 has seen an increase in sickness absence rates which is indicative of a rising trend over the last 3 years although absent rates have been slower to increase and are similar to 2015/16 levels.

During this year, nearly 20% of all days lost to sickness absences were disregarded under the provision introduced with the 2011 policy changes. In 2015/16 disregarded absences accounted for 18% of all sickness absences, however these days lost still count towards the sickness absence SPI.

The council is applying a more targeted strategy for managing absence over the coming months, tailored to individual services and supported by on-going robust application of the current Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence

Appendices/Attachments: 2

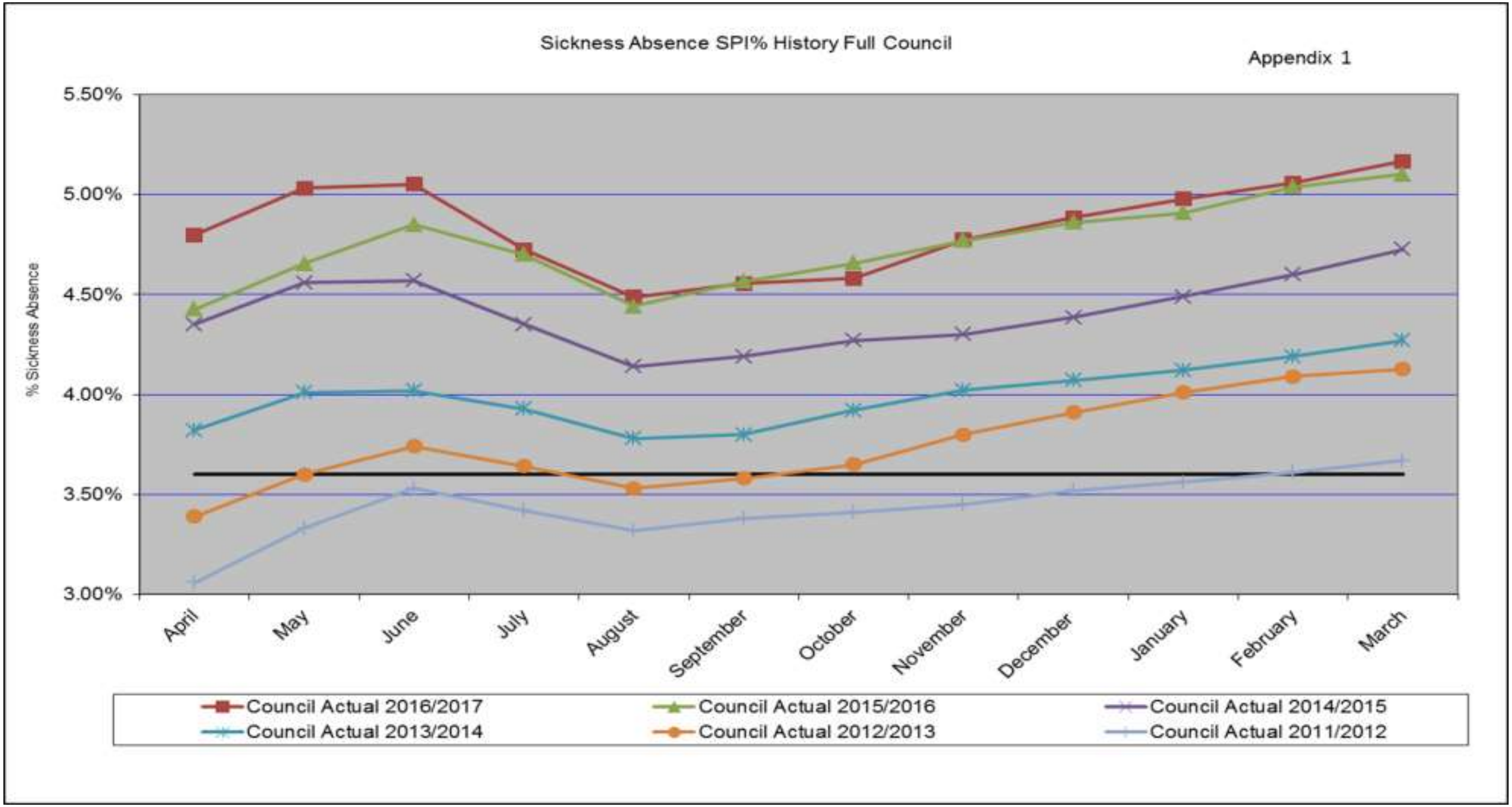
1. Sickness Absence SPI% History – Full Council
2. Sickness Absence SPI% all services – 2016/17

Contact Person: Fraser Mackenzie, HR Manager – Policy & Advice (01506 281422)

Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Date: 16 June 2017



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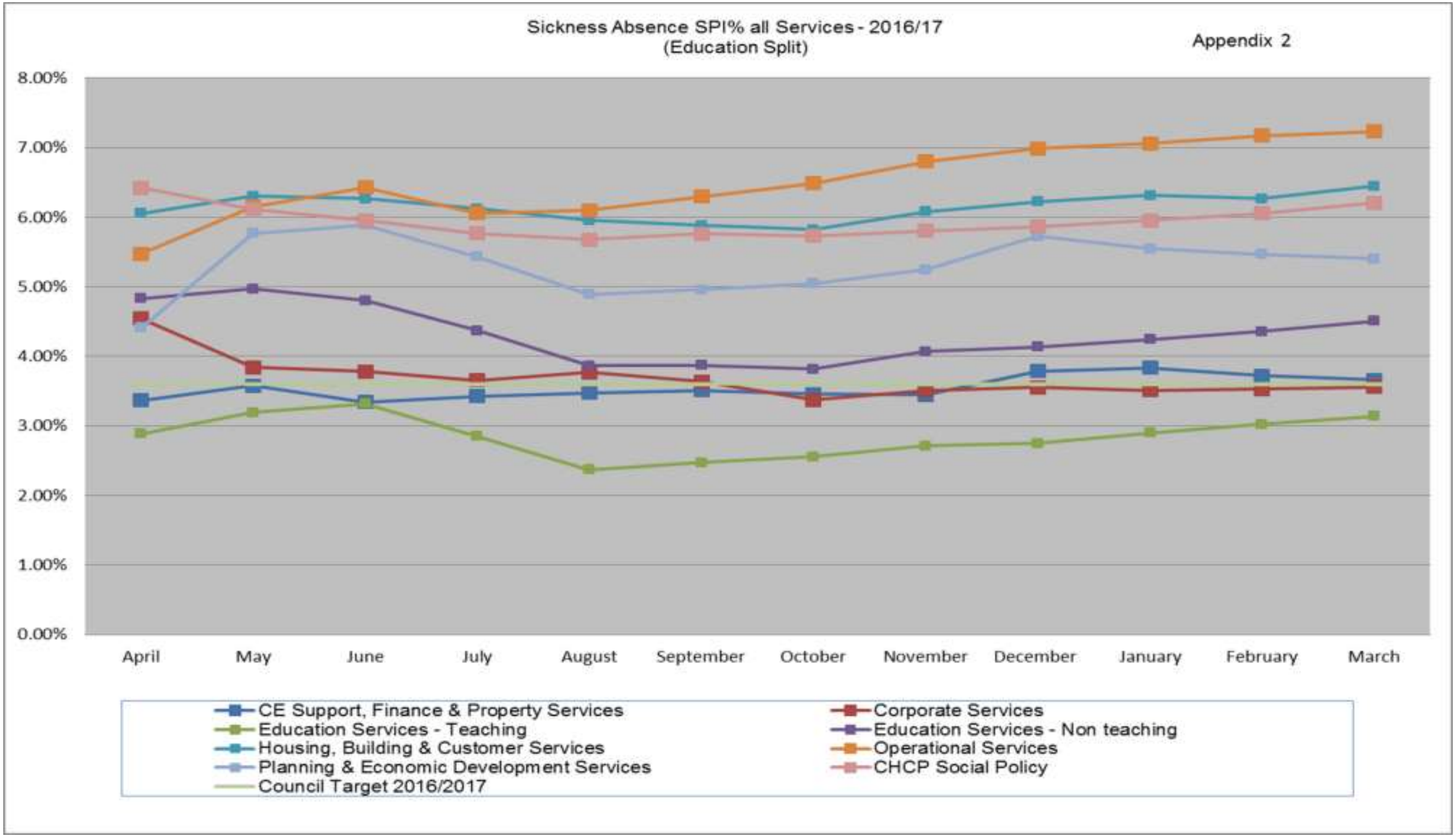

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West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PERFORMANCE REPORT FROM THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report the current levels of performance for all indicators that support the council's Corporate Plan and are the responsibility of the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel note the performance information and determine if further action or enquiry is necessary for any of the performance indicators in the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	• Being honest, open and accountable • Focusing on our customers' needs
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	In compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Challenges current service performance through the evaluation of performance indicators
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Indicators support various outcomes in the SOA
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Met from existing budgets.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	N/A
VIII	**Consultations**	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Each Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is allocated areas of the Corporate Plan which reflect the remit of the Panel. The responsibility for overseeing performance is within the remit of the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

D.2 Performance Reporting

The information presented in Appendix 1 outlines all 37 performance indicators which are the responsibility of the Panel.

The 37 performance indicators are categorised as follows:

- 33 green
- 1 amber
- 3 red

Each indicator in Appendix 1 displays a latest note which offers an explanation from the service on the performance.

D.3 Red Performance Indicators

CP:CPU025_Percentage of Category A & B frameworks utilised from the total number of available collaborative contracts.

Current performance: 84.6 percent
Target: 92 percent

Category A contracts are managed by the Scottish Procurement & Commercial Directorate and include goods and services that are used by all local public sector bodies in Scotland. Category B contracts are managed by Scotland Excel and include commodities which fall outside of the Category A scope but are commonly purchased across the local authority sector. In 2016/17, a total of 88 out of 104 identified collaborative contracts were utilised by the service, giving performance of 84.6 percent. This was a dip from previous year's performance of 90 percent.

P:CuCS011q_Customer and Communities - The percentage of complaints received by Customer and Communities Service that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full

Current performance: 92.9 percent
Target: 60 percent

The Customer and Communities service received 14 complaints in quarter four of 2016/17, with 13 being upheld or part upheld. This was a dip on the percentage of complaints upheld in the previous quarter (quarter 3 2016/17) which was 72.7 percent and on the same period in the previous year, when 75 percent of complaints were upheld. The number of complaints received in proportion to the number of enquiries handled by the service remains small. However, the service continues to analyse complaints and address through staff training and process improvements.

P:HRS103_Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive

Current performance: 45
Target: 0

The trend shows an overall decrease of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive over the period 2012/13 to 2016/17, with a total of 12 less reportable incidents. In 2016/17 the number of reportable incidents decreased to 45 from 48 in 2015/16. As in previous years, these incidents are being examined to establish potential trends and identify required actions to be incorporated into the service annual health and safety action plan for 2017/18.

E. CONCLUSION

The summary chart at the front of Appendix 1 show that the majority of performance indicators which are the responsibility of the Panel are within target.

The information contained in Appendix 1 will allow the Panel to focus on the issues that services currently face and highlight where service performance is currently below target.

This information allows the Panel to function in accordance with the council's Code of Corporate Governance and the principles of Best Value.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: 1
Appendix 1 – Partnership and Resources PDSP Performance Report

Contact Person: Rebecca Kelly
Telephone: 01506 281891 email: rebecca.kelly@westlothian.gov.uk

Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive
16 June 2017

APPENDIX 1

_09 PDSP - Partnership and Resources PIs - ALL(Detail)

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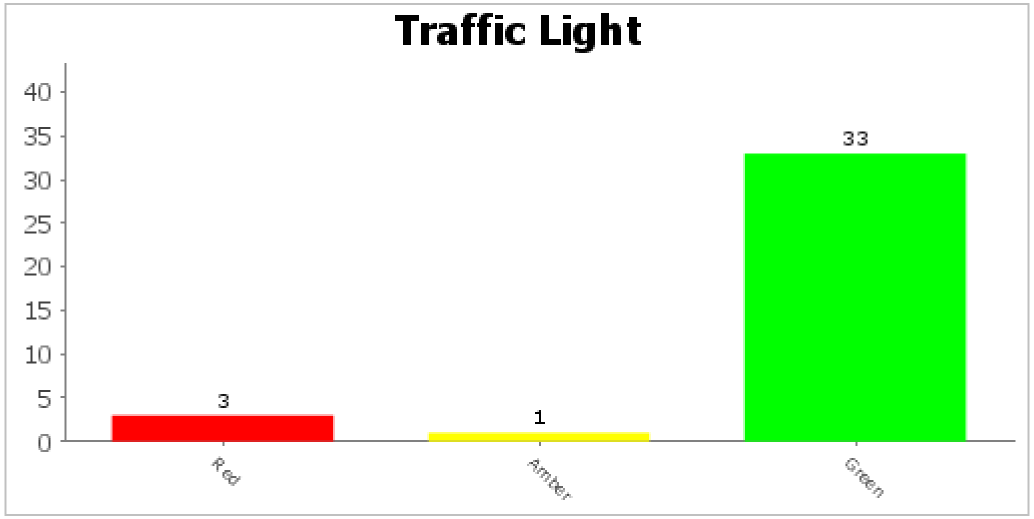

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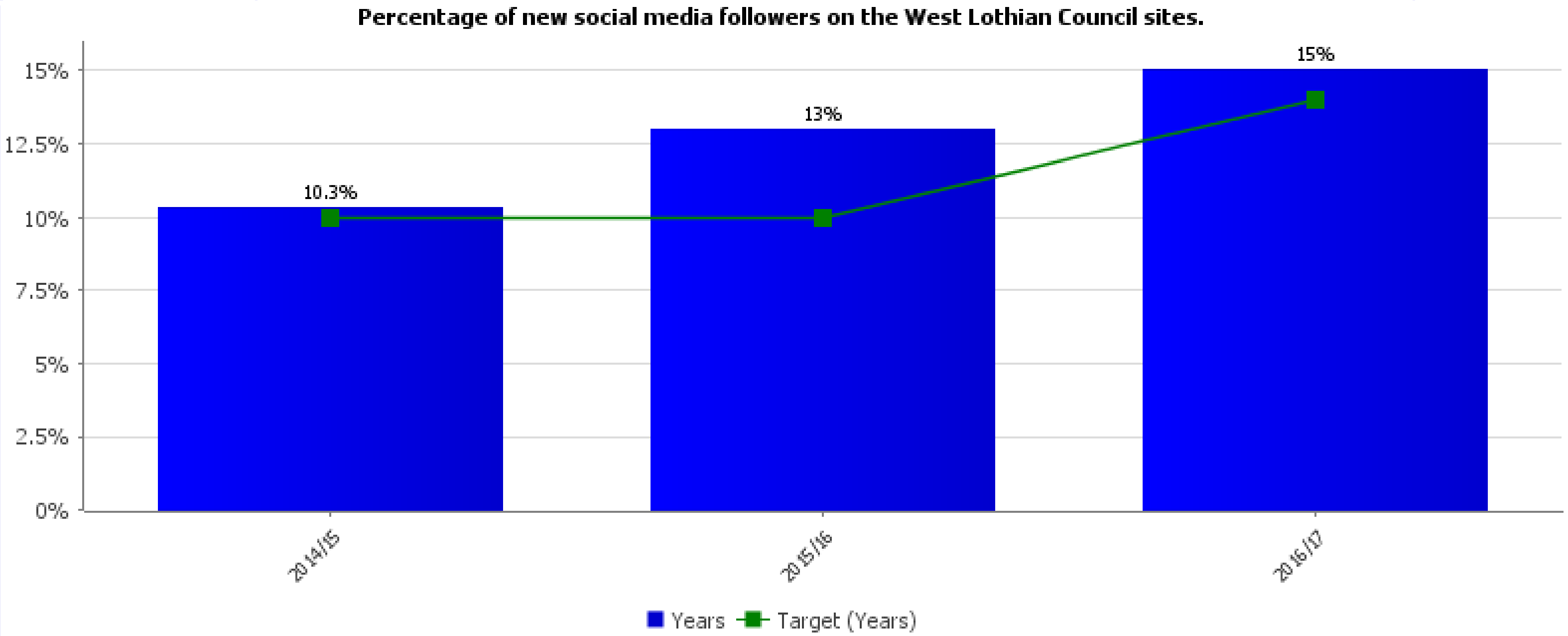
APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CC082_9b.1a Percentage of new social media followers on the West Lothian Council sites.	PI Owner	zCC_PIAdmin; Garry Heron
Description	This Performance indicator measures the percentage increase or decrease of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram followers on the main council sites. The data is obtained from the social media platforms and is calculated by comparing the change in numbers and calculating what the percentage change. This indicator allows the corporate communications team to monitor and measure the usage of key social media channels allowing us to evaluate staffing resources and determine the appropriate content required to attract new service users to this communications channel.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	15%
		Current Target	14%



Trend Chart Commentary:
We recorded a 15% growth in 2016/17 due to more people following our Facebook and Twitter feeds, and the addition of Instagram in 2016/17.
On 1 April 2017, we had 37,188 Facebook, 12,907 Twitter followers and 1,347 Instagram followers, so 51,442 in total, which represents an increase of 6,827.

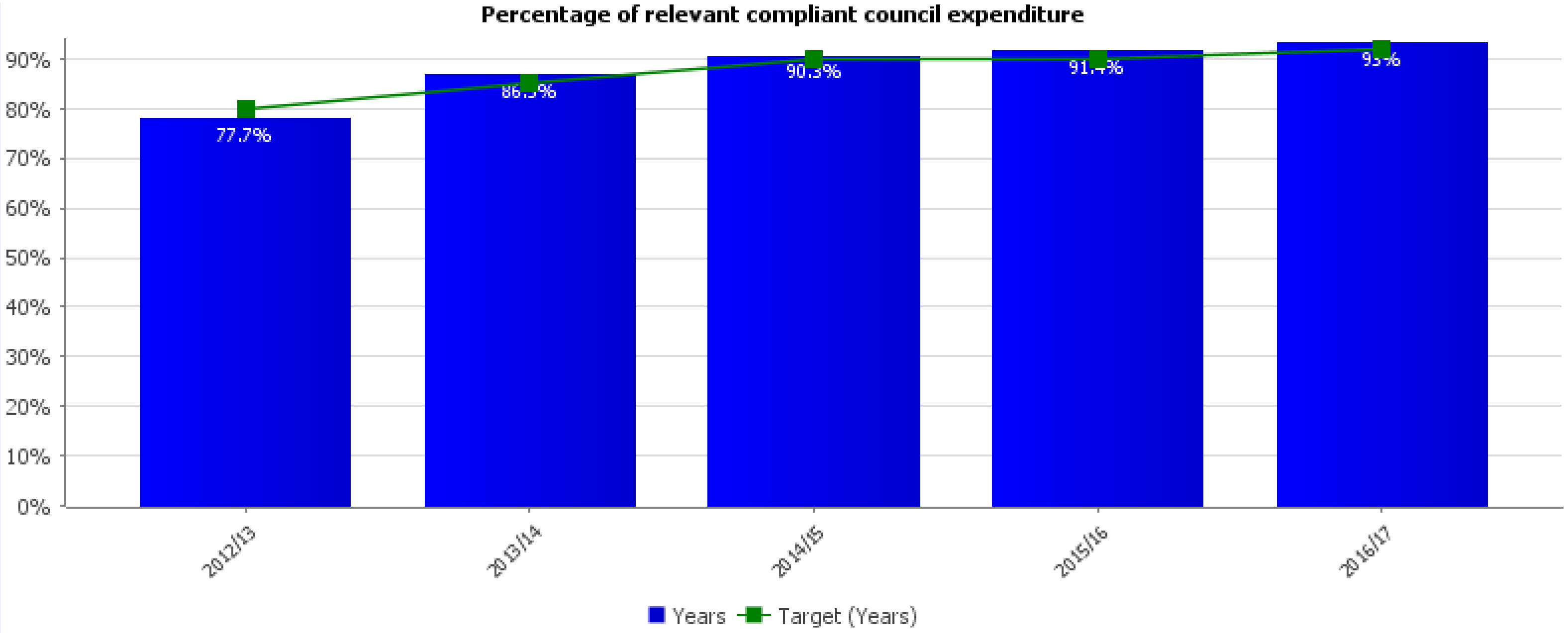
The trend shows that there was an increasing number of local residents choosing to engage with the council's social media channels, with rises of over 10% each year.

On 1 April 2016, we had 33,914 Facebook and 10,701 Twitter followers, 44,615 in total representing an increase of 13%.
On 1 April 2015, we had 30,501 Facebook and 8,914 Twitter followers, 39,415 in total representing an increase of 10%.
We only have part year data for 2014/15.

We will continue to use our social media channels to share information with local residents, as social media continues to grow in importance as a key channel for engaging the West Lothian public. There is a limit to the number of people who can follow the council on social media and the year on year increase is challenging. The target for 2017/18 will remain at 14%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CPU019_9b.1a Percentage of relevant compliant council expenditure**	**PI Owner**	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of relevant Supplies, Services and Works expenditure covered by contracts award in line with standing orders. Relevant Spend is identified as being spend which is influenceable by the Corporate Procurement Unit, Non influenceable spend is identified and removed from the overall spend to allow for a more accurate calculation. Calculated on an annual basis, the service identifies the council's contracted suppliers from the Corporate Contract Management System (CCMS) and measures their spend against the total council spend within the council's purchase to pay systems. Levels of spend with non-contracted suppliers is monitored by the service on a quarterly basis to ensure that the year-end target performance is achieved. This performance indicator is related to ensuring that the target savings agreed for the next five years can be achieved through effective procurement activity. A 90% target to be achieved by 2018 has been set within the council's Corporate Procurement Strategy 2013/18. In 2015/16 this target was achieved, therefore the target has been revised and increased to 92%	**Traffic Light Icon**	✔
		Current Value	93%
		Current Target	92%



Trend Chart Commentary

End of year performance FY 2016/17 has been recorded at the highest percentage since this indicator was created. The total percentage of compliant spend in 93%, which has surpassed target of 92%.

