DATA LABEL: Public

West Lothian Council

Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

30 November 2018

A meeting of the **Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre** on **Friday 7 December 2018** at **9:30am**.

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. Minutes

   (a) Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Panel held on Friday 5 October 2018 (herewith)

   (b) Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Panel held on Tuesday 13 November 2018 (herewith)

5. Quarterly Performance Report - Quarter 2 of 2018/19 - report by Depute Chief Executive (herewith)

6. Sickness Absence (1 April 2018 - 30 September 2018) - report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

7. BSL (British Sign Language) Local Plan for West Lothian Council 2018-2024 - report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

8. Severe Weather Policy (Revised) - report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

9. Avoidance of Industrial Disputes Procedure - report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

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

11. Horizon Scan - report by Head of Finance and Property Services and Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith)

12. Property Asset Management - Performance Update - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

13. Property Asset Management Plan (2018/19 to 2027/28) - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

14. 2018/19 Financial Performance - Month 6 Monitoring Report - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)

15. Councillors' Code of Conduct - Annual Review 2017/18 - report by Governance Manager (herewith)

16. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Annual Report 2017 - 2018 - report by Chief Executive (herewith)

17. Workplan (herewith)

NOTE **For further information please contact Val Johnston on 01506 281604, val.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 5 OCTOBER 2018.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Frank Anderson (substituting for Peter Johnston), Chris Horne, Dave King, Dom McGuire (substituting for George Paul), Kirsteen Sullivan and Damian Timson

Apologies – Councillors Peter Johnston (substituted by Frank Anderson) and George Paul (substituted by Dom McGuire)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. MINUTE

The Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel approved the minute of its meeting held on 24 August 2018. The minute was then signed by the Chair.

3. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2018/19 TO 2022/23 – POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL SAVING MEASURES

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on the work undertaken by officers to identify potential additional saving measures to address the current budget gap of £5.227 million, including the outcome of the review of ideas received from stakeholders during the Transforming Your Council (TYC) consultation.

At a meeting of the council on 13 February 2018, a long term financial plan for five years had been agreed along with detailed revenue budgets for the three years 2018/19 to 2020/21. In addition to the detailed revenue budgets, the council had agreed budget savings of £60.1 million over the five year period to 2022/23. Based on the budget assumptions included within the agreed financial plan, the total five year budget gap was £65.3 million, leaving a balance of £5.227 million to be identified.

In the quarterly horizon scan report considered by the panel on 24th August 2018, it was noted that officers would undertake a detailed review of the budget model in advance of the annual budget setting process for 2019/20 which could result in an increase in the budget gap meaning the balance of savings to be identified may increase. An update on the review of the budget model would be presented to the panel in December 2018.

In June 2018, the panel had considered a report on the proposed approach to identifying additional saving measures to address the remaining budget gap which had included consideration of suggestions received from stakeholders during the TYC consultation. The report was noted by the panel with no suggested changes to the proposed process.

The report provided panel members with a broad overview of the work undertaken by officers to identify and develop additional budget savings including (a) a review of ideas from the TYC consultation to determine the scope for further savings, (b) consideration of service budgets to identify any further savings, (c) development of budget saving proformas for new savings for consideration and (d) continuous scanning by the Corporate Transformation Programme Team (CTPT) and services of development in other councils and more widely to identify areas for consideration.

The appendix to the report clearly set out a number of TYC ideas which had been assessed would provide no opportunities for further savings. It also identified potential additional saving measures for a number of items, including some new savings and other ideas to increase the level of approved budget savings, which were also set out in the appendix. A number of council wide ideas for potential savings had been identified that would be further investigated by the CTPT and reported back to elected members on potential savings and values in 2019. Once the panel had considered the potential additional savings outlined in the appendix, detailed proformas would be developed to outline the business case for each saving. This was consistent with the approach used for the savings included in the five your financial plan agreed by Council and Council Executive in February 2018. The proformas would be reported to the relevant PDSPs for consideration to allow panels to reflect and comment on potential additional savings. A table within the report set out the intended key deadlines and actions.

Following a lengthy discussion on the potential additional saving measures arising from the TYC process set out in the appendix to the report, members of the panel agreed that the following areas should not be pursued:-

- Review of breakfast club provision
- Means testing of free school meals to special schools
- Removal of school crossing patrols during lunchtime
- Review cost and funding of galas and marches

Arising from the discussions, the Head of Finance & Property Services undertook to provide the panel with a detailed breakdown of the voluntary organisations budget and clarified that feedback on potential budget savings for financial years 2018/19 and 2019/20 would be reported back to the panel in due course. The Head of Corporate Services was asked to provide the panel with information on the costs incurred by the council to process Freedom of Information Requests.

It was recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the agreed process for reviewing the TYC ideas and identifying potential measures to address the remaining budget gap of £5.227 million;

2. Notes the outcome of the officer review of the ideas received during the TYC consultation;

3. Notes ideas where it was assessed that there was no potential for additional savings, noting that no further work would be undertaken by officers on those items;

4. Notes ideas where potential savings had been identified and that officers would continue to develop those options to confirm the potential saving value and assess their viability, creating business cases, where appropriate, for the future consideration by policy development and scrutiny panels;

5. Notes that there were a number of potential areas which required further feasibility analysis and that officers would continue the work, reporting back to elected members in due course; and

6. Provides feedback on the initial review of the TYC ideas and potential measures.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and recommendations subject to the following TYC potential savings not being pursued by officers:-

- Review of breakfast club provision
- Means testing of free school meals to special schools
- Removal of school crossing patrols during lunchtime
- Review cost and funding of galas and marches

4. CHILD POVERTY UPDATE

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Estates providing an update on the levels of child poverty within West Lothian and the measure taken by council services to tackle both the causes and impact of poverty on families, together with information on the requirements of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

Poverty in Scotland was a growing problem according to official Scottish Government statistics. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation Analysis of Poverty in Scotland indicated that poverty rates varied greatly between different groups with poverty high among families with children. The Institute of Fiscal Studies projected that current welfare changes would continue to have a negative impact across the UK and an additional

50,000 children would be in poverty by 2020. Scottish Government projections indicated that by 2030, 38% of children would be in relative poverty if no action was taken. Information on the complex reasons for households falling into and remaining in poverty was given in the report.

The Community Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018-2023 contained a West Lothian Poverty Profile that provided information and analysis on indicators and data to give an overall picture of poverty within West Lothian. Section 5 looked at children in relative poverty which compared children in families with incomes of less than 60% of the contemporary UK media income. It was important to take housing costs into account when determining disposable income. A table within the report provided information on the percentage of children living in poverty after housing costs by council ward area. The average level of child poverty in West Lothian was 22% which was comparable to the Scottish level and reflected the pattern for other measures of deprivation within the ward areas. West Lothian was ranked in joint 12th position alongside Edinburgh, Midlothian, Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire Councils.

The report gave an overview of the four targets set out within the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 which the Scottish Government was expected to ensure were met by 2030, all of which would be measured after housing costs had been deducted. The Act also set interim targets that were to be met in financial year beginning April 2023 and committed the Scottish Government to produce a "Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan" for each of the five years to set out its policies and proposals to help make progress towards the targets. The Scottish Government's action plan would focus the majority of actions specifically at increasing family incomes and reducing costs. They had also produced additional guidance which suggested that direct action involving children under 12 would not impact on national and local targets unless it reduced parental expenditure.

The Act placed a duty on local authorities and NHS Health Boards to jointly prepare and publish an annual local child poverty action report that would outline activities undertaken that contributed to the meeting of child poverty targets and activity which was due to be published by June 2019.

Council services undertook a range of projects and actions to support vulnerable families and help lessen the impact of poverty on them and their children. An appendix to the report mapped out projects or actions that were grouped together under the drivers of poverty which mirrored the groupings in the Scottish Government's action plan and which would form the basis of a wider community planning child poverty mapping exercise. The mapping had not included all activities and did not take into account the funding the council allocated to third sectors through different funding streams.

The mapping activity had highlighted areas where additional activity would support the reduction of the number of children in relative poverty and help towards reaching the Scottish Government targets. A separate report would be presented to the Council Executive on time-limited funding that were allocated to anti-poverty initiatives and to seek approval of the allocation of those funds to priority areas.

The Panel was asked to note the impacts of the welfare reforms in West Lothian and the action the council and community planning partners were taking in response. On behalf of the panel, the Chair commended officers for their excellent report and work to tackle child poverty.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

5. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION 2017/18 COMPLIANCE REPORT

A report had been circulated by the Head of Corporate Services providing an update on the council's compliance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA), particularly regarding the handling of FOI requests.

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 provided a general right of access to information held by Scottish public authorities, subject to specified exemptions applying. The Scottish Information Commissioner had a duty to promote and enforce compliance by Scottish public authorities within the terms of the legislation. Appendix 1 to the report showed the council's performance in 2017/18 in processing FOI requests within the required 20 working day timescale.

In addition to requests for information under FOISA, the council was required to comply with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 in the processing of personal data. The council also received requests from individuals for access to personal information held on them by the council, known as Subject Access Requests (SARs). The timescale for a SAR was 40 days.

Table 1 contained the total number of FOISA requests received by the council over the period from 2013/14 to 2017/18, table 2 contained the total number of internal reviews carried out and table 3 contained the total number of SARs received.

Of the 20 internal reviews which were concluded in 2017/18, 12 were upheld, 2 were partly upheld and 6 were not upheld. The main reason for upholding requests related to responses not being issued on time and information should have been released being withdrawn.

The council's performance in 2017/18 in processing requests within the required timescales for FOI and SAR requests was shown in appendix 1 to the report. The overall performance for the year to date for FOI requests was 91% completed within 20 days and SAR requests was 83% completed within 40 days.

It was noted that requests for environmental information, such as waste, water, air quality, energy or noise were dealt with under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (EIRs). The timescale for processing EIRs was 20 days and the council's performance was set out in appendix 1 to the report.

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) came into force on 25th May 2018 and harmonised UK law with GDPR and European Law Enforcement Directive. The council had reviewed all personal information held and processes and procedures which could be impacted by GDPR to ensure compliance with the new legislation.

The panel was asked to note the council's performance in relation to the processing of Freedom of Information requests (FOI), Subject Access Requests (SARs) and requests under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

6. WORKING SAFELY AT HEIGHT GUIDANCE

A report had been circulated by the Head of Corporate Services outlining the new Working Safely at Height Guidance.

The council had a responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees whilst at work and any other person who may be affected by its acts or omissions. As part of the ongoing commitment in the implementation of council-wide health and safety policy, the guidance document advised on compliance with the Working at Height Regulations 2005 and would to assist services in fulfilling responsibilities and duties outlined in the regulations.

The new Working Safely at Height Guidance, which was provided as an appendix, set out the responsibilities for implementation, detailed procedures that must be considered for working at height and gave links to other relevant guidance documentation that should be taken into consideration when devising working at height procedures. The description of working at height was provided in the report.

It was recommended that the Panel note the content of the report and recommend the Working Safely at Height Guidance to the Council Executive for approval.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and recommendation.

7. WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL PARTICIPATION REQUEST REVIEW

A report had been circulated by the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration presenting the findings of a recent review of the West Lothian Council participation request process.

Participation requests were introduced in April 2017 under Part 3 of the

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and provided a mechanism for community bodies to put forward ideas for how services could be changed to improve the outcome for communities. Requests could be made to a number of public service authorities, including West Lothian Council, and each was required to have their own process in place for dealing with requests.

The council's process for managing participation requests was approved by the panel and Council Executive in March 2017. Members agreed that the process should be reviewed upon completion of the first participation request to ensure it was fit for purpose.

Bathgate Community Council had submitted the first participation request in February 2018 around increased awareness of the council's roads policies and where the community council influence and improve existing policies through local involvement. A Participation Request Panel made up of council officers had assessed their request and agreed that the information required to make a decision had not been provided and the request was therefore not valid. With support from officers, the group shaped the information into a valid request which was subsequently approved by the panel in June 2018. An outcome improvement process had been agreed and published on the council's website and a full report would be published once the process was complete.

As the first participation request had been received, the participation request process had been reviewed. The report recalled the current process before setting out the findings of the review and listing the minor recommendations suggested to improve the process. The feedback from officers and the community council was provided in the report.

The report concluded with information on a briefing by the Scottish Community Development Centre on learning from their work around participation requests which contained 7 key findings that were in line with the findings of the council review. Their briefing highlighted that legislation and guidance might need some strengthening that could lead to participation requests having the potential to form an important piece of the puzzle in making bottom-up co-production happen in Scotland.

It was recommended that the panel considers the following recommendations which were intended to be submitted to the Council Executive for approval:-

a) Notes the review of the West Lothian Council participation request process: and

b) Approves the recommendations to improve the process and further raise awareness of the process within communities and council services.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and remit the report to the Council Executive for approval.

8. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS – ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

A report had been circulated by the Depute Chief Executive outlining activity in 2017/18 under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) required by the policy approved by the council in September 2017.

The council had duties and responsibilities when undertaking certain types of surveillance in relation to the detection of crime, in relation to public safety and the protection of public health which were found principally in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA). In certain circumstances, a formal authorisation was needed from an appropriate senior council officer before some forms of information-gathering activity could be carried out.

When the new RIPSA policy was approved by the council in September 2017, it was agreed that a stand-alone annual report be provided on RIPSA activity and issues relevant to the council's use of RIPSA.

Authorisations were required for planned covert surveillance in relation to criminal activity, public health or public safety where it was designed to gather private information without the subject being aware of it. No authorisation was required for overt surveillance, unplanned or spontaneous surveillance or for one-off instances of information gathering. If officers acted without an authorisation any evidence gathered could be inadmissible, enforcement action could fail or the council could suffer reputational damage.

The panel noted that only a very low number of authorisations were granted each year and were generally used by council services that operated in areas such as noise and criminal anti-social behaviour, trading standards, environment health and counter fraud investigations. A table within the report outlined the authorisations requested in 2017/18 and the previous five years. The report provided further details on the two authorisations requested and granted in 2017/18 and the outcome of both cases. The annual exercise undertaken by Environmental Health to test the purchase tobacco products to underage young people had not required authorisation due to the way in which the activity was carried out.

The report moved on to explained that the offices of three Commissioners with oversight roles had been incorporated into one, the Office of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner. The council's next inspection was due to be carried out mid-2019 and would be carried out under the new regime.

Three new statutory Codes of Practice had been issued by the Scottish Government for Scottish public bodies in the exercise of their RIPSA powers that covered Covert Surveillance, Targeted Equipment Interference and Cover Human Intelligence Sources. Only the first had any bearing on the council's use of powers and mainly contained technical changes to the previous version.

The report concluded with information on the consequences of a recent case in England which had failed due to lack of awareness of the law.

It was recommended that the panel note the information provided in relation to the council's use of RIPSA powers in 2017/18.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

9. REVIEW OF DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

A report had been circulated by the Governance Manager inviting consideration of improvements that could be made to the council's decision-making arrangements.

The report recalled the background to the reasons for the council undertaking a review of its decision making arrangements and provided details of the further discussions with Group Leaders and the Independent Councillor that had taken place following the August meeting of the panel. A small number of additional points had emerged as a result of the further discussions and these were set out of the end of the appendix to the report.

The report detailed the constraints that were explained to councillors during the consultation meetings and was the first formal step towards eventual decision-making. Suggestions could emerge to be progressed by officers for decision or there could be areas of disagreement. Further PDSP reports might also be necessary. The Council Executive might be required to direct officers as to what should be taken forward whilst final changes to Standing Orders and the Scheme of Administration would have to be made at full council. The feedback from discussions was not necessarily exhaustive and additional ideas could be brought forward in the course of any further PDSP or committee or council consideration.

The panel was invited to:-

(i) Note the updated themes and concerns that had emerged from officers' discussions with members following council's instruction in February 2018 to review decision-making arrangements; and

(ii) Consider those issues to assist in identifying potential improvements and in taking the review forward for decision-making.

Arising from the discussion, the Governance Manager agreed to provide members with a note of the possible changes that would require changes to the council's Standing Orders and full council determination. He would also identify areas from Appendix 2 which might be taken forward to committee for decision following further discussion with the group leaders and Independent councillor.

Decision

To note the terms of the report and recommendation.

10. PERFORMANCE REPORT FROM THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A report had been circulated by the Depute Chief Executive informing the Panel of the findings and recommendations arising from a review of the performance information provided to the council's two performance committees and the nine Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels (PDSPs).

The review had been undertaken in response to the recommendations of the Best Value Assurance Review of West Lothian Council. The review activity was completed in March 2018 and considered performance reporting to all PDSPs and the council's two performance committees during the period 2016/17 and 2017/18. The review methodology was included in the report.

A total of 261 performance reports were received by Committee and PDSP in 2016/17 and 2017/18. A table within the report provided a breakdown of performance reports by performance committees and PDSPs.

A further table showed the categories of performance reports received by performance committees and PDSPs.

The report went on to list the key findings of the review.

In addition, the report set out recommendations that had been identified to improve the quality, relevance and consistency of the performance information that was provided to elected members via the PDSPs and committee. These were:-

1. A standard calendar of performance reporting to PDSP and the two performance committees was agreed to establish a consistent provision of performance information for scrutiny by elected members.

2. Corporate performance reports identified for inclusion in the PDSP and two performance committee workplans. This might include a targeted performance scorecard for the Corporate Plan (including relevant priorities/deliverables) and relevant indicators from the Local Government Benchmarking Framework dataset.

3. PDSP scorecards reviewed in conjunction with the Lead Officer, taking into account the relevance and collection frequency of PIs that were currently in place.

4. An agreed reporting format (layout) for scorecards and service performance reports identified for PDSPs.

5. The annual evaluation of quality of publicly reported performance indicators undertaken each May. To aid review activity, this would take into account the alignment of the current PDSP performance indicators with the Corporate Plan priorities and other activities that had been identified as significant in requirements or priorities.

The panel was asked to the performance information and determine if further action or enquiry was necessary for any of the performance indicators in the report.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

11. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan was circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.

MINUTE of MEETING of the PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 13 NOVEMBER 2018.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Kirsteen Sullivan, Chris Horne, Dave King, George Paul Tom Kerr, (substitute for Damian Timson)

Apologies – Councillor Peter Johnston, Damian Timson

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Chief Executive advising of the Review of Local Governance that was being undertaken jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA and to make proposals in relation to West Lothian Council's participation in the Review.

The report advised that the Scottish Government Programme for Government contained a commitment to deliver a Review of Local Governance. The Scottish Government and COSLA launched a Local Governance Review in a joint announcement on 7 December 2017. The stated purpose of the review was to ensure that local communities had more say about how public services in their area were run.

The Review was intended to strengthen local decision making and democratic governance in ways that improved outcomes in local communities, grow Scotland's economy for everyone's benefit, support communities to focus on their priorities and help new ideas to flourish. The Review would cover services provided currently at local and national level, and how powers, responsibilities and resources were shared between national and local spheres of government and communities.

The Chief Executive explained that the Review would involve two separate strands. The first strand would focus on how decisions were taken in communities, the second on how decisions were taken at the level of community planning partnerships and councils or more regionally.

The second strand would involve the Scottish Government inviting city regions, regional groupings, individual local authorities, Community Planning Partnerships and other public sector organisations to propose place specific working which had the potential to improve local outcomes and drive inclusive economic growth.

All changes proposed would be tested against the following democratic renewal principles:-

- Subsidiarity and Local Decision Making
- Simple Open Democracy
- Personal and Empowering
- Fairness and Equality of Outcome
- Financially Sustainable and Preventative

The report went on to advise that an enabling group had been set up jointly by COSLA and the Scottish Government to undertake and report on both stages of the Review. It was noted in the report that a joint oversight group, comprising of ministers and the COSLA presidential team would ensure joint political oversight. The report also advised that the Scottish Government had stated that it intended new legislation (the Local Democracy Bill) within the lifetime of the current parliament.

The report recalled that on 28 May 2018 Scottish Ministers, COSLA and the Scottish Community Alliance launched jointly the "Democracy Matters" conversation, the stated aim of which was to identify new legal rights for communities which would place them at the heart of decision making and was part of the first strand of the Review.

Scottish Ministers and COSLA asked public sector organisations to submit initial comments as the first stage of the second strand of the Review.

The Chief Executive established an officer group to produce draft proposals for consideration by members. The draft proposals centred around four key themes as follows:

- The Integrated Public Authority model and its benefits in terms of the democratic renewal principles, at the level of existing unitary authorities.
- Decentralisation and devolution of decision making utilised the existing powers conferred by the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, communities of interest and existing approaches and communities of place (including Community Council, and Community Development Trusts) in preference to the establishment of a new tier of local governance, or new local bodies.
- The further development of joint working and shared services as an alternative to regionalisation.
- An examination of existing legislation which hindered effective public service delivery and governance.

In relation to the Integrated Public Authority model, initial thinking concentrated on the following themes:-

- Community safety (involving Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue, Housing, Education).

- Economic development (involving Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, the College Sector, Education, Visit Scotland and potentially Scottish Water).

- Health and wellbeing (involving Council Revenues, Benefits, Grants etc., and aspects of the local delivery of national benefits).

It was noted that local residents influenced decisions through the democratic process which ensured that locally elected representatives were accountable for their actions and decisions. Bringing a greater range of public functions under the democratic oversight of local government could increase local control over decisions, increase the accountability of public services and foster a greater sense of connection between the service and community.

The continuation of national bodies to set strategic direction was supported, with local authorities maximising the co-ordination, responsiveness and accountability of a wider range of public services to local conditions and priorities. The need to ensure continuation of strategic local oversight when introducing further devolution was also recognised.

In relation to joint working, an enhanced role for COSLA in promoting and facilitating joint working, along the lines of that used by local government bodies in England and Wales, may help ensure that local authorities secure some of the perceived benefits of regionalisation without losing accountability and that this aspect of reform remained within the democratic control of local authorities.

The report went on to provide details on the following:-

- The Integrated Public Authority

- Devolution and Decision Making

- Joint Working / Shared Services

The report advised that the Review of Local Governance provided an opportunity to examine legislation which was hindering effective public service delivery and governance, a number of examples was detailed within the report..

The report also provided details and information on the Legal Framework for local authorities.

In conclusion West Lothian Council's draft proposals were made up of four key themes, concentrated on four broad functions which were in accordance with the five democratic renewal principles all of which were detailed in the report.

The proposals could also be judged against the principles underpinning The Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services.

The report recommended that the panel note and consider the following recommendations which were intended to be submitted to Council Executive:

1. To note the ongoing Review of Local Governance being led jointly by the Scottish Government and COSLA.

2. Consider the contents of the report ad agree there submission to COSLA and the Scottish Government

3. Note that officers would continue to work with COSLA in the development of a national Local Authority position.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.

2. To agree the report and its recommendations be submitted to Council Executive for approval.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 2 OF 2018/19

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose is to report the current level 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

It is recommended 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**	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)**	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	**Other consultations**	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

Overseeing and challenging council performance is contained within the remit of every Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP). Scrutiny of performance by elected members in PDSPs forms a key part of the council's wider scrutiny and public performance reporting arrangements.

To support this, each PDSP is allocated areas of the Corporate Plan, strategic priorities and key council performance, relevant to the focus areas of the Panel, and receives quarterly and annual performance reports.

D.2 Quarterly Performance Report

The quarterly performance scorecard report for PR PDSP contains a range of relevant service performance information for scrutiny.

A summary position of the status of the 65 performance indicators in the PR PDSP scorecard is contained in Appendix 1, with a more detailed commentary provided in Appendix 2 of this report.

The 65 performance indicators are categorised as follows:

Summary of Performance Indicator status (RAG)	
Status (against target)	Number of PIs
Green	42
Amber	8
Red	9
Unknown	6

**Note: the Unknown status occurs when a service does not record performance during the period, for example, if the service did not receive any complaints to process.*

The RAG status is against the performance target that has been set by the service in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. In Appendix 2 a trend chart commentary offers an explanation on the current performance levels (against the target) for each indicator. This information will also highlight to the Panel the measures that services will take to improve performance.

D.3 Red Performance Indicators

The current trend for those indicators that are currently at Red status is summarised.

CSC100_Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact

Current performance: 69%
Target: 75%

The trend chart shows performance dipped in Quarter 2 in 2018/19 compared to Quarter 1 and also in comparison to the same period in 2017/18. The CSC is reporting that it is receiving a higher proportion of calls that are more complex and cannot be resolved fully at first point of contact by the CSC Advisers. Simultaneously, the council is also seeing an increasing number of customers shifting towards completing transactional activities online, using improved functionality on the council's website to request services and make payments.

There are three red performance indicators that relate to the cumulative percentage of sickness absence in services:
- Customer and Communities (CuCS021)
- The Advice Shop (FEADS028)
- Financial Management Unit (FM048)

There are four red performance indicators that relate to the total number of complaints received by services:
- Customer Service Centre (CSC062m)
- Customer and Communities (CuCS010q)
- Property Management and Development (PMD144)
- Revenues and Benefits Unit (REV122)

There is one performance indicator that relates to the total percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld by a service:
- Customer Service Centre (CSC063m)

D.4 Unknown Performance Indicators

- There are 6 performance indicators with an Unknown status that relates to the percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld. This is due to services not receiving complaints within the time period presented and therefore the indicators show blank data.