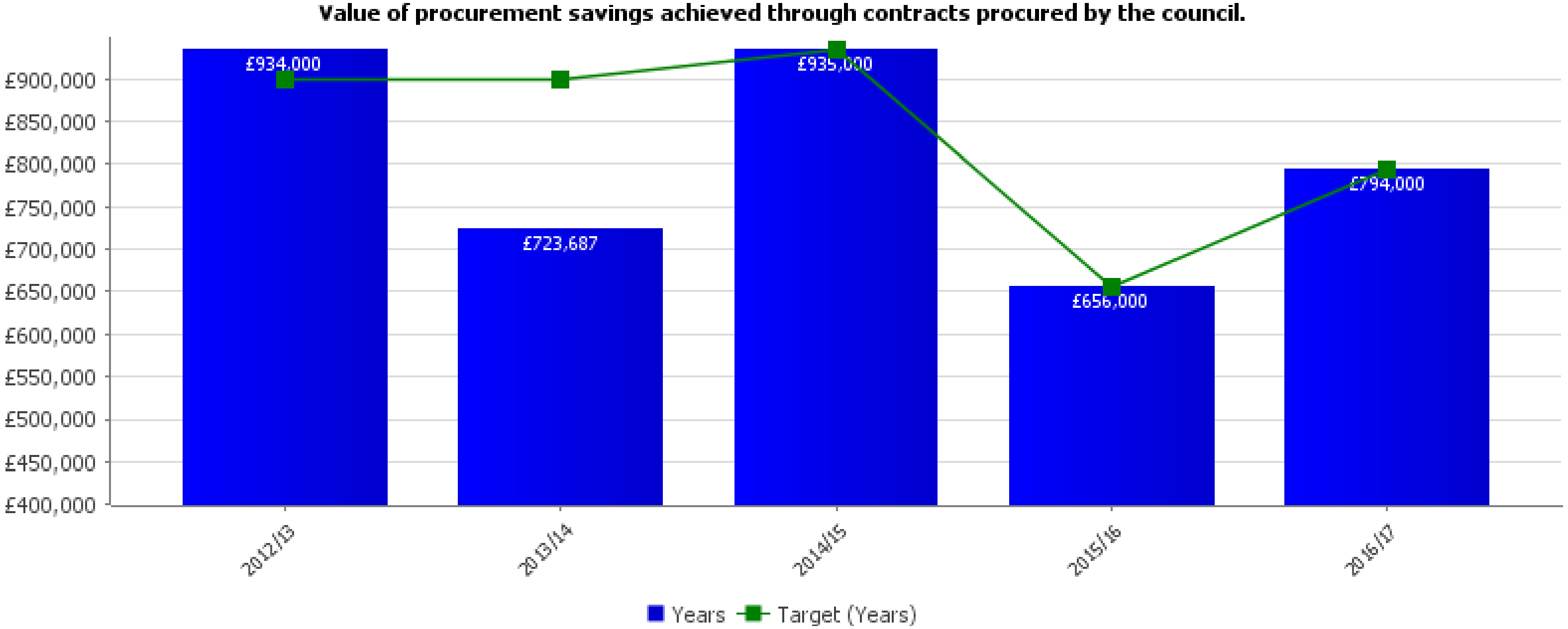
The target for 2015/16 was 90%. The end of year performance is recorded at 91%. This is derived from contracted spend of £191,570,826.30 and total influenceable spend of £209,484,955.

The percentage of contract spend has steadily increased since 2012/13, each year meeting or exceeding target. Levels of spend with non-contracted suppliers will continue to be monitored and appropriate action will be taken on a quarterly basis to ensure any identified contracts are highlighted with the services and added to the procurement plans.

The target for 2016/17 has been increased to 92%. Once the Procurement Commercial Improvement Programme is completed in October 2016, this figure will be benchmarked against other local authorities.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	CP:CPU020_9b.1a Value of procurement savings achieved through contracts procured by the council.	PI Owner	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown
Description	This performance indicator measures the value of cashable savings achieved through contracts arranged by the Corporate Procurement Unit. Cashable savings will be identified from contracts set up for use by the Scottish Government's centres of procurement expertise (Scottish Procurement and Scotland Excel) as well as those arranged by West Lothian Council and collaboratively with public sector partners. This indicator measures savings calculated using the Scottish Government's Best Practice Indicator 1 (Total Efficiency Savings Achieved year-on-year). This performance indicator is related to achieving the outcomes within the council's Corporate Procurement Strategy 2013/18.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	£794,000
		Current Target	£794,000



Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for cashable savings since 2012/13 has been reached each year. However, each year this has been achieved by using one-off savings, for example rebate payments and capital savings. These one-off savings are then transferred to the following year's saving target.

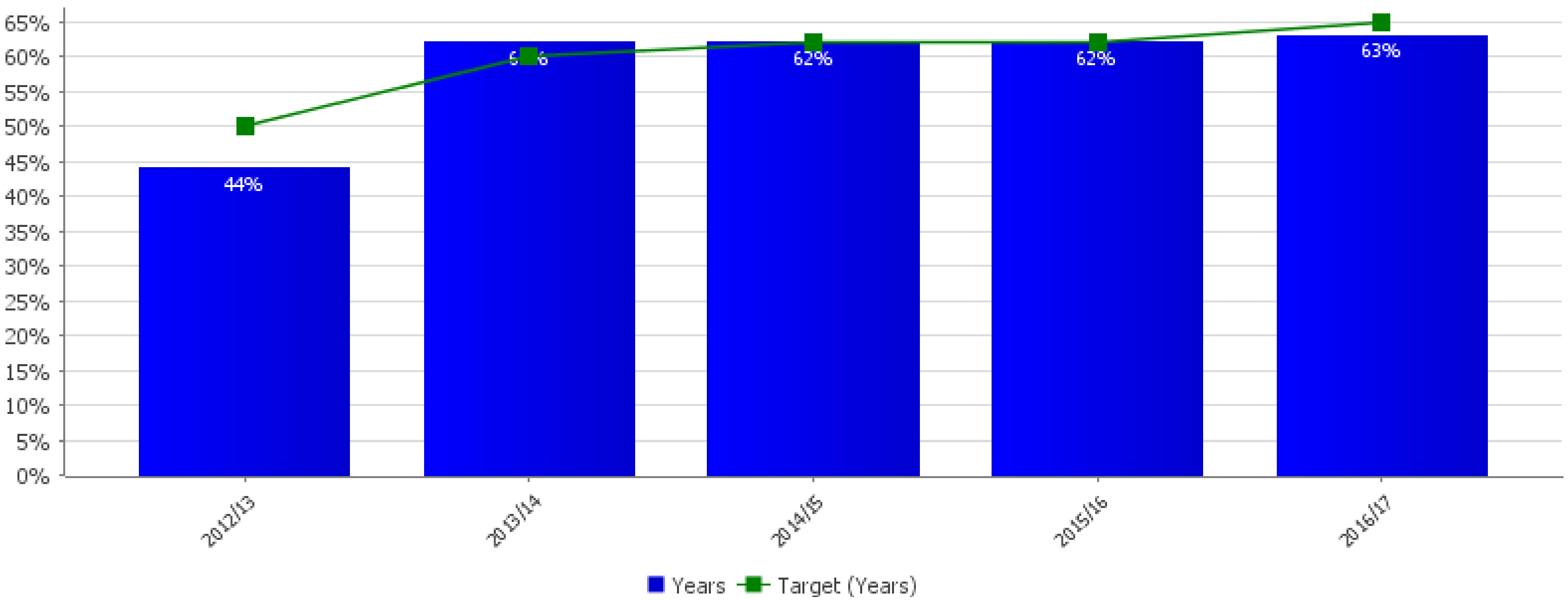
The target for cashable savings in 2016/17 is £794,000 in line with the delivering better outcomes five year target and the balance of the 2015/16 one off savings. Once the Procurement Commercial Improvement Programme is completed in October 2016, this figure will be benchmarked against other local authorities.

As most contracts are now being procured are second and third generation contracts, means that savings are more difficult to obtain. To assist with reaching the savings target, the procurement are now working with services to review specifications and contracts to identify contract which could deliver further savings.

The savings target for 2016/17 has been set at £794,000.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CPU021_9b.1a Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) score assigned to West Lothian Council.**	**PI Owner**	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage score of West Lothian Council's Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP). This external assessment was previously named the Procurement Capability Assessment (PCA). The Scottish Government's Procurement Reform Delivery Group agreed in January 2009 that a single procurement assessment should be developed for the Scottish Public Sector. The objective of the PCIP is to set out a mechanism for identifying areas where organisations can strengthen their approach to procurement through a detailed evaluation of their procurement capability to improve their structure, processes and ultimately performance. Corporate procurement capability is assessed in key areas against common criteria and standards and assigns a percentage score. The PCIP is performed annually by Scotland Excel (the Scottish Government's Local Authority Centre of Procurement Expertise). The assessment is performed annually for all Scottish Local Authorities.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	63%
		Current Target	65%



Trend Chart Commentary:
The revised procurement capability assessment has been renamed the Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) and the PCIP assessments took place during 2016/17. West Lothian Council's PCIP assessment took place on 25 May 2016 and scored 63%. With Tranche 2 assessments still to be undertaken in 2017/18, the current Local Authority average PCIP score is running at 65%, which is principally in line with our target expectations..

The structure and scoring of the Procurement Capability Assessment (PCA) was revised in 2015/16. As a result of this national review there was no assessment carried out in 2015/16. Therefore all scores remained in place for that year.

West Lothian Council accepted an offer to defer the assessment in 2014/15 and therefore the actual performance scored remained at 62%. This will allow staff to prioritise on the delivery of contracts and contract savings.

West Lothian Council has consistently increased its Procurement Capability Assessment score year on year (2012/13 = 44% and 2013/14 = 62%). Using the Procurement Capability Assessment (PCA) to benchmark in previous years, the council score of 62% was the Scottish Council average score for that year.
Improvement in the PCA score reflects the improvements made within corporate procurement as the PCA review reflects the level of compliance in procurement work undertaken. This has made an impact on spend captured under contract, community benefits achieved, contract and supplier management processes and ultimately ensuring best value for all contracts.

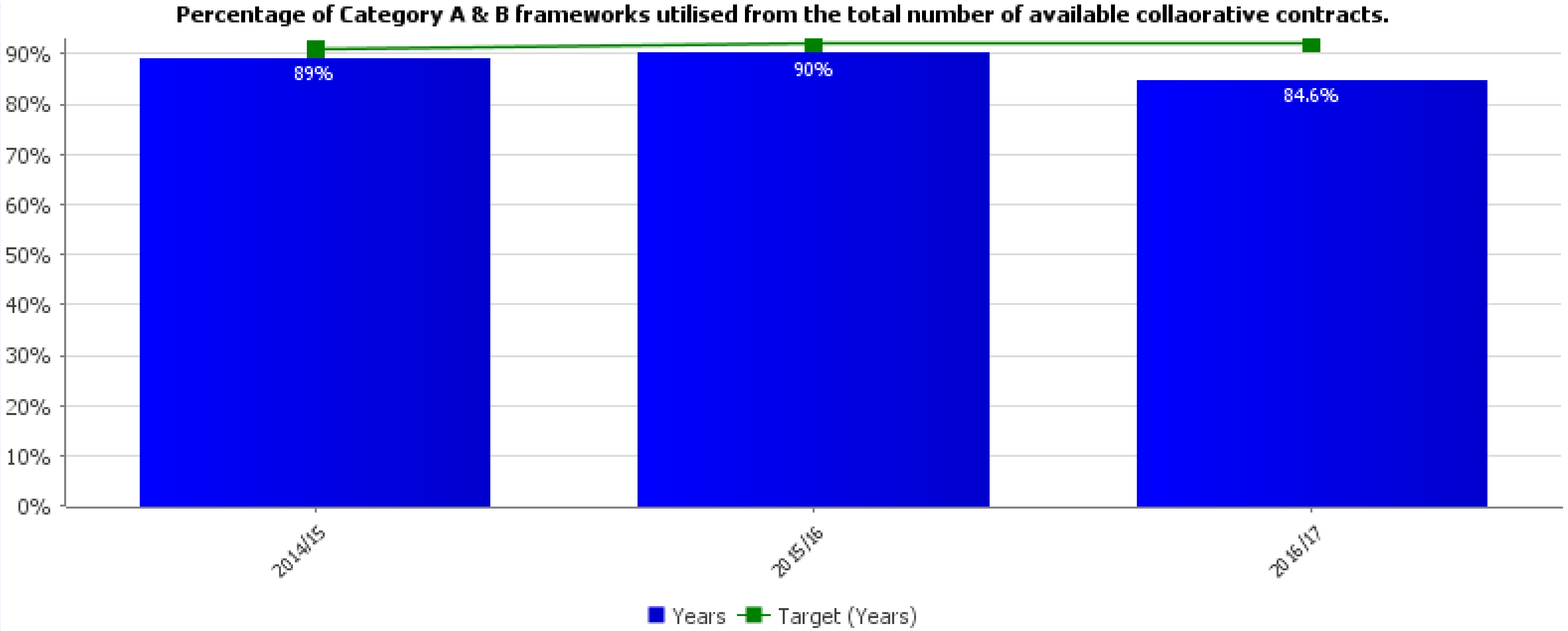
In 2013/14 West Lothian Council achieved the joint seventh highest score from all the Scottish Local Authorities assessed.

The target for the PCIP score for 2016/17 has been set as the Local Authorities average score, however, this is two percent lower than the average score of the 17 local authorities who agreed to take part in 2016/17, averaging 65%. Procurement will benchmark which areas can be targeted for improvement once Scotland Excel releases scores from other authorities.

The current score of 63% is very close to the current average score across all authorities (65%). We continue to monitor and benchmark our performance as other authorities progress through tranche 2 assessments in FY17/18, and will be reviewing our work under PCIP during this period.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	CP:CPU025_9b.1a Percentage of Category A & B frameworks utilised from the total number of available collaborative contracts.	PI Owner	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of category A and B contracts procured from the total number of available collaborative contracts. Category A contracts are managed by the Scottish Procurement &.Commercial Directorate and include goods and services that are used by all local public sector bodies in Scotland (e.g. IT Hardware and Software, Office Equipment, Utilities etc.). Category B contracts are managed by Scotland Excel and include commodities which fall outside of the Category A scope but are commonly purchased across the local authority sector. This performance indicator is related to achieving the outcomes within the council's Corporate Procurement Strategy 2013/18.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	84.6%
		Current Target	92%



Trend Chart Commentary:
Actual Performance for 2016/17 has been recorded below target at 84.6%. A total of 104 collaborative contracts have been identified, with 88 being utilised by Corporate Procurement Unit. This demonstrating that 84.6% of all Category A and B contracts demonstrate best value through the use of a collaborative contract.

The target performance for 2015/16 is set at 92%. Actual Performance has been calculated to show the total number of potential collaborations was 100, West Lothian Council participate in 90 of these. This demonstrating that 90% of all Category A and B contracts demonstrate best value through the use of a collaborative contract.

The target for performance for 2014/15 was set at 91%. Actual performance for the year was recorded below target at 89%. Total number of potential collaborations was 73, West Lothian Council participate in 65 of these. This demonstrates that 89% of all Category A and B contracts demonstrate best value through the use of a collaborative contract. The figures are broken down further below;

- Scotland Excel Available contracts - Available 46 - West Lothian Council participate in 45

APPENDIX 1

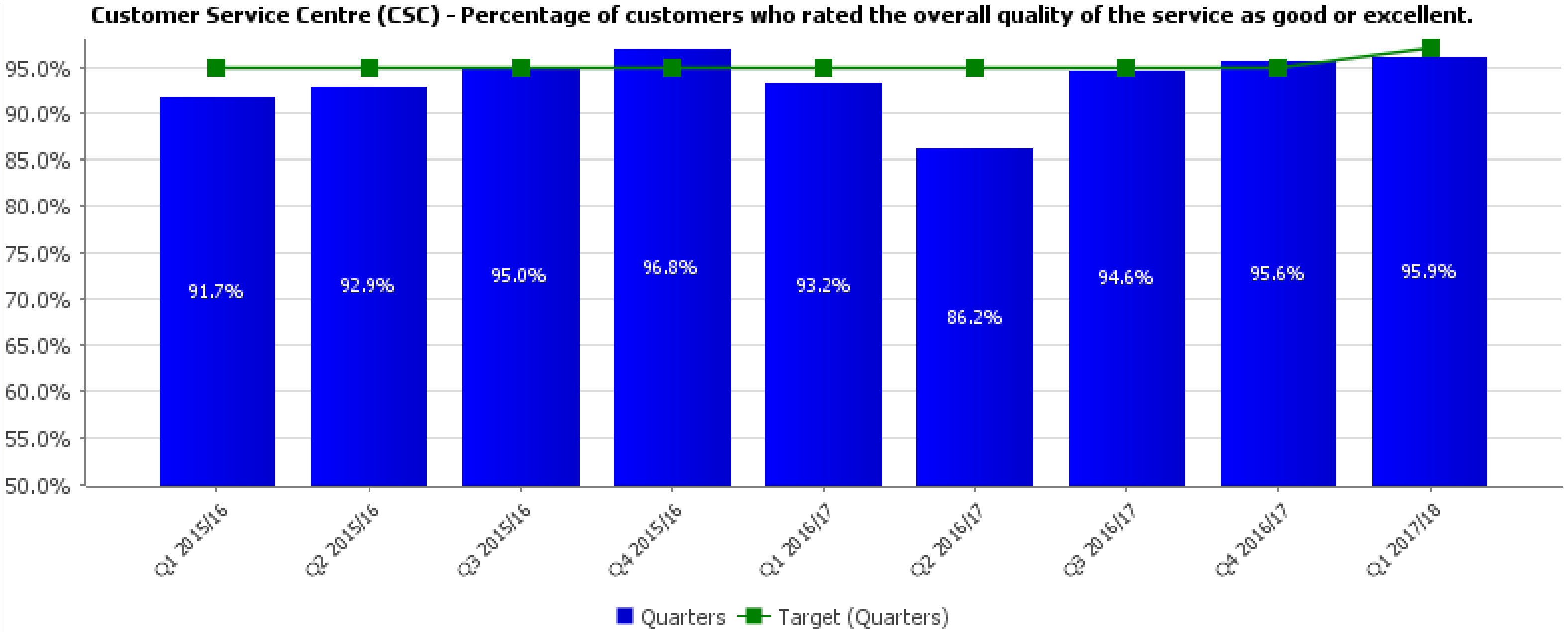
- Scottish Procurement Directive- Available contracts - 31 with 4 contracts with West Lothian would not participate in as these services are delivered inhouse. West Lothian Council participate in 20. There have been two contracts awarded in May, which we participate in once our own contracts have ended.

The service will continue to monitor performance in this area throughout the year to ensure best value is obtained.

The target for 2016/17 will remain at 92%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CSC007_6a.7 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as 'good' or 'excellent'. This information is gathered through using our monthly survey and a number of customers are randomly selected. The target is reviewed annually.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	95.9%
		Current Target	97.0%



Trend Chart Commentary:

From Quarter 3 2016/17 all survey requests are now being e-mailed to customers after each call to try to increase the number of completed responses and maintain consistency. The chart shows that CSC quarterly performance fluctuates throughout the year. Quarters 1 and 2 in 2016/17 decreased due to increases in call volumes and unplanned absences within CSC, priority was given to inbound calls, this meant that few outbound call surveys were completed. CSC reviewed the process in Quarter 3 which has increased the number of surveys completed. CSC will strive to improve this performance through call evaluation, coaching and feedback to advisors.

2016/17

Quarter 4 - 3103 customers contacted and 406 customer responses.
Quarter 3 - 887 customers contacted and 102 customers responded.
Quarter 2 - 214 customers contacted and 94 customer responses.
Quarter 1 - 83 customer contacted and 62 customer responses.

2015/16

Quarter 4 - 190 customers contacted and 187 customer responses.

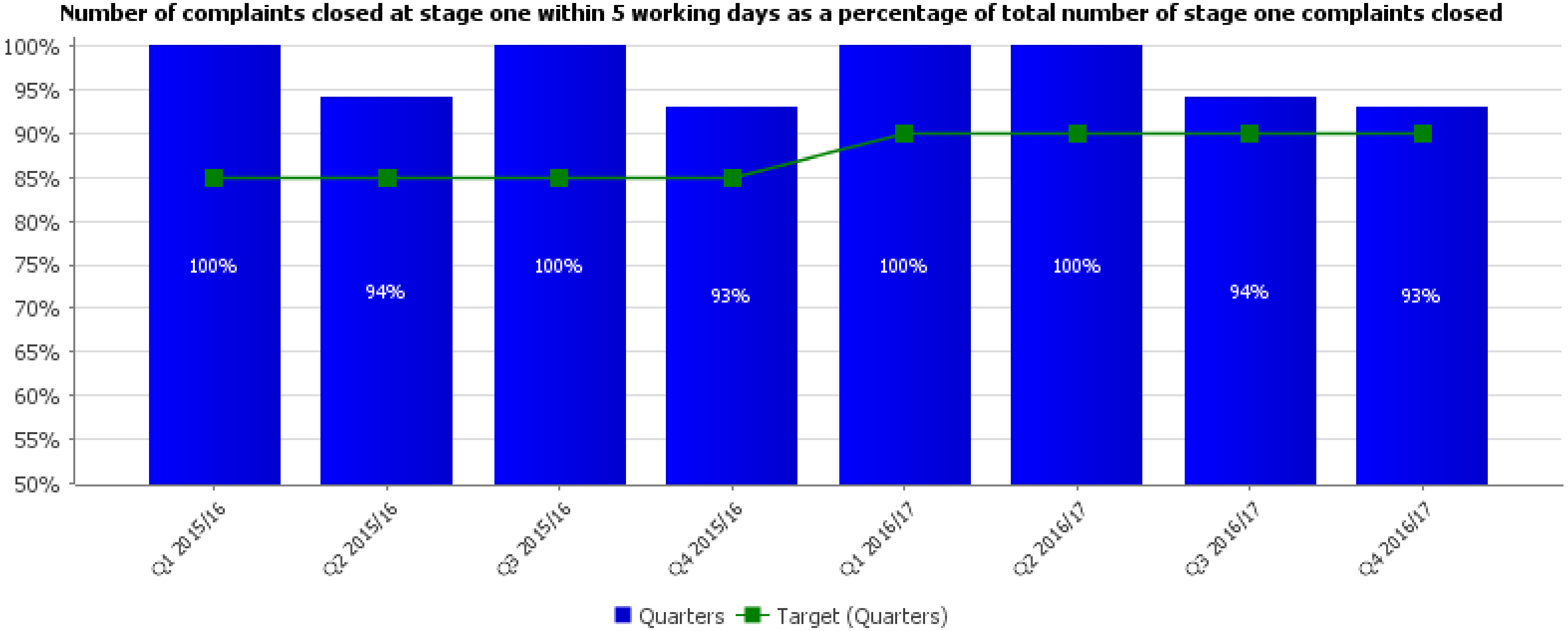
APPENDIX 1

Quarter 3 - 40 customers contacted and 38 customers responded.
Quarter 2 - 183 customers contacted and 170 customer responses.
Quarter 1 - 313 customer contacted and 287 customer responses.

In 2017/18 the target is set at 95% as that is deemed to be an achievable figure given the trend chart results from previous year. The survey sample size received is relatively small in comparison to survey requests. This can produce large variances in results from month to month.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CSC050q_6b.1 Number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as a percentage of total number of stage one complaints closed	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This indicator measures the total number of stage one complaints (complaints that the council aims to deal with within 5 working days) which are closed within 5 working days as a percentage of the total number of stage one complaints closed by CSC.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	93%
		Current Target	90%



Trend Chart Commentary

The Customer Service Centre (CSC) consistently exceeds this target. In 2016/17 CSC reviewed and increased this performance indicator from 85% to 90%. Quarter 2 and 4 2015/16, although this is still within target the decrease was due to a task within the process not being completed correctly. In Quarter 3 and 4 2016/17 show slight decrease which is due to an increase in unplanned absences within the Resolver team.

2016/17

Quarter 4 - Performance decreased to 93%. This is a result of 13 of the 14 complaints received being closed within 5 working days.
Quarter 3 - Performance decreased to 94%. This is a result of 17 of the 18 complaints received being closed within 5 working days.
Quarter 2 - This performance indicator remained at 100%
Quarter 1 - This performance indicator increased by 7% to 100% in quarter 1 2016/17.

2015/16

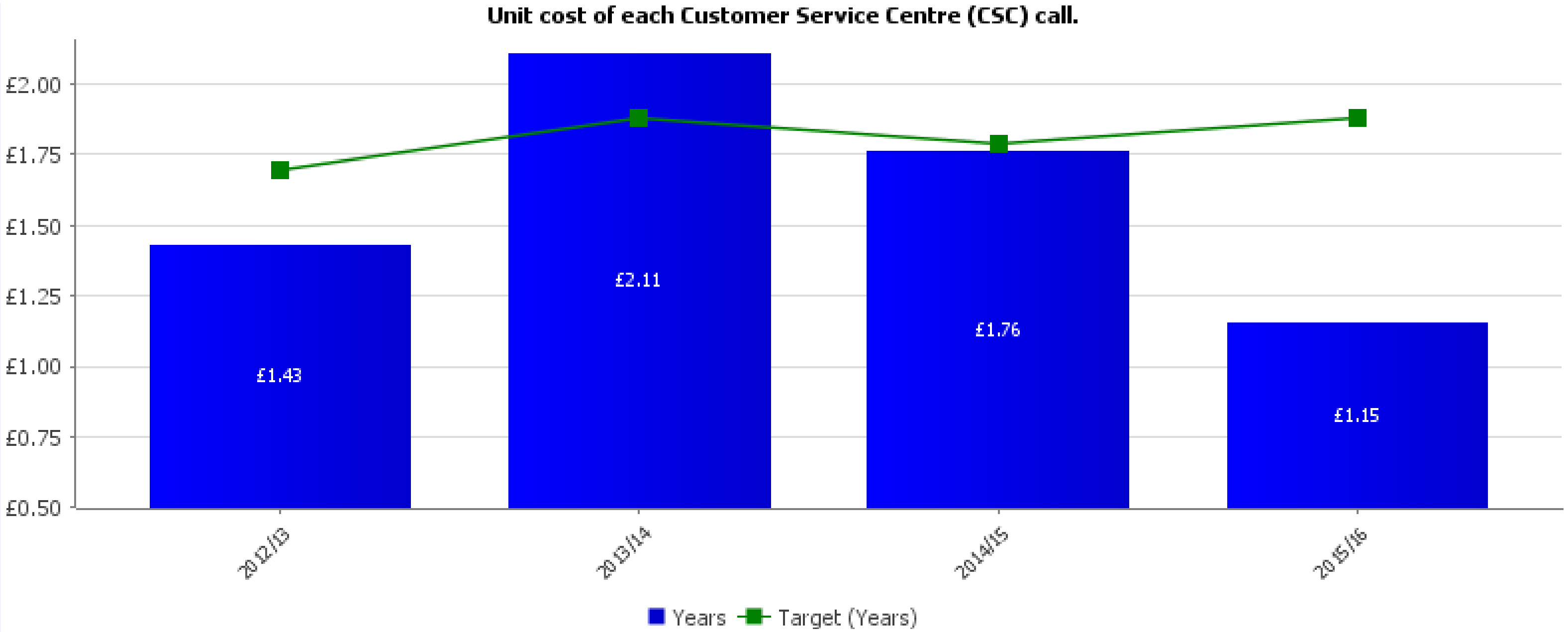
Quarter 4 - This performance indicator decreased to 93%
Quarter 3 - This performance indicator increased by 6% to 100%

Quarter 2 - This performance indicator decreased by 6% to 94%
Quarter 1 - This performance indicator remains at 100%.

The 2017/18 target remains 90% in line with Corporate Complaints Policy.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CSC150_9a.1a Unit cost of each Customer Service Centre (CSC) call.**	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator shows the unit cost for each individual contact from West Lothian Council customers. The Customer Service Centre delivers a telephone service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.	Traffic Light Icon	✔
		Current Value	£1.15
		Current Target	£1.88



Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend in this indicator shows that for years 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2014/15, the Customer Service Centre has been beneath the target figure for the unit cost of Customer Service Centre calls. In 2013/14 the Customer Service Centre was above target. The volume of calls received by the Customer Service Centre have increased in this time, but improvements to staff training, streamlining of processes have contributed to the positive trend.

2016/17 - The final costs will be gathered by the end of June 2017 when this performance indicator will be updated.

2015/16 - The target for 2015/16 was £1.88. The final unit cost of each customer service centre calls was £1.15. this is a decrease £0.61 from the 2014/15 figure but stands under target figure. The decrease in cost is due to reduction in staff levels due to a high number of temporary contracts being given and these staff moving into permanent contract within and outwith the Council meaning the service had a number of vacancies through the year. The target was set 7p higher than the previous year to take account of increased staffing costs due to wage rises etc, and a presumption that the number of calls would reduce as more customers began to self serve via the website.

2014/15 - The final unit cost of each Customer Service Centre call was £1.76, this is a decrease of £0.35 from the 2013/14 figure but stays under the target figure of £1.79 for this period.

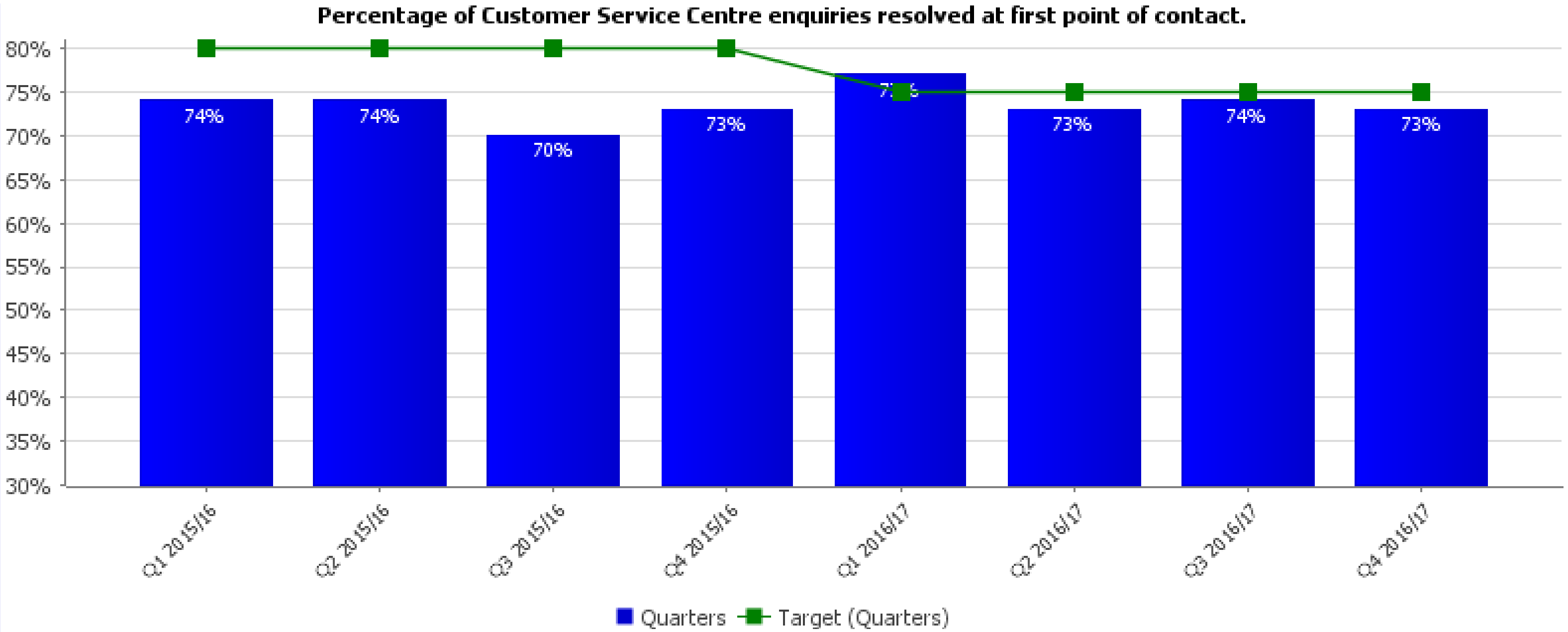
2013/14 - The final unit cost of each Customer Service Centre call was £2.11, this is an increase of £0.68 from the 2012/13 figure. Performance during 2013/14 failed to achieve target of £1.88. In 2013/14

Customer Service Centre moved to Civic Centre, call volumes increased but there was a reduction in staffing due to long term absences within the service, including maternity leave. Staffing resource have also been taken to cover within the Careline emergency team.

The target for 2016/17 will be £1.90 to reflect the change in call volumes. Following audit review thresholds have been amended.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	CP:CSC201_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of customer enquiries that are resolved by the Customer Service Centre so that the customer does not need to make any further contact with the Council. Recognised good practice for contact centre is to achieve a minimum of 75% enquiry resolution.	Traffic Light Icon	✓
		Current Value	73%
		Current Target	75%



Trend Chart Commentary:

Over the last year performance for this indicator has decreased due to an increasing number of customers being able to self serve via automated payments and online web forms. This means a larger number of calls being dealt with are more complex and need support from other services.

2016/17

Quarter 4- 73% first point resolution.
Quarter 3 - 74% first point resolution.
Quarter 2- 73% first point resolution.
Quarter 1- 77% first point resolution.

2015/16

Quarter 4 - 73% first point resolution.
Quarter 3 - 70% first point resolution.
Quarter 2- 74% first point resolution.
Quarter 1- 74% first point resolution.

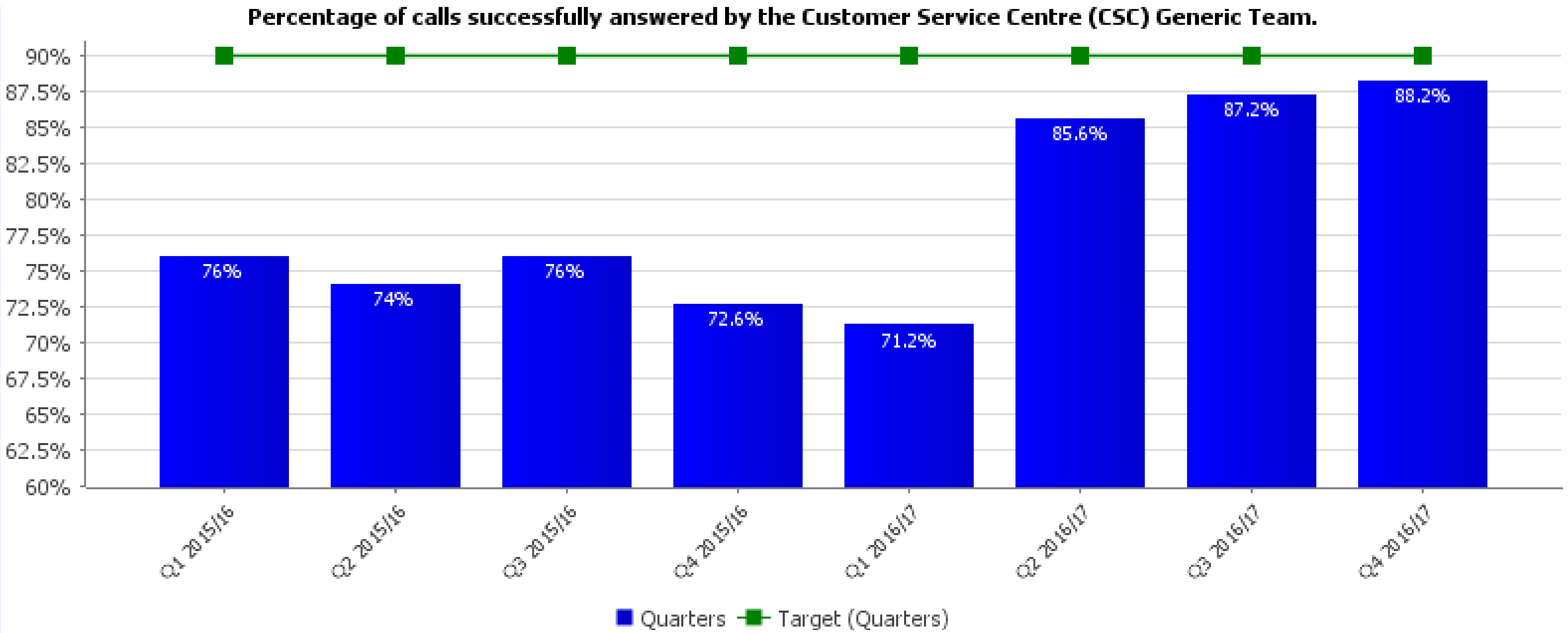
APPENDIX 1

The target for 2017/18 remains at 75% which is the national target to recognise the increase in the number of self service options for customers and a recognition that the calls being dealt with are becoming more complex and often need support from other services

CSC is currently working with Falkirk District Council and Link Housing Association to benchmark results for 1st point resolution.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CSC210_9b.1c Percentage of calls successfully answered by the Customer Service Centre (CSC) Generic Team.	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the number of calls answered by the Customer Service Centre Generic Team against the number of calls where the customer hangs up before their call is answered or directed to voicemail.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	88.2%
		Current Target	90%



Trend Chart Commentary:

This trend indicator shows that performance has fluctuated over each quarter since Quarter 1 2015/16 . These issues are due to shortage of resource, issues with technology, and unplanned absences. Improvement as been made from Quarter 2 2016/17 which has been due to the technical problems being resolved, additional resource trained and long term absences returning. The target set is static as it is the percentage of calls successfully answered which is closely linked to the abandonment rate. The abandonment rate is a national target set at 10% which would make our target 90% to be successfully answered.

2016/17

Quarter 4 - 88.2% calls were successfully answered.
Quarter 3 - 87.2% calls were successfully answered.
Quarter 2 - 85.6%calls were successfully answered.
Quarter 1 - 71.2% calls were successfully answered.

2015/16

Quarter 4 - 72.6%calls were successfully answered.
Quarter 3 - 76% calls were successfully answered.

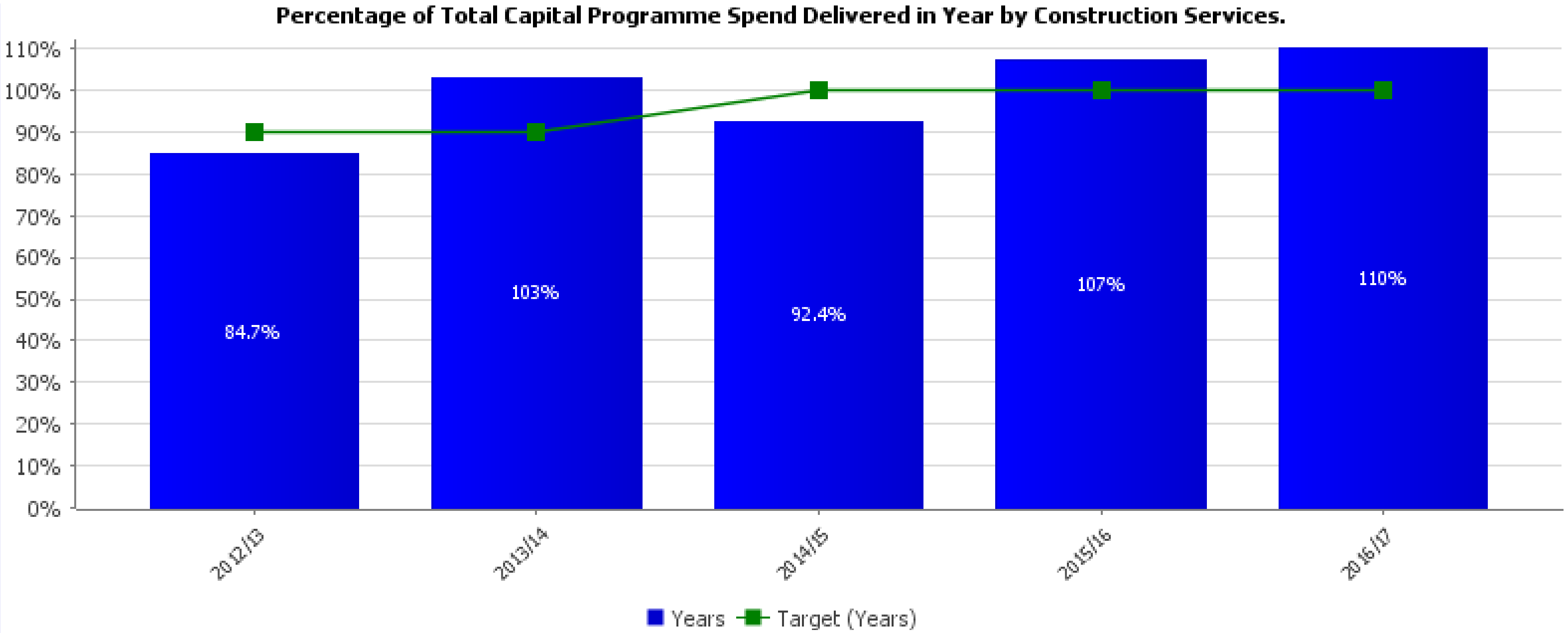
APPENDIX 1

Quarter 2 - 74% calls were successfully answered.
Quarter 1 - 76%calls were successfully answered.

The target for 2017/18 will remain at 90% due to a national target for abandoned calls remaining at 10%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CSg601_9b.1c Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Construction Services.	PI Owner	zCSg_PIAdmin; Marjory Mackie
Description	Construction Services are responsible for the delivery of a range of construction projects identified in the General Services and Housing Capital programmes. This indicator measures the percentage of the budget that is spent by the end of the financial year for projects that are the responsibility of Construction Services.	Traffic Light Icon	✔
		Current Value	110%
		Current Target	100%



Trend Chart Commentary:

This annual indicator shows the capital programme spend achieved by Construction Services within each financial year.

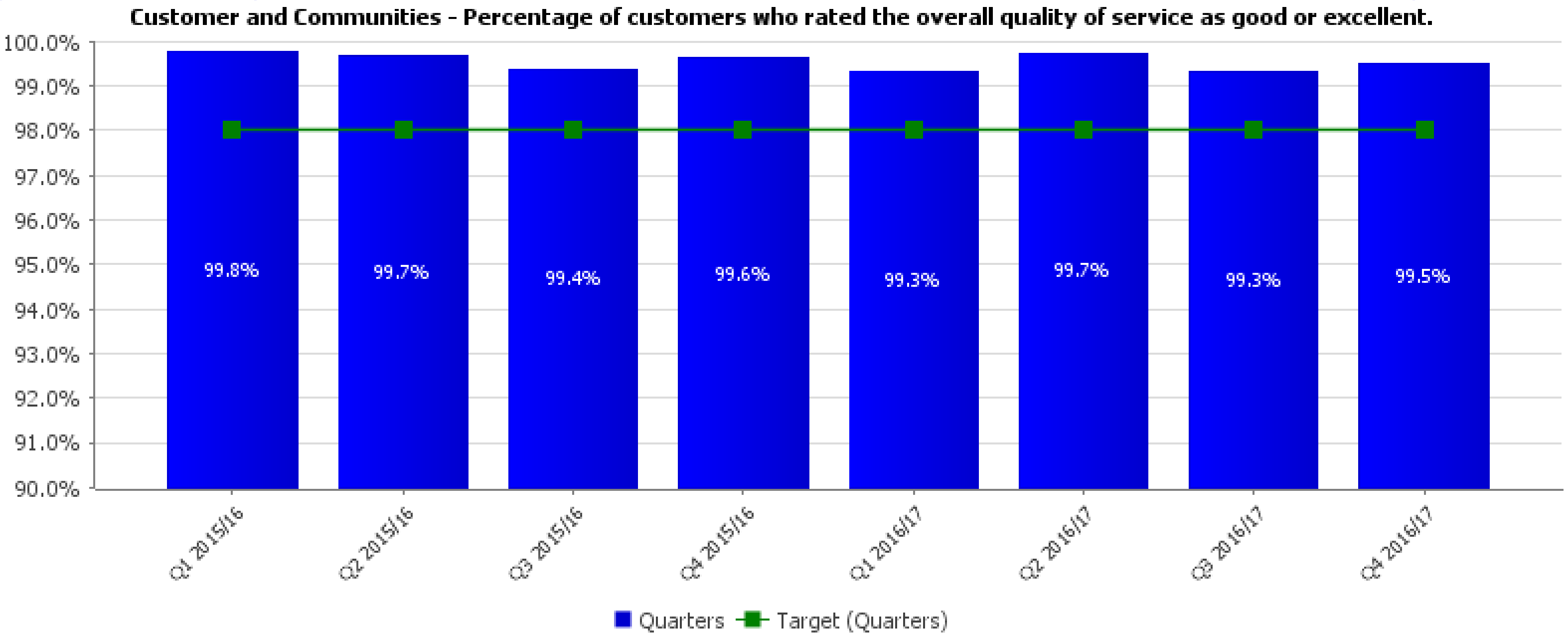
In 2016/17 the capital expenditure exceeded target at 110%. The trend shows continued improvement overall in the percentage of capital budget spent since 2012/13 when the level of expenditure in year was 84.7%. In 2013/14 and 2015/16 the capital expenditure exceeded target due to acceleration of a number of key projects, however two key projects were delayed late in 2014/15 which resulted in a slightly lower spend than anticipated.

In 2016/17 Construction Services were responsible for £47.9million of capital works (General Services, Housing and Open Space) and successfully delivered £52.9million which is an increase of £18.6million in expenditure from 2015/16.