E. CONCLUSION

The performance scorecard shows that a significant proportion of performance indicators are achieving targeted levels of performance. Where performance is not at the expected level, appendix 2 of this reports offers details to the Panel of the corrective actions being taken by services to improve performance.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: 1
Appendix 1 – Partnership and Resources PDSP Performance Scorecard Summary Report
Appendix 2 – Partnership and Resources PDSP Performance Scorecard Detailed Report

Contact Person: Rebecca Kelly
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Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive
7 December 2018

APPENDIX 1

Partnership & Resources PDSP Scorecard Report

Generated on: 22 November 2018

West Lothian Council

Traffic Light Red

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CSC062m_6b.3 Total Number of Complaints against Customer Service Centre (CSC).	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	12	7
	CSC063m_6b.4 Percentage of Complaints Upheld and part upheld against Customer Service Centre	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	75%	55%
	P:CSC100_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	69%	75%
	CuCS010q_6b.3 Customer and Communities - Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	23	12
	CuCS021_7b.1 Customer and Communities - Percentage of Sickness absence	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	4.7%	3.6%
	FEADS028_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Advice Shop	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	7.11%	3.6%
	FM048_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Financial Management Unit - Cumulative	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	3.34%	1.5%
	PMD144_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Property Management and Development	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	9	3
	REV122_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Revenues Unit	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	32	22

Traffic Light Amber

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CSg112_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Construction Services	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	4	3
	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.	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	65.2%	60.0%
	P:CuCS026q_9b.1a Percentage of customer enquiries recorded on the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) which are resolved at the first point of contact	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	72.2%	75.0%
	FM001_6b.5 Percentage of Suppliers paid within 30 Days of Receipt.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	95.6%	96%
	ITS003_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in IT Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	4.21%	3.6%

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	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	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	44%	33%
	P:REV027_6b Percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax correspondence processed within 10 working days of receipt.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	86.8%	91%
	REV047_9b.1a Percentage of income collected in the current year from Council Tax.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	53.87%	54.08%

Traffic Light Green

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CC014_6b.3 Total number of complaints received per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	CC031_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Communications	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	3%	3.6%
	CC081_9b.1a Percentage of new social media followers on the West Lothian Council sites per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	3.2%	2%
	CPU017a_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Procurement Unit	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0%	3.6%
	CPU019b_9b.1a Percentage of relevant compliant council expenditure per quarter.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	94%	92%
	CPU047c_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	P:CSC007mq_6a.7 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	92.2%	97.0%
	CSg113_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Construction Services that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	50%	50%
	CSg301_7b.1 Construction Services - Cumulative Percentage of Sick Days	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2.02%	2%
	CSg600_9b.1c Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered by Construction Services.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	39%	40%
	P:CuCS007q_6a.7 Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (A Shaw)	99.5%	98.0%
	P:FEADS007_6a.7 Advice Shop - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	99.4%	99%
	P:FEADS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Advice Shop	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	3	4
	FEADS012_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Advice Shop that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0%	50%
	P:FEADS061_9b.1a Total quarterly amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	£7,086,453	£6,750,000
	FM037_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Financial Management Unit	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0	3

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
✓	FM038_6b.4 Financial Management Unit - the percentage of complaints received by Financial Management Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0%	10%
✓	P:HRS104_9b.2 Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	6	9
✓	HRS525_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in HR Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.7%	3.6%
✓	HRS550_6b.3 Number of complaints received by HR Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	1
✓	P:IA008_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by internal audit as good or excellent.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	100%	100%
✓	P:IA015_9b.1a Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	8.7	10
✓	IA051_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0.68%	1.5%
✓	IA066_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0	0
✓	ITS004_9b.1c Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	39%	40%
✓	ITS012_6a.7 Percentage of IT Services Customers Rating the Overall Quality as Good or Excellent.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	99%	98%
✓	ITS030_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
✓	LS007_7b.1 Percentage Sickness Absence Levels in Legal Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0.41%	3.6%
✓	P:LS046_6b.5 Percentage of Taxi/Private Hire Car Applications Not Granted or Refused within 90 Days	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	4%	6%
✓	LS087_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Legal Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	2
✓	PIS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1	1
✓	PIS013_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed by the Performance and Improvement Service that were upheld / partially upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0%	25%
✓	PIS023_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Performance and Improvement Service	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.09%	3.6%
✓	PIS514_6b.5 Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days		98.3%	97%
✓	PMD111b_7b.1 Cumulative Percentage Sickness/Absence levels - Property Management & Development	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1.25%	1.5%
✓	P:PMD161_9b.1a Industrial Portfolio - Percentage of Total Units Let.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	94.92%	90%
✓	P:PMD163_9b.1a Office Portfolio - Percentage of Office Units Let.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	91.89%	90%
✓	P:PMD164_9b.1c Percentage of rent outstanding for commercial property, (Current debt).	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	3.76%	4%

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	REV002_9b Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) received in the year.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	53.23%	52.7%
	REV048a_7b.1 Monthly Sickness Absence Levels	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2.74%	2.5%
	REV099_9b Housing Benefit monthly new claims	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	8.45	17
	REV123_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Revenues Unit that were upheld or partially upheld	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	25%	25%

Traffic Light Unknown

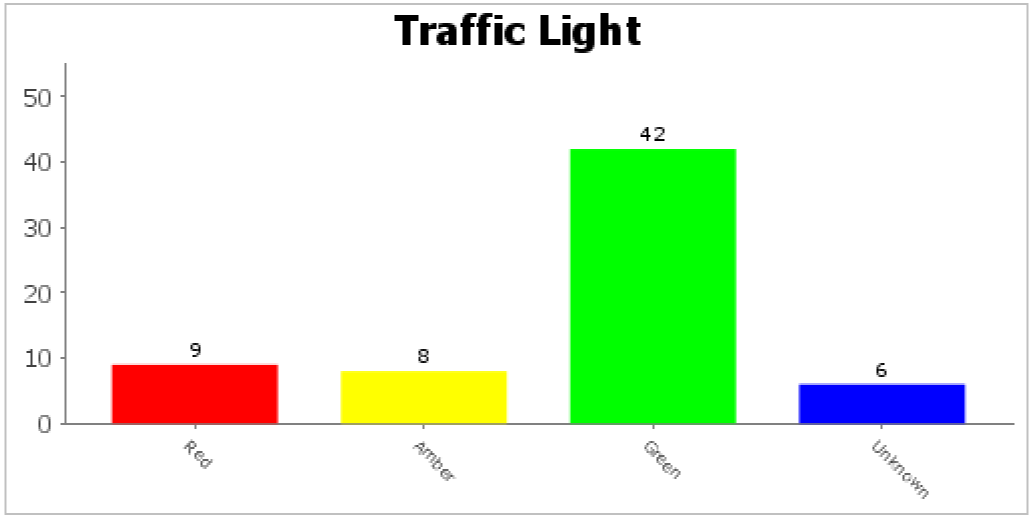
Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CC016_6b.4 The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)		
	CPU047d_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0%
	HRS554_6b.4 Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	25%
	IA067_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud that were upheld or partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	N/A	42%
	ITS031_6b.4 Percentage of complaints received that were upheld/partially upheld	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0
	LS027_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0%

APPENDIX 2

09 PDSP – Partnership and Resources PIs – ALL (Detail)

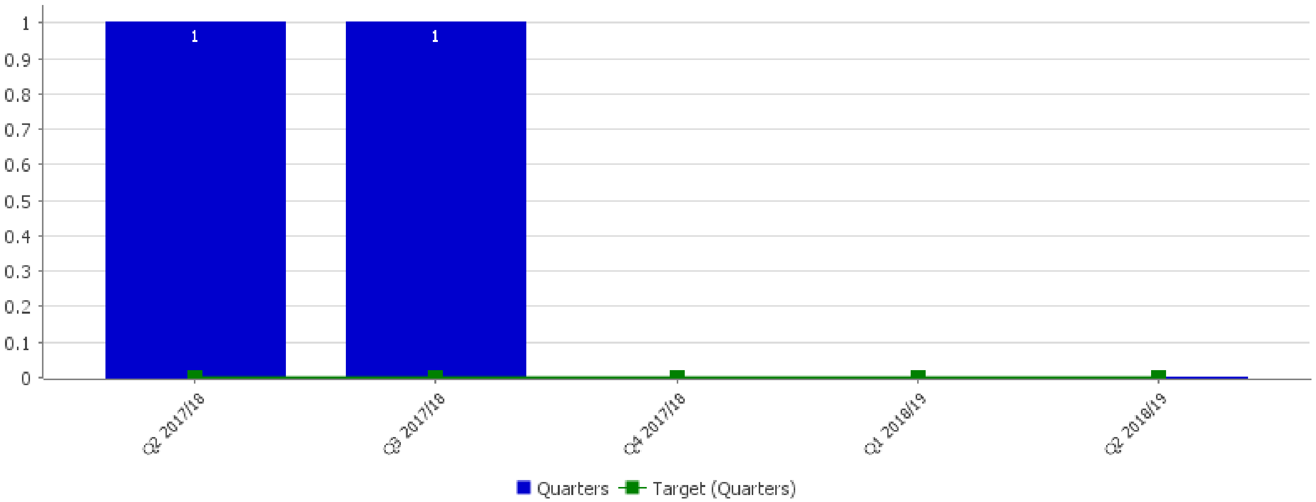
Data Label : OFFICIAL

Generated on: 22 November 2018 16:46



PI Code & Short Name	**CC014_6b.3 Total number of complaints received per quarter**	PI Owner(s):	zCC_PIAdmin; Garry Heron
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of complaints received quarterly relating to Corporate Communications. Performance is reviewed on a regular basis and reported quarterly to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the quality and standard of customer service. The data for this performance indicator is captured through the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, Social Media and Councillor Enquiries. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.		

Total number of complaints received per quarter



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	0
Amber Threshold:	0
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:
The service handle complaints made through members of public through social media and councillor enquiries, the service receives a small number of complaints.

2018/19
Q1 2018/19 - the service received no complaints
Q2 2018/19 - the service received no complaints

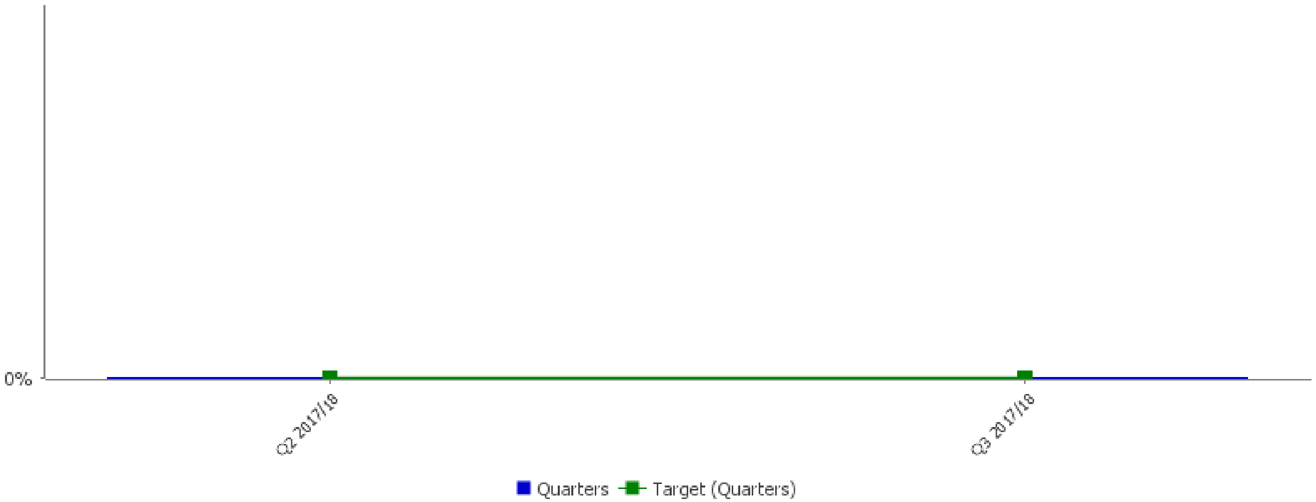
2017/18
Q1 2017/18 - the service received no complaints
Q2 2017/18 - the service received 1 complaint relating to social media content
Q3 2017/18 - the service received 1 complaint relating to content in Bulletin
Q4 2017/18 - the service received no complaints

Complaints are handled following corporate procedures and analysed to identify trends.

The target for 2018/19 performance will remain at 0 per quarter, this is to reflect the small number of complaints the service received in 2017/18. Targets are reviewed annually.

PI Code & Short Name	**CC016_6b.4 The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter**
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of Corporate Communications complaints that have been investigated and upheld or part upheld during each quarter. For each quarter the total number of complaints responded to within relevant timescale is divided by the total number of stage one complaints received to determine a percentage. The data for this indicator is extracted from the customer relationship management (CRM). The complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.
PI Owner(s):	zCC_PIAdmin; Garry Heron

The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter



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Last Updated:	
Status:	
Current Value:	
Current Target:	
Red Threshold:	
Amber Threshold:	
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

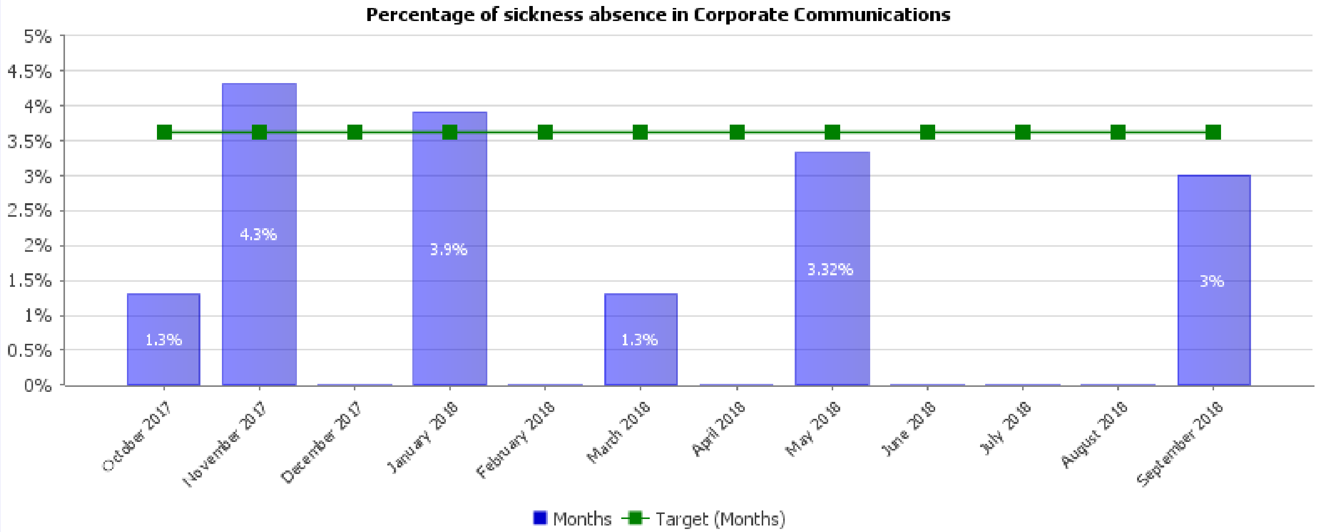
Trend Chart Commentary:
Q2 2018/19 no complaints were received.
Q1 2018/19 no complaints were received.

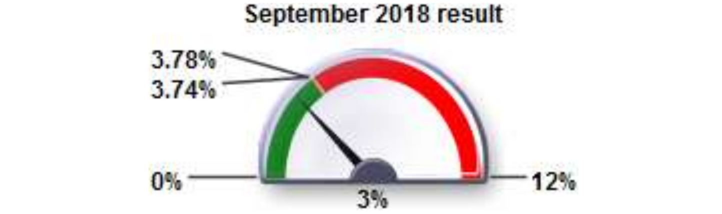
Q4 2017/18 no complaints were received.
Q3 2017/18 1 complaint was received relating to Bulletin content which was not upheld
Q2 2017/18 1 complaint was received relating to social media content which was not upheld
Q1 2017/18 no complaints were received.

Please note, where there have been no complaints received within the quarter, no value will be added to the chart. Therefore this will show as blank or missing an one year period on the chart.

The target for 2018/19 will remain at 0%.

PI Code & Short Name	**CC031_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Communications**	**PI Owner(s):**	zCC_PIAdmin; Garry Heron
Description	This performance indicator measures, as a percentage, the total level of sickness absence in the Corporate Communications team in Corporate Services. The data is provided by the council's Human Resource Services on a monthly basis and is tracked and monitored to ensure absence is managed appropriately in the service and any corresponding impact on performance is understood and managed.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	3%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	3.78%
Amber Threshold:	3.74%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

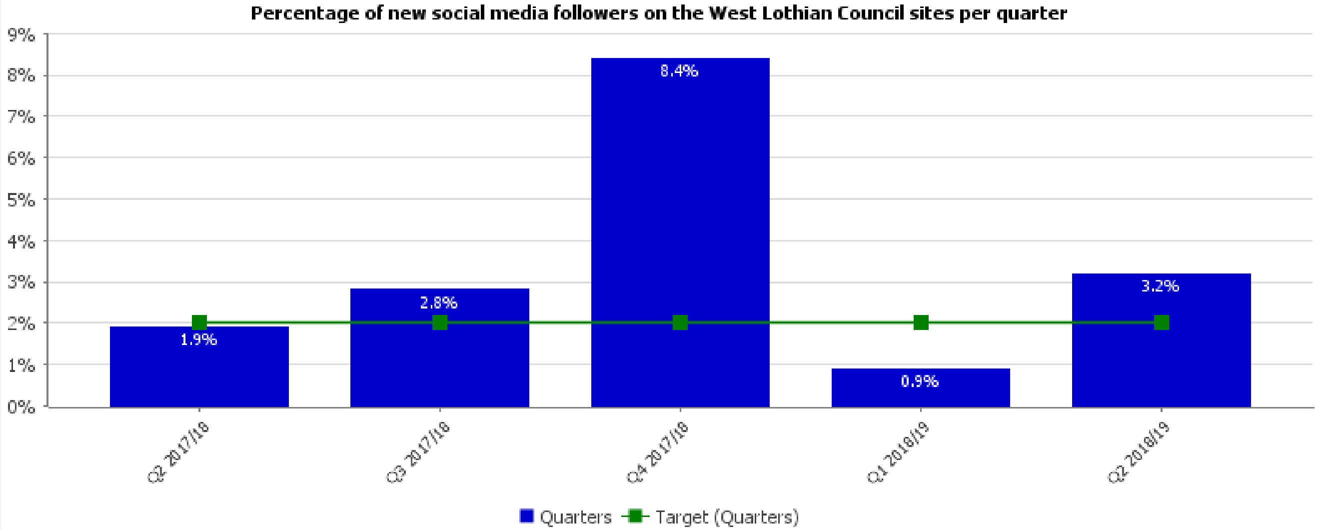
Due to the small size of the team, even short period of absence can have an adverse effect on absence rates and that is reflected in the trend chart.

In November 2017 the percentage increased to 4.3% and above the target and was a result of one member of staff being absent for several days. However the percentage returned to 0% in December. In January 2018 sickness absence increased to 3.9% due to several short term absences. The percentage decreased to 0% again in February and remained low throughout 2018 with the exception of May due to two members of staff being absent. From June to August, there has been no absences in Corporate Communications. One member of staff absent for 4 days during the month of September 2018.

Absence is monitored and addressed in line with the council's Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedures.

The corporate target is 3.6%.

PI Code & Short Name	**CC081_9b.1a Percentage of new social media followers on the West Lothian Council sites per quarter**		
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.	PI Owner(s):	zCC_PIAdmin; Garry Heron

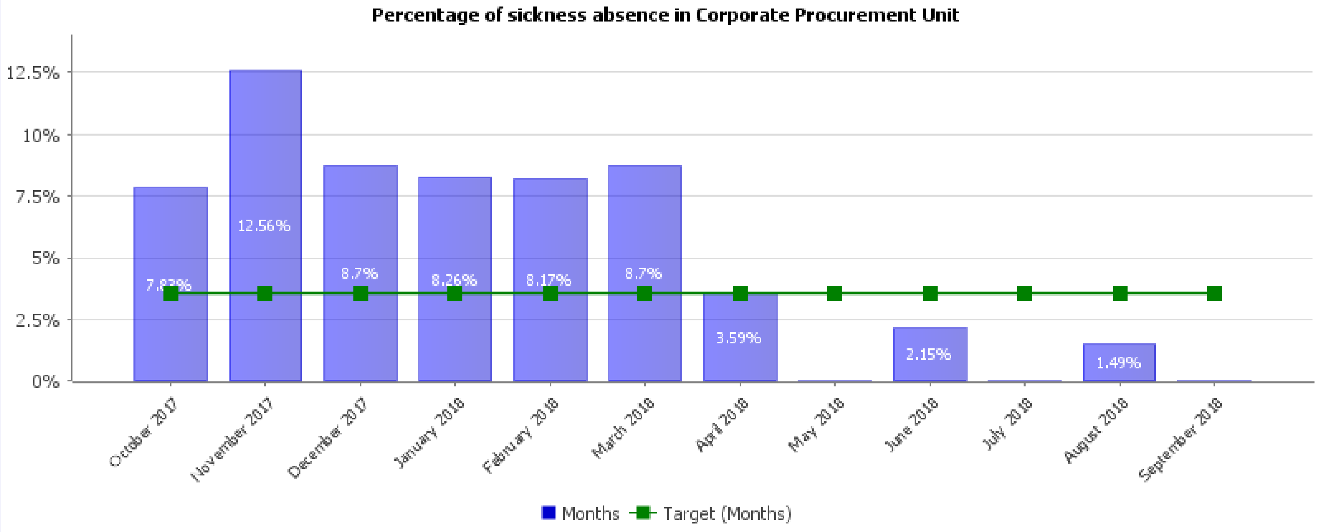


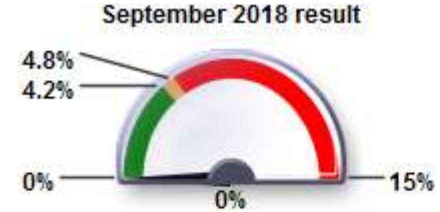
Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✓
Current Value:	3.2%
Current Target:	2%
Red Threshold:	0.5%
Amber Threshold:	1.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The quarterly chart for number of social media likes generally shows a steady increase of around 1% to 3% for each period. This reflects the growing numbers of residents using social media and choosing to follow our channels. Severe weather during Q4 2017/18 led to a substantial increase in followers during this period of over 8%. This was followed by a drop to 0.9% in Q1 2018/19 as the majority of potential new followers were likely to have already subscribed to our channels during the previous quarter. In Q2 2018/19 followers grew from 60,550 to 62,500, an increase of 1,951 or 3.2%. This can be attributed to campaign to name gritters which increased engagement and continued growth of locality social media channels. The target will remain at 2%.

PI Code & Short Name	**CPU017a_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Procurement Unit**	**PI Owner(s):**	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of sickness absence within the Corporate Procurement Unit on a month by month basis. For each month, the service aims to have equal to or less than 1.50 percent sickness absence. The monthly sickness statistics used for this performance indicator are recorded from data issued by HR services.		





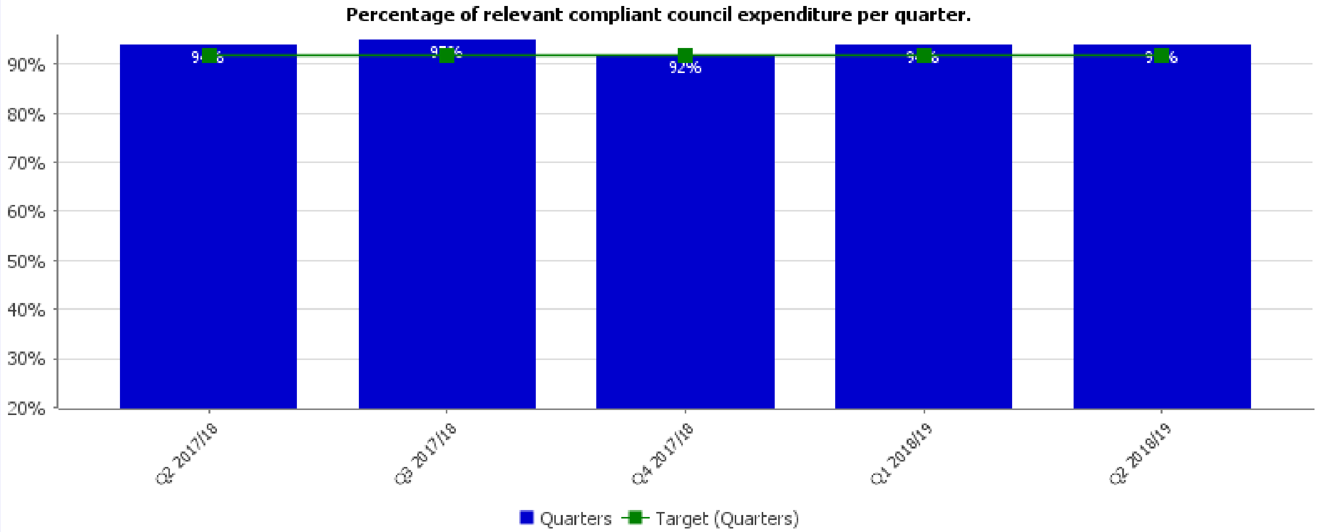
Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	0%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	4.8%
Amber Threshold:	4.2%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

Sickness absence from October 2017 to present has been extremely varied. From October 2017 to April 2018, recorded performance consistently exceeded the target of 3.5%. This was mainly due to periods of long term sickness absence within the team. From May 2018 to August 2018, the highest recorded absence figure was 2.5% in June 2018, with a total of four days recorded as sickness absence that month. A total of five instances out of the last eleven have been recorded as below the threshold of 3.6%.