The target for 2017/18 will remain at 100%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CuCS007q_6a.7 Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.	PI Owner	zCuCS_Admin; Karen Cawte
Description	Service customers are randomly selected to complete a customer satisfaction survey. This indicator shows the percentage of customers rating the overall satisfaction with the customer service they received as good or excellent. The target is reviewed on an annual basis. This information is representative of Bathgate Partnership Centre, Community Facilities, Customer Information Service, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre, Library Services and Registration Services.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	99.5%
		Current Target	98.0%



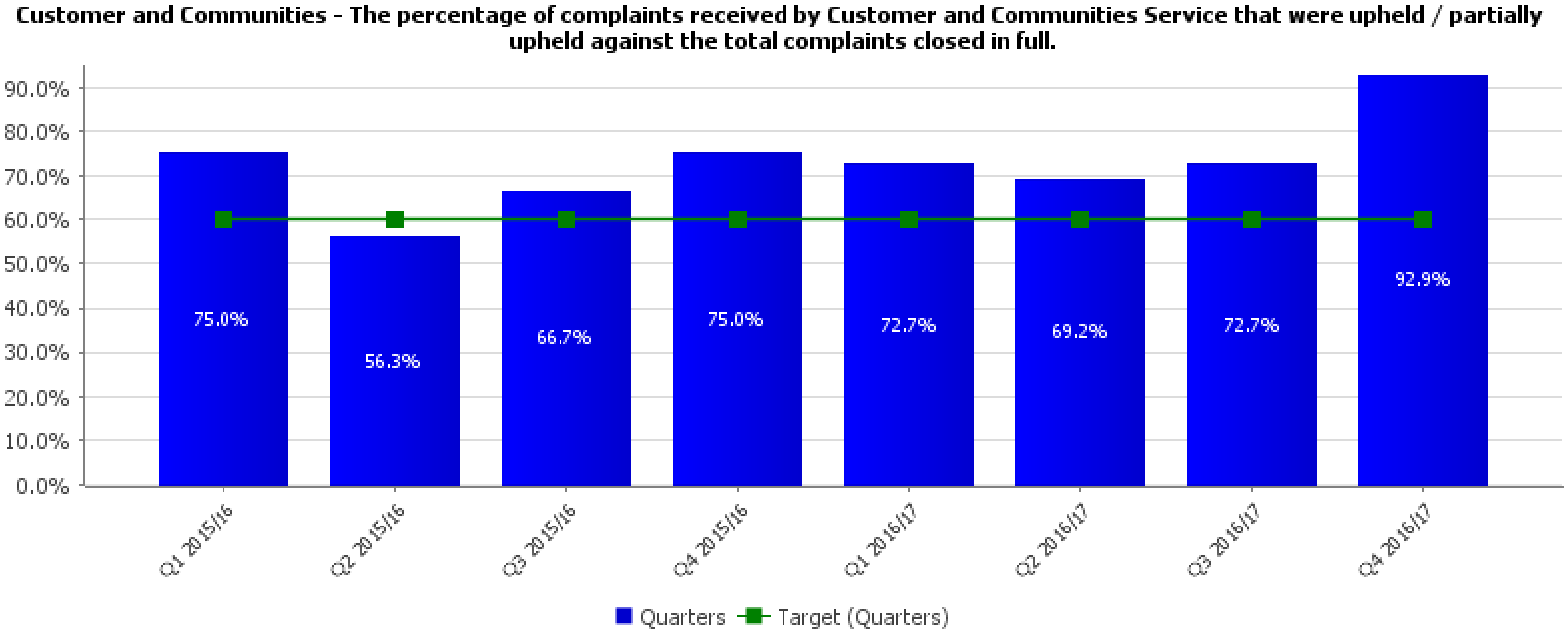
Trend Chart Commentary:

2016/17- The target for this year will be 98%, this has remained the same as previous years due to the impact of a small number of negative responses can have to the overall result.
Performance in Quarter 1 dipped slightly due to 5 customers rating the service as poor.
Quarter 4 - 602 out of 605 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent
Quarter 3 - 579 out of 583 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent
Quarter 2 - 739 out of 741 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent
Quarter 1 - 750 out of 755 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent

2015/16 - Performance in Quarter 3 dipped slightly due to 6 customers rating the service as poor.
Quarter 4 - 795 out of 798 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent
Quarter 3 - 949 out of 955 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent
Quarter 2 - 880 out of 883 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent
Quarter 1 - 864 out of 866 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CuCS011q_6b.4 Customer and Communities - The percentage of complaints received by Customer and Communities Service that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full.	PI Owner	zCuCS_Admin; Karen Cawte
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Customer and Communities Servicewhich were upheld or partially upheld, as a percentage of all complaints received. This information is representative of Bathgate Partnership Centre, Community Facilities, Customer Information Service, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre, Library Services and Registration Services.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	92.9%
		Current Target	60.0%



Trend Chart Commentary:
2016/17
The target for this year will be 60%. Overall the number of complaints compared to the number of customers dealt with is very small. The first two quarters of 2016/2017 has remained above target.
In quarter 3, 8 complaints were upheld or part upheld, 5 were due to standard of service in Customer Information Services, 1 was due to Incorrect Information at Fauldhouse Partnership Centre, 1 due to Poor Communication at Library Services and 1 due to Standard of Service in Registration Services.
In quarter 2, 9 complaints were upheld or part upheld, 5 were due to standard of service, 3 due to employee attitude and 1 due to poor communication. Staff training and meetings held to help resolve the issues and procedures were reviewed and changed.
In quarter 1, 16 complaints were upheld or part upheld, 4 were due to poor communication, 3 policy related, 6 employee attitude and 3 standard of service. Staff briefings and training held to resolve issues and procedures reviewed.

Quarter 4 - 13 out of 14 complaints were upheld or part upheld
Quarter 3 - 8 out of 11 complaints were upheld or part upheld.
Quarter 2 - 9 out of 13complaints were upheld or part upheld.
Quarter 1 - 16 out of 22 complaints were upheld or part upheld.

APPENDIX 1

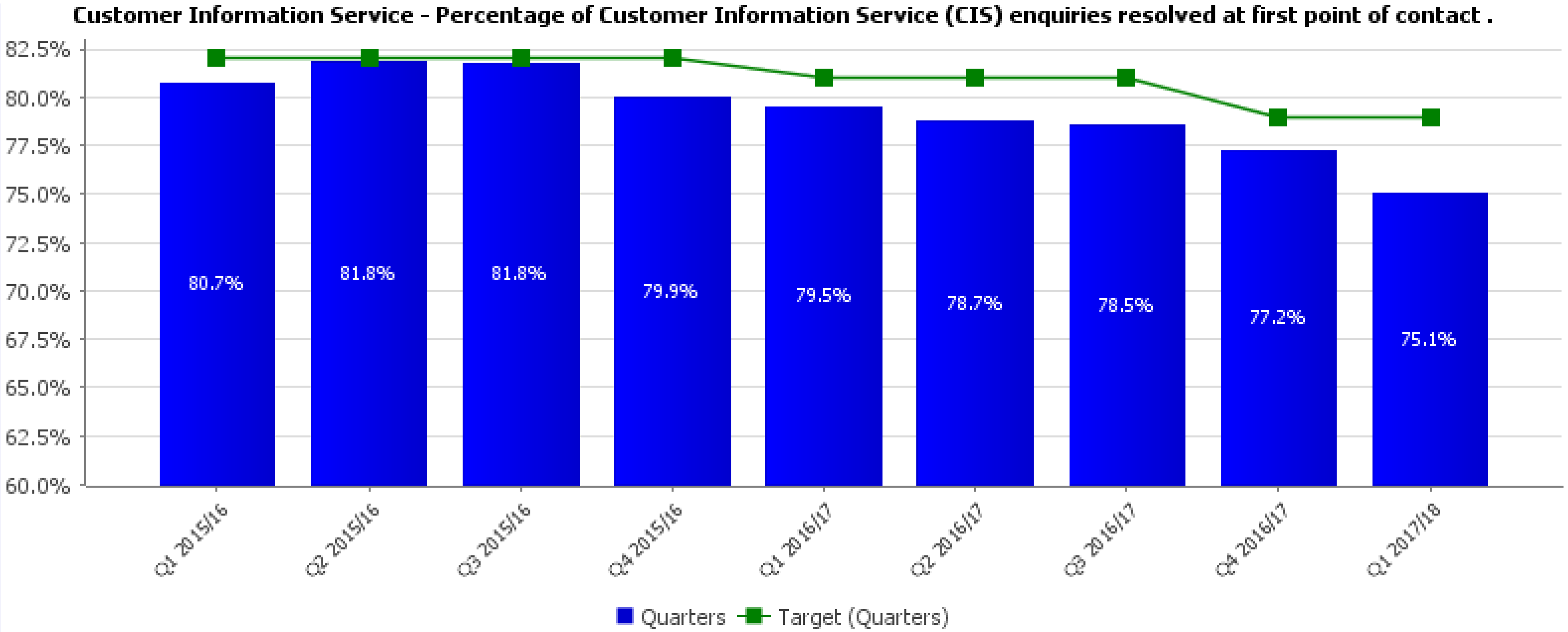
2015/16

There had been a dip in Quarter 2 in 2015/2016, this was due to a higher number of complaints in Customer Information Service and Fauldhouse Partnership Centre due to Staff Attitude, Standard of Service and Policy Related, Staff training was given in all instances.

Quarter 4 - 6 out of 8 complaints were upheld or part upheld.
Quarter 3 - 6 out of 9 complaints were upheld or part upheld, 2 due to standard of service, 3 employee attitude and 1 due to waiting times, staff Training given, procedures changed and rota's amended.
Quarter 2 - 9 out of 16 complaints were upheld or part upheld, 5 due to standard of service, 1 due to waiting time, 2 Employee Attitude and 1 Policy Related. Staff training given.
Quarter 1 - 3 out of 4 complaints were upheld or part upheld, 2 were due to standard of service and 1 poor communication. Staff Briefings done.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:CuCS026q_9b.1a Customer Information Service - Percentage of Customer Information Service (CIS) enquiries resolved at first point of contact	PI Owner	zCuCS_Admin; Julia Laidlaw
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of customer enquiries that have been resolved by Customer Information Service (CIS) during the initial customer interaction. This removes the need for the customer to make any further contact with the council to have their enquiry resolved. There is a national target of 75% set by the Customer First initiative.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	75.1%
		Current Target	79.0%



Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for 2016/17 was set at 81%, however this was changed to 79% in January 2017 in recognition that there was a clear reduction in the amount of enquiries which are being dealt with at the first point of contact. In addition, from January 2017 the number of advisers included in the indicator increased due to the recent service restructure. It now includes all CRM enquiries handled throughout the neighbourhood, not just CIS offices.

The service failed to meet its target during 2015/16 and 2016/17. There was a slight fluctuation between each quarter with a variance of no more than 4.6% over the 2 year period.

The lowest performance was noted in quarter 4 2016/17 (77.2%) and was a result of an increase in the number of enquiries which had to be passed to other service areas to resolve.

2016/17

Quarter 4 – 19,287 of a total 24,976 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 77.2%, which is down 1.3% from the previous quarter and is down 2.7% from the same period of 2015/16.

Quarter 3 - 13,200 of a total of 16,811 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 78.5% which is 1% down on quarter 1 and 0.2% down on quarter 2.

Quarter 2 - 16,926of a total of 21,499 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 78.7% which is 0.8% down from quarter 1. This is linked with an increase in the number of case forms

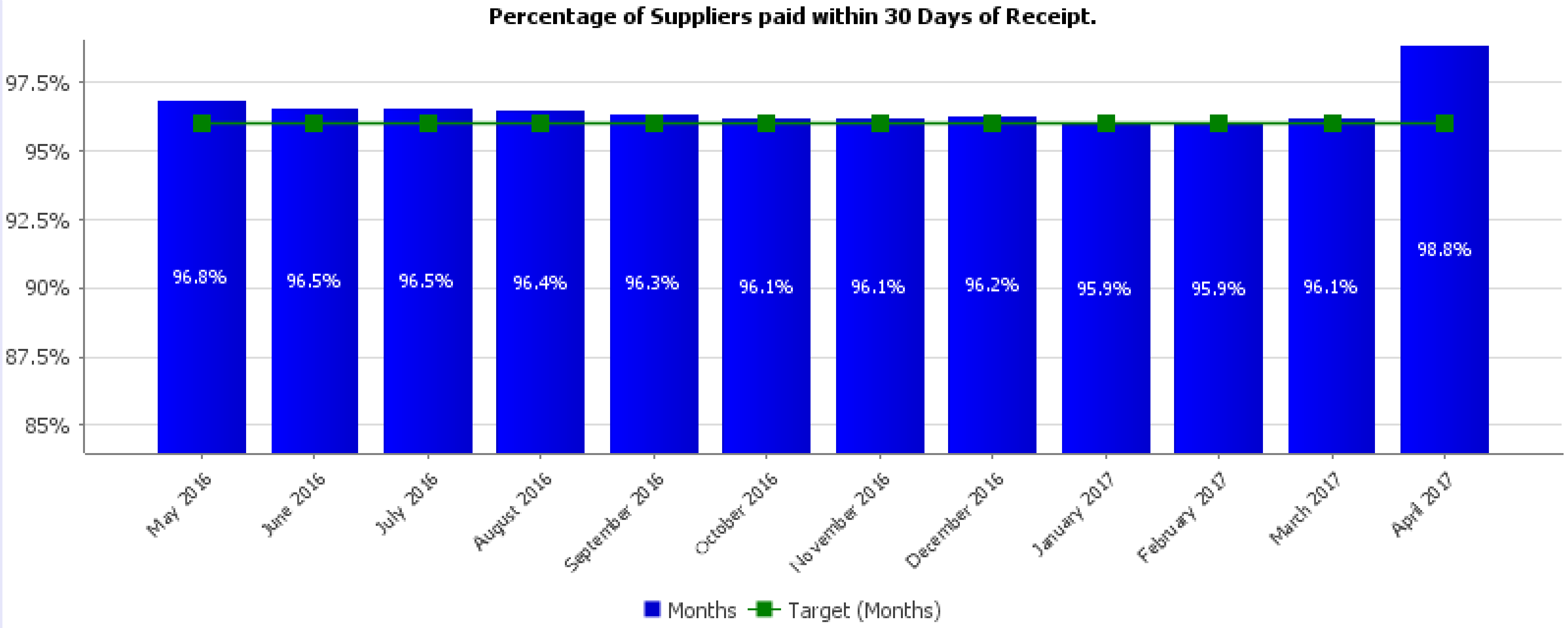
advisers are passing to colleagues in other services relating to housing and council tax arrears.
Quarter 1 - 18,684 of a total of 23,498 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 79.5%. This is 1.2% down on the same period in 2015/16. This is linked with an increase in the number of case forms advisers are passing to colleagues in other services relating to housing and council tax arrears.

2015/16
Quarter 4 - 19,107 of a total of 23,900 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact, equating to 79.9%, a decrease of 1.9% from the previous quarter.
Quarter 3 - 16,912 of a total of 26,686 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact, equating to 81.8%, matching the previous quarter.
Quarter 2 - 20,374 of a total of 24,909 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact equating to 81.8%, a 1.1% increase from the previous quarter.
Quarter 1 - 18,991 of total 23,521 enquiries were resolved at first point of contact, equating to 80.7%.

The target for 2016/17 is set at 81% which is a stretching target compared to the national target of 75%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**FM001_6b.5 Percentage of Suppliers paid within 30 Days of Receipt.**	**PI Owner**	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of correctly presented invoices from suppliers paid within 30 calendar days of receipt. Thirty calendar days reflects the normal credit term period in accordance with the Late Payments of Commercial Debts (Interests) Act 1998. West Lothian Council recognises the importance in paying invoices in a timely manner. The target used is set internally by the Head of Finance and Property and ensures challenging targets year on year which are always higher than the Scottish average. Note that this performance indicator monitors the performance on a monthly basis and the cumulative figure for the year is reported to Audit Scotland as a statutory performance indicator. The payment of invoices is a key activity for Finance and Property Services, ensuring that the council's suppliers are paid on a timely basis. Note that the performance indicator records the cumulative performance for the year to date, commencing April.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	98.8%
		Current Target	96%

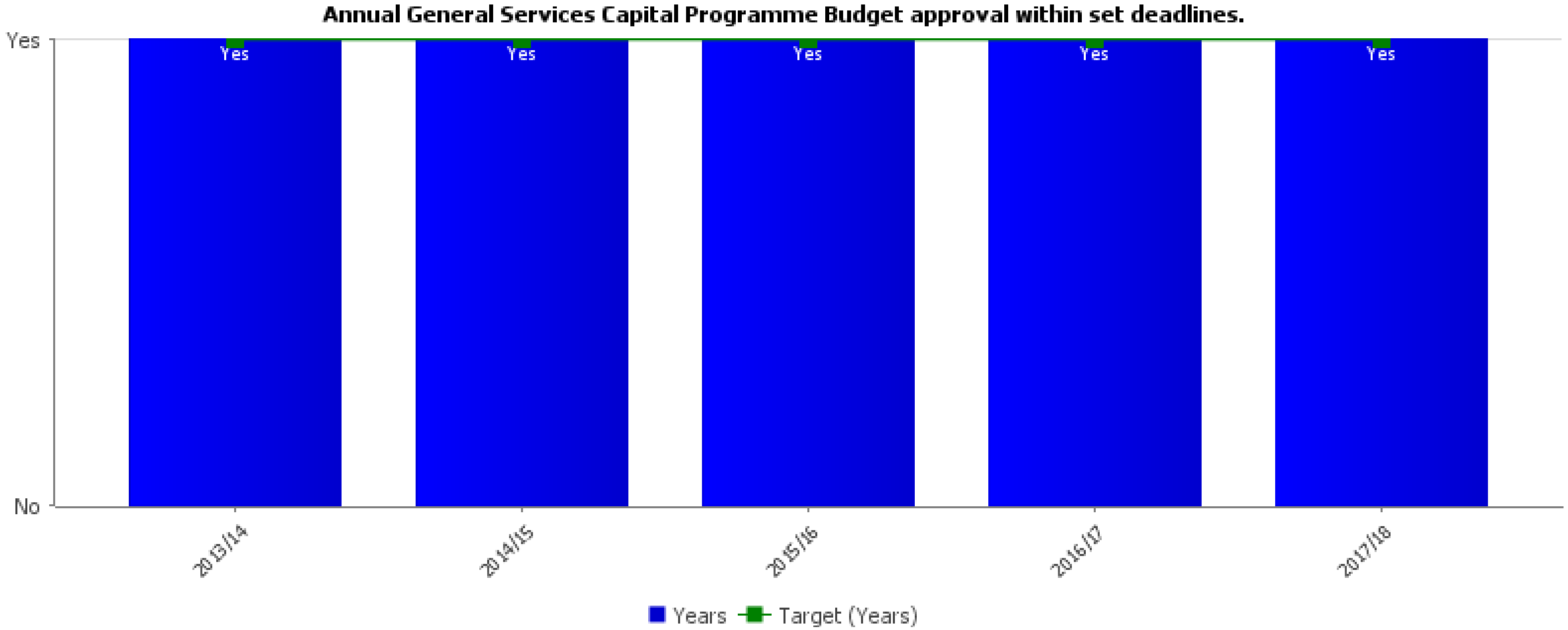


Trend Chart Commentary:
The Financial Management Unit works closely with services to improve invoice processing times. Monthly performance exceeds the current target of 96% (The annual performance is greater than the Scottish Local Authorities average of paying 93.06 per cent source: CIPFA Directors of Finance 2014/15) of invoices within 30 days. There has been a steady increase in performance over recent years, resulting in a cumulative result of 96.1 per cent for the year ending March 2016, against a target of 96 per cent. West Lothian Council process over 13,000 invoices every month and we are currently ranked 6th out of 32 councils.

The 2016/17 target for percentage of suppliers paid within 30 days of receipt is 96 per cent.

APPENDIX 1

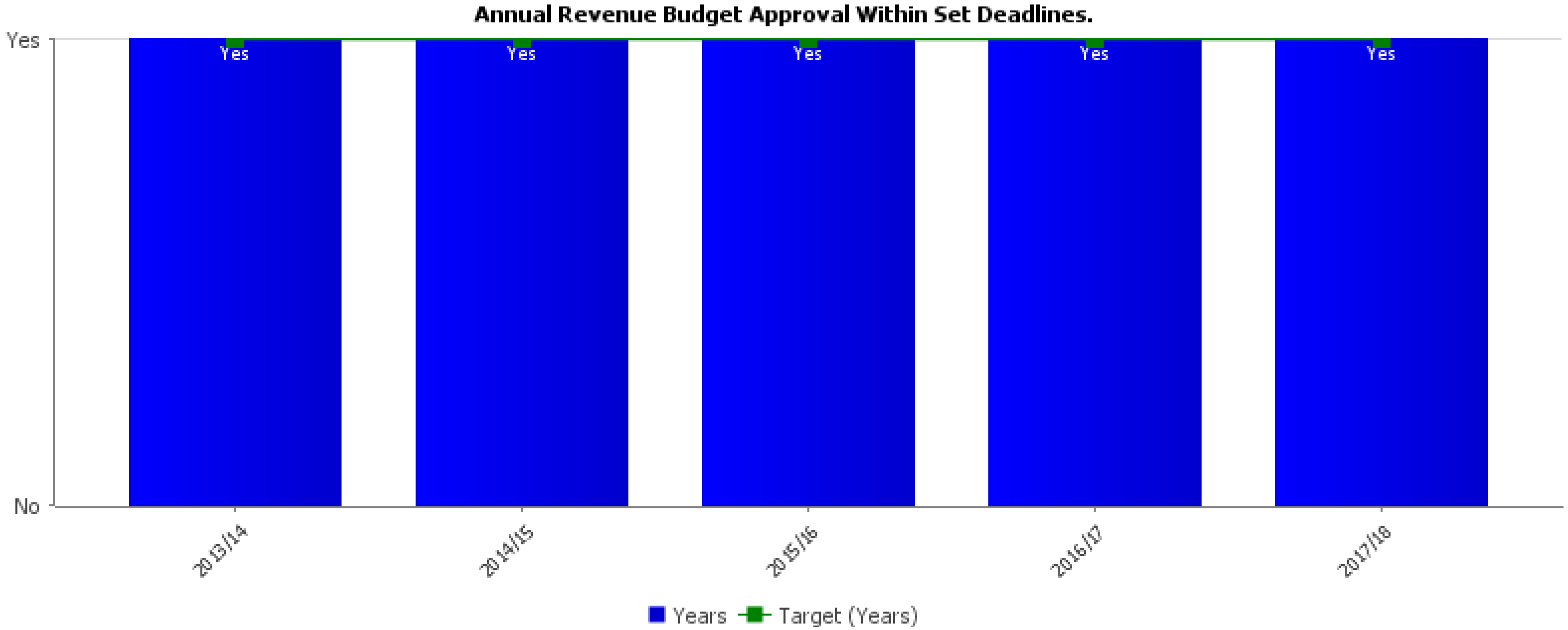
PI Code & Short Name	CP:FM002_9b.1a Annual General Services Capital Programme Budget approval within set deadlines.	PI Owner	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance indicator measures the process for approving the Council's annual capital budget. West Lothian Council approved a ten year capital investment and asset management strategy in 2007 that covers the period 2008/2009 to 2017/2018. This provides for investment in Council properties such as schools, communities, sports and arts facilities, day care centres as well as investment in roads and structures, footpaths, street lighting, open spaces and IT. The general services capital programme is reviewed annually and reported to Council in January each year.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	Yes
		Current Target	Yes



Trend Chart Commentary:
West Lothian Council has consistently produced and agreed upon a balanced annual general services capital programme budget within the set deadlines. The updated 2017/18 capital budget was approved on 20 February 2017 at the meeting of the Council.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	CP:FM003_9b.1a Annual Revenue Budget Approval Within Set Deadlines.	PI Owner	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance indicator measures the process for approving the Council's annual revenue budget. The annual revenue budget covers the day to day running costs incurred in the delivery of the council's services, for example salaries, wages, supplies and services. This ensures expected expenditure is matched by expected funding. Funding sources include council tax and block grants from the Scottish Government. The council approves its revenue budget in January or February for the forthcoming financial year. The Council must approve a budget before 11 March to comply with statutory obligations. However, to initiate collection of instalments in April, it is necessary to set the council tax at least one month before the statutory deadline.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	Yes
		Current Target	Yes



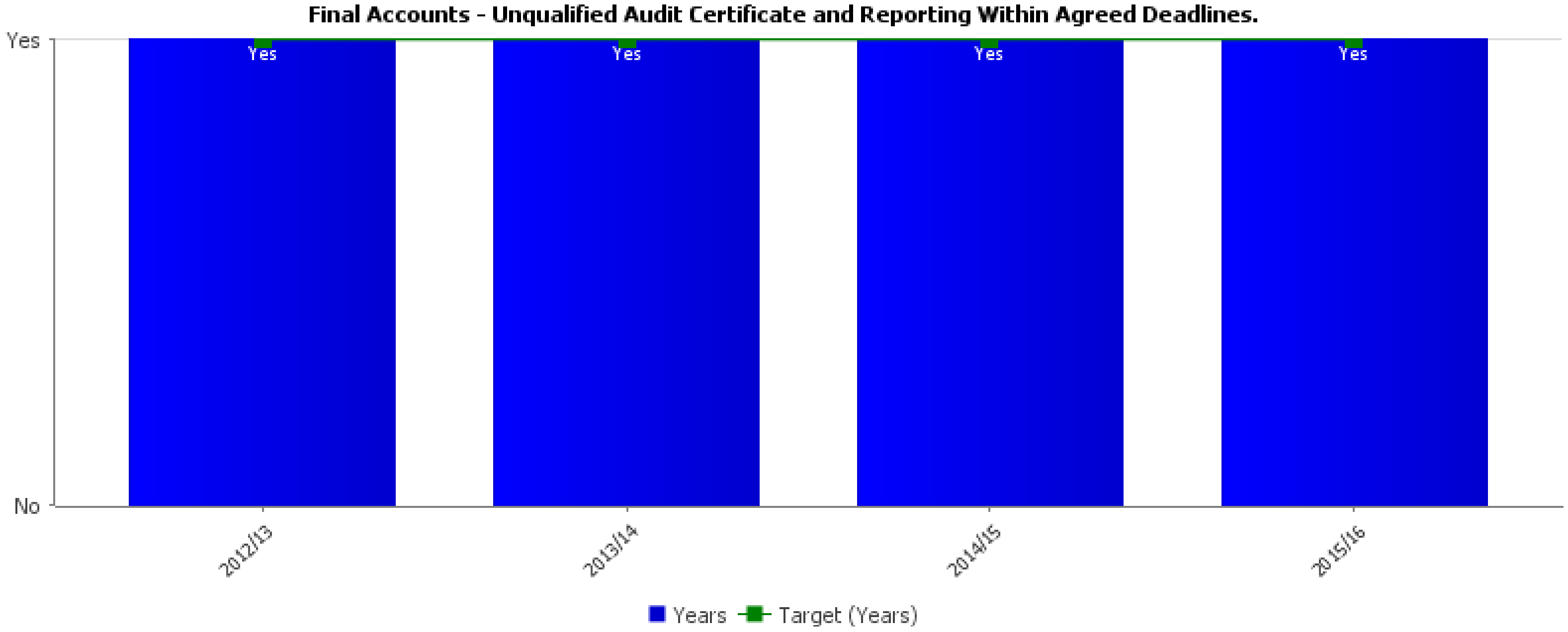
Trend Chart Commentary:

West Lothian Council has consistently produced and agreed balanced revenue budgets within set deadlines. This is within a context of unprecedented financial pressures and increased public expectations regarding the quality of services provided.

The revenue budget for 2017/18, including a detailed annual revenue budget and Council Tax freeze for 2017/18, was agreed at a meeting of the council on 20 February 2017. The target for 2018/19 will be to agree upon a balanced revenue budget within the set deadlines.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**FM006_9b.1a Final Accounts - Unqualified Audit Certificate and Reporting Within Agreed Deadlines.**	**PI Owner**	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance indicator measures the receipt of the annual audit certificate in relation to the Council's financial statements. On an annual basis, the Financial Management Unit produce the annual financial statements for West Lothian Council. This work is carried out in April and May each year and thereafter the council's independent external auditors review these financial statements and produce an audit certificate. The audit certificate indicates if the financial statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the council, whether they have been prepared in accordance with international financial standards, the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The Financial Management Unit's aim is to receive an unqualified audit certificate on an annual basis. The outcome of the annual audit is required to be reported to Council by 30 September each year.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	Yes
		Current Target	Yes



<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>

<u>2016/17</u>
The annual target for the council is to receive an unqualified audit certificate which demonstrates the effective financial management of the council's resources and assets in accordance with international financial standards, the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

West Lothian Council has consistently received an unqualified audit certificate which demonstrates the effective financial management of the council's resources and assets. In September 2016, the council received notification that it had achieved an unqualified audit certificate for the audit of the council's 2015/16 annual statement of accounts. The auditors report which confirms this will be presented to Council in September 2016.

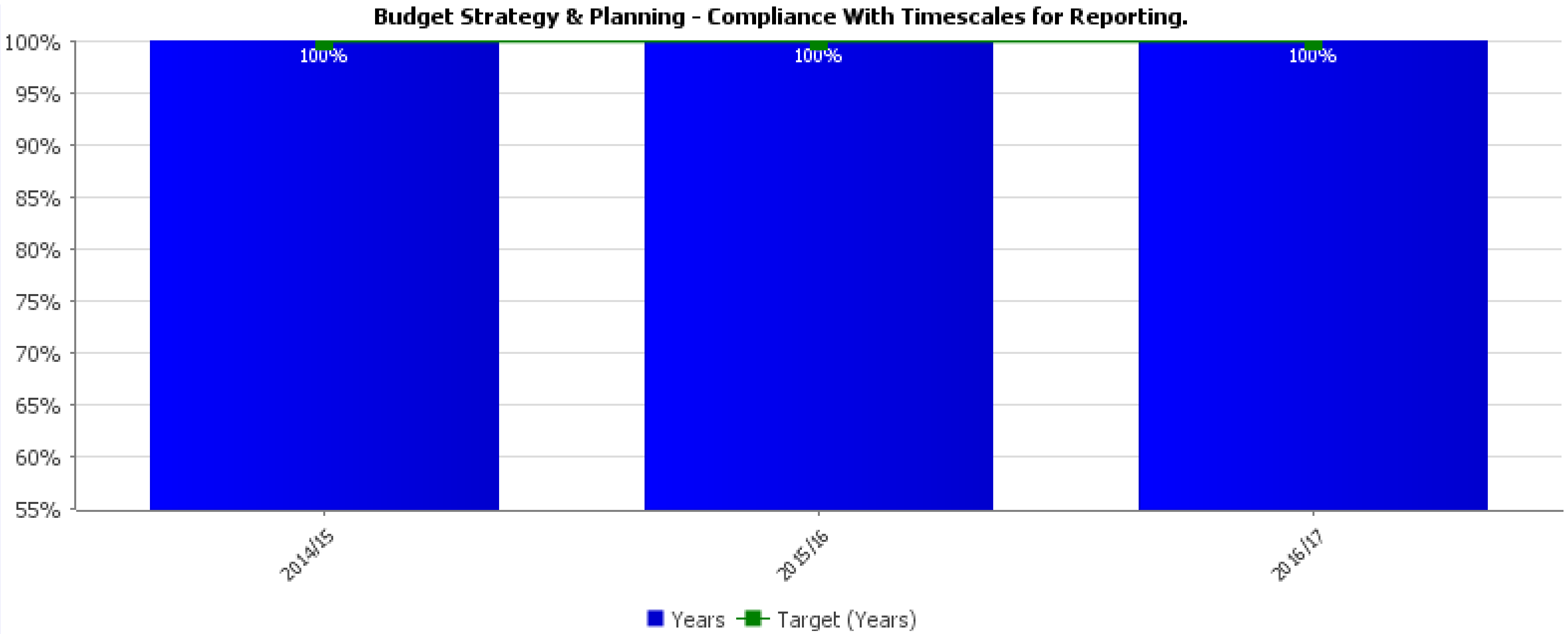
APPENDIX 1

2015/16
In 2015/16 the council achieved an unqualified audit certificate for the external audit of the council's 2014/15 statements of accounts.

2014/15
In 2014/15 the council achieved an unqualified audit certificate for the external audit of the council's 2013/14 statements of accounts.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:FM091_9b.1c Budget Strategy & Planning - Compliance With Timescales for Reporting.**	**PI Owner**	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance indicator measures the timeliness of reporting information in relation to revenue, capital and treasury budget strategy to elected members and senior management. The annual revenue budget covers the day to day running costs incurred in the delivery of the council's services, for example salaries & wages and supplies & services. On an annual basis, the Council is required to set a balanced budget. This ensures expected expenditure is matched by expected funding. Funding sources include council tax and block grants from the Scottish Government. The councils general services capital budget which provides investment in schools and other buildings, roads, footpaths, lighting, parks and open spaces, and IT is approved for the period up to 2017/18, and is updated annually to take account of changes to funding or programme phasing. In addition to the budget approval process, the Financial Management Unit is required to update elected members and senior management on key issues that affect the long term revenue budget of the council, for example, the general economic climate. This helps ensure that the council will continue to have a balanced and robust budget.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	100%
		Current Target	100%



Trend Chart Commentary:

The Financial Management Unit works closely with senior management and elected members to ensure they are kept up to date with any issues that affect the long term budget strategy of the council with all agreed deadlines being met. This helps ensure that the council will continue to have a balanced and robust budget.

The target to achieve 100% timeliness of reporting information was achieved each year.

The target for 2016/17 will be to achieve 100% timeliness of reporting information in relation to revenue, capital and treasury budget strategy to elected members and senior management.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:HRS103_9b.2 Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive.**	PI Owner	zHRS_PIAdmin; Kim Hardie
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive. Reportable incidents are occurrences which must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the legislative requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. When an incident meets the criteria outlined in the regulations, a formal notification report must be submitted by the authority to the Health and Safety Executive within timescales stipulated in the regulations.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	45
		Current Target	0

Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend shows an overall decrease of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive over the period 2012/13 to 2016/17. This overall reduction is attributable to amended regulations which came into force in 2013 and also as a result of published HSE guidance clarifying when incidents would or would not be reportable.

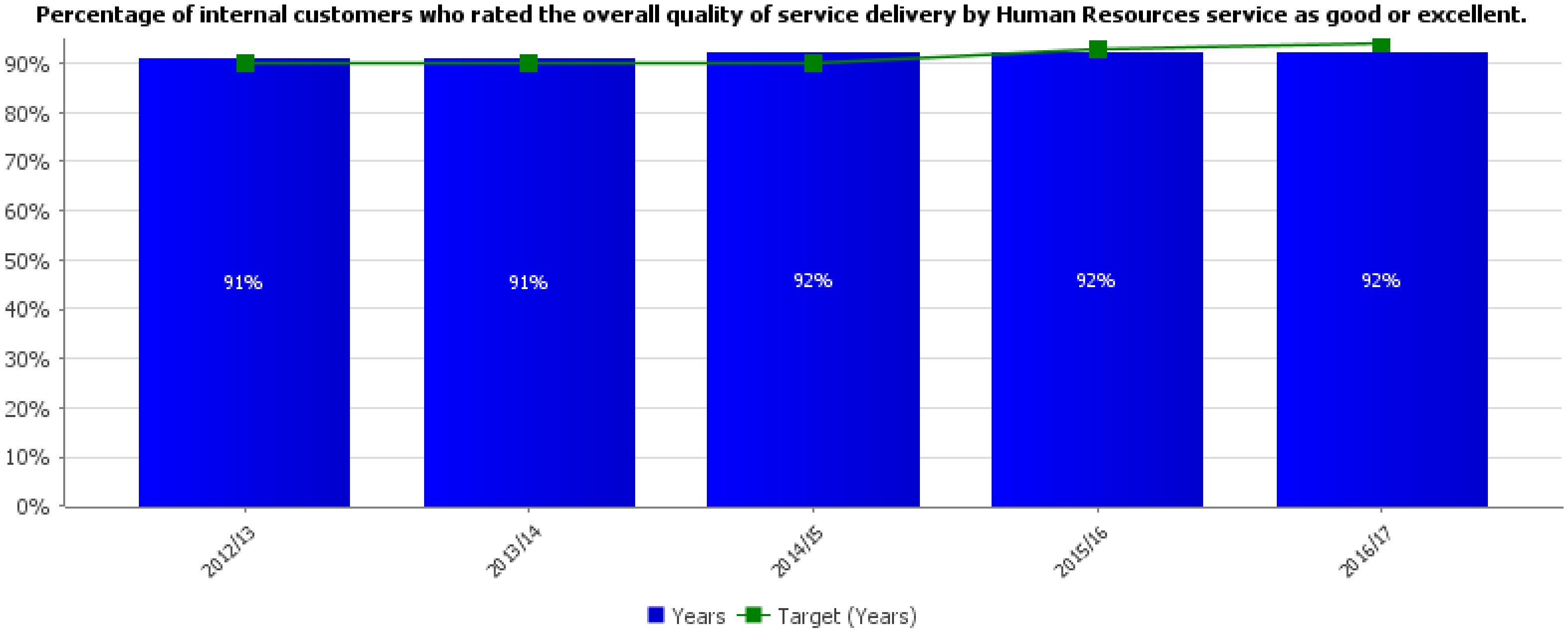
One change was only to report specific incidents after an absence of seven days, meaning there is a longer time period from the point of an incident occurring and any resulting absence before triggering the need to report criteria. Before the amendments if an employee was absent or could not perform their normal duties for a period of four days this would have been reportable. Additional guidance was also produced regarding the criteria for reporting incidents which occurred in schools to pupils. These will only now be reported where there has been a failure identified in the way the activity was managed rather than automatically reported because a pupil has been taken to hospital from the scene of an incident. Both changes have resulted in a substantial reduction in the number of injuries reported to the HSE.

Where there has been an increase within a service area, these incidents will be examined to establish potential trends and identify required actions to be incorporated into the service annual health and safety action plan for 2017/2018.

In 2017/2018 this target will be altered to reflect a percentage reduction in the number of reportable incidents to the HSE.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:HRS516_6a.7 Percentage of internal customers who rated the overall quality of service delivery by Human Resources service as good or excellent.**	**PI Owner**	zHRS_PIAdmin; Lesley Henderson
Description	This annual survey records the percentage of internal customers who rated the service provided by Human Resources (HR) as good or excellent. HR Services is responsible for the delivery of advice and support, policy development, contract administration, payroll and learning and development. This support is provided for over 8,000 employees across the council. The survey is sent to 150-200 council managers who regularly use the services provided by Human Resources. The survey list is prepared by collating records from each HR Team to ensure all aspects of HR service delivery are reviewed.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	92%
		Current Target	94%



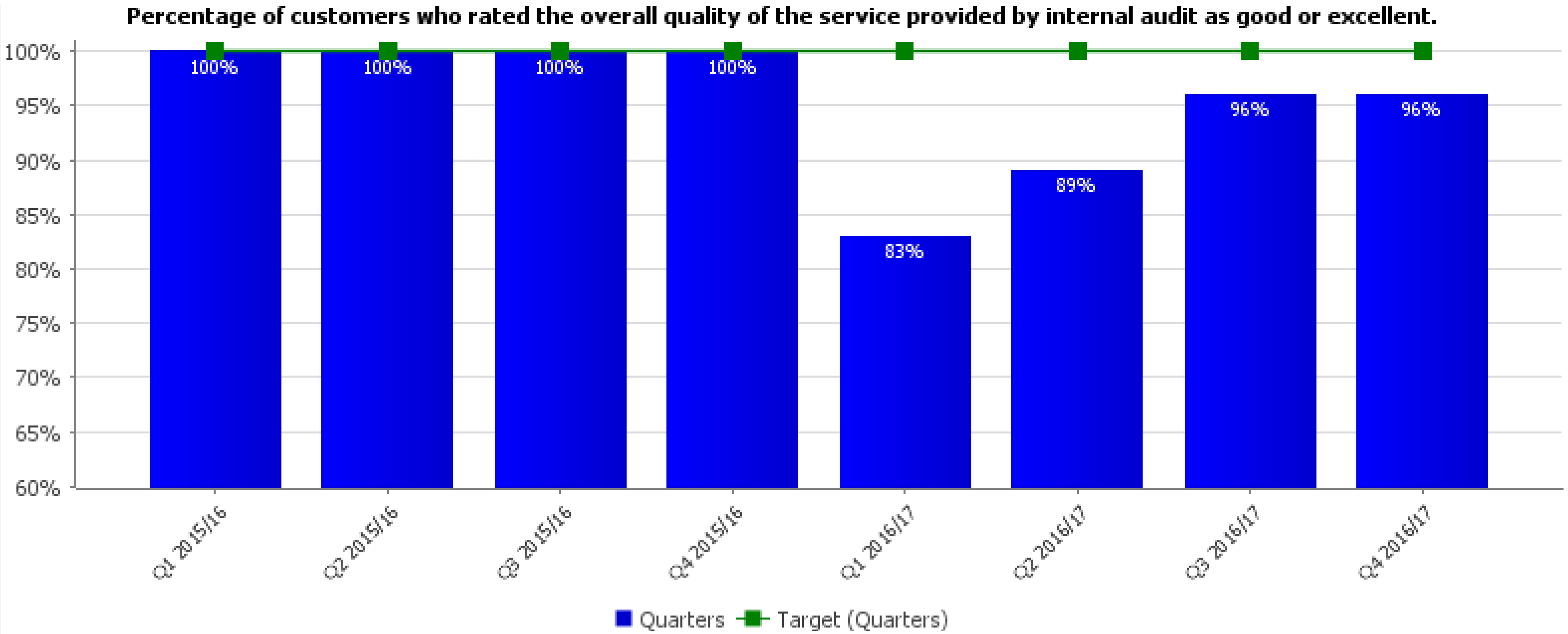
<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
The survey responses have ranged between 55 and 74 responses over the years with approximately 160 customers surveyed with a reasonable spread of responses across services. Given the diversity and complexity of work undertaken by the HR Service, this is a sound indicator of the collective performance across the Service.

Annual focus groups are conducted with respondents to the survey who regularly access HR services. The feedback from these groups reaffirmed the positive experience of customers. Suggested areas for improvement, including further training on the use of Talentlink, a review of access to HR advice for employees and administration of recruitment processes will be reported to the HR Programme Board for further discussion and a decision on appropriate action.

The target for 2017/18 has been set at 93%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**IA008_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by internal audit as good or excellent.**	**PI Owner**	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of internal audit as good or excellent. A questionnaire is issued at the end of each audit and customers are asked to rate the overall quality of the audit service provided as; excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor. All responses ranked as either 'Excellent' or 'Good' are recorded as positive responses. For each year, the cumulative number of positive responses are divided by the total number of responses to determine a percentage. The results of customer feedback are analysed on a quarterly basis in order to identify areas for improvement.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	96%
		Current Target	100%



<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
Performance to Q4 2016/17 was 96%. 28 customer questionnaires were received, one responded n/a, and one responded that the overall quality of service was adequate.

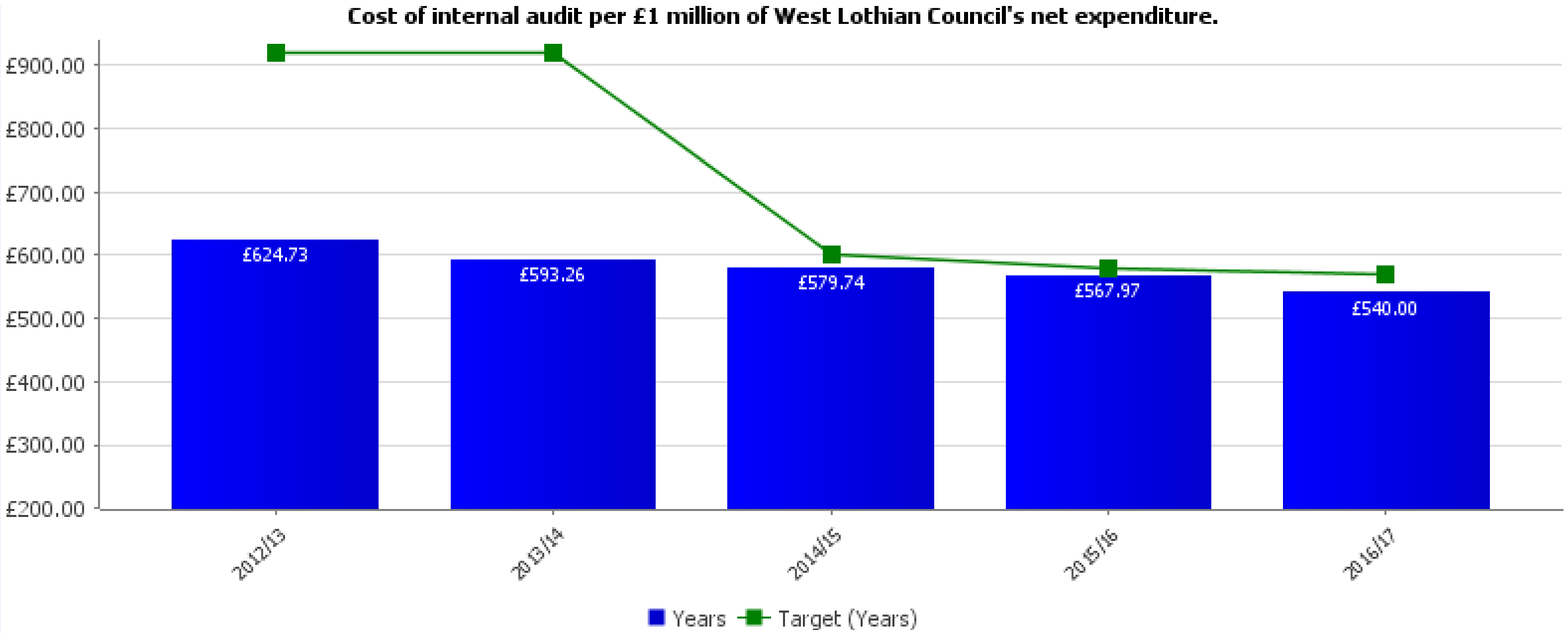
Performance for all quarters of 2015/16 was 100%. All 21 customers rated the overall quality of services as good or excellent.

The target for 2017/18 will remain at 100%.

By continuing to operate in line with procedures, which cover all key stages of the audit process, it is expected that high levels of performance will be maintained for this indicator. The targets set will continue to be reviewed in line with our [Customer Service Excellence] requirements.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:IA012_9a.1d Cost of internal audit per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure.**	**PI Owner**	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the cost of internal audit per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure. Our performance is benchmarked against 32 Scottish Local Authorities as part of the annual 'Scottish Directors of Finance Performance Indicators' benchmarking exercise. In line with the benchmarking guidance issued, we calculate our indicator by dividing the total cost of internal audit services (excluding risk management and counter fraud services) by West Lothian Council's net expenditure for the financial year and multiplying by one million. The objective of this performance indicator is to compare the level of resources made available by councils for the provision of internal audit services.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	£540.00
		Current Target	£570.00



Trend Chart Commentary:

The estimated cost of internal audit for 2016/17 is £540. The decrease in cost is due to a reduction in staffing. The actual figure will not be finalised until August 2017, when the CIPFA Directors of Finance PIs are submitted.

The cost internal audit for 2015/16 was £567.97, with a target of £580. The cost for the previous four years was 2014/15 - £579.74, 2013/14 - £593.26, 2012/13 - £624.73 and 2011/12 - £631.62.

A key contributing factor towards the lower cost in recent years is the change in the role of the unit. From 2011/12 the unit took over responsibility for risk management and business continuity planning, and from 2014/15 the counter fraud function has also transferred to the unit.

When benchmarked against 32 Scottish Local Authorities, the cost of internal audit continues to be significantly lower than the overall Scottish average in each year. The Scottish average was £920 for 2012/13, £988 for 2013/14, £974 for 2014/15 and £948 for 2015/16.