All absences are managed in accordance with the Council's sickness absence policy and procedure. Target performance will continue to be set at the Corporate Services standard of 3.6%, with CPU will continuing to monitor performance in this area throughout 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**CPU019b_9b.1a Percentage of relevant compliant council expenditure per quarter**
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of relevant Supplies, Services and Works expenditure covered by contracts awarded 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 a quarterly 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.
PI Owner(s):	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown



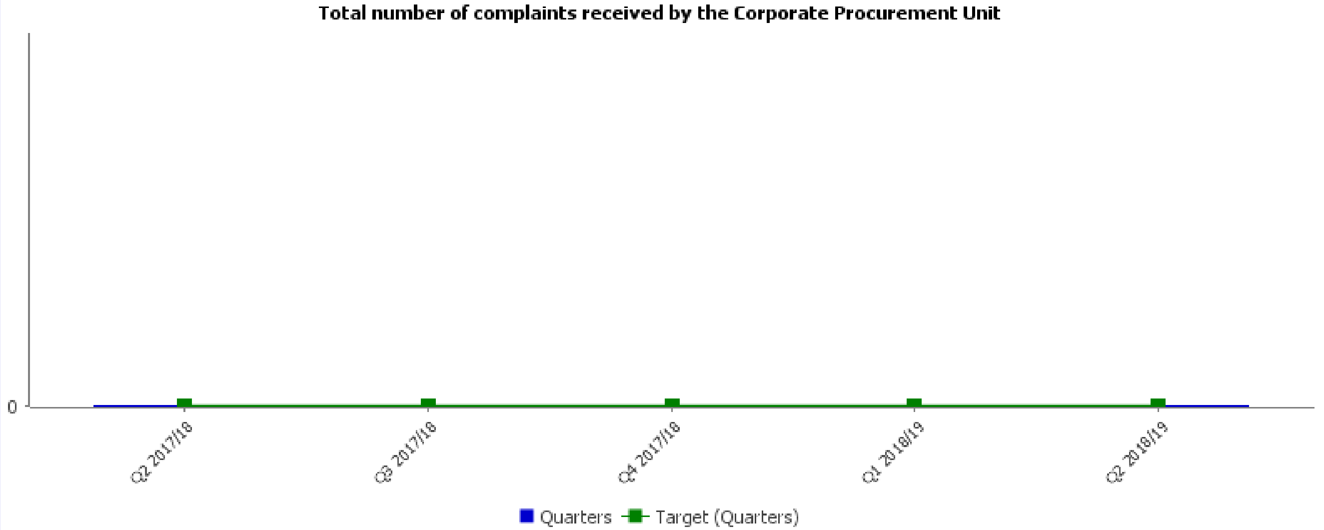
Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✓
Current Value:	94%
Current Target:	92%
Red Threshold:	82.8%
Amber Threshold:	87.4%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

Performance in this indicator has consistently exceeded target since Q1 2016/17 of 90%. The target was raised to 92% Q3 2016/17 due to high performance, which has continued to the current performance of 94% in Q2 2018/19.

Performance in this quarter will continue to be monitored by the Corporate Procurement Unit and target of 92% remains.

PI Code & Short Name	CPU047c_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit	PI Owner(s):	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit. It is the total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit at stage one (complaints that the council aims to deal with within 5 working days) and those received directly at stage two (more complex complaints that the council aims to deal with within 20 working days). Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✓
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for 2017/18 was set at 1, but was reduced to 0 (nil) during review in August 2017. No complaints have been received during 2017/18 to date.

The total number of complaints received during 2016/17 was recorded at four. Out of the four complaints recorded, two of which have been recorded as "Upheld". One of the complaints was internal, when a tender was not published by the agreed date. The other complaint was an external complaint in relation to the specification for a tender which was issued by the service area.

There were two complaints received during 2015/16. During Q1 2015/16 there were no complaints received. A complaint was received in Q2 2015/16 and was recorded as a stage one complaint. The complaint was recorded as 'Not Upheld' and was dealt with within the five day target. There were no complaints received during Q3 2015/16. The second complaint was recorded in Q4 2015/16. This complaint was initially recorded as a stage one complaint, however, this was escalated to stage two. The complaint was recorded as Upheld and was dealt with within the 20 target given for Stage two Complaints.

PI Code & Short Name	**CPU047d_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full**
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit which were upheld or partially upheld, as a percentage of all complaints received.

PI Owner(s):	zCPU_PIAdmin; David Brown

The percentage of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full

Q2 2018/19 result

N/A

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	0%
Red Threshold:	80%
Amber Threshold:	77%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

No complaints were received by the Corporate Procurement Unit during 2017/18.

No complaints have been received by the Corporate Procurement Unit in Q1 and Q2 2018/19.

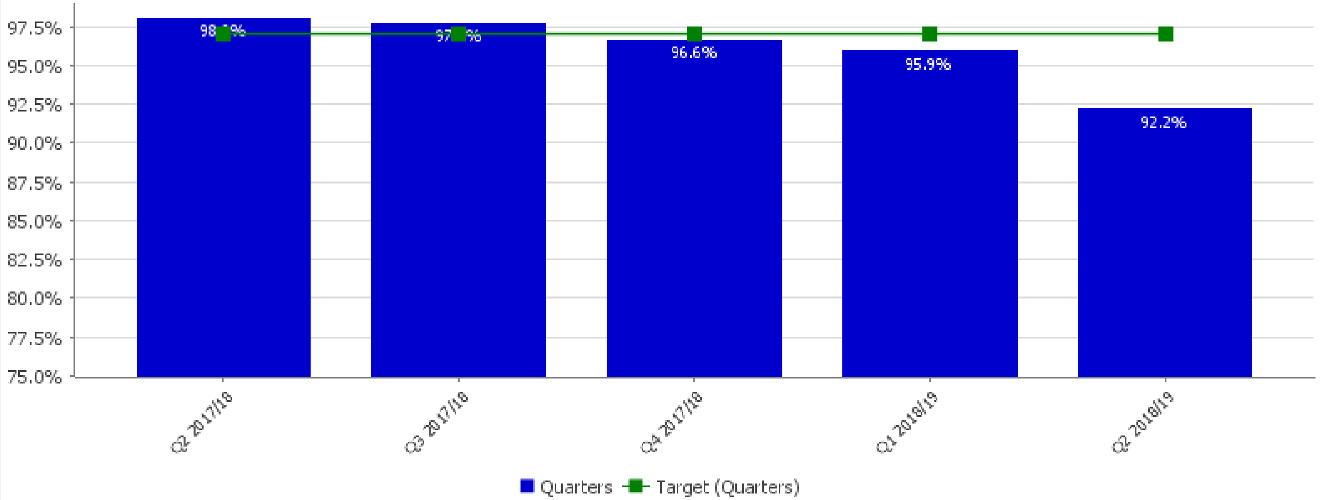
Where no complaints have been received by the service in a period the chart will appear blank.

The target for 2018/19 has been set at 0.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CSC007mq_6a.7 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.**
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. The data from surveys is analysed to identify service improvements.

PI Owner(s): zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash

Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.



Cumulative result for Q2 2018/19 as of October 2018

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	92.2%
Current Target:	97.0%
Red Threshold:	87.0%
Amber Threshold:	92.0%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

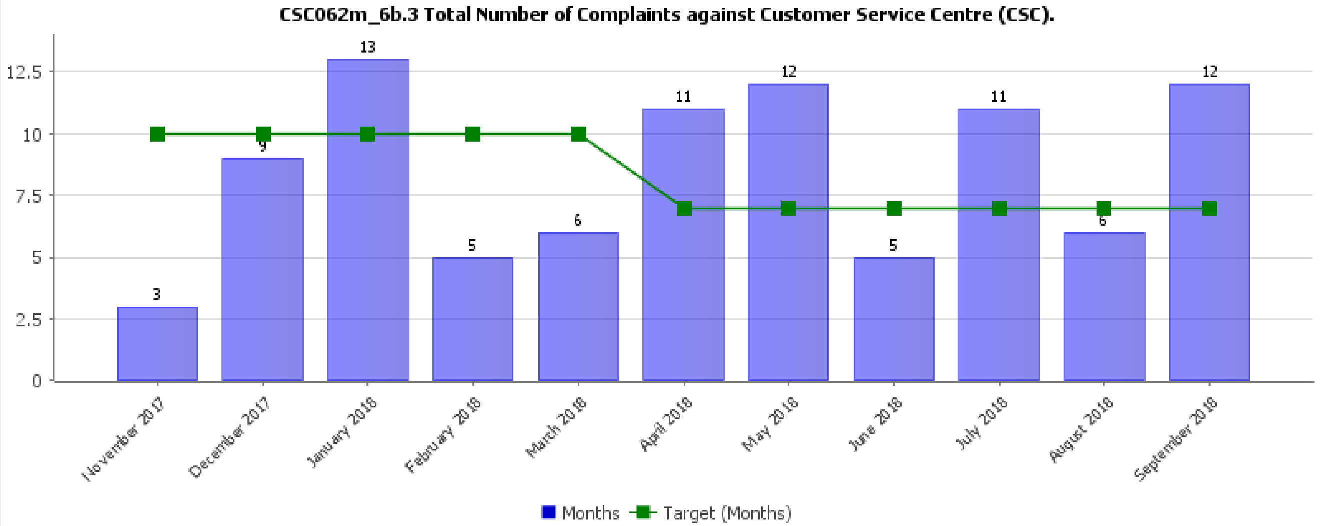
The chart shows that CSC quarterly performance has decreased throughout the year from 98% to 92.2%.This decrease is due to higher levels of unplanned absences within CSC, priority was given to inbound calls, this meant that fewer outbound call surveys were completed. From customers' comments, there is no clear reason for the decrease in performance.

2018/19
Quarter 2 - 587 customers contacted and 541 customer responses.
Quarter 1 - 710 customers contacted and 681 customer responses.

2017/18
Quarter 4 - 594 customers contacted and 574 customer responses.
Quarter 3 - 567 customers contacted and 554 customer responses.
Quarter 2 - 546 customers contacted and 535 customer responses.

In 2018/19 the target remains at 97% as that is deemed to be an achievable figure given the trend chart results from previous year.

PI Code & Short Name	CSC062m_6b.3 Total Number of Complaints against Customer Service Centre (CSC).	PI Owner(s):	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of complaints received against Customer Service Centre that have been investigated during each month. The data for this indicator is extracted from the customer relationship management system (CRM). The complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.		



Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	12
Current Target:	7
Red Threshold:	12
Amber Threshold:	10
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trent Chart Commentary:

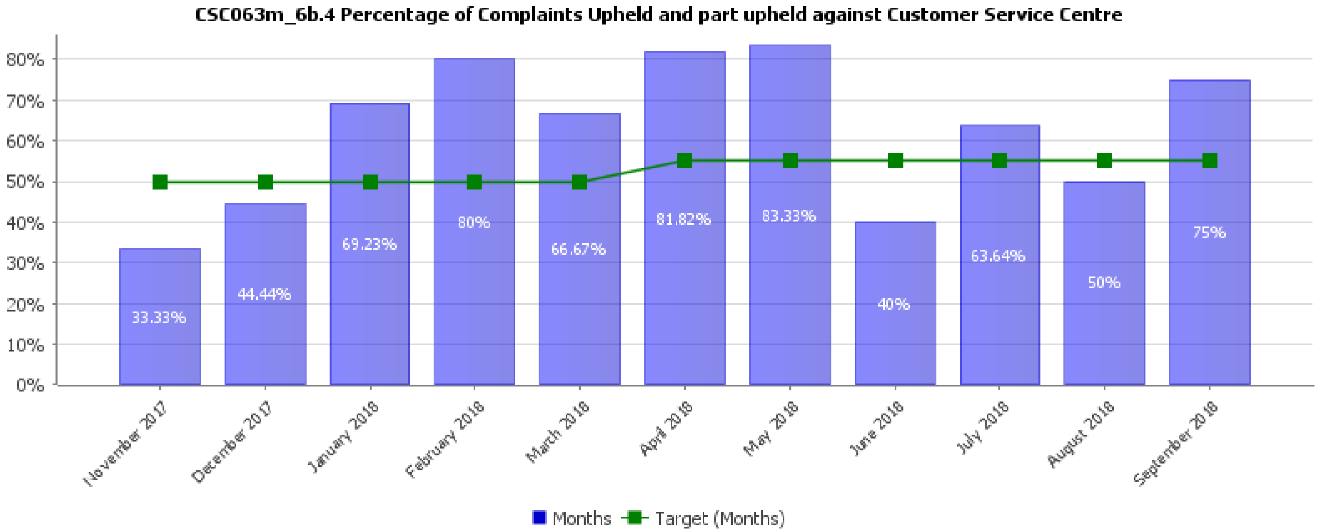
The performance indicator has fluctuated between 3 and 14 complaints received again CSC. In November reduction by 2 to reach 3 complaints. In December 2017, the number of complaints raised by 6 to reach 9 complaints. In January 2018 complaints raised against CSC significantly increased to 14, however there was an increase of 8,000 inbound calls to the service which was due to severe weather and a reduction in staffing caused by vacancies and unplanned absences. From February 2018 complaints against CSC has decreased to 5 and an increase of 1 in March 2018. In April and May 2 018complaints increased to reach 11 and 12 respectively, this increase is due to an increase in call volumes due to the introduction of charges and changes in service delivery throughout the organisation and reduced number of staff caused by vacancies and unplanned absences. A reduction in complaints was received in June 2018. A further increase in July 2018 which was in line with the increase in call volumes. In August complaints reduced by 5 to 6 in total. The number of complaints received increased by 8 to reach 12 in September which is due to increase in call volumes across the full service, and in October reduced to 9 complaints with 3 upheld.

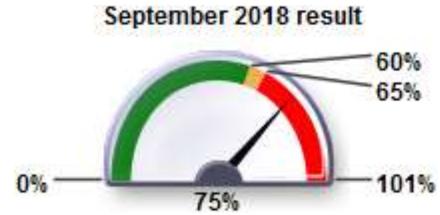
2018/19
October 2018 - 9 complaints received.
September 2018 - 12 complaints received.
August 2018 - 6 complaints received.
July 2018 - 11 complaints received.
June 2018 - 5 complaints received.
May 2018 - 12 complaints received.
April 2018 - 11 complaints received.

2017/18
March 2018 - 6 complaints received.
February 2018 - 5 complaints received.
January 2018 - 14 complaints received
December 2017 - 9 complaints received
November 2017 - 3 complaints received.

The target for 2018/19 has been reduced to 7 as is deemed an achievable target from the previous performance.

PI Code & Short Name	CSC063m_6b.4 Percentage of Complaints Upheld and part upheld against Customer Service Centre	PI Owner(s):	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of Customer Service Centre 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 the customer relationship management system (CRM). The complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	75%
Current Target:	55%
Red Threshold:	65%
Amber Threshold:	60%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

From November 2017 the performance for Upheld/part upheld complaints has fluctuated over the last year from 33.33% to 83.3%. In November 2017, 3 complaints received and only 1 upheld. In December 2017 there was an increase in the number of complaints to 9 with 4 upheld/part upheld. In January 2018 complaints raised again CSC increased by 4 to reach 13 with 9 upheld/part upheld. CSC call volumes for the January period increased by 8,000 calls. In February 2018 the performance decreased to 5 complaints with 4 upheld and in March 2018 a slight increase to 6 complaints in total. An increase in complaints in April and May 2018 to 7 upheld and 2 pert upheld and then in June to 5 upheld and 2 part upheld was due to an increase in call volumes due to the introduction of charges and changes in service delivery throughout the organisation and reduced number of staff caused by vacancies and unplanned absences. In July performance decrease with CSC receiving 11 complaints which is an increase of 6. Employee attitude concerns were raised and dealt with the employee's line manager under performance management. In August 2018 performance improved with a reduction of 6 complaints received. These were for poor communication and wait time. September increased to 12 complaints, 3 for waiting time, 2 employee attitude and 4 for inaccurate information. Employee attitude and inaccurate information were raised and dealt with the employees line managers. A reduction in October 2018 to 9 complaints, 3 upheld and 6 not upheld. 1 for Employee attitude raised and dealt with the employee's line managers. 2 related to wrong information given by new employees going live on the telephones, which is currently being monitored by CSC Trainer and line manager.

2018/19

October 2018 - 9 complaints received, 3 upheld and 6 not upheld.
September 2018 - 12 complaints received, 7 upheld, 2 part upheld and 3 not upheld.
August 2018 - 6 complaints received, 3 upheld and 3 not upheld.
July 2018 - 11 complaints received, 6 upheld, 1 part upheld and 3 not upheld.
June 2018 - 5 complaints received, 2 part upheld, 3 not upheld.
May 2018 - 12 complaints upheld, 5 upheld , 5 part upheld, 2 not upheld
April 2018 - 11 complaints received, 7 upheld, 2 part upheld, 2 not upheld

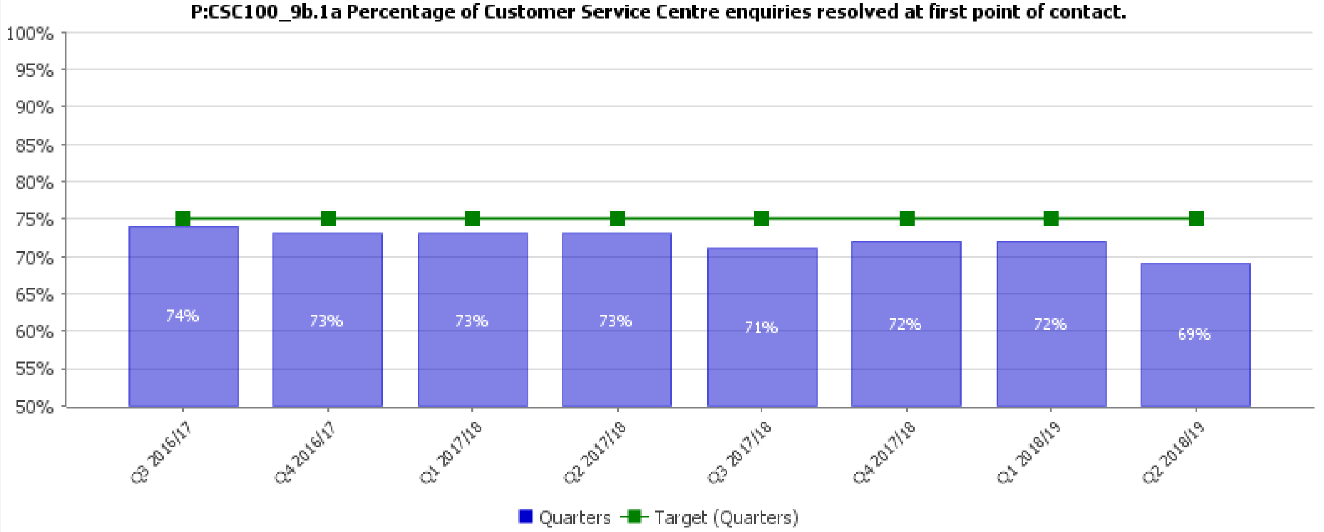
2017/18

March 2018 - 6 complaints received, 3 upheld, 2 part upheld.
February 2018 - 5 complaints received, 4 upheld

January 2018 - 14 complaints received, 6 upheld, 4 part upheld, 3 not upheld and 1 stage 2 not upheld.
December 2017 - 9 complaints received, 4 upheld or part upheld.
November 2017 - 3 complaints received, 1 part upheld.

The target for 2017/18 has increased to 50% to reflect the recent trend in this performance indicator.

PI Code & Short Name	P:CSC100_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact	PI Owner(s):	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.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	69%
Current Target:	75%
Red Threshold:	69%
Amber Threshold:	72.75%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

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.

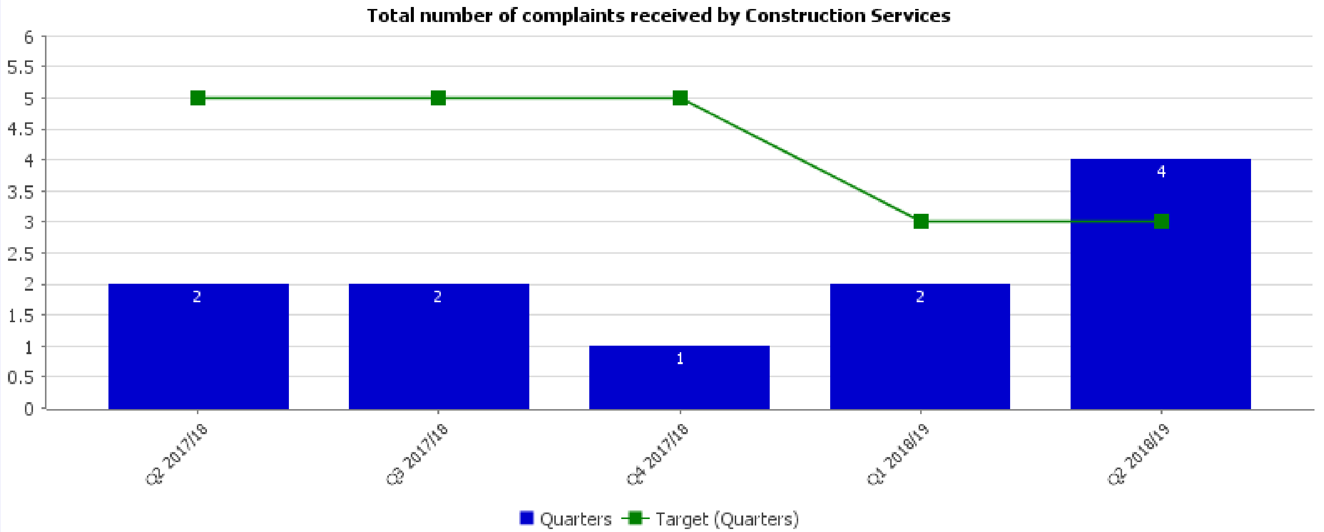
2018/19
Quarter 2 - 69% first point resolution
Quarter 1 - 72% first point resolution

2017/18
Quarter 4 - 72% first point resolution.
Quarter 3 - 71% first point resolution.
Quarter 2 - 73% first point resolution.

The target for 2018/19 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 currently working with Link Housing Association to benchmark results for 1st point resolution.

PI Code & Short Name	**CSg112_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Construction Services**	PI Owner(s):	zCSg_PIAdmin; Marjory Mackie
Description	This performance indicator measures the combined total number stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received by the service.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	4
Current Target:	3
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

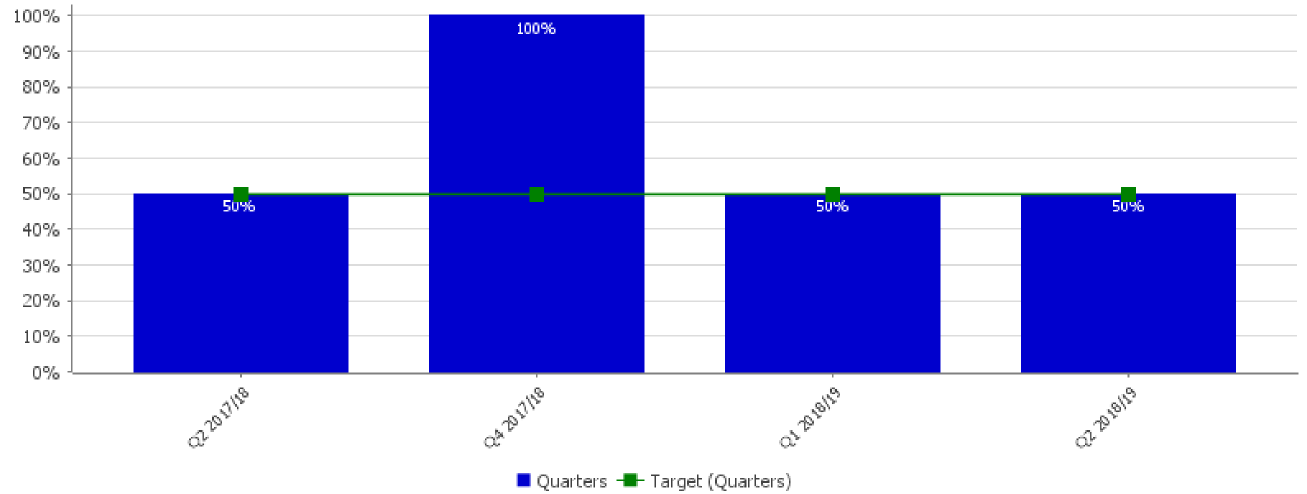
This quarterly PI was introduced in Q2 2014/15. Due to the low number of external complaints received through CRM the service also maintains a spreadsheet to log internal complaints which is reviewed monthly to ensure any improvement actions are progressed.

We aim to provide the best service possible and where this falls below customers' expectations we have a corporate policy for dealing with any complaints in as efficient and effective manner as possible.

Following review of the number of complaints received by the service in 2017/18, the target for 2018/19 has been set at 3.

PI Code & Short Name	**CSg113_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Construction Services that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full**	PI Owner(s):	zCSg_PIAdmin; Marjory Mackie
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of stage one and stage two complaints that were upheld and part upheld by Construction Services which is then analysed quarterly to identify service improvements. A target of 50% has been set which will be reviewed annually by the Complaints Steering Board. This performance indicator is one of a range of indicators developed to monitor the effectiveness of the council's complaint handling procedure (CHP). The model CHP was developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to simplify and improve complaints handling through a standardised system for complaints across all local authorities.		