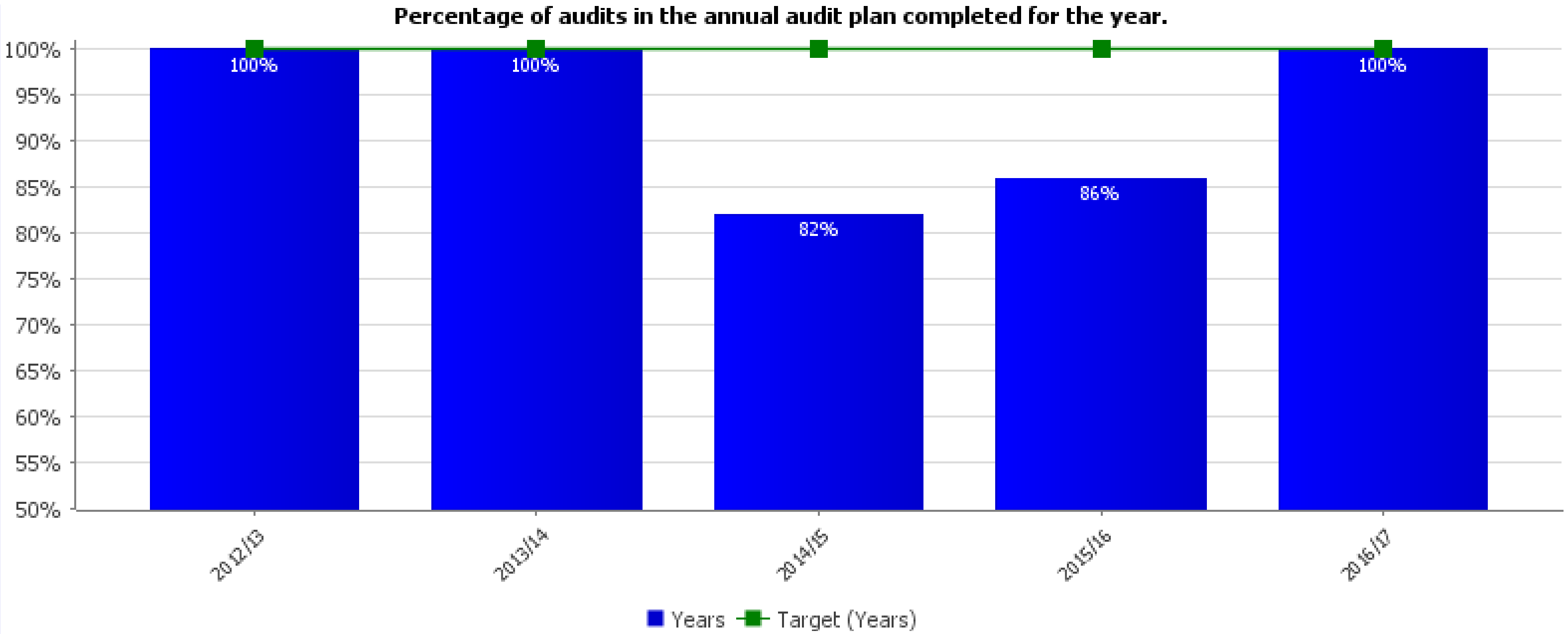
APPENDIX 1

For 2015/16 internal audit was the second lowest costing internal audit service in Scotland, for 2014/15 the second lowest, for 2013/14 the lowest and for 2012/13 third lowest.

The target for 2016/17 is £570, and will be £540 for 2017/18.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:IA014_9b.1a Percentage of audits in the annual audit plan completed for the year.	PI Owner	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of planned audits in the annual audit plan that have actually been completed each year. The total number of planned audits to be completed between 1 April and 31 March each year are outlined in the annual audit plan which is approved by the Audit and Governance Committee. The number of completed audits is divided by the number of planned audits to determine the percentage completed. Completion of all audits within the annual audit plan helps provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of West Lothian Council's systems of internal control. Consequently, we aim to complete 100 per cent of the risk based audits each year.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	100%
		Current Target	100%



Trend Chart Commentary:
For 2016/17 100% of the audit plan was completed and the target was achieved.

For 2015/16 86% of the audit plan was completed. This is due to a combination of the complexity of some of the work undertaken and available resources being used for other priority activities which were non-audit work. Performance for 2012/13 and 2013/14 was 100%, and for 2014/15 was below target at 82% . The below target performance was due to the level of reactive work being greater than planned.

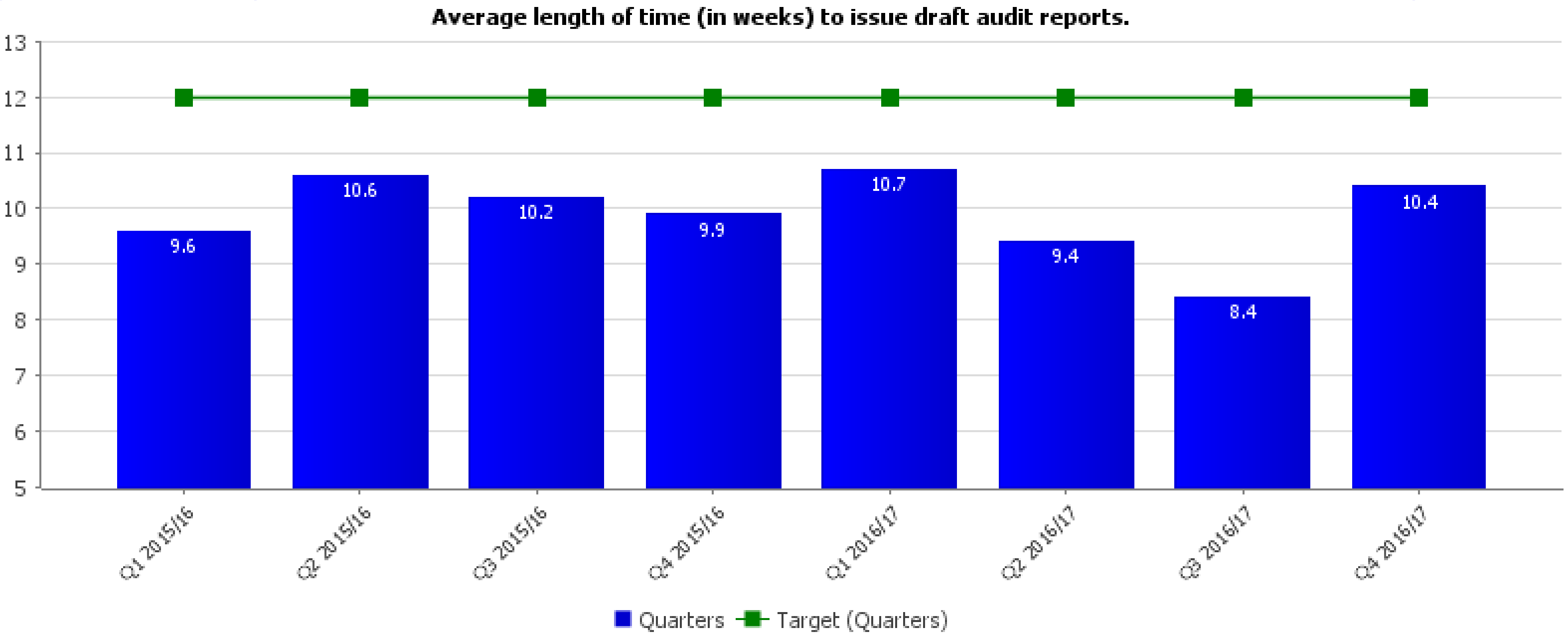
The numbers of audits completed in each year are as follows: 2012/13(25 audits), 2013/14(31 audits), 2014/15(32 from 39 audits), 2015/16(31 from 36 audits) and 2016/17 (32 audits).

Performance is assisted by the internal procedures which cover the key stages of the audit process and ensure the progress of audits is continuously monitored. The number of audits included in the plan each year will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the work.

The target for 2017/18 is 100%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	IA015_9b.1a Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports.	PI Owner	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports. The date of issue of the draft audit report is subtracted from the date that the audit commenced to show the number of weeks taken. The date of commencement is agreed with our customers and we aim to complete all risk based audit work within 12 weeks of this date. This indicator is reported on quarterly and a rolling 12 month average is calculated for each quarter. The objective of our 12 week target is to ensure that audit reports are issued timeously so that they are current and meaningful to both the service area and any related stakeholders.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	10.4
		Current Target	12



Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance to Q4 2016/17 was 10.4 weeks and has been below the target of 12 weeks in all quarters reported over the last two financial years.

The 12 week target and the appropriateness of the timescales achieved is substantiated by reference to Indicator IA001: Percentage of customers who rated internal audit's timeliness as good or excellent which has been maintained at 100% since Q1 2015/16 i.e. customers are satisfied with the timescales being achieved. The average length of time to issue draft audit reports can be subject to ongoing fluctuation as a result of factors such as the complexity of individual audits and the level of reactive work which may be given priority over routine audits.

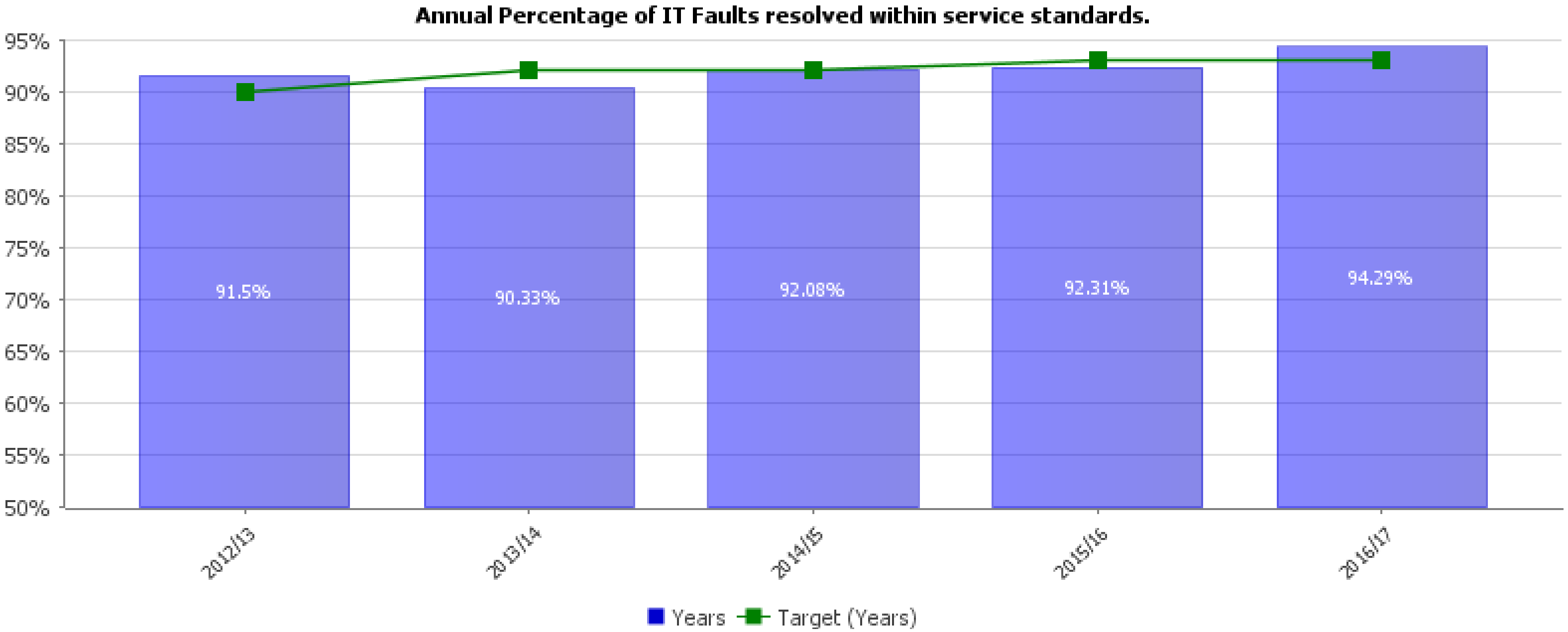
The number of draft audit reports issued in each quarter reported is as follows, 2015/16 - Q1(1), Q2(9), Q3(10),Q4(14) and 2016/17 - Q1(3), Q2(6), Q3(12), Q4(14).

The approach to reporting on this PI has recently been reviewed and amended to a rolling basis, with historic data being adjusted accordingly.

The 12 week target continues to be appropriate and will remain in place for 2016/17.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	ITS064_6b.5 Annual Percentage of IT Faults resolved within service standards.	PI Owner	zITS_PIAdmin; Jennifer Milne
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT faults resolved within the service standards in a financial year. The current service standard attached to all Corporate faults is 5 working days. The data for this indicator is provided from the IT Service Management software system.	Traffic Light Icon	✓
		Current Value	94.29%
		Current Target	93%



Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend chart demonstrates performance achieves 88% or above over the period and an improving trend from 2013/14.

Performance in 2012/13 was a result of low levels of major incidents recruitment successfully filled majority of vacancies.

Performance in 2013/14 reduced as a result of major incidents in September/October 2013 and an increased resource requirement to achieve Public Sector Network compliance in the year. The target for 2014/15 was set at 92%.

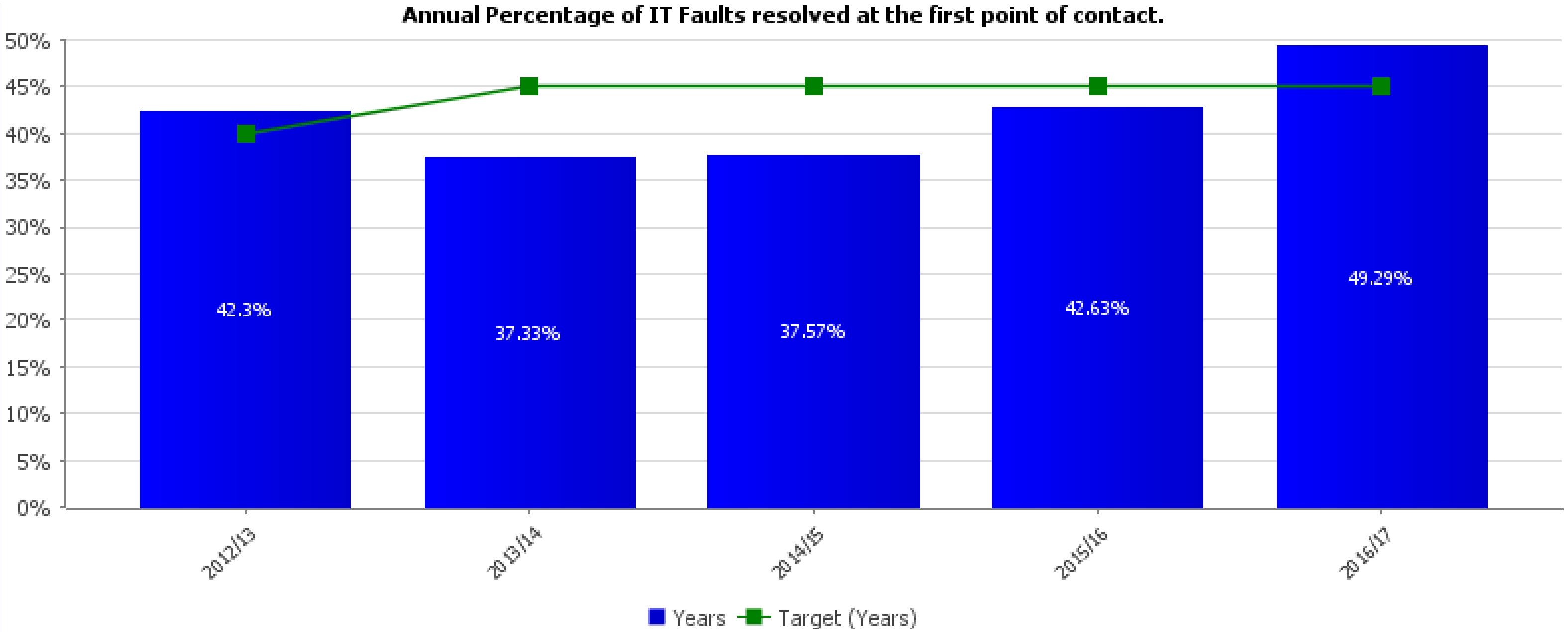
Performance in 2014/15 improved as a result of low levels of major incidents, recruitment exercises had successfully filled the majority of vacancies and improved processes.

Performance in 2015/16 and 2016/17 improved as a result of improved resource management in the service.

The target for 2017/18 is 94%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:ITS066_9b.1a Annual Percentage of IT Faults resolved at the first point of contact.**	**PI Owner**	zITS_PIAdmin; Jennifer Milne
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT Faults resolved at the first point of contact in a financial year. From a customer perspective this means that the customers Fault is dealt with and resolved whilst they are on the phone. The data for this indicator is provided from the IT Service Management software system.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	49.29%
		Current Target	45%



<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
The trend chart demonstrates annual percentage of IT faults resolved at the first point of contact improving trend over the period 2014/15 - 2016/17 as a result of targeted training, cross skilling of front line service desk staff and process improvement.

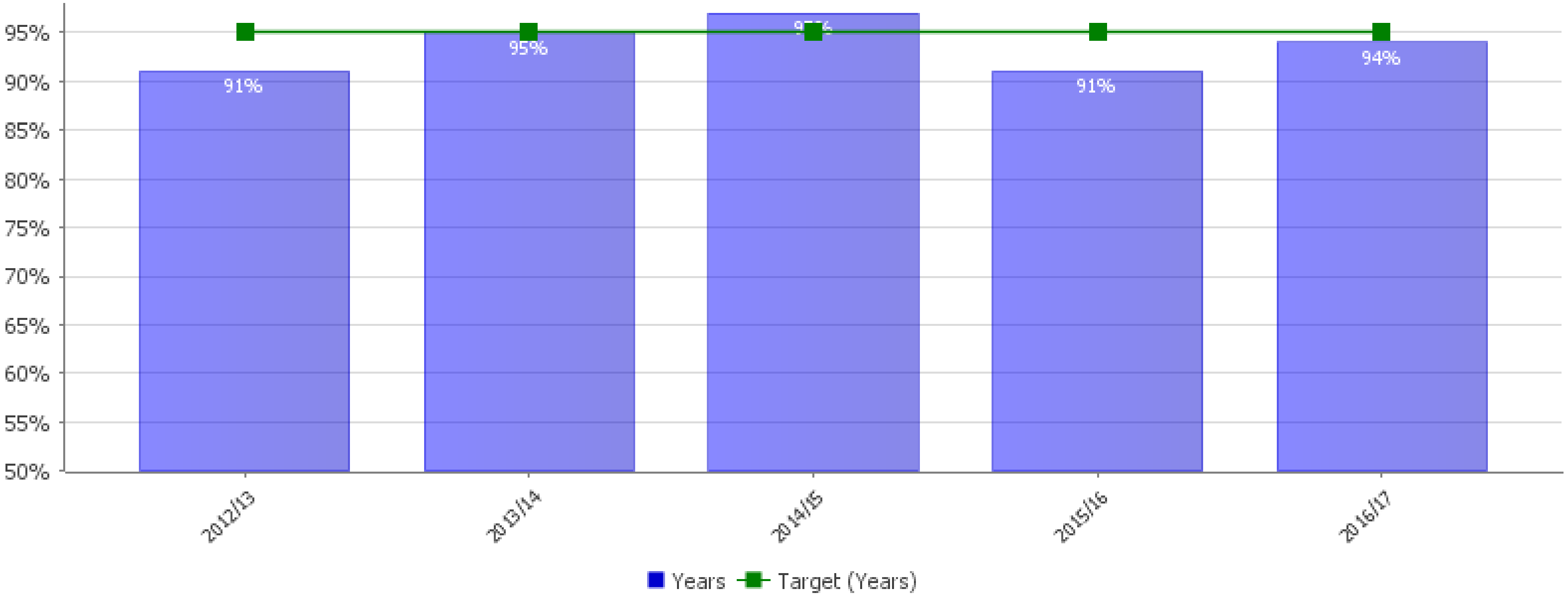
Performance reduced in 2013/14 as a result of major faults in September/October 2013 and impact of vacancy and training of new staff in December 2013/January 2014.

The target for 2017/18 as agreed in Corporate Services Management plan is 50%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	LS035_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the Licensing service as good or excellent .	PI Owner	zLS_PIAdmin; Audrey Watson
Description	Customer satisfaction surveys are issued to all customers by Licensing Services at the end of the Licensing process. The process of determining applications for a license, involve referral to and input from third party agencies. The manner in which those agencies manage their input into the process can affect the progression of the application from the point it is made, to the point it is determined. The Licensing Service has no influence over those parts of the process which rely upon third parties either in respect of timescales or outcomes. This can have an impact on overall customer satisfaction levels. This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the whole Licensing Service, from application to determination, as good or excellent from a five-point scale (excellent, good, adequate, poor, very poor). The data from surveys is analysed to identify service improvements and the results are reported at the end of the financial year. Since 2012 surveys have been issued to all customers when licences are issued at the end of the application process and this resulted in an improved response rate. Methods of consultation were reviewed in early 2013 and telephone surveys were trialled but were not found to result in an improved response rate. Surveys have been emailed since April 2013 to all customers who have supplied email addresses. Most now provide email addresses. Paper surveys are issued to all other customers at the end of their application process. The use of emailed surveys has led to an increase in the response rate.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	94%
		Current Target	95%

Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the Licensing service as good or excellent .

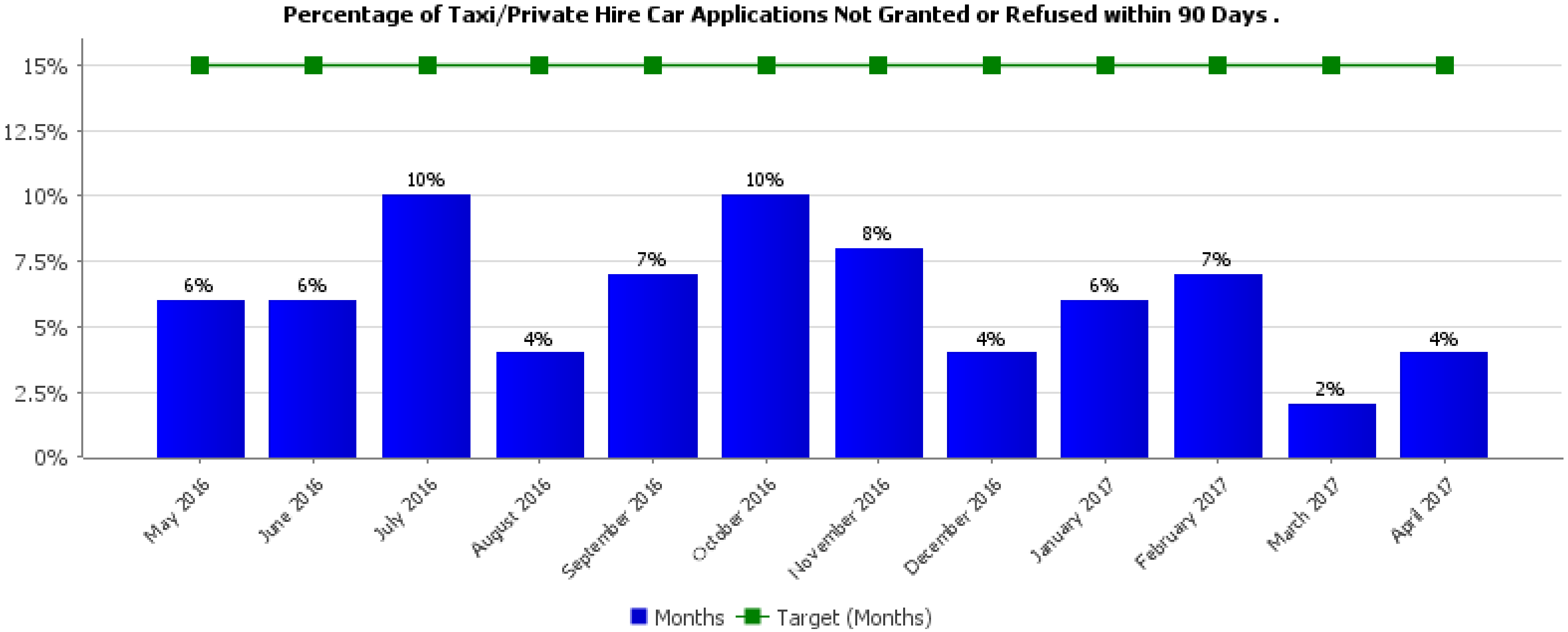


<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
The trend shows that between 2012/13 and 2016/17 the target has not always been met but performance has always exceeded 90%. Generally reductions in customer satisfaction is attributable to the quality of

information provided and ease of use of a particular licensing system which is under the control of a third party public organisation and has only just been upgraded. In 2016/17, 277 responses were received. The target for 2017/18 remains at 95% to reflect performance.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:LS046_6b.5 Percentage of Taxi/Private Hire Car Applications Not Granted or Refused within 90 Days .**	**PI Owner**	zLS_PIAdmin; Audrey Watson
Description	The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 provides a statutory deadline of 6 months for an application to be granted or refused. That deadline is to be extended to 9 months when amending legislation is brought into force in 2017. The Licensing Team has set a local target of 90 days for applications to be granted or refused. The process of determining applications for a licence, involve referral to and input from third party agencies. The manner in which those agencies manage their input into the process can affect the progression of the application from the point it is made, to the point it is determined. The Licensing Team has no influence over those parts of the process which rely upon third parties either in respect of timescales or outcomes. This can have an impact on overall customer satisfaction levels. From Summer 2017 public performance reporting in respect of this indicator will be undertaken on a quarterly basis. A new indicator is being prepared for that purpose and this indicator will be downgraded to a monthly management indicator.	**Traffic Light Icon**	✔
		Current Value	4%
		Current Target	15%

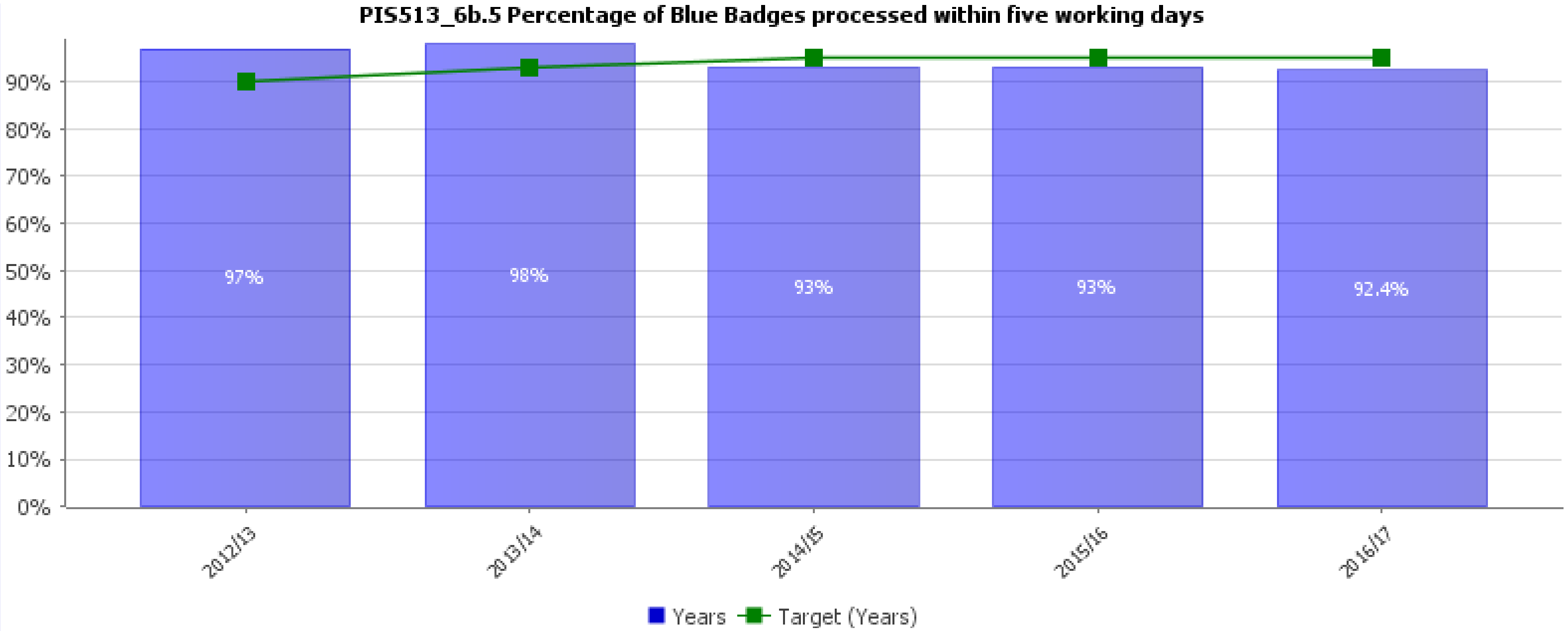


Trend Chart Commentary:
From time to time there have been slight increases in the number of applications which were granted or refused outwith the 90 day period. The reasons for these usually often relate to matters arising from applicants themselves and not the overall licensing process, however the target has been consistently met.

The 2017/18 target shall remain at 15%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**PIS513_6b.5 Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days**	**PI Owner**	zPIS_PIAdmin; Joe Murray
Description	This indicator measures the percentage Blue Badge applications that are processed by the service within five working days. This is a service standard to ensure that Blue Badges are processed in a timely manner. There are two distinct categories of Blue Badge application, the first is those that automatically qualify by meeting eligibility criteria. The second is discretionary applications, which require desktop assessment and in some cases an Independent Mobility Assessment to assess eligibility. The service aims to process all Blue Badge applications within five working days to ensure that customers receive a timely decision and Blue Badges are issued to eligible customers as quickly as possible.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	92.4%
		Current Target	95%



Trend Chart Commentary:

Over the period performance has declined from a high of 98 percent in 2013/14 to 92.4 percent in 2016/17, this can be attributed to a changing level of demand for Blue Badges, with increasing numbers of applications being received by the service and also, a wider eligibility criteria – with the introduction of more complex applications for discretionary and cognitive impairment Blue Badges. The service will continue to monitor demand and seek to refine the Blue Badge process for customers.

The dip in performance in 2016/17 from the previous year is linked to the introduction of the cognitive impairment Blue Badge, a pilot scheme that began in April 2016 offering an extension to the eligibility criteria. The complexity of the application for this scheme is greater and consequently, the time required to process each application is significantly longer that a mobility Blue Badge application.

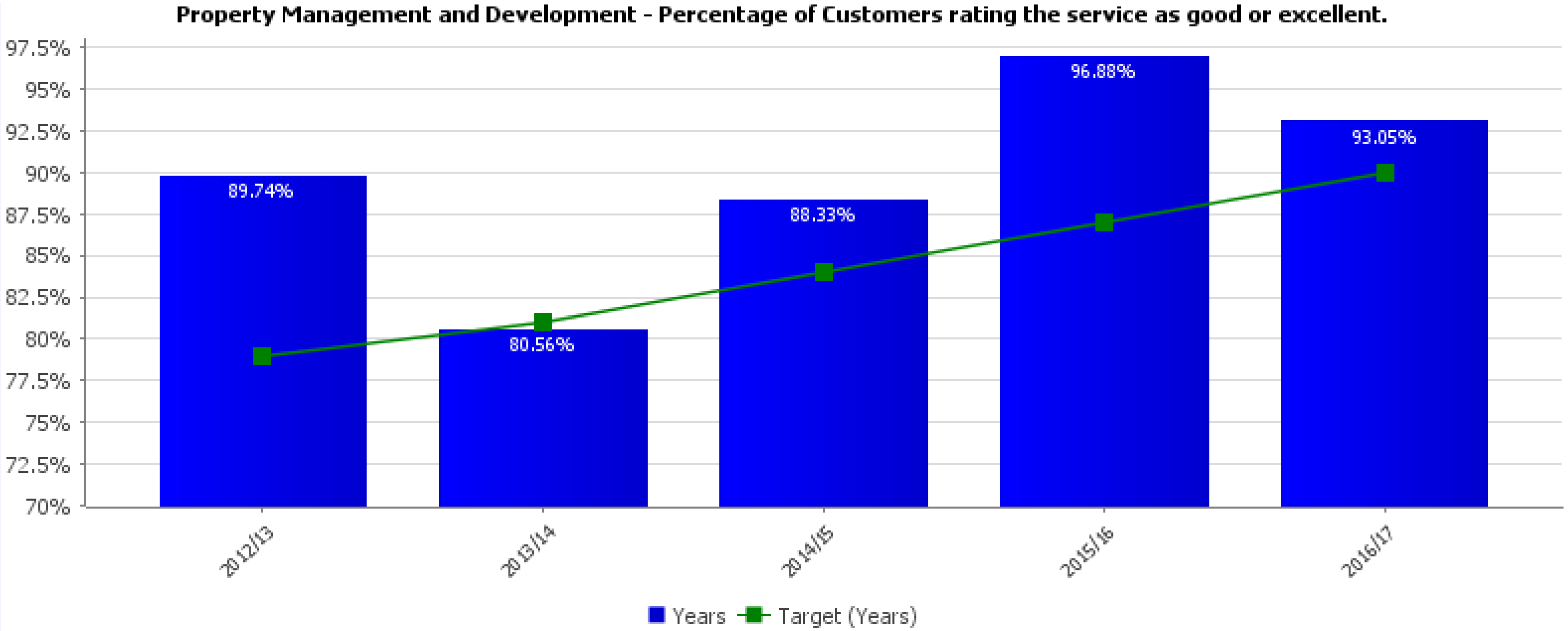
Performance in 2015/16 and 2014/15 were consistent at 93 percent following peak performance of 98 percent in 2013/14. The change in performance was a result of an increase in demand that started in 2014/15 and was sustained in 2015/16, where the number of applications received by the service increased by 15 percent on 2013/14 volumes.

The target for 2017/18 is 94 percent as the extension of the Cognitive Impairment Blue Badge through to the end of 2017/18 has been confirmed by the Scottish Government and it is anticipated that the service

will continue to receive and handle a significant volume of these complex applications.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:PMD127_6a.7 Property Management and Development - Percentage of Customers rating the service as good or excellent.**	**PI Owner**	zPMD_PIAdmin; Tracey Thomson
Description	Property Management and Development (PM&D) makes a standard questionnaire available to all customers throughout the year, through the council website and links in emails. The question set is based on the 5 Drivers of customer satisfaction and experience. This Performance Indicator is based on a question asking customers to rate their overall satisfaction with the service they received, measuring the percentage of respondents who rated the service delivered as good or excellent. Progressive targets have been set for all PM&D's Customer satisfaction Performance Indicators (except PMD126, equality, which is fixed at 100%) with the intention of reaching 90% satisfaction by 2016/17.	**Traffic Light Icon**	✔
		Current Value	93.05%
		Current Target	90%



Trend Chart Commentary:
Performance in 2016/17 is ahead of the overall target to reach 90% satisfaction by 2016/17. This target was set on an incremental increase each year from 2013/14.

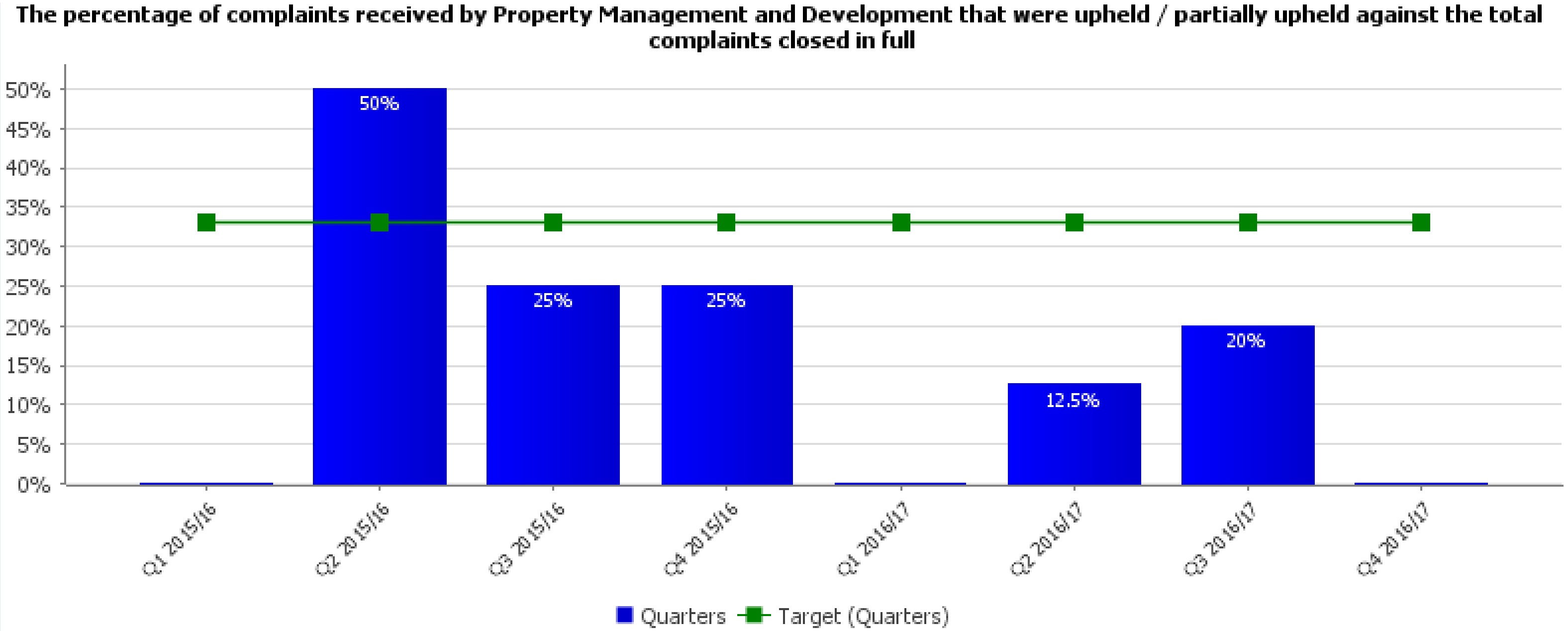
Results in 2016/17 are based on 29 survey returns, which is a reduction from the 34 returns in 2015/16. Given the size of the survey return a small change in the number of replies scoring the service as "good" or "excellent" can lead to a high variation in the percentage level of satisfaction.

Performance reflects the emphasis that PM&D gives to providing a service that meets our customers’ requirements. The response to our surveys is discussed with staff to identify areas where we can all improve the service we deliver.

The target for 2017/18 is to increase by an increment of 2% to 92%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:PMD145_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Property Management and Development that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full**	**PI Owner**	zPMD_PIAdmin; Paul Kettrick; Jack Orr
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of insert service name complaints that have been investigated and upheld or part upheld during each month. For each month the total number of complaints responded to within relevant time-scale is divided by total number of stage 1 complaints received to determine a percentage. The data for this indicator is extracted from te customer relationship management system (CRM)The Complains are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.	**Traffic Light Icon**	✔
		Current Value	0%
		Current Target	33%



Trend Chart Commentary:

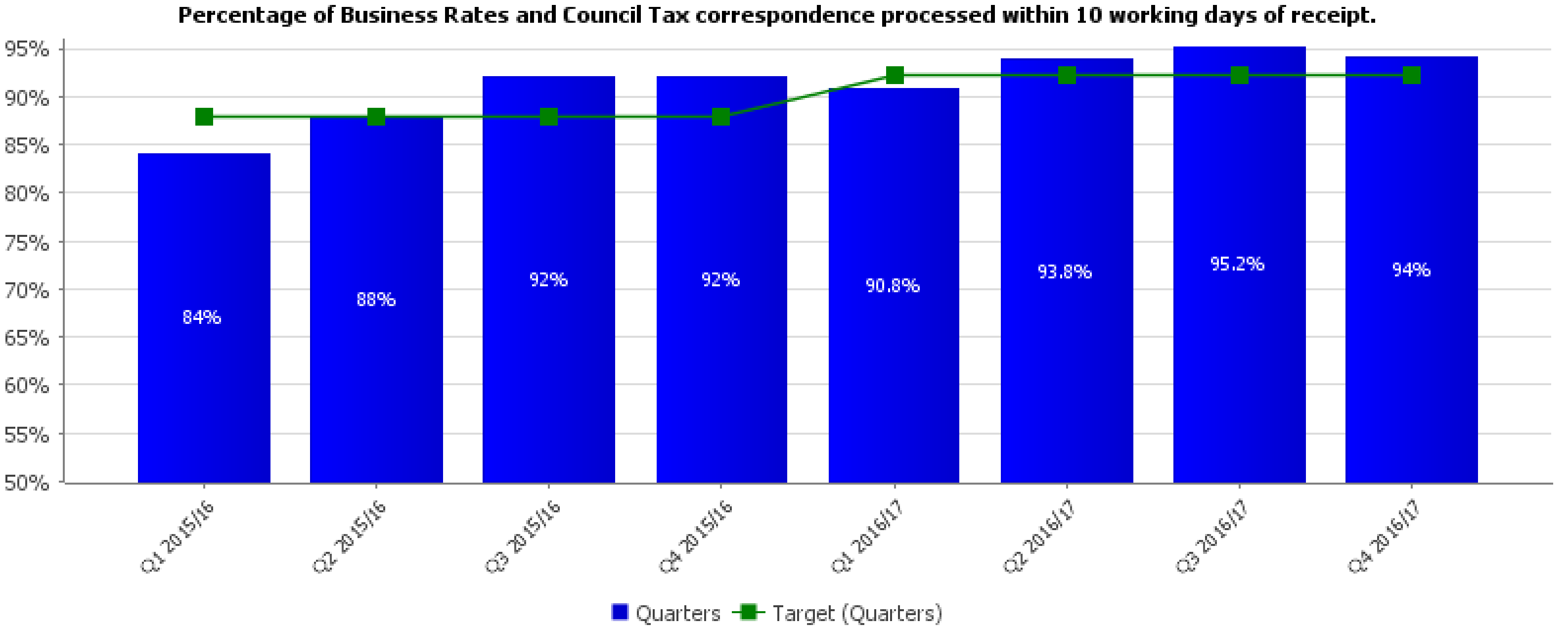
The Service received 3 complaints in Q1, 2016-17. None were upheld or partly upheld. One of the eight complaints received was upheld or partially upheld in Q2. None of the 1 complaint received was upheld or partially upheld in Q4, 2016-17.

The service received no complaints in Q1, 2015-16. One out of two complaints received was upheld in Q2, one out of four complaints received was partly upheld in Q3 and one out of four complaints received was partly upheld in Q4.

The quarterly target for 2016-17 is 33%.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV027_6b Percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax correspondence processed within 10 working days of receipt.**	**PI Owner**	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator is cumulative across the financial year. Where correspondence is received within the Revenues Unit in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax enquiries, the aim is to process 92.2 percent within 10 working days of receipt.	**Traffic Light Icon**	
		Current Value	94%
		Current Target	92.2%



Trend Chart Commentary:

We have reviewed the target for 2016/17 and set it at 92.2%. This target has been set taking into account previous year performance and focus on continual improvement.

2016/17

Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 achieved 94% which exceeded the target of 92.2%. 46,419 items of correspondence were processed with 43,644 within the target.
Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 improved to 95.2% against a target of 92.2%. 32,868 items of correspondence were processed with 31,306 within the target.
Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 improved to 94% against a target of 92.2%. 21,063 items of correspondence were processed with 19,755 within the target.
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 2016/17 fell slightly against the target of 92.2%. 10,560 items of correspondence were processed with 9,586 within the target. This is on trend with previous quarter 1 performance and the strategy in place to process mail should see an improvement in the future quarters.

2015/16

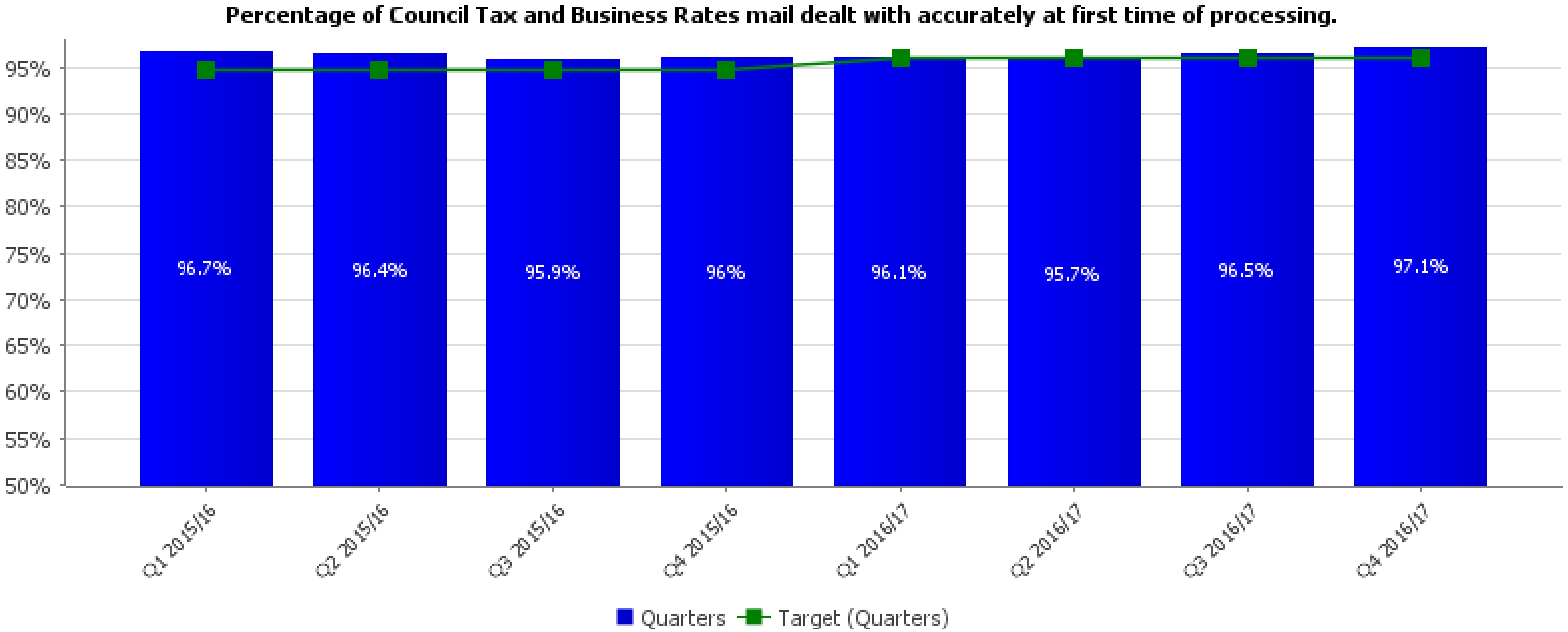
Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 2015/16 was maintained at 92% against a target of 88%. 41,018 items of correspondence were processed with 37,689 processed within the target.
Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 2015/15 improved to 92% against a target of 88%. 31,341 items of correspondence were processed with 28,735 processed within the target.
Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 2015/16 improved to 88% against a target of 88%. 22,149 items of correspondence were processed with 19,488 processed within the target.