The percentage of complaints received by Construction Services that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	50%
Current Target:	50%
Red Threshold:	55%
Amber Threshold:	53.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

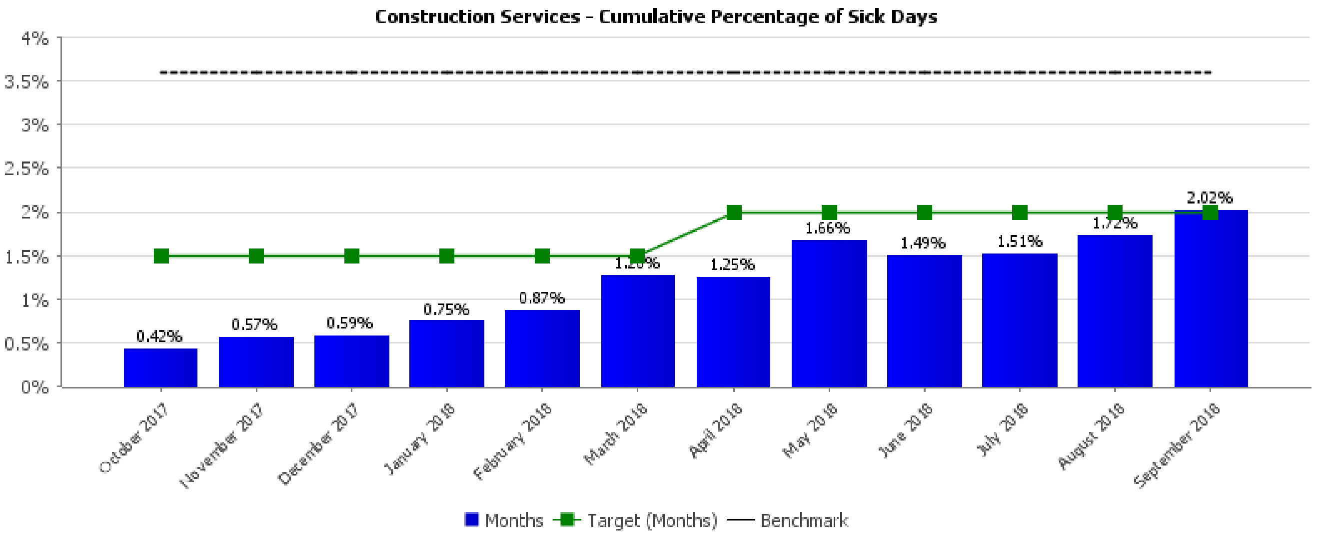
Trend Chart Commentary:

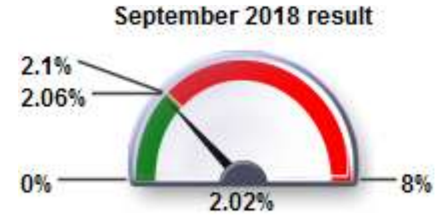
This quarterly PI was introduced in Q1 2014/15. The number of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints which are upheld appears to be high and analysis of the type of complaint is undertaken following the investigation to identify any areas for improvement in service delivery. Due to the low number of external complaints received through CRM the service also maintains a spreadsheet to log internal complaints which is reviewed monthly to ensure any improvement actions are progressed.

We aim to provide the best service possible and where this falls below customers' expectations we have a corporate policy for dealing with any complaints in as efficient and effective manner as possible.

Following review the target for 2018/19 will remain at 50%.

PI Code & Short Name	**CSg301_7b.1 Construction Services - Cumulative Percentage of Sick Days**	**PI Owner(s):**	zCSg_PIAdmin; Marjory Mackie
Description	This monthly PI records the cumulative Construction Services Sickness/ Absence level as is reported through monthly management reports from HR Pay and Reward using the SPI percentage. It is used to review the effectiveness of sickness absence management. The monthly sickness absence figures are contained in CSg300_7b.3a.		



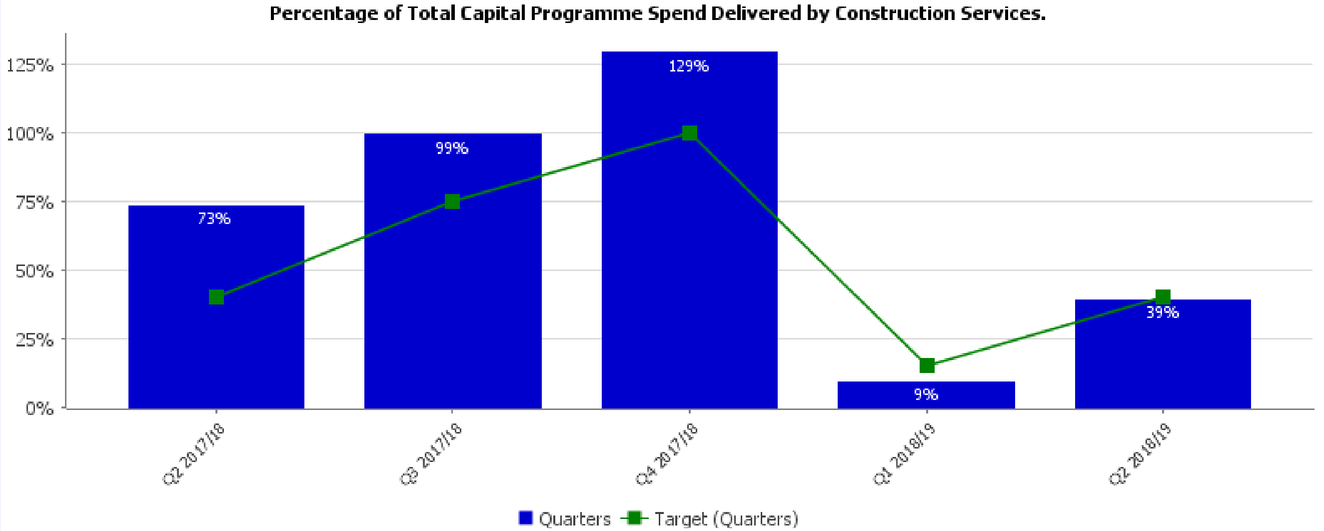


Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	2.02%
Current Target:	2%
Red Threshold:	2.1%
Amber Threshold:	2.06%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:
There is no underlying trend to sickness levels and Construction Services has recorded levels below the corporate target of 3.6% consistently for 13 months. All sickness absence is managed in line with the Sickness Absence Policy.

The target is set at 3.6% corporately, with a Finance & Property Services service target of 2%

PI Code & Short Name	CSg600_9b.1c Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered by Construction Services	PI Owner(s):	zCSg_PIAdmin; Marjory Mackie
Description	Construction Services are responsible for the delivery of a range of construction projects and planned improvement programmes identified in the General Services and Housing Capital programmes. This indicator measures the percentage of the budget that is spent quarterly for projects that are the responsibility of Construction Services.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	39%
Current Target:	40%
Red Threshold:	38%
Amber Threshold:	38.8%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

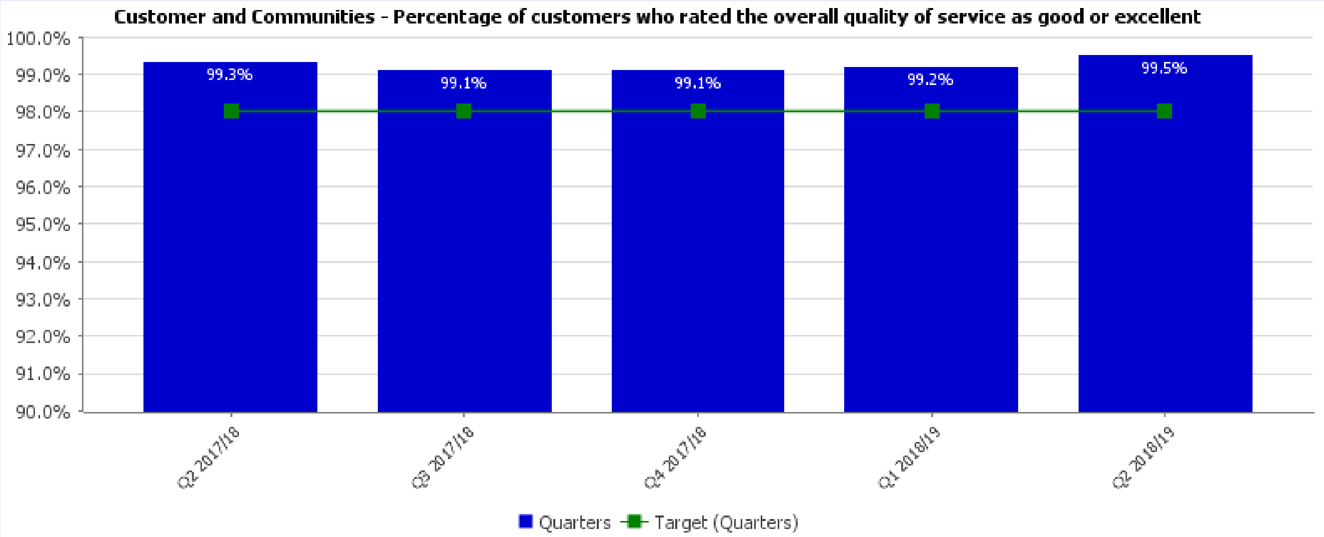
Trend Chart Commentary:
This indicator shows the cumulative percentage of capital programme spend against budget achieved by Construction Services within each quarter.

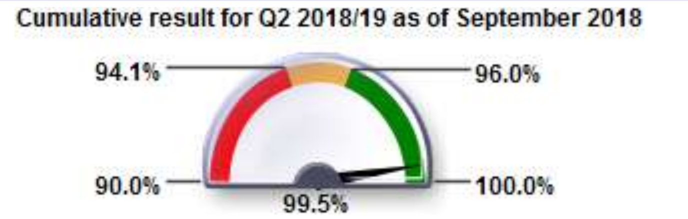
In Q2 2018/19 the capital expenditure met the target at 39%. It is anticipated that the capital expenditure will meet the targets as work progresses in the new capital investment programme. The trend shows consistently good performance overall in the percentage of capital budget spent over the previous quarters. Following completion of the five year investment programme at the end of 2017/18 a review has been undertaken focussing on areas of higher spend to ensure provision is sufficient in the new programme and improved project governance arrangements are also now in place to monitor progress and spend going forward.

In 2018/19 Construction Services are responsible for £9.1million of capital works (General Services, Housing and Open Space).

The Q3 target for 2018/19 is 75%.

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(s):	.CuCS Service Manager; zCuCS_Admin
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. This performance indicator is part of the performance scorecard for the council's Customer Services Strategy 2018/23 and will contribute to outcome 1 which is that services are designed to meet the needs and preferences of customers.		





Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	99.5%
Current Target:	98.0%
Red Threshold:	94.1%
Amber Threshold:	96.0%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:
The target for this performance indicator is to achieve 99% by 2022/23 and this was set in the development of the council's Customer Service Strategy 2018/23.

2018/19
The target for this year is 98%. It remained the same as a small number of negative responses can affect the overall result.

Quarter 2 - 826 out of 830 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent. This was an increase of 0.3% from the previous quarter, and an increase of 0.2% from the same period of the previous year, with an increase of 86 responses.
Quarter 1 - 747 out of 753 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.

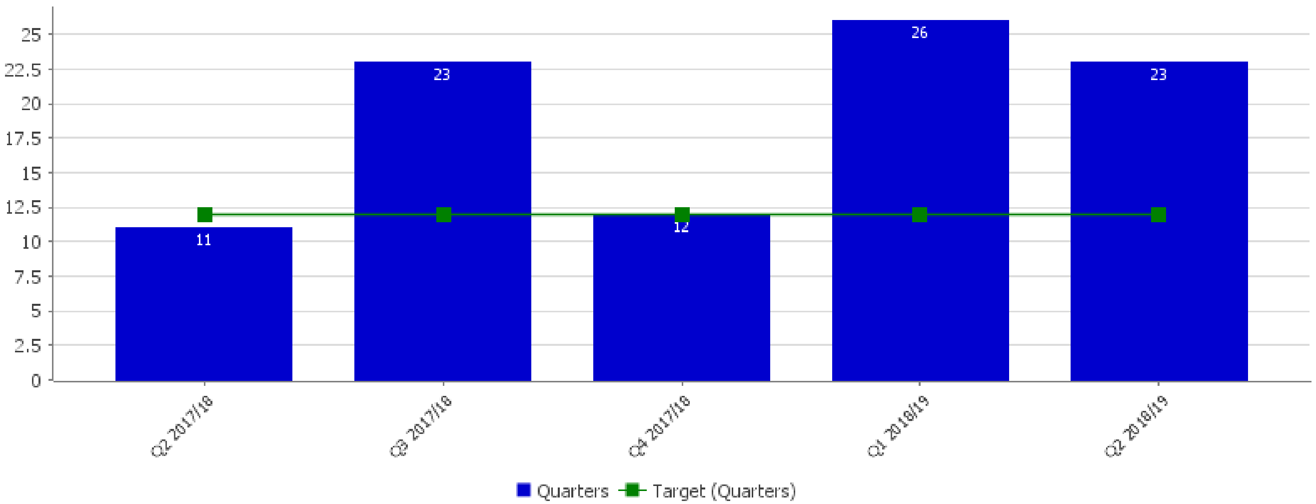
2017/18
The target for this year was 98%. It remained the same as a small number of negative responses can affect the overall result.

Quarter 4 - 778 out of 785 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.
Quarter 3 - 654 out of 660 responses rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent.
Quarter 2 - 739 out of 744 responses rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.

The target for 2019/20 will be increased to 99%, as part of the aim to achieve this by 2022/23.

PI Code & Short Name	**CuCS010q_6b.3 Customer and Communities - Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services**	**PI Owner(s):**	.CuCS Service Manager; zCuCS_Admin
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by the Customer and Community services. It is the total number of complaints received by the Customer and Community services at stage one (complaints that the council aims to deal with within 5 working days) and those received directly at stage two (more complex complaints that the council aims to deal with within 20 working days). Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted.		

Customer and Communities – Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	23
Current Target:	12
Red Threshold:	14.4
Amber Threshold:	12.6
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

Overall the number of complaints compared to the number of customers dealt with is very small. Due to the make-up of the service it is challenging to find external benchmarking partners and so the service compares complaint performance with the Customer Service Centre.

2018/19

The target for this year is 12 and was set based on achieving improvement on the previous year's performance. A large number of complaints were received during June 2018 as a result of issues with the payment kiosks.

Quarter 2 - 23 complaints were received. Community Facilities received 2. Customer Information Services received 13, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre Centre received 1, Library Services received 6 and Registration Services received 1. There was an increase in Customer Information Services complaints due to the ongoing issues with the payment kiosks. CSC received 29
Quarter 1 - 26 complaints were received. CSC received 28.

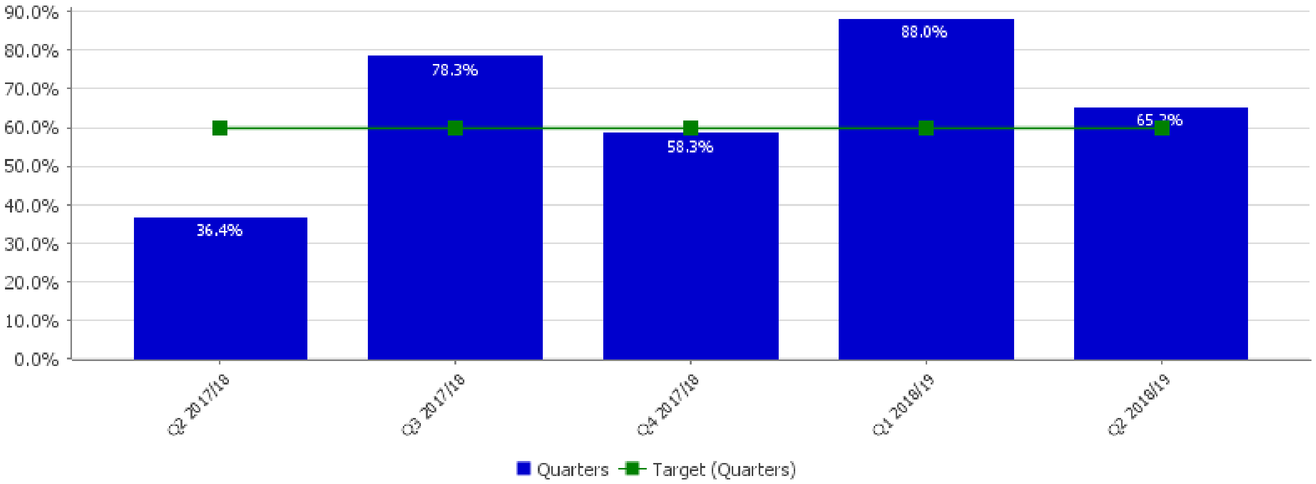
2017/18

The target for this year was 12 and was set based on achieving improvement on the previous year's performance. There was a significant increase in complaints Quarter 3 due ongoing issues with the payment kiosk in Strathbrock Partnership Centre.

Quarter 4 - 12 complaints were received. CSC received 25.
Quarter 3 - 23 complaints were received. CSC received 17.
Quarter 2 - 11 complaints were received CSC received 16.

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.**
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Customer and Communities Service which 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.
PI Owner(s):	zCuCS_Admin; Ralph Bell

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.



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	65.2%
Current Target:	60.0%
Red Threshold:	66.0%
Amber Threshold:	63.0%
Categories:	PDSP_Culture & Leisure; PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

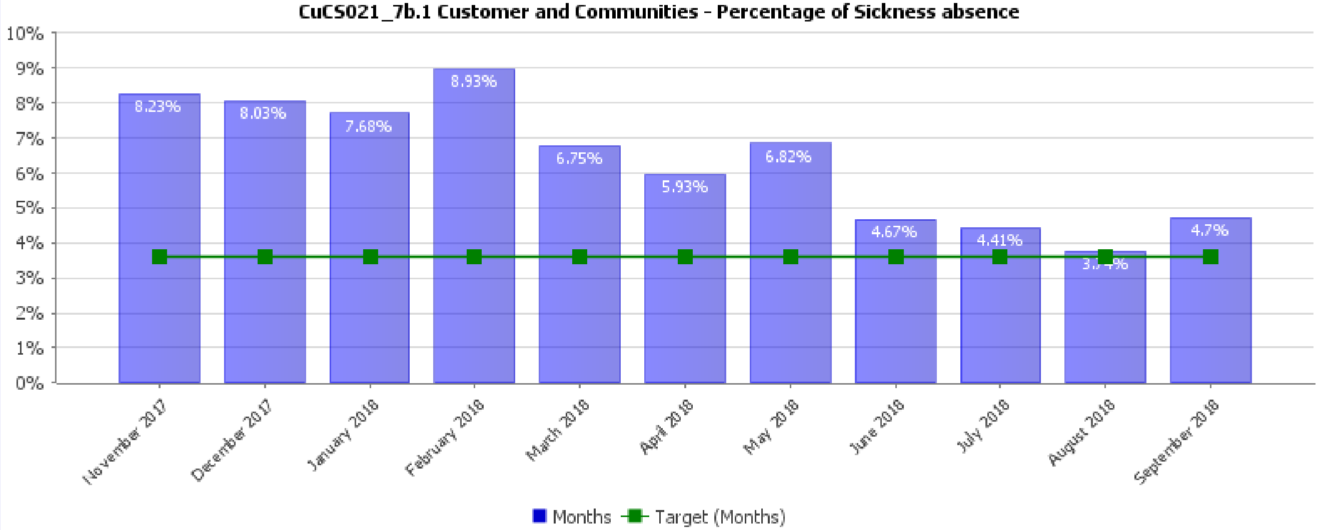
2018/19
The target for this year is 60%.

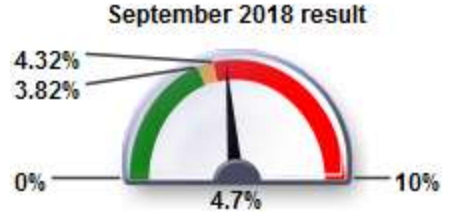
Quarter 2 - 15 out of 23 complaints were upheld or part upheld. There were a number of complaints specifically around technical issues with the cash kiosk introduced at Whitburn Library. This software issue has now been resolved by our systems support provider.
Quarter 1 - 22 out of 25 complaints were upheld or part upheld.

2017/18
The target for this year was 60%.

Quarter 4 - 7 out of 12 complaints were upheld or part upheld.
Quarter 3 - 18 out of 23 complaints were upheld or part upheld. 10 of these complaints were received due to kiosk issues at Strathbrock.
Quarter 2 - 4 out of 11 complaints were upheld or part upheld.

PI Code & Short Name	**CuCS021_7b.1 Customer and Communities - Percentage of Sickness absence**	**PI Owner(s):**	.CuCS Service Manager; zCuCS_Admin
Description	Number of full time days lost to sickness absence expressed as a percentage of overall full time days. This information is representative of Bathgate Partnership Centre, Community Facilities, Customer Information Service, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre, Library Services and Registration Services.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	4.7%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	4.32%
Amber Threshold:	3.82%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The trend shown on the graph is an improving one, based on a peak in absence levels in February 2018 to the 3.74 in August, the lowest absence rate in the service for 2 years.

2018/19

The target for sickness absence is 3.6%, which remains the corporate target.

September 2018 - absence recorded at 4.7%.
August 2018 - absence recorded at 3.74%.
July 2018 - absence recorded at 4.41%.
June 2018 - absence recorded at 4.67%.
May 2018 - absence recorded at 6.82%.
April 2018 - absence recorded at 5.93%.

2017/18

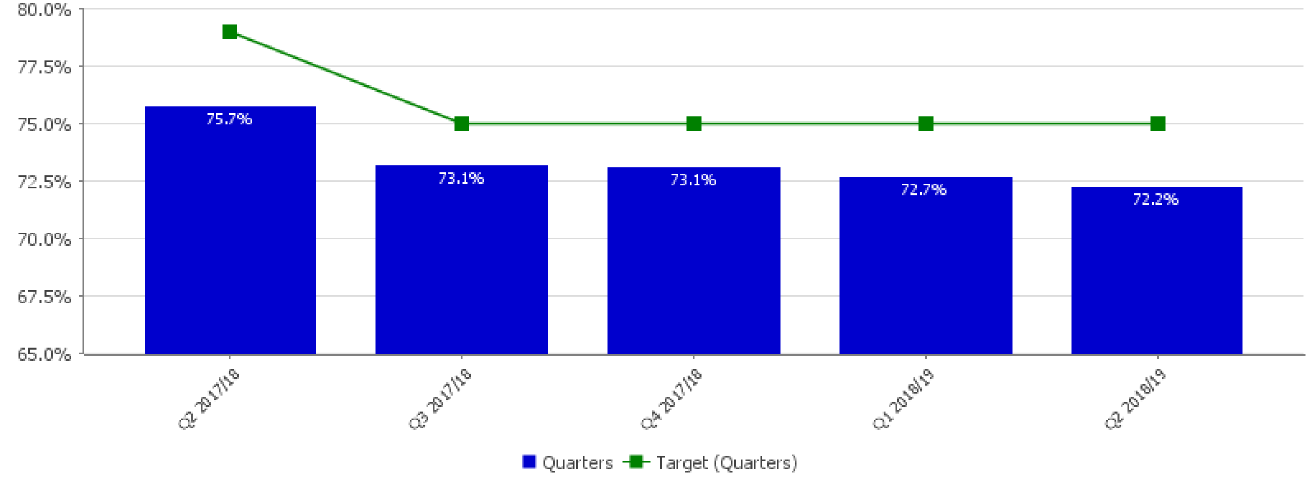
The target for sickness absence was 3.6%, which is the corporate target.

March 2018 - absence recorded at 6.75%.
February 2018 - absence recorded at 8.93%.
January 2018 - absence recorded at 7.68%.
December 2017 - absence recorded at 8.03%. November 2017 - A slight increase to 8.23% due to high levels of sickness in Broxburn and Armadale Neighbourhoods and the registration service. The registration service was due to two members of staff being off with planned operations so this should lower again in December.

22

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CuCS026q_9b.1a Percentage of customer enquiries recorded on the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) which are resolved at the first point of contact**	PI Owner(s):	zCuCS_Admin; Julia Laidlaw
Description	This annual indicator measures the percentage of customer enquiries that have been resolved at the first point of contact by staff within the 4 Customer and Community Service neighbourhoods 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 (COSLA).		

Percentage of customer enquiries recorded on the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) which are resolved at the first point of contact



Cumulative result for Q2 2018/19 as of September 2018

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	72.2%
Current Target:	75.0%
Red Threshold:	69.8%
Amber Threshold:	72.8%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for 2018/19 has been set at 75% and this matches the national target set by COSLA through the Customer First Initiative. In 2016/17 the target was set at 81%, however this was changed to 79% in January 2017 and again to 75% in September 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.

From January 2017 the number of advisers included in the indicator increased due to a service restructure. It now includes all CRM enquiries handled throughout the neighbourhood, not just Customer Information Service offices.

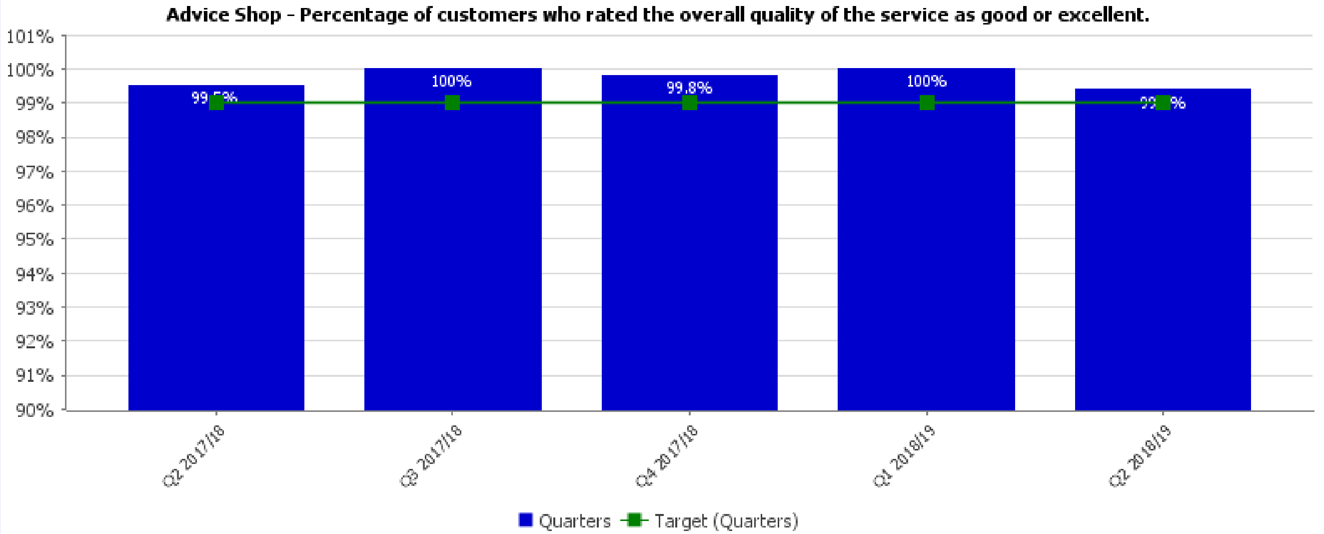
2018/19

Quarter 1 - 11,223 of a total of 15,446 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 72.7%. This is 2.1% down on the same period in 2017/18 and is linked with an increase in the number of case forms advisers are passing to colleagues in other services relating, in the main, to housing and council tax arrears and debt.

2017/18

Quarter 4 - the service dealt with 22,406 enquiries in this quarter with 16,370 resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 73.1% and is below our target of 75%. This is due, in the main, to the number of cases our staff have to create where the process requires them to pass an increased amount of information to other departments (mainly Revenues and Housing).
Quarter 3 - the service dealt with 19,277 enquiries in this quarter with 14,100 of them resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 73.1% and is below our target and below the national target of 75%. Quarter 2 - 17,628 out of a total of 23,275 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 75.7%. This was down 3% on the same period in 2016/17, however is still above the national target of 75% and above the quarter 1 figure.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:FEADS007_6a.7 Advice Shop - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent**	**PI Owner(s):**	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Elaine Nisbet
Description	From the start of 2012/13 we have measured this performance indicator on a quarterly basis. Responses are gathered from our customer survey cards and from our on-line questionnaire which we ask a random sample of at least 25 customers per week to complete following their involvement with the Advice Shop. The Advice Shop monitor results on a quarterly basis to identify any positive or negative trends which allows us to continue to provide the best possible service to our customers. Advice Shop customer satisfaction has been measured since 1999.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	99.4%
Current Target:	99%
Red Threshold:	97.52%
Amber Threshold:	98.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary

Over the last 8 quarters we have exceeded our target. The service actively encourages the sharing of ideas and improvements from customers, staff and partners. We discuss any suggested improvements and implement where appropriate. This ensures the overall customer experience continues to develop and improve. In 2017/18 there has been an 16% increase in the number of customers completing the questionnaires.

Benchmarking:
The most recent update is slightly above the Council's CSC (Revenues) customers who rated staff overall quality of service as good or excellent at 96.9.6% within the June 2018.

2018/19
Quarter 2 - In this quarter 99.4% of 498 respondents rated the overall quality of service good or excellent. Two respondents rated this as very poor and one respondent rated this as adequate.. Through investigation, difficult messages had to be delivered both customers. The advice supply was accurate. There has been a significant increase in the number of re sponses compared to quarter 1 and we would expect the response rated to continue at this level.

Quarter 1 - In this quarter 100% of 328 respondents rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent. There has been a reduction in the number or responses compared to the previous quarter and the service is looking to increase responses through improving accessibility of feedback forms and closer monitoring through one to one meetings with staff.

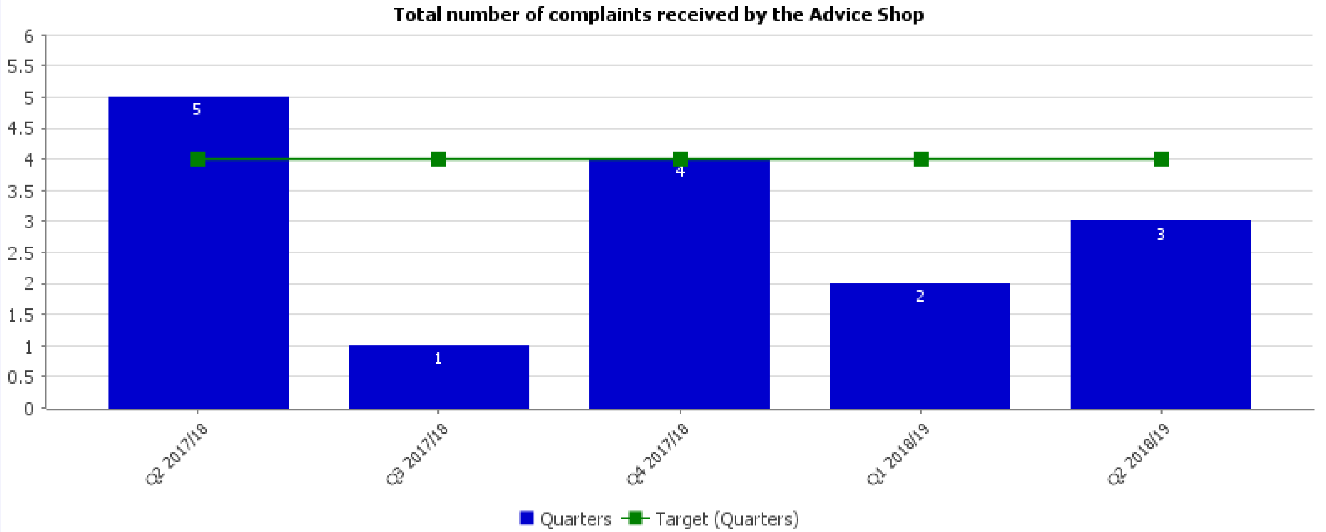
2017/18
Quarter 4 - In this quarter 99.8% of 375 respondents rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent. 1 customer rated this as very poor. Following investigation procedural changes have been introduced to improve in this area. The service has been working to increase the number of respondents and continue to monitor and try to improve the number of responses received.

Quarter 3 - In this quarter 100% of 273 respondents rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent. There has been a reduction in the number or responses compared to the previous quarter and the service is looking to increase responses through improving accessibility of feedback forms and closer monitoring through one to one meetings with staff.

Quarter 2 - In this quarter 99.5% of 351 respondents felt the overall quality of service was good or excellent. One respondent felt that the service delivered was very poor and one customer felt this was adequate. Following investigation it appears that this customer received some difficult messages regarding their enquiry and situation. The advice supplied was fully accurate and the advisor supported through alternative avenues.

2018/19 Target - Our target will remain at 99% for this period. We have adjusted the trigger thresholds to ensure we identify any trends early in the coming year. Each quarter we are looking to collect 350 completed questionnaires across all service delivery activity.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:FEADS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Advice Shop**
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by the Advice Shop. It is the total number of complaints received by the Advice Shop at stage one (complaints that the council aims to deal with within 5 working days) and those received directly at stage two (more complex complaints that the council aims to deal with within 20 working days). Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted. The Advice Shop investigates and manages all complaints by following corporate guidelines. We closely monitor and analyse complaints to quickly identify any trends. We use complaints to make improvements in our service.
PI Owner(s):	zADS_PIAdmin; Elaine Nisbet



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	3
Current Target:	4
Red Threshold:	7
Amber Threshold:	6
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PDSP_Social Policy; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:
The Advice Shop investigates and manages all complaints by following corporate procedure. We closely monitor and analyse complaints to identify any trends and to make improvements in our service.

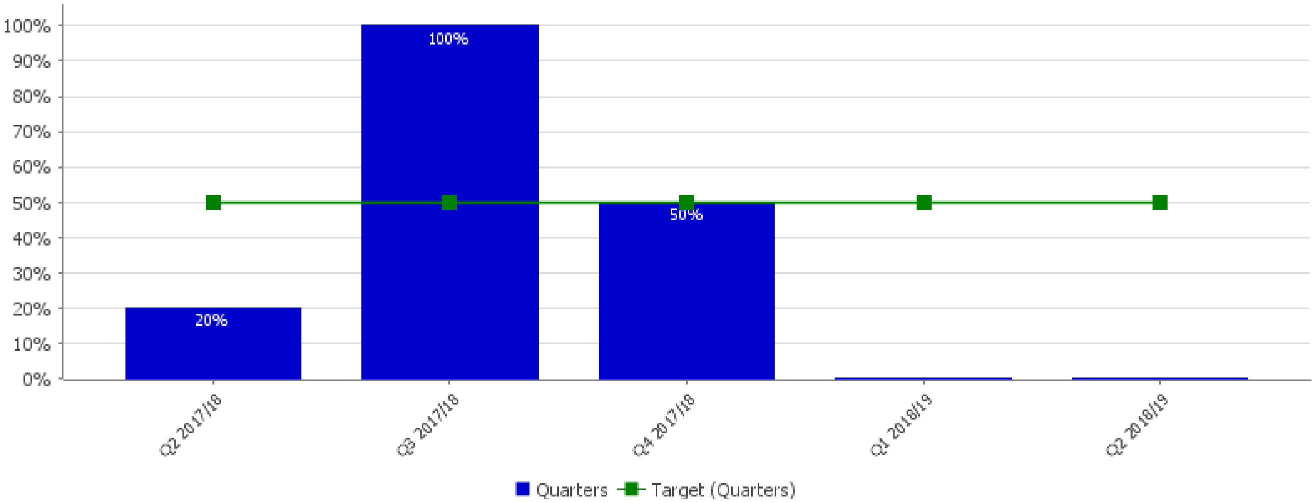
2018/19
Quarter 2 - 3 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Two were for standard of service and one for employee attitude. All complaints were not upheld.
Quarter 1 - 2 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. One was for standard of service and one for employee attitude. Both complaints were not upheld.

2017/18
Quarter 4 - 4 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Three of the complaints were for standard of service and one for employee attitude. 2 complaints were not upheld and 2 were upheld.
Quarter 3 - 1 complaint was received in this quarter against a target of 4. The complaint was regarding employee attitude and it was part upheld.
Quarter 2 - 5 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Four of the complaints were for standard of service and one for employee attitude. 4 complaints were not upheld and 1 was upheld.
Quarter 1 - 6 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Four of the complaints were for standard of service and 2 for employee attitude. 5 complaints were not upheld and 1 part upheld. This is the same as the previous quarter at 6 complaints and the highest over the past 2 years but 5 complaints were not upheld and 1 was part upheld.

Target 2018/19 - will remain at 4 complaints per quarter. This reflects a challenging target as we received 16 complaints for the year 2017/18.

PI Code & Short Name	**FEADS012_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Advice Shop that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full**
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by the Advice Shop which were upheld or partially upheld, as a percentage of all complaints received.
PI Owner(s):	zADS_PIAdmin; Elaine Nisbet

The percentage of complaints received by the Advice Shop that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0%
Current Target:	50%
Red Threshold:	55%
Amber Threshold:	52.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The Advice Shop investigates and manages all complaints by following corporate procedure We closely monitor and analyse complaints to identify any trends and to make improvements in our service.

2018/19

Quarter 2 - In this quarter 3 complaints were received. 2 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. All complaints were investigated and all were not upheld. This equates to 0% of upheld or partially upheld against the total number of complaints received.

Quarter 1 - In this quarter 2 complaints were received. 1 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. Both complaints were investigated and both were not upheld. This equates to 0% of upheld or partially upheld against the total number of complaints received.

2017/18

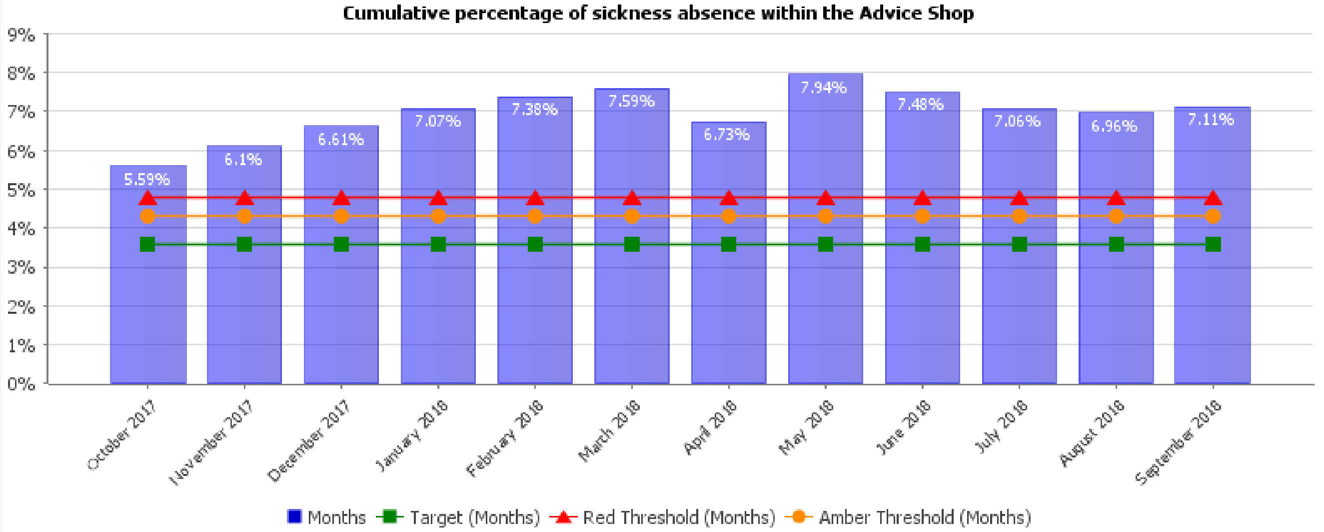
Quarter 4 - In this quarter 4 complaints were received. 3 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. All complaints were investigated and the outcome was that 2 complaints were upheld and 2 not upheld. This equates to 50.0% of complaints were upheld against the total number of complaints received.

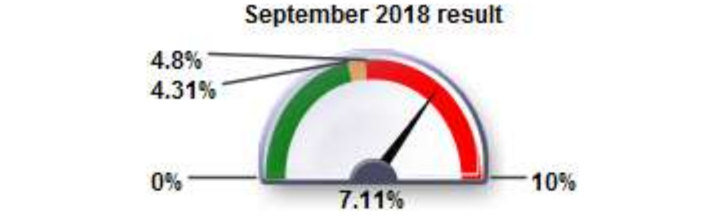
Quarter 3 - In this quarter 1 complaint was received for employee attitude. The complaint was investigated and the outcome was part upheld. This equates to 100% of complaints were upheld or part upheld against the total number of complaints received.

Quarter 2 - In this quarter 5 complaints were received. 4 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. All complaints were investigated and the outcome was that 1 complaint was upheld and 4 not upheld. This equates to 20.0% of complaints were upheld against the total number of complaints received.

2018/19 Target will remain at 50% to reflect the low number of complaints we receive.

PI Code & Short Name	FEADS028_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Advice Shop	PI Owner(s):	zADS_PIAdmin; Elaine Nisbet
Description	This performance indicator measures the cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Advice Shop. For each financial year, we aim to have equal to or less than the council's target of 3.6% sickness absence. The SPI figure provided by HR is used to populate this indicator.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	7.11%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	4.8%
Amber Threshold:	4.31%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

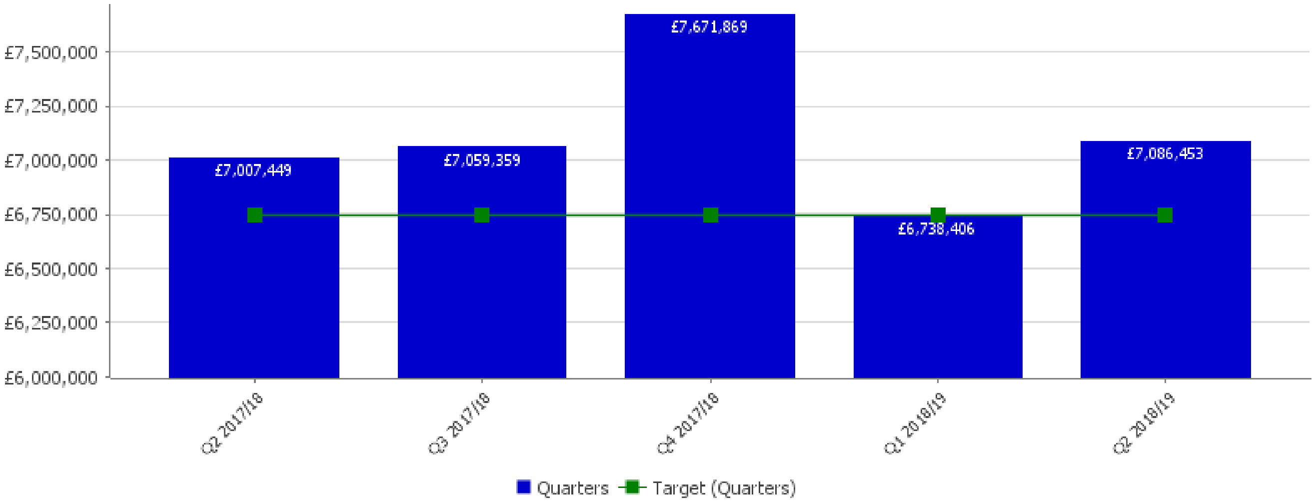
Trend Chart Commentary:

2018/19
September - Cumulative sickness absence for April to September '18 has increased to 7.11% from 6.96% in August. This has been caused by the increase of September's sickness absence rate.
August - Cumulative sickness absence for April to August has decreased slightly to 6.96%. The monthly sickness absence has increased in August from July so the decrease in the cumulative may be due to a late return for July being recalculated.
July - Cumulative sickness absence for April to July '18 has decreased to 7.06% from 7.48% in June due to the decrease in the number of short term absences.
June - Cumulative sickness absence for April to June '18 has decreased to 7.48% from 7.94% in May due to the decrease in long term absence from 4 people to 1.
May - Cumulative sickness absence for April to May '18 has increased to 7.94% from 6.73% in April due to the increase in long term absence from 3 to 4 people.
April - This is the first month of the new financial year and therefore the sickness absence is the same as the month of April 6.73% against a target of 3.6% which is a decrease on the previous month due to 1 member of staff on long term sick returning and a reduction of short term absences to 22 days. Long term absence is for 3 people and amounts to 65% of the total absence.

2017/18
March - Cumulative sickness absence to March has increased to 7.59%. Will check why this has increased as the monthly percentage has decreased.
February - Cumulative sickness absence to February has increased to 7.38%. Will check this as the sickness absence for the month of February decreased slightly.
January - Cumulative sickness absence to January has increased to 7.07% due to an increase in January sickness absence
December - Cumulative sickness absence to December has increased to 6.61% due to an increase in December sickness absence caused by an increase in long term absence to four staff members.
November - Cumulative sickness absence to November has increased to 6.10% due to an increase from 2 staff to 3 staff on long term absence.
October - Cumulative sickness absence to October has increased to 5.59% due to an increase in October sickness absence caused by two staff being on long term sick and 30 days absence from 7 staff members. One of these becomes a long term sickness in November (longer than 4 weeks).

PI Code & Short Name	**P:FEADS061_9b.1a Total quarterly amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers**		
Description	This key performance indicator shows the amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers during the quarter. This figure includes any successful benefit claims and appeals we help customers with. These figures can vary due to a variety of factors such as the time it takes the Department for Work and Pensions to make decisions and for the Appeals Service to set tribunals but these average out over the year. There are two aspects to a benefit or appeal award. Firstly the weekly award, this is multiplied by 52 to reflect the extra income customers receive over a year. This methodology is accepted and used throughout the UK by Welfare Rights services. The second part is the lump sum or backdates. Certain benefits can be a one off payment, these would not be recorded within the weekly award to ensure the correct amount is recorded.	**PI Owner(s):**	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Elaine Nisbet

Total quarterly amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers.



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✓
Current Value:	£7,086,453
Current Target:	£6,750,000
Red Threshold:	£6,480,000
Amber Threshold:	£6,648,750
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

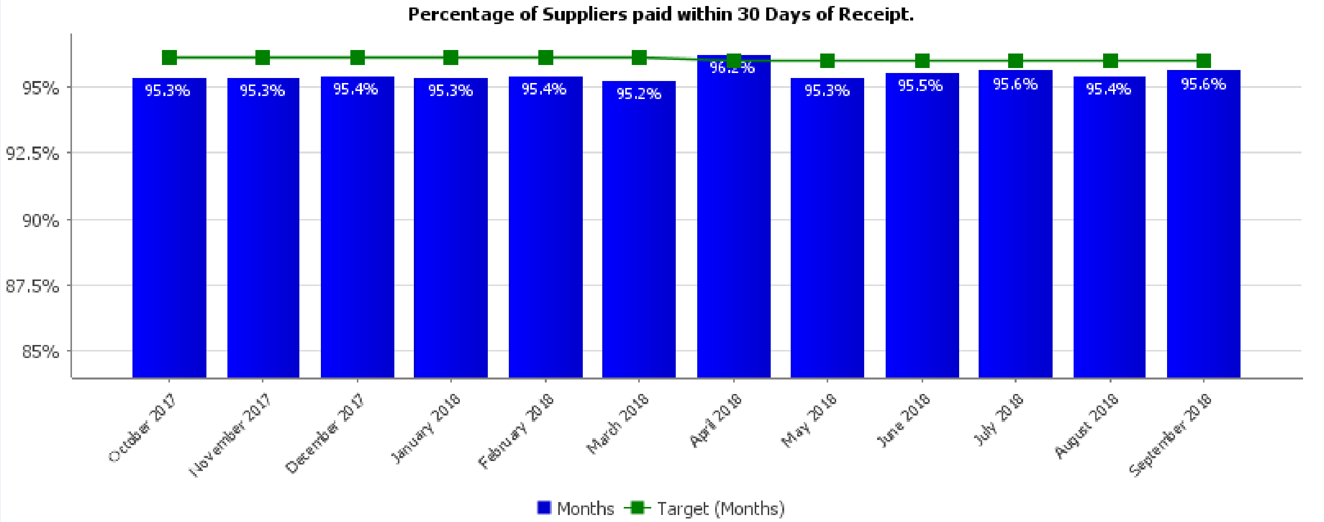
Trend Chart Commentary

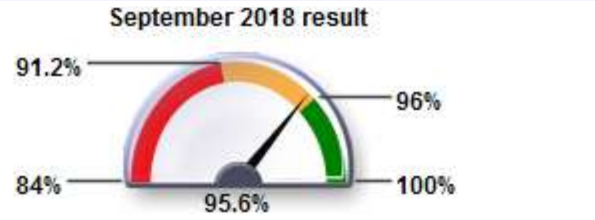
2018/19
Quarter 2 - In this quarter we exceeded our target reaching £7,086,453. This is an increase on the previous quarter and is due to increased processing of outstanding benefit claims. There has also been an increase in the number of Personal Independence Payment awards which has been contributory factor in reaching this target.
Quarter 1 - In this quarter we were just below our set target reaching £6,738,406. Following the introduction of full service Universal Credit on the 16th May in West Lothian, the service had to best manage resources to meet customer demand. We would expect to exceed our target in the next quarter.

2017/18
Quarter 4 - In this quarter we exceeded our target reaching £7,671,869. This is an increase on the previous quarter and is due to increased processing of outstanding benefit claims and also an increase in appeals. As Welfare Reforms including Universal Credit take affect we expect out figures to be much closer to our set target in the next quarter.
Quarter 3 - In this quarter we exceeded our target reaching £7,059,359. This is similar to the previous quarter as the number of appeals and subsequent decisions have remained at a high level during this period.
Quarter 2 - In this quarter we exceeded our target reaching £7,007,449. This is a substantial increase from the previous quarter and analysis shows that the increased number of successful welfare benefit appeals and subsequent benefits which follow.

2018/19 Target - Our quarterly target will remain at £6,750,000 due to the ongoing challenges with welfare reforms including Universal Credit becoming full service in May 2018.

PI Code & Short Name	**FM001_6b.5 Percentage of Suppliers paid within 30 Days of Receipt.**		
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 included in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework. 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.	**PI Owner(s):**	zFM_PIAdmin; Patrick Welsh





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	95.6%
Current Target:	96%
Red Threshold:	91.2%
Amber Threshold:	96%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance for October 2018 was 95.6 percent which is below the target of 96 percent. Performance for the year ending 2017/18 was 95.2 percent of invoices were paid within 30 days against a target of 96.1 percent.

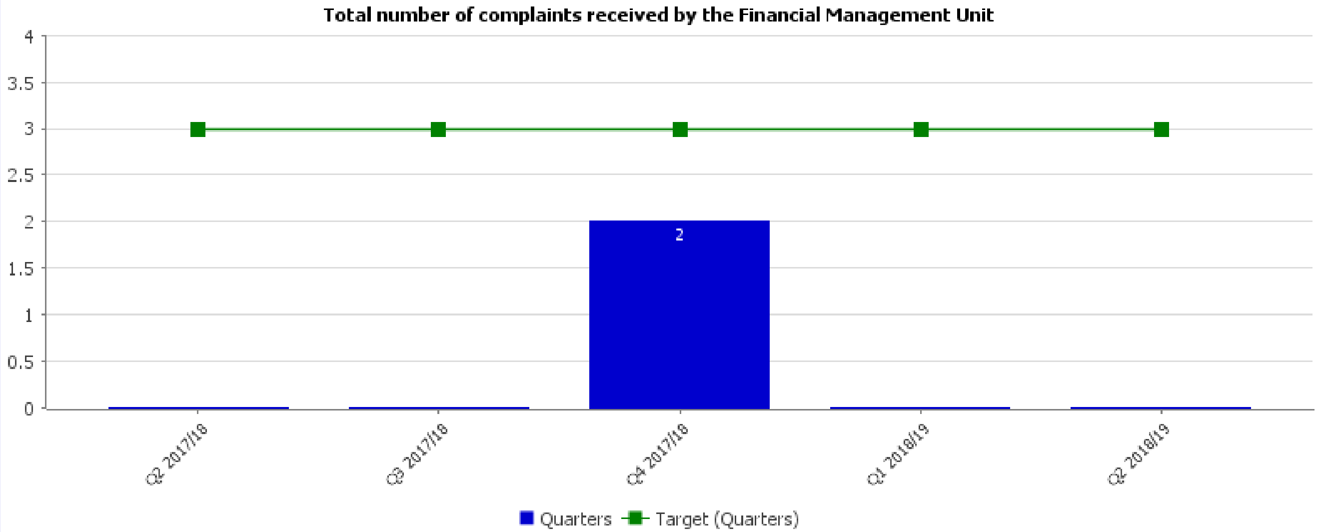
For the year ending March 2017, performance was 96.1 percent. At the beginning of the financial year 2017/18, performance in this area started higher than the target with cumulative performance being 96.5 percent up to July 2017. Since July 2017, performance has fallen below the target of 96.1 percent and has gradually decreased up to March 2018 with an overall cumulative performance for the year of 95.2 percent.

The Financial Management Unit works closely with services to improve invoice processing time. A full review of invoices paid after 30 days has been undertaken to establish the underlying reasons for the reduction in performance. The review identified that a significant increase in the volume of late invoices processed by Education Services during the latter part of 2017, and Operational Services in the months leading up to year end, has led to a decrease in the overall performance against target. A number of training sessions have been undertaken to address specific issues identified as part of the review of invoice processing performance. It is anticipated that the additional training will reduce the likelihood of late payments and help improve the performance at the start of next financial year. New invoice processing reports will be issued to service areas on a monthly basis to highlight performance against target. Further support will be extended to areas identified as falling below the council's performance indicator targets. The first results for 2018/19 show improvement in this regard.

The council participates in a benchmarking exercise with the other local authorities in Scotland via the CIPFA Directors of Finance benchmarking exercise. West Lothian Council process over 200,000 per year and we are currently ranked 12th out of 32 councils. The average performance in Scotland was 93.09 percent for 2017/18 against a West Lothian Council target of 96 percent.

For 2018/19 target for percentage of suppliers paid within 30 days of receipt is 96 percent with the reduction from 2017/18 target of 96.1 percent as a result of anticipated changes to administrative functions throughout the council.

PI Code & Short Name	**FM037_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Financial Management Unit**	**PI Owner(s):**	zFM_PIAdmin; Patrick Welsh
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of complaints received during a financial year relating to the Financial Management Unit. Performance is reviewed on a regular basis and reported annually to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the quality and standard of customer service. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	3
Red Threshold:	6
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

This core indicator monitors complaints received by the Corporate Finance Manager and measures the combined level of stage 1 & 2 complaints received.

Since quarter 2 2014/15, the Financial Management Unit has received 9 complaints, 1 in 2014/15 (Quarter 2), 1 in 2015/16 (Quarter 4), 5 in 2016/17 (1 in Quarter 2 and 4 in Quarter 4) and 2 in 2017/18 (Quarter 4). Of the two complaints received in Quarter 4 2017/18, one was unrelated to the unit and was reassigned to another service. None of the complaints received since 2014/15 were upheld with the majority of these relating to complaints about the length of time or the decision made by the council's insurers.

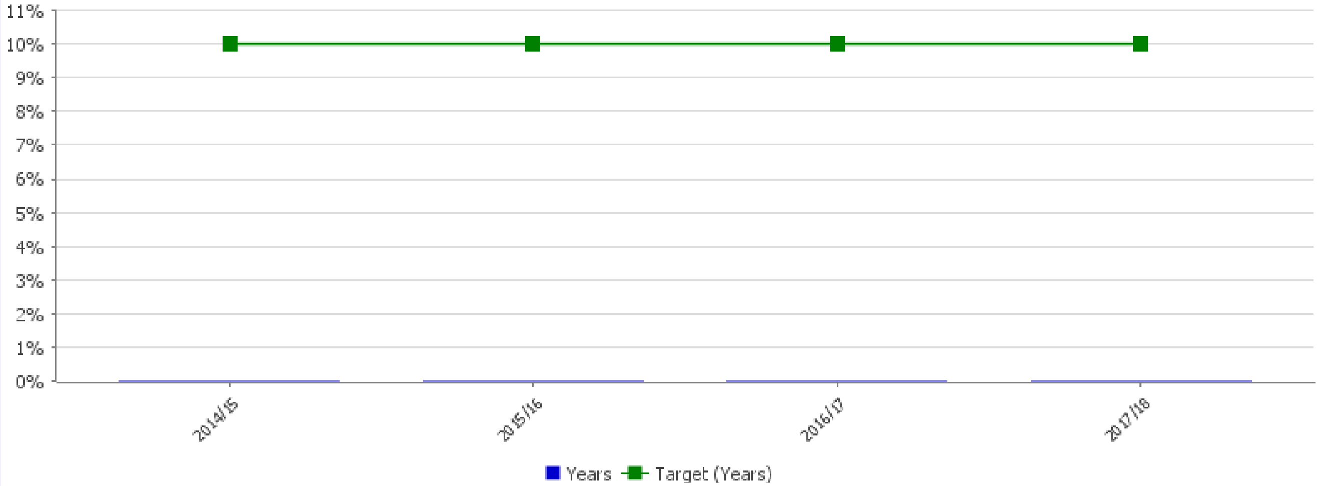
The Financial Management Unit will continue to aim to minimise all complaints were possible and where they do arise that these are dealt with timeously.

Please note, that on months where there have been no complaints received, there will be no value added, therefore this will show as a blank or missing month on the chart.

The target for 2018/19 is to receive no more than 3 complaints per quarter which is consistent with the 2017/18 target. There have been no complaints received since Q4 2017/18.

PI Code & Short Name	**FM038_6b.4 Financial Management Unit - the percentage of complaints received by Financial Management Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full**
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by the Financial Management Unit that have been upheld or part upheld during each financial year. In each period, the total number of upheld and partially upheld complaints is divided by the total number of complaints closed to determine the overall percentage. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.
PI Owner(s):	zFM_PIAdmin; Patrick Welsh

Financial Management Unit - the percentage of complaints received by Financial Management Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full



2017/18 result

Last Updated:	2017/18
Status:	✔
Current Value:	0%
Current Target:	10%
Red Threshold:	9%
Amber Threshold:	8%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

For the most available data period, the Financial Management Unit has not received any complaints that were upheld or partially upheld.

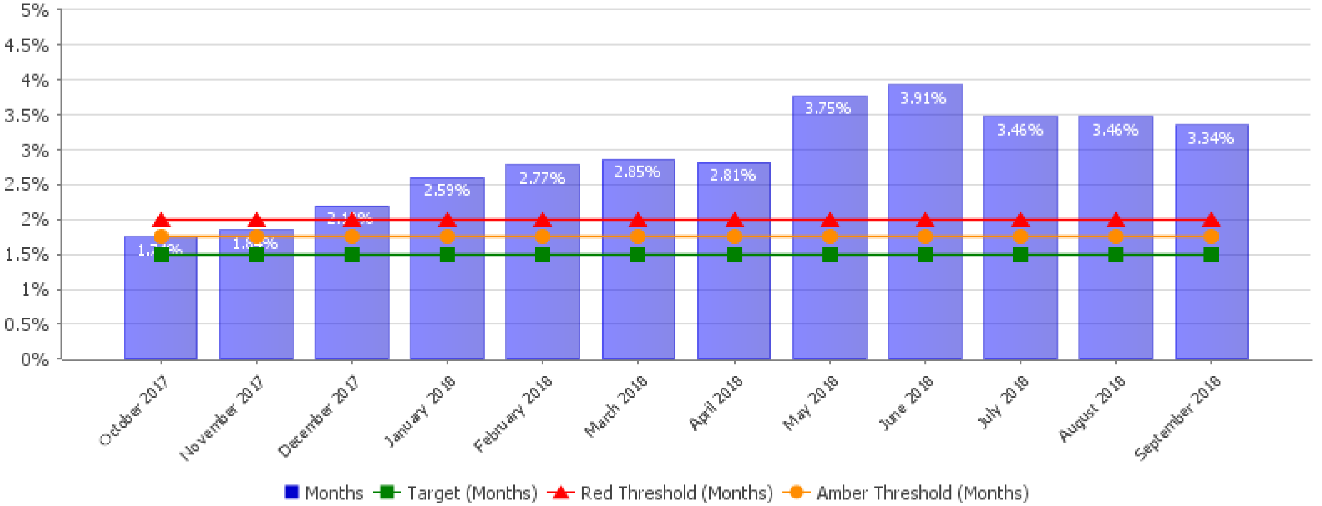
Please note, that for years where there have been no complaints received, there will be no value added, therefore this will s how as a blank or missing on the chart.

The target for 2018/19 is 10 percent of complaints received which are upheld or partially upheld which is consistent with the 2017/18 target.

32

PI Code & Short Name	**FM048_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Financial Management Unit - Cumulative**	**PI Owner(s):**	zFM_PIAdmin; Patrick Welsh
Description	This performance indicator measures, as a percentage, the total level of sickness absence in the Financial Management Unit on a cumulative basis. The data is provided by the council's Human Resource Services on a monthly basis and is tracked and monitored to ensure absence is managed appropriately in the service and any corresponding impact on performance is understood and managed.		

Percentage of Sickness Absence in Financial Management Unit - Cumulative



September 2018 result

Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	3.34%
Current Target:	1.5%
Red Threshold:	2%
Amber Threshold:	1.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

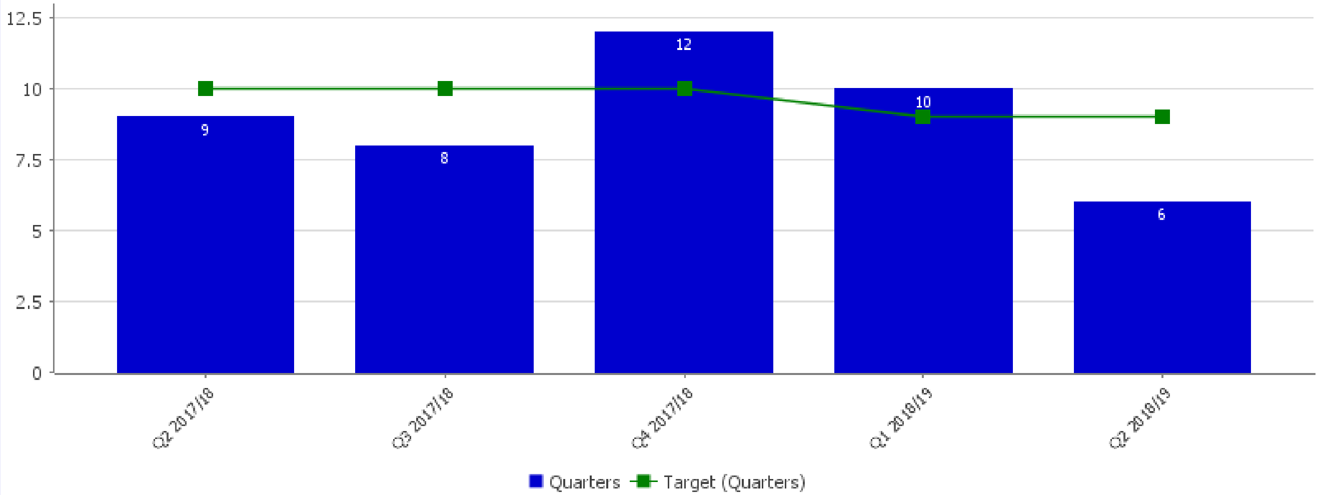
Sickness absence has been above the target of 1.5 percent during 2018/19. For the period April 2018 to September 2018, cumulative sickness was 3.44 percent.

Higher than normal levels of long term sickness have been the main reason for the rate being above target. All line managers within the unit comply with the council's sickness absence policy and seek specialist advice if required from Human Resources when there are more complex sickness absence situations arising.

The target for 2018/19 is 1.5 percent which is consistent with the 2017/18 target.

PI Code & Short Name	P:HRS104_9b.2 Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter	PI Owner(s):	zHRS_PIAdmin; Kim Hardie
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive on a quarterly basis. 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.		

Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	6
Current Target:	9
Red Threshold:	10.08
Amber Threshold:	9.54
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend shows an overall decrease of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive over the period. 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. This records the total number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive.

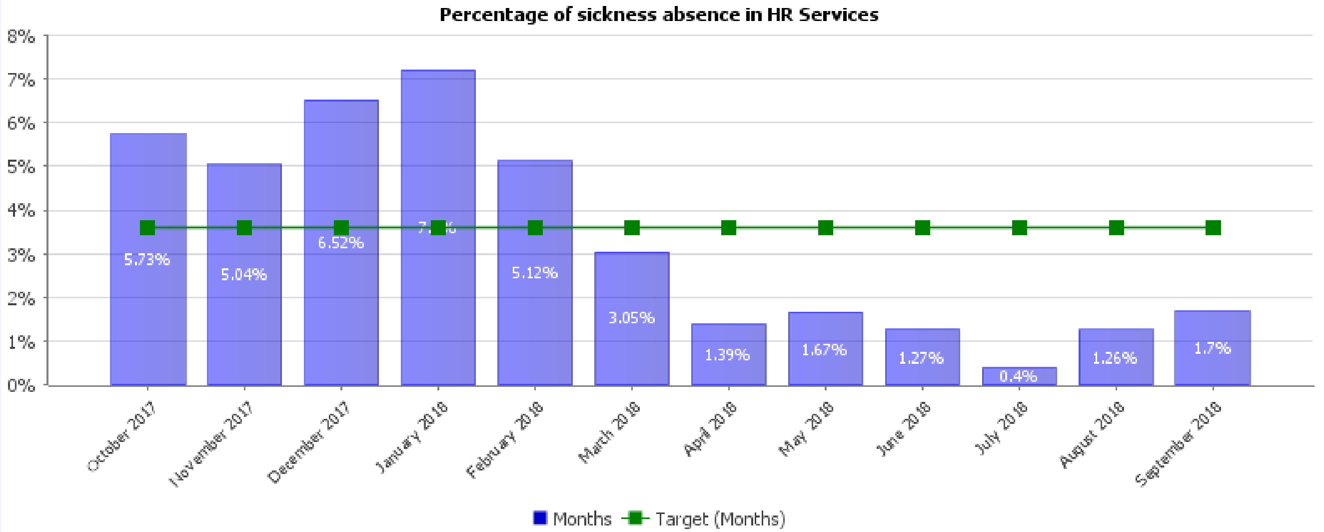
The overall reduction is in part attributable to amended regulations which came into force in 2013. One change was only to report specific incidents after an absence of seven days replacing the previous three day threshold, meaning there is a longer time period from the point of an incident occurring and any resulting absence before triggering the need to report criteria. 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 being automatically reported because a pupil has been taken to hospital from the scene of an incident. Both changes have resulted in a reduction in the number of injuries reported to the HSE.

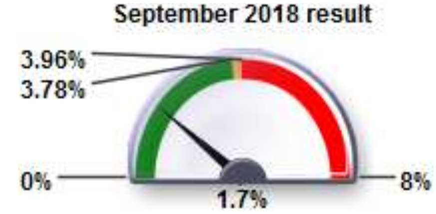
All RIDDOR reportable incidents are investigated to ensure that corrective and preventative measures are implemented to prevent a recurrence of a similar type of incident as far as reasonably practicable.

Incident statistics are examined to establish potential trends and identify required actions to be incorporated into the service annual health and safety action plans and corporate health and safety work plan for 2018/19.

There will be an aim to decrease the number of reportable incidents by a further five percent in 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**HRS525_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in HR Services**	**PI Owner(s):**	zHRS_PIAdmin; Lesley Henderson
Description	This measure records the Human Resources Shared Services Sickness/ Absence level as is reported through monthly management reports from HR Services using the SPI percentage. It is used to review the effectiveness of sickness absence management.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	1.7%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	3.96%
Amber Threshold:	3.78%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

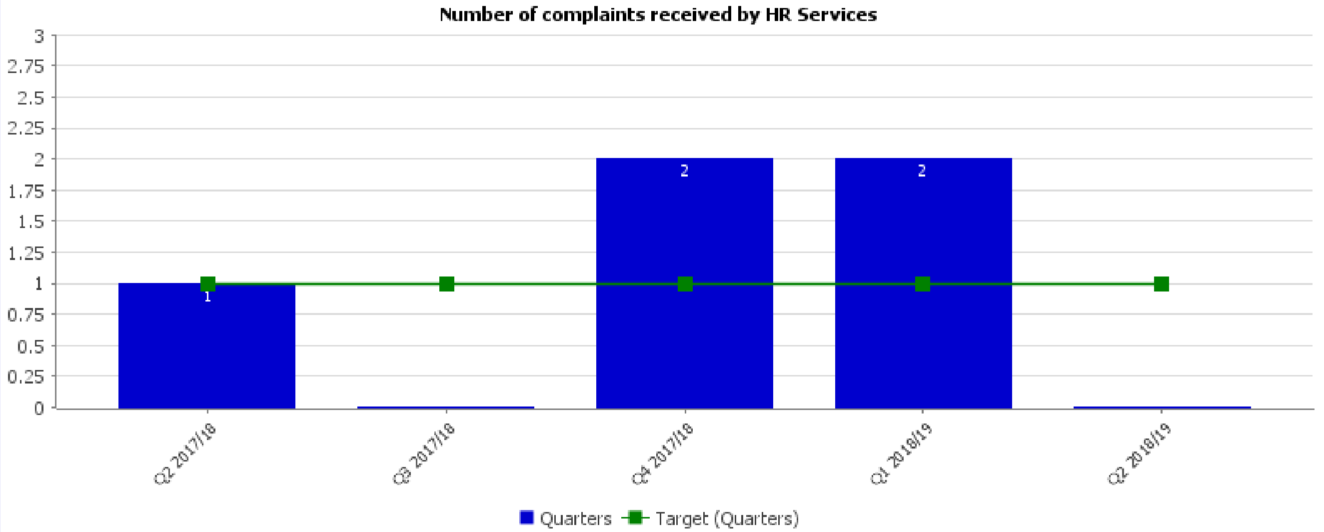
Trend Chart Commentary:

Absences in HR from October 2017 were reporting above the 3.6% corporate target, however since March 2018 to date it has been consistently below council and corporate targets of 3.6%, reaching the lowest in July 2018 at 0.40% for the month.

All cases of absence are actively managed in accordance with the requirements of the council's Policy for Supporting Attendance at Work.

The target remains at the council target of 3.6%

PI Code & Short Name	**HRS550_6b.3 Number of complaints received by HR Services**
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by HR Services. It is the total number of complaints received by HR Services at stage one (complaints that the council aims to deal with within 5 working days) and those received directly at stage two (more complex complaints that the council aims to deal with within 20 working days). Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted.
PI Owner(s):	zHRS_PIAdmin; Lesley Henderson



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	1
Red Threshold:	3
Amber Threshold:	2
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

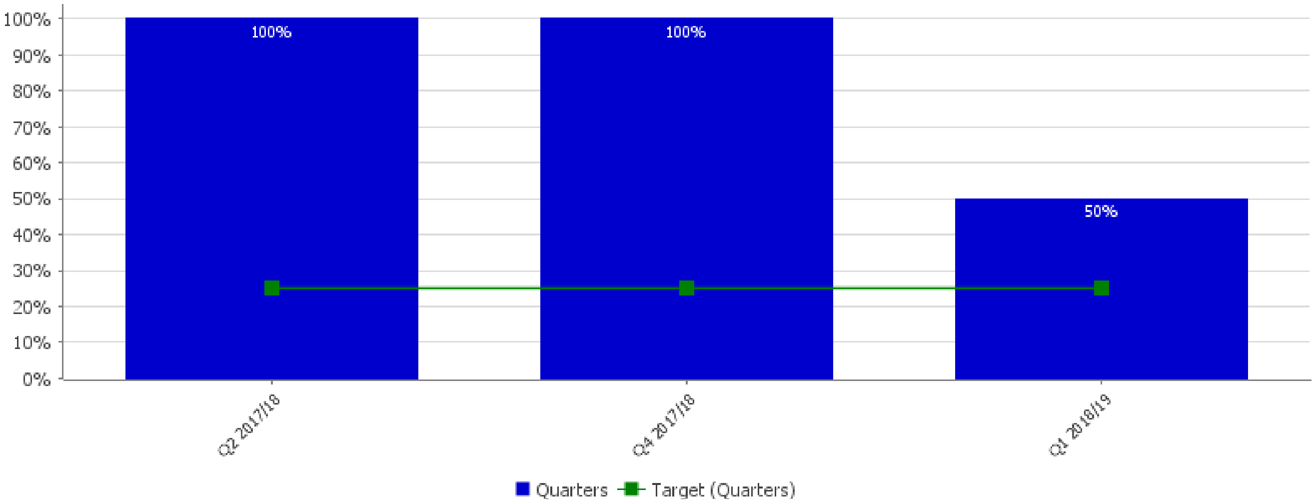
Although the number of complaints into HR and Support Services is low, it has been above the target in 4 of the reporting periods.

Complaints received normally relate to the misapplication of a council policy, failure in administrative process or delays in processing timescales. All complaints trigger reviews of process to reduce the likelihood of similar service failure in the future.

The complaints target of 1 per quarter is based on an the average number received over the reporting period.

PI Code & Short Name	**HRS554_6b.4 Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter**	**PI Owner(s):**	zHRS_PIAdmin; Lesley Henderson
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by HR Services that have been upheld or part upheld during each quarter. In each period, the total number of upheld and partially upheld complaints is divided by the total number of complaints closed to determine the overall percentage. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.		

Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter



Q2 2018/19 result
N/A

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	?
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	25%
Red Threshold:	27.5%
Amber Threshold:	26.25%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

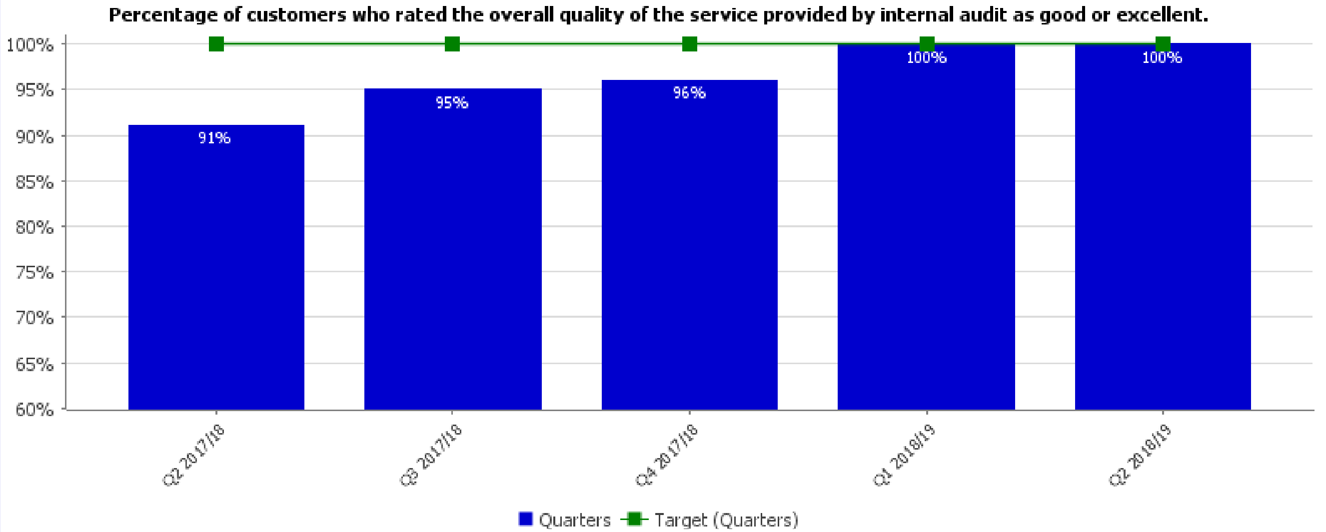
Trend Chart Commentary:
As a result of the low complaint numbers, an upheld complaint has a significant impact on the percentage of upheld complaints.

2018/19
Quarter 2 - the service did not receive any complaints.
Quarter 1 - the service received 2 complaints, 1 was upheld and 1 not upheld.

2017/18
Quarter 4 - the service received 4 complaints, 2 upheld & 2 part upheld.
Quarter 3 - the service did not receive any complaints.
Quarter 2 - the service received 1 complaint which was upheld.
Quarter 1 - the service received 4 complaints, 2 upheld & 2 not upheld.

Complaints received normally relate to the misapplication of a council policy, failure in administrative process or delays in processing timescales. All complaints trigger reviews of process to reduce the likelihood of similar service failure in the future.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:IA008_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by internal audit as good or excellent**
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. The performance indicator reports on the cumulative number of positive responses received to the end of each quarter in the financial year. It is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of positive responses received for the year to date (at the quarter end) by the total responses, and the results are analysed and used to identify areas for improvement.
PI Owner(s):	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	100%
Current Target:	100%
Red Threshold:	85%
Amber Threshold:	90%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

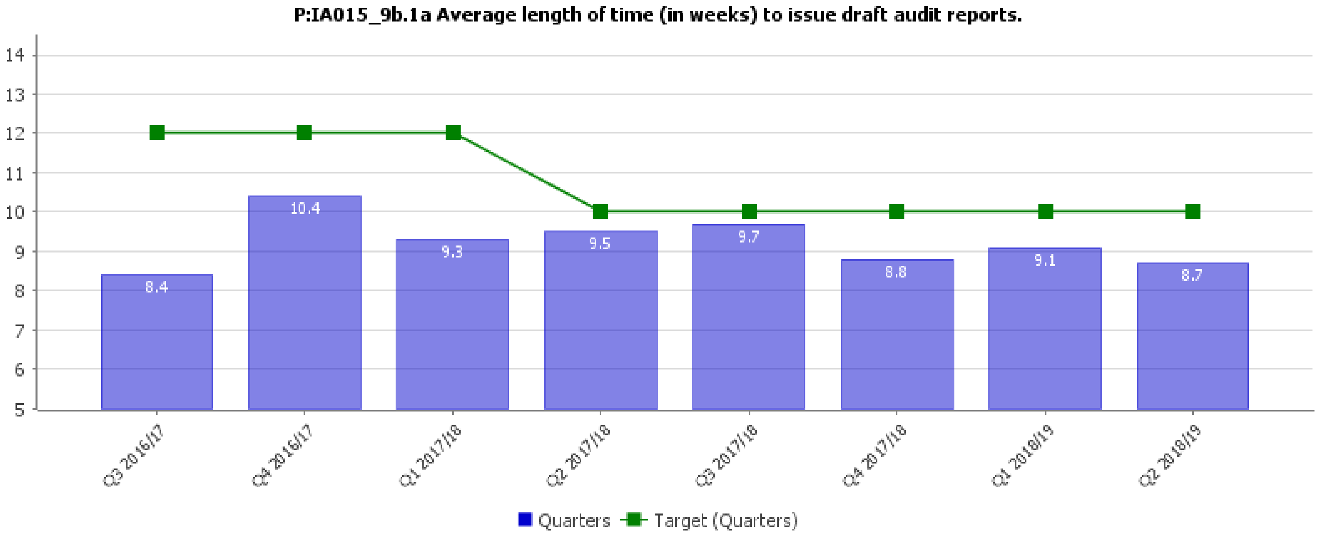
Performance to Q2 2018/19 was 100% and 13 customer questionnaires were received.

Performance to Q4 2017/18 was 96%. 26 customer questionnaires were received with one response of not applicable and one response of poor.

The target for 2018/19 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.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:IA015_9b.1a Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports**	**PI Owner(s):**	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator is part of the performance scorecard for the council's Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Strategy 2018/23 and will contribute to outcome 1 the deployment of an internal audit service. This 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 10 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 10 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.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✓
Current Value:	8.7
Current Target:	10
Red Threshold:	11
Amber Threshold:	10.5
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for this performance indicator is to achieve 10 weeks by 2022/23 and this was set in the development of the council's Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Strategy.

Performance to Quarter 2 2018/19 was 8.7 weeks. Performance to Quarter 4 2017/18 was 8.8 weeks and has been below the revised target of 10 weeks since Quarter 1 2017/18.

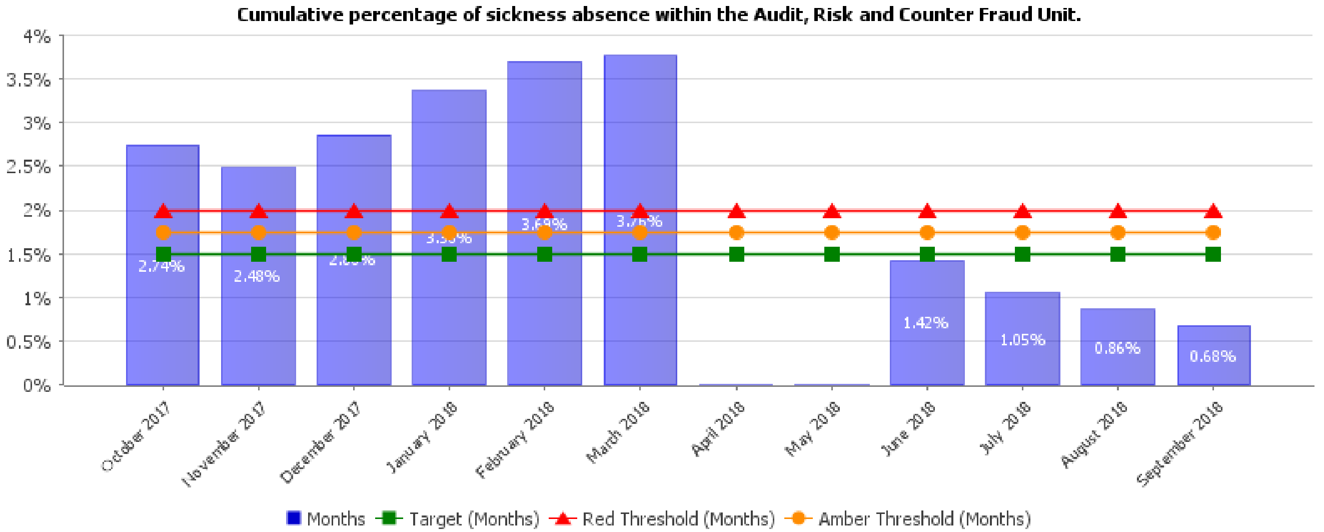
The 10 week target and the appropriateness of the timescales achieved is substantiated by reference to Indicator IA001: Percentage of customers who rated internal audit's timeliness as good or excellent, for which high performance is also reported and shows that customers are satisfied with the timescales 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 for each rolling 12 month period reported was 2016/17 - Quarter 3 (35), Quarter 4 (35), 2017/18 - Quarter 1 (36), Quarter 2 (38), Quarter 3 (34), Quarter 4 (33), 2018/19 Quarter 1 (30), Quarter 2 (30).

Having considered the audits included in the 2018/19 audit plan the 10 week target continues to be appropriate and will remain in place for 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**IA051_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit**
Description	This performance indicator measures the cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit for each financial year. For each financial year, we aim to have equal to or less than 1% sickness absence. The SPI figure provided by Human Resources is used to populate this indicator.
PI Owner(s):	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons



Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	0.68%
Current Target:	1.5%
Red Threshold:	2%
Amber Threshold:	1.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

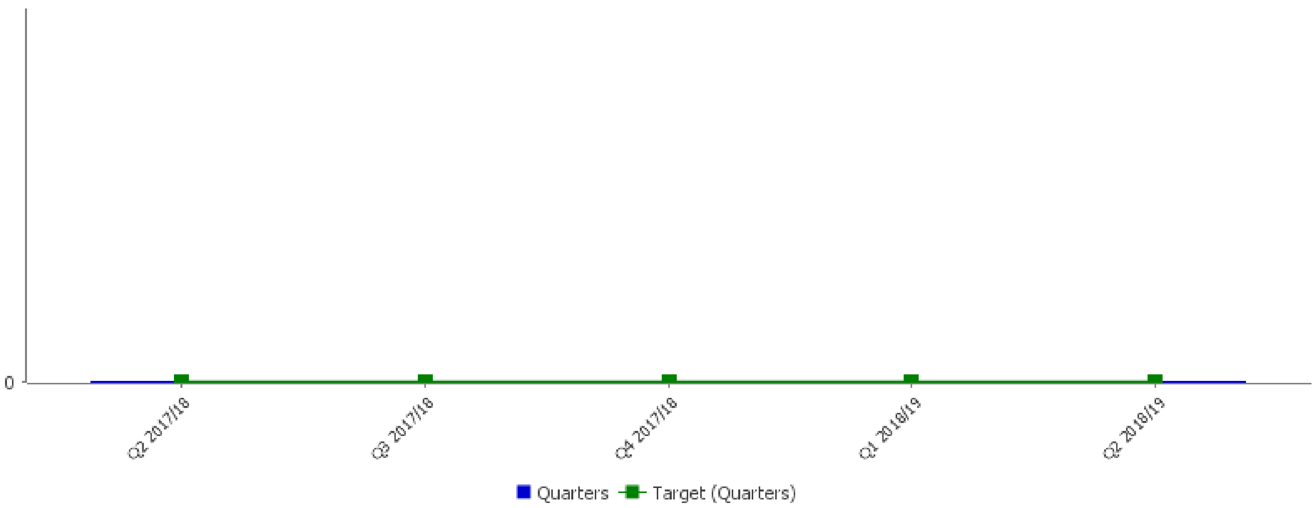
Performance to October 2018 was 0.95% (8 days) and is below the 1.5% target.

It is noted that although the council target is 3.6% the service has set a target of 1.5%.

Previous years' information is noted below to demonstrate the ongoing good performance in relation to sickness absence.

PI Code & Short Name	IA066_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud	PI Owner(s):	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the combined level of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received by the service.		

Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	8
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The service did not receive any complaints in Quarters 1 or 2 of 2018/19.

The service did not receive any complaints in 2017/18.

Target per quarter is set at 0 complaints.

PI Code & Short Name	**IA067_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud that were upheld or partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full**
Description	This Performance Indicator measures service failure of the combined level of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints shown as a percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld against the total number of complaints received.
PI Owner(s):	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons

The percentage of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud that were upheld or partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full

Q2 2018/19 result	
	N/A
Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	42%
Red Threshold:	46.2%
Amber Threshold:	42.84%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

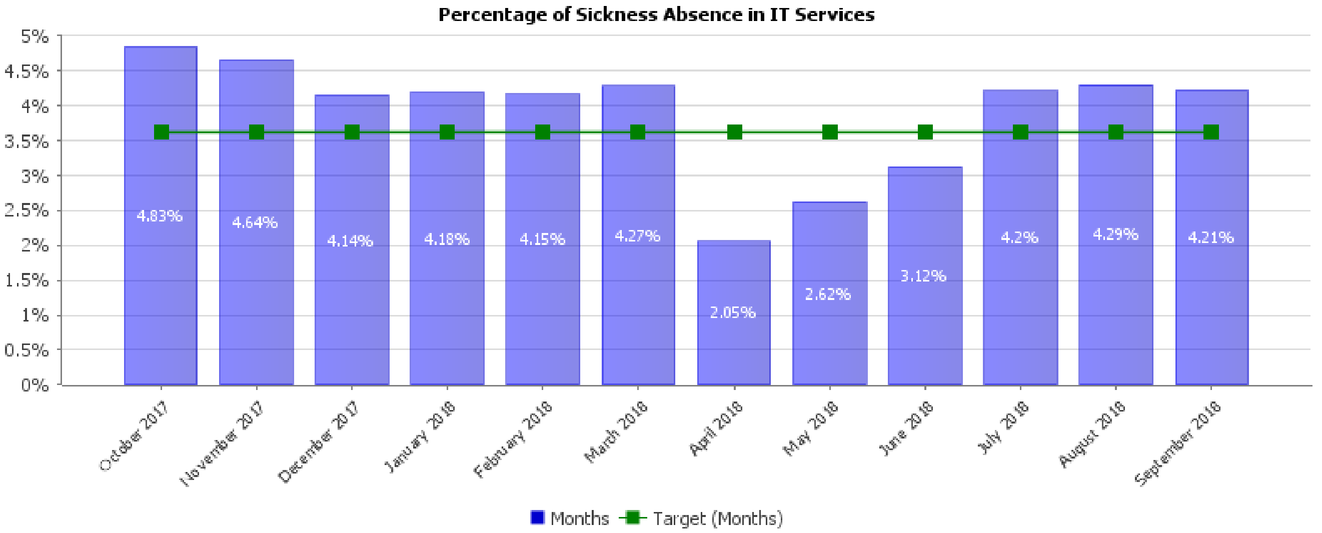
Trend Chart Commentary:

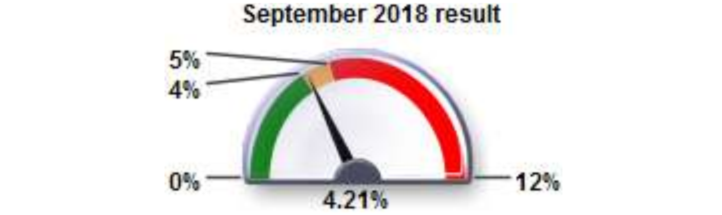
The number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud has been historically low. No complaints were received in 2017/18. No complaints have been received in Q1 or Q2 2018/19.

A service wide complaint improvement action report is prepared on a quarterly basis and is reported to both the Head of Finance and Property Services and the Complaints Steering Board.

The corporate target for 2018/19 is 42%.

PI Code & Short Name	**ITS003_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in IT Services**	**PI Owner(s):**	zITS_PIAdmin; Ian Forrest
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage indicator of sickness absence in IT Services. The percentage is a cumulative measure of sickness absence over the period of the financial year. HR Services calculate the percentage comparing sickness days as a percentage of total available staff days and provide the monthly data on approximately the 17th day of the following month. The data is then verified and uploaded into the performance management system by the service.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	4.21%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	5%
Amber Threshold:	4%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

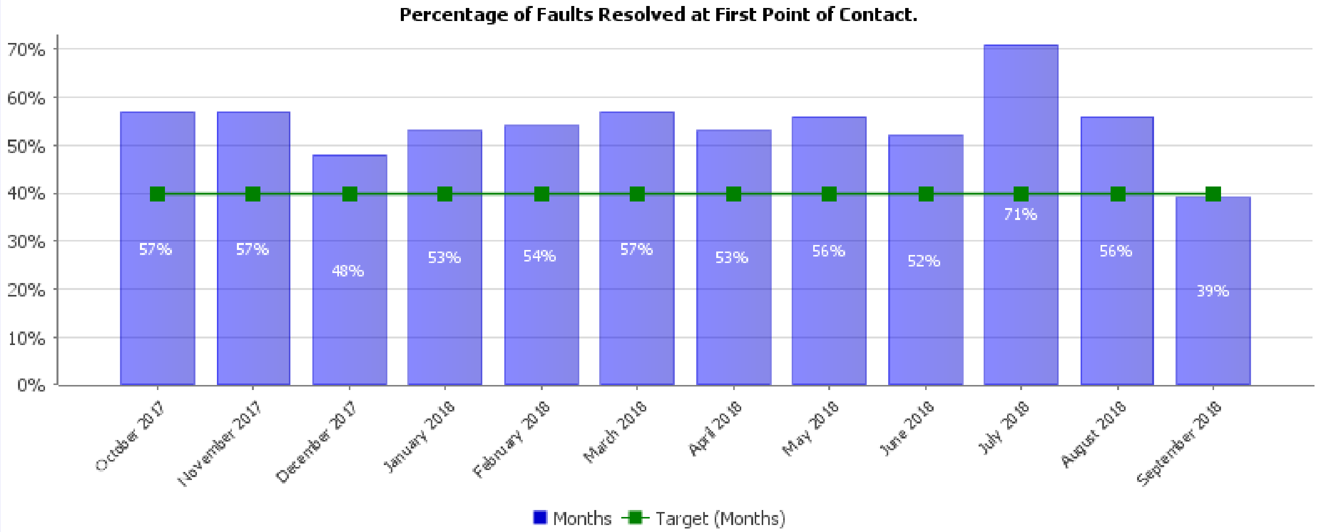
The trend chart illustrates sickness absence levels in IT Services. All sickness absence is managed in accordance to the Sickness Absence Policy and procedures.

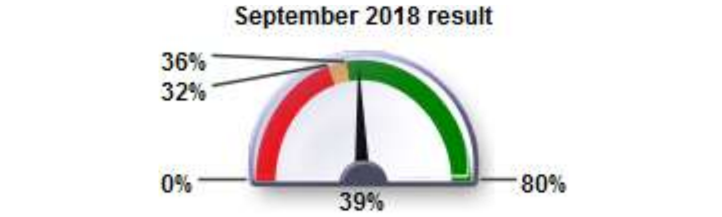
September 2018 - performance improved slightly due to the return of 1 long term absence.
May 2018 to August 2018 - performance declined due to 3 long term absences and various short term absences.
April 2018 - performance improved to below the corporate target, all absences were short term across 2 staff accounting for the 21 days. 1 absence was discounted (19 days).
January 2018 to March 2018 - there was marginal movement with a decline of performance due to short term absences, hospitalisation and bereavements.
October 2017 to December 2017 - there was performance improvement from was due to a reduction of long and short term absences, including an ill health retirement.

The target is at an overall council level target of 3.6% as are the amber (4%) and red thresholds (5%).

Please note monthly data is provided by HR on approximately 17th day of the following month.

PI Code & Short Name	**ITS004_9b.1c Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact.**
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT incidents (faults) resolved within at the first point of contact with the customer in a monthly period. The data for this indicator is extracted from the IT Services work tracking system. The IT Service Centre may be unable to complete a resolution to an incident (fault) where the issue is beyond their technical capability/complexity or is a major incident that requires advanced technical skills.
PI Owner(s):	zITS_PIAdmin; Ian Forrest





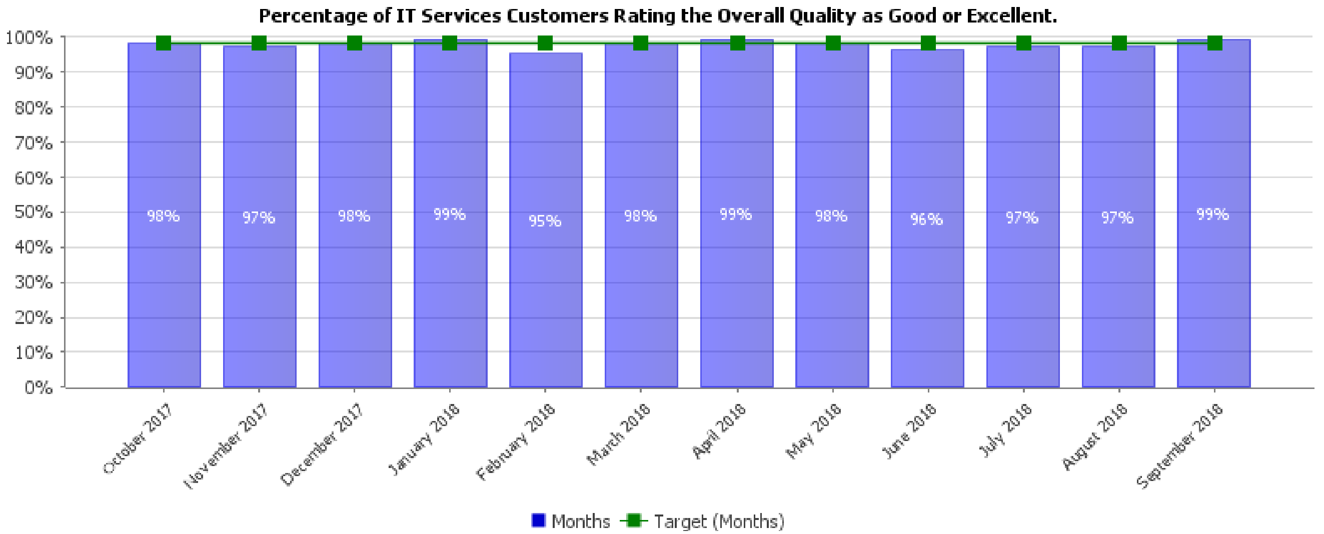
Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	39%
Current Target:	40%
Red Threshold:	32%
Amber Threshold:	36%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:
The trend chart demonstrates performance is inconsistent.

2018/19
September 2018 - performance achieved 39% against a target of 40% The decrease in performance from August 2018 was due to the schools returning from holiday and the logging of 614 Education calls compared to 481 corporate calls that received a first line resolve. The Education calls do not allow first line remote resolutions by the IT Service Desk.
August 2018 - performance achieved 56% against a non-seasonal target of 40% as Education customers returned from holiday. Performance was positive in light of two major incidents that the Service Desk could not resolve. These major incidents related to Intermittent Network Issues on 06/08/2018 and problems accessing Objective on 07/08/2018.
July 2018 - performance achieved 71%. Performance was positive and remained above seasonal target. This is a typical trend when education customers are on summer holiday.
June 2018 - performance achieved 52% against a target of 40%. This decrease in performance of 4% from May can be attributed mainly to the 5 major incidents in the month relating to email issues, slow network, no access to Seemis, PC authentication issues, and issues with CRM that the service desk had to deal with. The performance continues to remain above target by 16%.
May 2018 - performance achieved 56% against a target of 40% This positive increase in performance of 3% from April can be attributed mainly to the increase in calls logged and resolved by the Service Desk in comparison to the previous month.
April 2018 - performance achieved 53% against a target of 45%. This decrease in performance from the previous month was a result of an increased call volume as a result of the schools and corporate customers returning mid-month from holiday. The increased call volume had a positive impact on the Service Desk Grade of Service (see ITS016_6b.5).
March 2018 - performance achieved 57% against a target of 40%. This increase in performance of 3% from last month can be mainly contributed to the high number of Incidents dealt with by first line on the Service Desk for Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd March as a high percentage of customers worked from home due to the adverse snow conditions and were unsure how to use their remote access (see ITS001_6B.5).

Performance in October 2018 achieved 52% against a non seasonal target of 40%. The increase in performance from September 2018 was due to the schools having the October break resulting in the logging of only 495 Education calls compared to 673 corporate calls that receive a first line resolve. The Education calls do not allow first line remote resolutions by the IT Service Desk.

PI Code & Short Name	**ITS012_6a.7 Percentage of IT Services Customers Rating the Overall Quality as Good or Excellent.**		
Description	The data for this indicator is extracted from the returns that are received from the IT Services monthly survey. This survey is sent out to all customers that have had work completed (either an incident (fault) or a change request (enhancement)) by IT Services within the last full month. The survey asks the customer to answer 9 questions on overall satisfaction & experience. The 9th question allows a free text response. The return rate is based on the total number of responses to Question 7 on the survey where the response was given as 'Good' or 'Excellent'. Question 7 - Overall quality of the service we provided. The survey is issued on the first working day of the new month and closes on 16th with results available to input to Covalent on 18th day of the month.	**PI Owner(s):**	zITS_PIAdmin; Ian Forrest



September 2018 result

Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✓
Current Value:	99%
Current Target:	98%
Red Threshold:	91%
Amber Threshold:	94%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

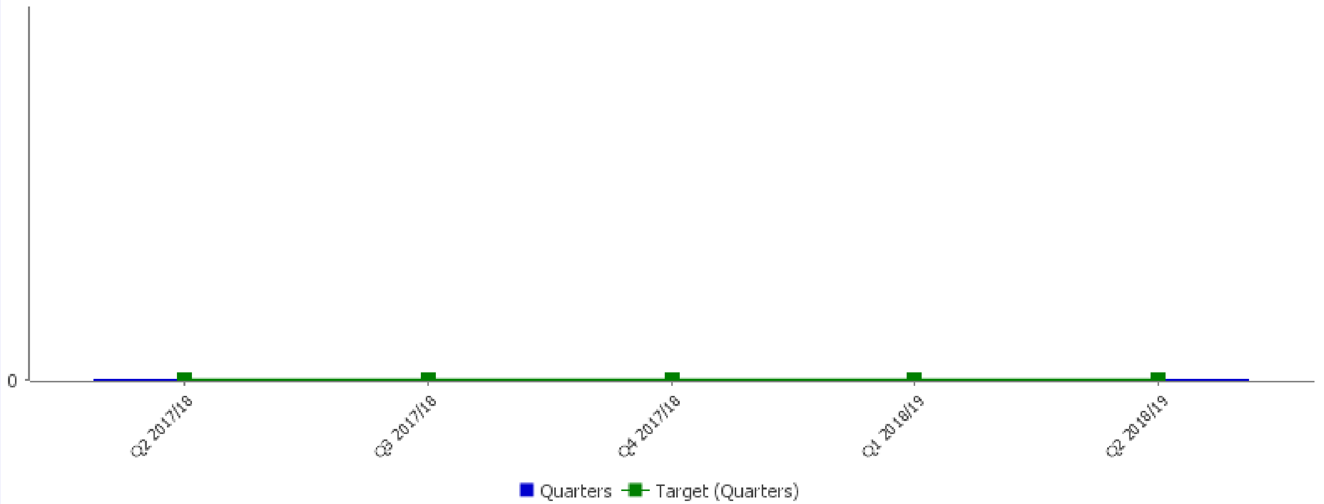
<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
The trend chart demonstrates performance achieves 96 - 99%.

2018/19
Performance decreased from September 2018 to October 2018 by 1% but still matched target. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance increased from August 2018 to September 2018 by 2% and exceeded target by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance from July 2018 to August 2018 remained the same at 1% below target. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance increased from June 2018 to July 2018 by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance decreased from May 2018 to June 2018 by 2%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance decreased from April 2018 to May 2018 by 1% but continues to match target. Issues are being raised and addressed at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance increased by 1% from March 2018 to April 2018 and is currently 1% above target. Issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.

The service set a target of 98% for 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**ITS030_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter**	**PI Owner(s):**	zITS_PIAdmin; Ian Forrest
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of complaints received during each quarter relating to IT Services. Performance is reviewed on a regular basis and reported annually to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the quality and standard of customer service. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.		

Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	0
Amber Threshold:	0
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

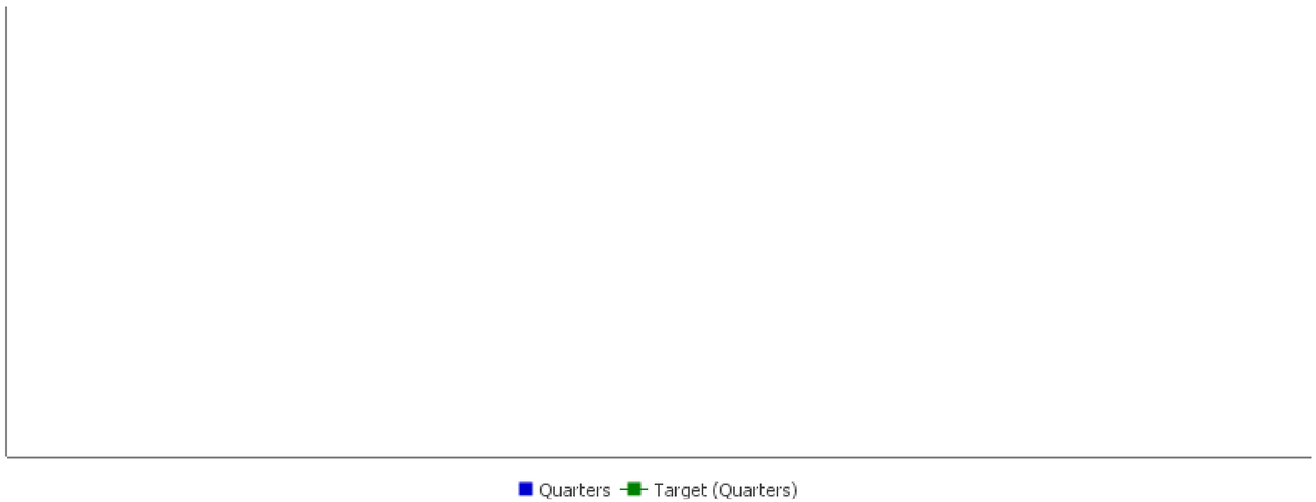
There were no complaints received by IT Services in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2018/19.

There were no complaints received by IT Services in 2017/18.

The target for 2018/19 will remain as 0.

PI Code & Short Name	**ITS031_6b.4 Percentage of complaints received that were upheld/partially upheld**	PI Owner(s):	zITS_PIAdmin; Ian Forrest
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service that have been upheld or part upheld during each quarter. In each period, the total number of upheld and partially upheld complaints is divided by the total number of complaints closed to determine the overall percentage. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.		

Percentage of complaints received that were upheld/partially upheld



Q2 2018/19 result	
N/A	
Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	0
Amber Threshold:	0
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

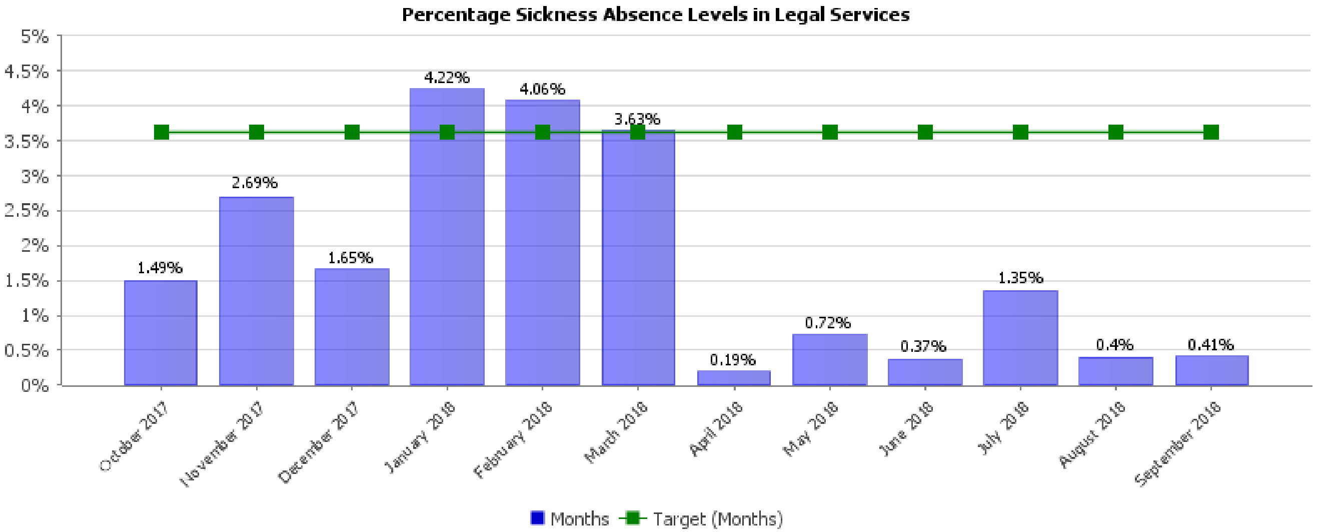
Trend Chart Commentary:

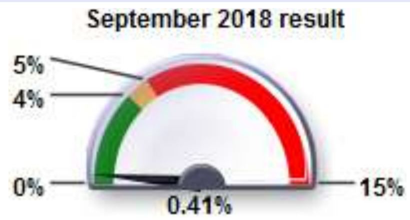
There were no complaints received by IT Services in Quarters 1 and 2 of 2018/19.

There were no complaints received by IT Services in 2017/18.

The target for 2018/19 will remain as 0.

PI Code & Short Name	**LS007_7b.1 Percentage Sickness Absence Levels in Legal Services**
Description	This measure records Legal Services Sickness Absence levels as reported through monthly management reports from HR Pay and Reward. This indicator measures the actual absences during each month. It is used to review the effectiveness of sickness absence management. The sickness absence data for each month is not available until the 18th of the following month.
PI Owner(s):	zLS_PIAdmin; Carol Johnston





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	0.41%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	5%
Amber Threshold:	4%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

During January, February and March 2018 the target was not met. This was attributable to periods of short term sickness absence of a limited number of staff. During the remainder of the reported periods, there have been fluctuations in sickness absence levels due to short term absences but levels have been below the corporate target.

As Legal Services are a relatively small team, a few absences can have a significant impact on the sickness absence return. Incidents of short term sickness absence experienced are due to minor ailments. There are no general patterns of sickness absence within Legal Services which would give rise to particular concerns and all absences are managed through the Councils sickness absence policy.

The target for 2018/19 will remain at 3.6% in line with the Corporate target.

PI Code & Short Name	**LS027_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld**	PI Owner(s):	zLS_PIAdmin; Carol Johnston
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by Legal Services that have been upheld or part upheld during each quarterly period. In each period, the total number of upheld and partially upheld complaints is divided by the total number of complaints closed to determine the overall percentage. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers. Legal Services provides legal services to West Lothian Council including conveyancing, litigation, tribunals and inquiries, planning, transportation, social services, education, clerking to the Licensing Board, Committees, Sub-Committees, Committee Services and Civic Government & Miscellaneous Licensing.		

Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld

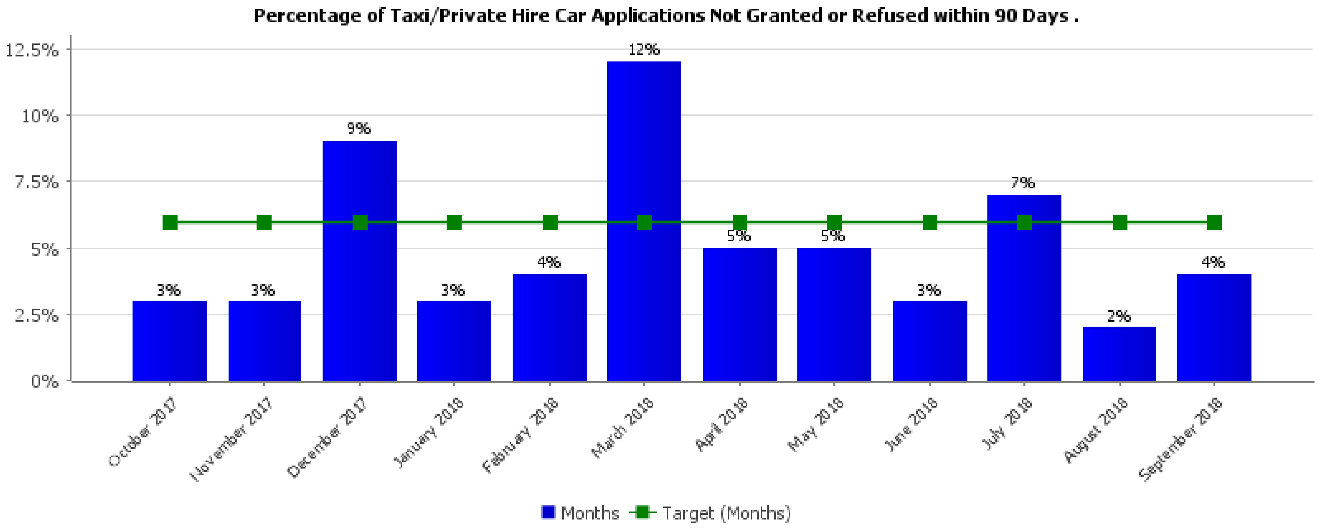
Q4 2017/18 result	N/A
Last Updated:	Q4 2017/18
Status:	
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	0%
Red Threshold:	75%
Amber Threshold:	50%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

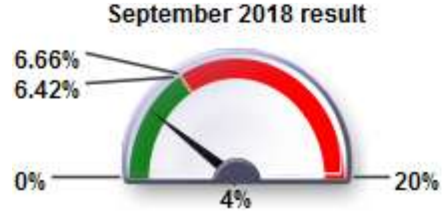
Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend shows that Legal Services have had no upheld complaint during the reporting period. In periods where no complaints were received the chart will show as a blank.

Following review of historical performance, the target for 2018/19 is 0%

PI Code & Short Name	P:LS046_6b.5 Percentage of Taxi/Private Hire Car Applications Not Granted or Refused within 90 Days .		
Description	The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 originally set a statutory deadline of 6 months for an application to be granted or refused. That deadline was extended to 9 months for applications received after 1 May 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 2018/19 it was proposed that no further reporting would take place in relation to this public performance indicator. A new indicator is to be created to report on the determination of new hire car applications and will not include reporting in relation to renewal applications. This will provide information in relation to the timescale within which a new licence is granted and is considered to be of more relevance to potential applicants than the existing indicator. Reporting will continue until the new indicator is created.	PI Owner(s):	zLS_PIAdmin; Audrey Watson





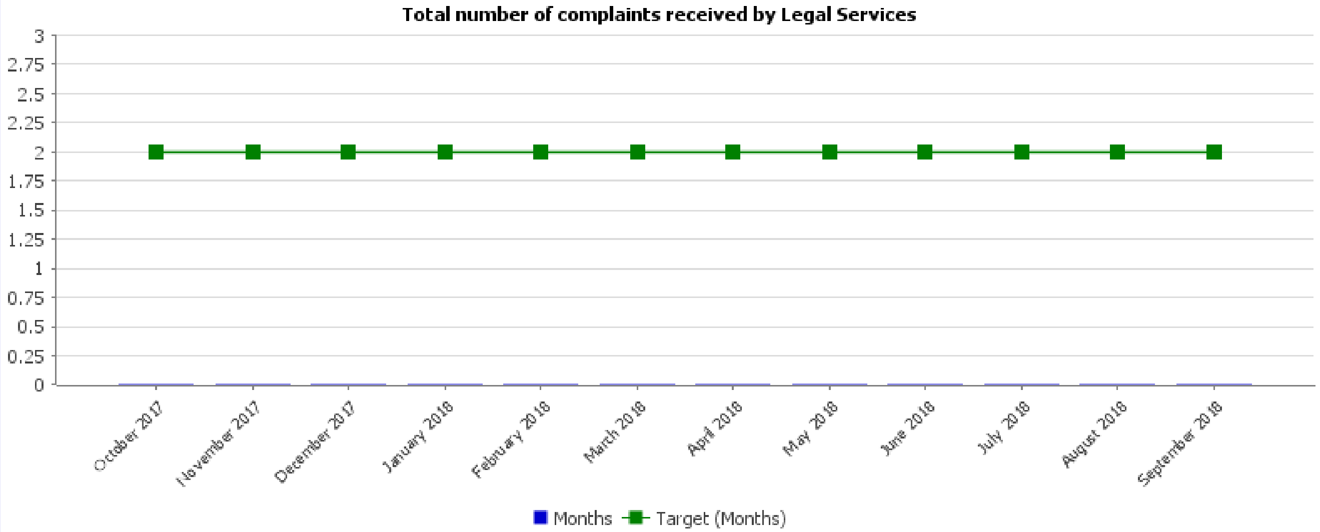
Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	4%
Current Target:	6%
Red Threshold:	6.66%
Amber Threshold:	6.42%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

From time to time there have been fluctuations in the number of applications which were granted or refused outwith the 90 day period. The trend evidences that with the exception of December 2017 and March and July 2018, the target has been met. The target was reviewed at the commencement of the 2017/18 reporting period, and having regard to historical fluctuations in performance, was unchanged. During the months when the target was not met the process of determining applications was impacted by delays introduced into the process by third parties or by the committee process. Those applications which were not determined within 90 days were determined within the statutory timescale.

The 2018/19 target is 6% having regard to historical fluctuations in performance this is a reasonable but challenging target. A new indicator reporting on hire car applications will be developed for 2018/19 and this indicator will be archived as being of little relevance.

PI Code & Short Name	**LS087_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Legal Services**	**PI Owner(s):**	zLS_PIAdmin; Carol Johnston
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Legal Services. It is the total number of complaints received by Legal Services at stage one (complaints that the council aims to deal with within 5 working days) and those received directly at stage two (more complex complaints that the council aims to deal with within 20 working days). Information regarding complaints at Stage 1 and Stage 2 is scrutinised within the service and utilised to assist in identifying improvements to service delivery and support corrective action in respect of any particular trends which may emerge. Information is collated from the councils CRM system Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted.		



Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	2
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	3
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

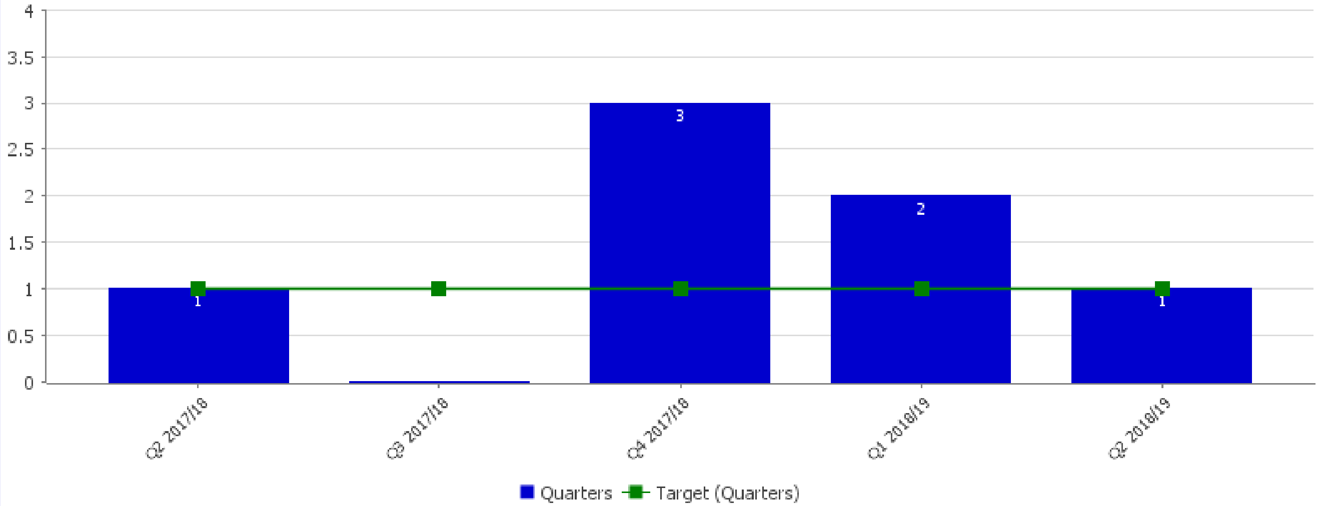
No complaints have been received during the reporting period.

The target is reviewed quarterly at service performance meetings. The target for 2018/19 remains at 2 having regard to historical performance.

PI Code & Short Name	PIS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service per quarter
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of complaints received during each quarter relating to the Performance and Improvement Service. Performance is reviewed on a regular basis and reported quarterly to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the quality and standard of customer service. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.

PI Owner(s): zPIS_PIAdmin; Rebecca Kelly

Total number of complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service per quarter



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	1
Current Target:	1
Red Threshold:	3
Amber Threshold:	2
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The service received a total of one complaint in Q2 2018/19. The complaint related to the blue badge assessment process and was not upheld.

The service received a total of two complaints in Q1 2018/19. One customer was unhappy with the five day timescale to respond to a stage 1 complaint. This was not upheld as the timescale is a national target set by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. The second complaint was linked to the blue badge assessment process. Both complaints were not upheld.

The service received a total of three complaints in Q4 2017/18. Two complaints related to the introduction of the blue badge charge and the other complaint was linked to the mobility assessment process for blue badges. All three complaints were not upheld.

The service did not receive any complaints in Q3 2017/18.

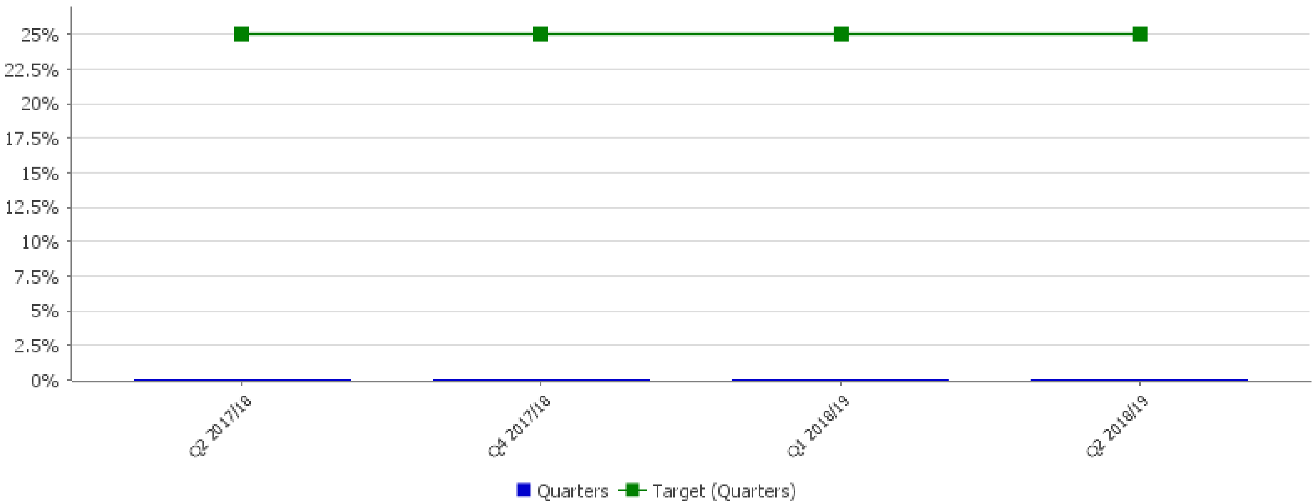
The service received a total of one complaint in Q2 2017/18 and this related to the council's Blue Badge Scheme. The complaint was not upheld.

The service received a total of two complaints in Q1 2017/18 and this related to the council's Blue Badge Scheme. One complaint was not upheld at stage 1 and one was part upheld at stage 2 of the complaint process. The part upheld complaint related to the information that was provided to the customer on why a blue badge application was unsuccessful. Changes have since been made to the letters sent to blue badge applicants to provide greater clarity on the reasons for refusing an application.

The target for 2017/18 was set at two complaints per quarter and this target will be remain the same for each quarter during 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**PIS013_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed by the Performance and Improvement Service that were upheld / partially upheld per quarter**	PI Owner(s):	zPIS_PIAdmin; Rebecca Kelly
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service that have been upheld or part upheld during each quarter. In each period, the total number of upheld and partially upheld complaints is divided by the total number of complaints closed to determine the overall percentage. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.		

Percentage of all complaints closed by the Performance and Improvement Service that were upheld / partially upheld per quarter



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	0%
Current Target:	25%
Red Threshold:	60%
Amber Threshold:	50%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 1 2018/19. Both complaints were not upheld.

The service received a total of three complaints in Quarter 4 2017/18. Two complaints were related to the introduction of the blue badge charge and the other complaint was linked to the mobility assessment process. All three complaints were not upheld.

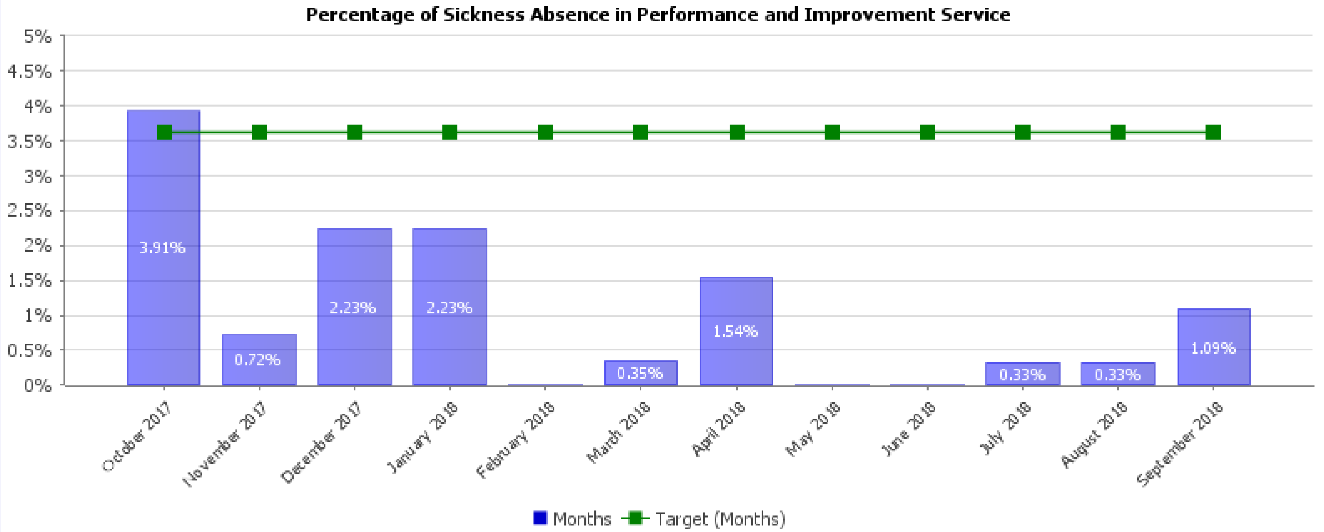
The service did not receive any complaints in Quarter 3 2017/18.

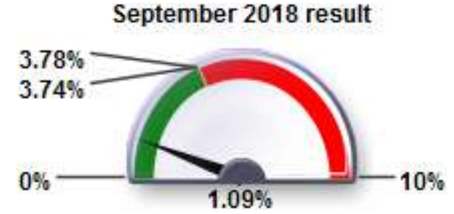
The service received a total of one complaint in Quarter 2 2017/18 and this related to the council's Blue Badge Scheme. The complaint was not upheld.

The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 1 2017/18 and this related to the council's Blue Badge Scheme. One complaint was not upheld at stage 1 and one was part upheld at stage 2 of the complaints process. The part upheld complaint related to information provided to the customer on why his blue badge application was not successful. Changes have been made to blue badge refusal letters to provide further clarity to customers on why their applications are unsuccessful.

The target for 2017/18 was set at 25% per quarter and this target will remain for each quarter in 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**PIS023_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Performance and Improvement Service**	**PI Owner(s):**	zPIS_PIAdmin; Rebecca Kelly
Description	This performance indicator measures, as a percentage, the total level of sickness absence in the Performance and Improvement Service in Corporate Services. The data is provided by the council's Human Resource Services on a monthly basis and is tracked and monitored to ensure absence is managed appropriately in the service and any corresponding impact on performance is understood and managed.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	1.09%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	3.78%
Amber Threshold:	3.74%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The Performance and Improvement Service comprises 14.3 full time equivalents and due to the size of the service, a small number of staff absent from work can greatly impact the perfomance in this indicator.

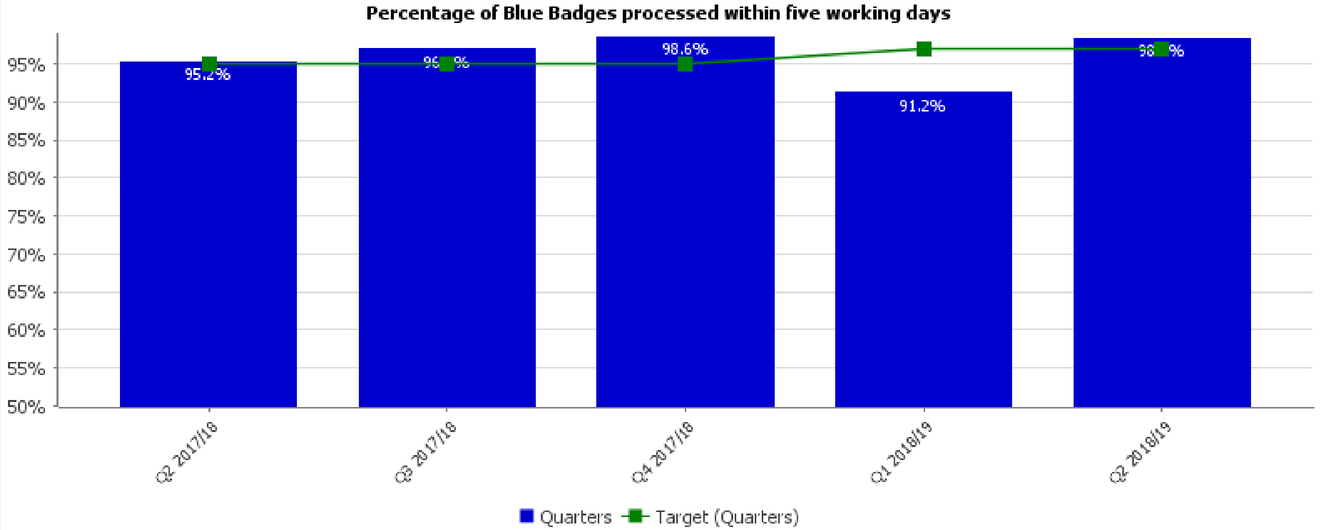
The trend shows that there was one period where the service failed to meet the corporate target of 3.6 percent, with seven periods where performance was 0 or under 1 percent. Absence was almost 4 percent in October 2017 with a total of 12 days of absence accumulated by the service in this month. During other periods absences have been short-term, with one day of absence in the service in March, July and August 2018, two days in November 2017, four days in April 2018 and six days in December 2017 and January 2018.

Sickness levels are monitored on a monthly basis and the service takes the appropriate action in compliance with the Council's Sickness Absence Policy and procedures to manage all periods of absence.

The target has been set using the corporate target of 3.6% and will remain at this level for 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**PIS514_6b.5 Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days**
Description	This indicator measures the percentage blue badge applications that are processed by the service within five working days on a quarterly basis. 