APPENDIX 1

Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 2015/16 fell to 84% against a target of 88%. 10,229 items of correspondence were processed with 8,599 processed within the target. This is on trend with previous quarter 1 performance and the strategy in place to process mail should see gradual improvement in performance over the year.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV028_6b Percentage of Council Tax and Business Rates mail dealt with accurately at first time of processing.**	**PI Owner**	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator is cumulative across the financial year. Where incoming mail is received within the Revenues Unit in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax enquiries, we will aim to process 96 percent of this mail accurately at the time of receiving it	**Traffic Light Icon**	✔
		Current Value	97.1%
		Current Target	96%



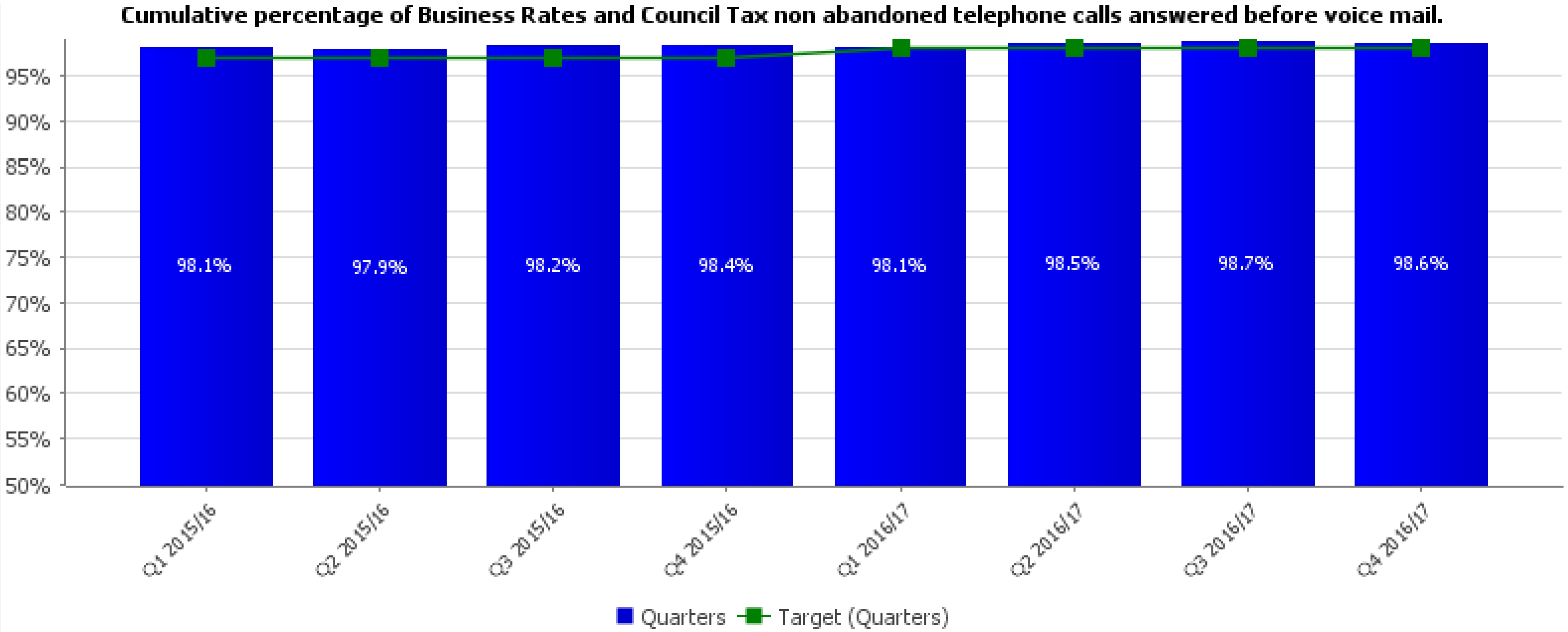
<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
We have reviewed the target for 2016/17 and set it at 96%. This target has been set taking into account previous year performance and focus on continual improvement.

2016/17
Quarter 4: Performance at Q4 2016/17 is 97.1% which is above target. A total of 1757 accuracy checks have been carried out with 1706 confirmed as accurate.
Quarter 3: Performance at Q3 2016/17 is 96.5% which is above target. A total of 1128 accuracy checks have been carried out with 1083 confirmed as accurate.
Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 2016/17 is 95.7% and this is below target. A total of 816 accuracy checks have been carried out with 781 confirmed as accurate.
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 2016/17 is 96.1% and this remains on target. A total of 412 accuracy checks have been carried out with 396 confirmed as accurate.

2015/16
Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 2015/16 is 96% and this remains above target. A total of 1,861 accuracy checks have been carried out with 1,786 confirmed as accurate.
Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 2015/16 is 95.9% and this remains above target. A total of 1,435 accuracy checks have been carried out with 1,376 confirmed as accurate.
Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 2015/16 is 96.4% and this remains above target. A total of 1,008 accuracy checks have been carried out with 972 confirmed as accurate.
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 2015/16 is 96.7% and has improved from the previous quarter. A total of 542 accuracy checks have been carried out with 524 confirmed as accurate.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV029_9b Cumulative percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax non abandoned telephone calls answered before voice mail.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of incoming telephone calls for Business Rates and Council Tax answered before the customer is asked to leave a voicemail message. We will aim to answer 98 percent of incoming telephone calls from customers before they are asked to leave a voice mail message.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	98.6%
		Current Target	98%



<u>**Trend Chart Commentary:**</u> We have set a cumulative target of 98% for 2016/17 and will measure our performance against it.

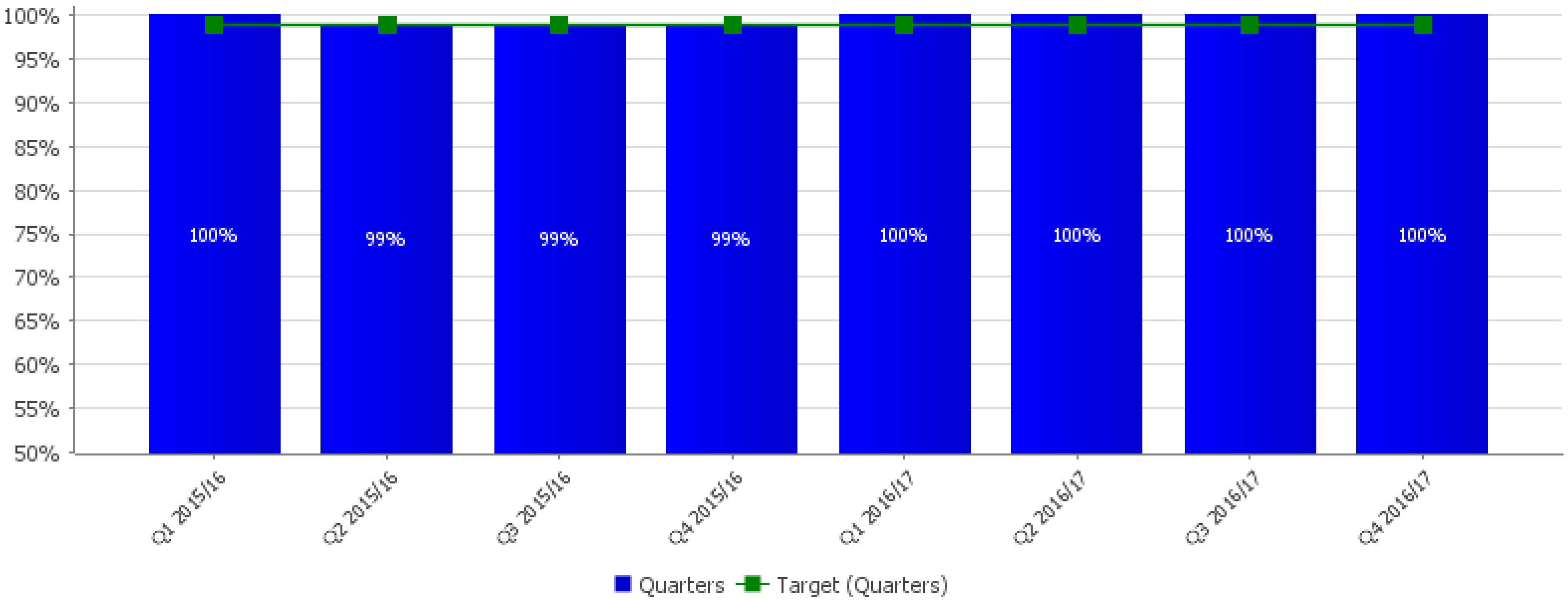
2016/17
Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 was above the target of 98%. 27,323 calls have been available to answer with 26,933 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.
Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 was above the target of 98%. 20,220 calls have been available to answer with 19,948 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.
Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 was above the target of 98%. 13,757 calls have been available to answer with 13,544 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 was above the target of 98%. 7,505 calls have been available to answer with 7,359 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.

2015/16
Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 was above the target of 97%. 28,636 calls have been available to answer with 28,177 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.
Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 was above the target of 97%. 22,114 calls have been available to answer with 21,706 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.
Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 was above the target of 97%. 15,707 calls have been available to answer with 15,381 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 improved and is above the target of 97%. 8,228 calls have been available to answer with 8,072 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV030_9b Cumulative percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax customers called back within 2 working days of leaving a voice mail message.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of voicemail messages received from customers in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax telephone calls that are returned within two working days of the voicemail message being left. We aim to return 99 percent of calls within two working days of the voice mail message being left. The customer is advised of this when leaving a message so it is important that this target is met.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	100%
		Current Target	99%

Cumulative percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax customers called back within 2 working days of leaving a voice mail message.



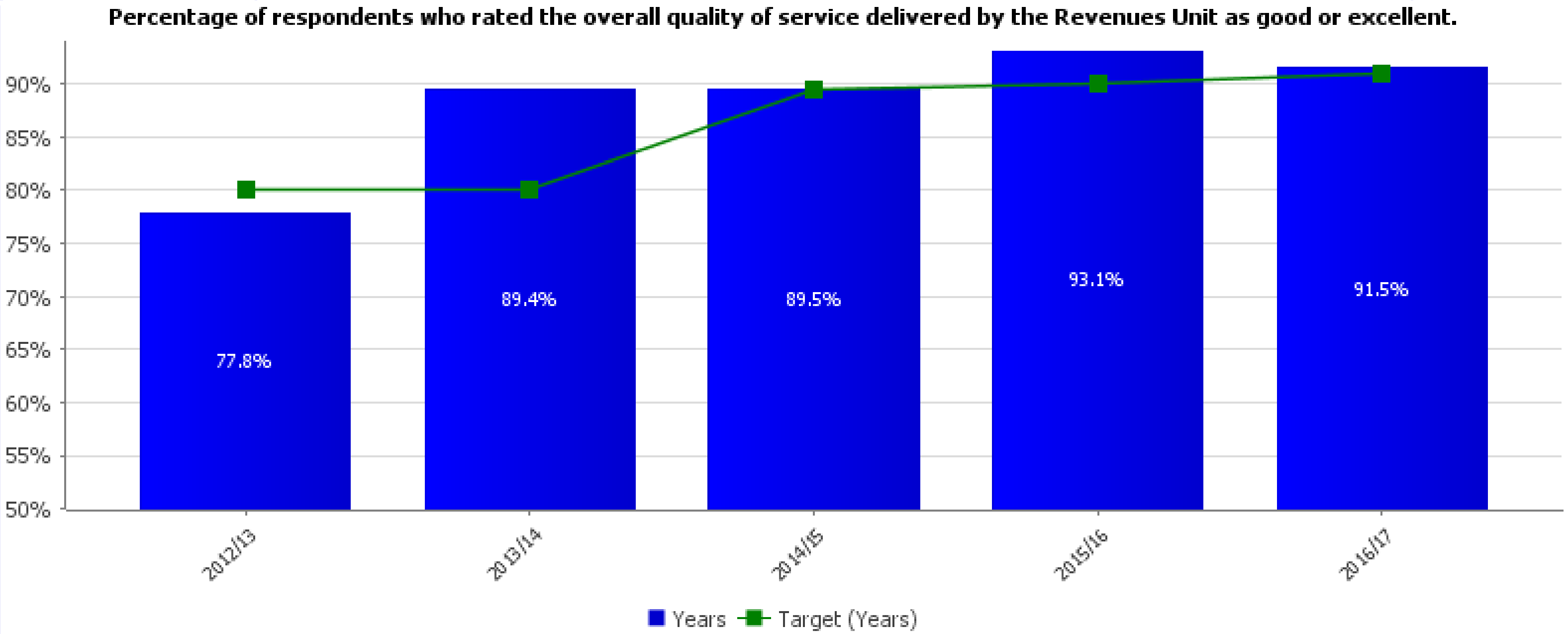
Trend Chart Commentary:
We have set a cumulative target of 99% for 2016/17 and will measure our performance against it.

2016/17:
Quarter 4: Performance as at quarter 4 was 100% against a target of 99%. 390 voicemails were received and 390 were returned within two working days.
Quarter 3: Performance as at quarter 3 was 100% against a target of 99%. 272 voicemails were received and 272 were returned within two working days.
Quarter 2: Performance as at quarter 2 was 100% against a target of 99%. 213 voicemails were received and 213 were returned within two working days.
Quarter 1: Performance as at quarter 1 was 100% against a target of 99%. 146 voicemails were received and 146 were returned within two working days.

2015/16:
Quarter 4: Performance as at quarter 4 was 99% against a target of 99%. 459 voicemails were received and 454 were returned within two working days.
Quarter 3: Performance as at quarter 3 was 99% against a target of 99%. 408 voicemails were received and 406 were returned within two working days.
Quarter 2: Performance as at quarter 2 fell slightly from quarter 1 but remains on target. 170 voicemails were received and 168 were returned within two working days.
Quarter 1: Performance as at quarter 1 was 100% against a target of 99%. 156 voicemails were received and 156 were returned within two working days.

APPENDIX 1

PI Code & Short Name	P:REV042_6a.7 Percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service delivered by the Revenues Unit as good or excellent.	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers that rated our overall service as good or excellent. Collected as part of our ongoing survey, customers are asked to rate the quality of the service provided as; excellent, good, adequate, poor, very poor or not applicable. The survey is a random but representative sample of the customers that accessed the service and the results are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.	Traffic Light Icon	
		Current Value	91.5%
		Current Target	91%



Trend Chart Commentary:
We strive to improve our services on an ongoing basis. Feedback from our customers is important to judge if our actions have been successful.

2016/17:
The surveys were issued to a sample of our Benefits, Business Rates, Council Tax, Scottish Welfare Fund and internal customers. 1,791 surveys were issued with 390 being returned (22%), a decrease in return rate of 1% from the previous year. The percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service between good and excellent was 91.5%, a decrease of 1.6% from the previous year.

2015/16:
The surveys were issued to a sample of our Benefits, Business Rates, Council Tax, Scottish Welfare Fund and internal customers. 2,309 surveys were issued with 530 being returned (23%), an increase in return rate of 0.3% from the previous year. The percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service between good and excellent was 93.1%, an increase of 3.6% from the previous year.

2014/15:
The surveys were issued to a sample of our Benefits, Business Rates, Council Tax, Scottish Welfare Fund and internal customers. 2,123 surveys were issued with 482 being returned (22.7%), an increase in return

rate of 7% from the previous year. The percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service between good and excellent was 89.5%, an increase of 0.1% from the previous year.

2013/14:
The surveys were issued to a sample of our Benefits, Business Rates, Council Tax and internal customers. 2,202 surveys were issued with 345 being returned (15.7%), an increase in return rate of 4.1% from the previous year. The percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service between good and excellent was 89.4%, an increase of 11.6% from the previous year. This level of response has exceeded our target.

2012/13:
The surveys were issued to a sample of our Benefits, Business Rates and Council Tax customers. 1,423 surveys were issued with 165 being returned (11.6%). The percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service between good and excellent has reduced from the previous year and has not reached our target. The main reason for this is the introduction of a new Council Tax and benefit system in August 2012 because of Welfare Reform changes to benefit administration. As a result of this workloads built up and delays occurred in processing customer enquiries.

The target for 2017/18 is 92%. This target will drive continual improvement and has been set after consideration of service improvements that have been implemented in 2016/17 and are planned for 2017/18.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

LOTHIAN VALUATION JOINT BOARD

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on the business and activities of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes the terms of the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2017 of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs Being honest, open and accountable Working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Council requires the activities of certain outside bodies to be reported to elected members on a regular basis, as part of its Code of Corporate Governance.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	None
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	National outcome 15: Our Public Services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	No prior consideration required.

VIII Consultations None required.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

At its meeting of 29 June 2010, the Council Executive decided that the activities of certain outside bodies should be reported within the council to ensure all elected members are aware of the business of those bodies and to help to ensure their activities are more effectively scrutinised.

In accordance with that decision, the business of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board was to be reported to this meeting by the production of its minutes and annual report.

Appendix 1 provides the Minutes of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board meeting held on 6 February 2017.

E. CONCLUSION

This report ensures that members are kept appraised of the activities of Lothian Valuation Joint Board as part of the council's Code of Corporate Governance.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

West Lothian Council Code of Corporate Governance
Council Executive, 29 June 2010
Partnership and Resources PDSP, 1 March 2013, 24 May 2013, 31 January 2014, 25 April 2014, 5 September 2014, 23 January 2015, 24 April 2015, 14 August 2015, 15 January 2016, 1 April 2016, 17 June 2016, 4 November 2016, 27 January 2017, 17 March 2017

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Minutes of meeting of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board held on 6 February 2017.

Contact Person: Carrie Heron, Executive Project Officer
Email carrie.heron@westlothian.gov.uk; Telephone 01506 281675

Graham Hope
Chief Executive
16 June 2017

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

Edinburgh, 6 February 2017

Present:

City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors Work (Convener), Bagshaw, Doran, Ricky Henderson, Keil, Lunn and McVey.

East Lothian Council – Councillor McNeil.

Midlothian Council – Councillors Bryant and Russell.

West Lothian Council – Councillors Dodds and McCarra.

1 Appointments

Members were advised that, on 13 December 2016, West Lothian Council had appointed Councillor David Dodds to serve on the Joint Board in place of Councillor Barry Robertson who had resigned.

Councillor Robertson had also resigned as Vice-Convener of the Joint Board and Members were invited to appoint a replacement.

Decision

1) To note the appointment of Councillor David Dodds, West Lothian Council in place of Councillor Barry Robertson who had resigned.

2) To appoint Councillor Margot Russell, Midlothian Council as Vice-Convener.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted)

2 Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 28 November 2016 as a correct record.

3 Revenue Budget 2017/18

The Board's revenue budget for 2017/18 was presented. The budget would be funded through a flat-cash requisition of £6.118m. Recognising the financial pressures facing constituent councils, it was proposed to give a refund of the equivalent of 3% of requisition (£0.184m) funded from the Board's unallocated Reserve.

The Board would continue to incur Individual Electoral Registration (IER) costs in 2017/18. The Cabinet Office had stated its commitment to fully fund IER until the end of the current Parliament.

The ongoing financial pressure arising from IER had also been subject to numerous reports to the Board throughout the year.

The Interim Assessor and ERO and the Treasurer recognised the need to move towards a sustainable budget position for 2018/19 and a managed position for 2017/18.

Decision

1) To approve the budget for 2017/18 and to authorise the Treasurer to requisition the individual constituent Councils for amounts as follows:

Constituent Council	Requisition 2017/18
City of Edinburgh	£3,741,157
Midlothian	£562,244
East Lothian	£666,862
West Lothian	£1,147,737
Total	**£6,118,000**

2) To approve a refund of unallocated reserve of £183,500 on 1 April 2017 as follows:

Constituent Council	Proposed Refund
City of Edinburgh	£112,300
Midlothian	£16,800
East Lothian	£20,100
West Lothian	£34,300
Total	**£183,500**

3) To note that the Interim Assessor and ERO would report to the Board on development of the service review during 2017/18.

4) To note that the Interim Assessor and ERO would update the Board in due course of any changes to IER with service/financial implications.

5) To note the risks identified in section 5 of the report by the Treasurer.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

4 Budget Report 2017/18

The Interim Assessor and ERO provided an overview of the expected costs, income and risk to the Board within the budget provision for the financial year 2017/18.

The Board's Corporate Plan and Service Plan for 2017-2018 were also submitted.

Decision

1) To note the report.

2) To note that the Interim Assessor would provide a briefing paper to Board Members on the net effect of the revaluation on the threshold of the small business scheme.

(Reference – report by the Interim Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted)

5 Period 9 Financial Statement 2016/17

The Board's actual and budgeted expenditure for the period to 31 December 2016 was reported together with a year end projection to 31 March 2017.

At this stage, the projected outturn against the core budget indicated a forecast spend of £5.964m resulting in a net underspend of £0.154m.

Decision

To note the projected outturn position for 2016-2017.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

6 Annual Investment Strategy

Decision

To approve the annual investment strategy set out in appendix 1 of the report by the Treasurer.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

7 Future Meeting Arrangements June 2017 to June 2018

Decision

1) To approve the schedule of meetings for the period to June 2017 as follows:

Monday 26 June 2017 (Unaudited Accounts)	10:00am	Edinburgh
Monday 4 September 2017	10:00am	Edinburgh
Monday 13 November 2017	10:00am	Edinburgh
Monday 5 February 2018 (Revenue Budget)	10:00am	Edinburgh
Monday 16 April 2018	10:00am	Edinburgh
Monday 25 June 2018 (Unaudited Accounts)	10:00am	Edinburgh

2) To agree that the meeting dates be notified to Chief Executives of all constituent authorities represented on the Board.

(Reference – report by the Chief Executive and Clerk, submitted)

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORKPLAN TO 25 AUGUST 2017

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
1.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually 16 March 2018
2.	Code of Conduct Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually 19 January 2018
3.	West Lothian Development Trust Annual Report	Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration	Annually 19 January 2018
4.	Annual Complaints Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Annually 22 September 2017
5.	Quarterly Performance Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Quarterly 22 September 2017 19 January 2018 16 March 2018 1 June 2018
6.	Quarterly Welfare Reform update	Head of Finance and Property Services	Quarterly 22 September 2017 19 January 2018 16 March 2018 1 June 2018
7.	Quarterly Sickness Absence Update	Head of Corporate Services	Quarterly 22 September 2017 19 January 2018 16 March 2018 1 June 2018
8.	People Strategy	Head of Corporate Services	25 August 2017
9.	IT Strategy	Head of Corporate Services	25 August 2017
10.	Minutes of Scotland Excel Meetings	Head of Corporate Services	As available
11.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board minutes	Chief Executive	As available

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC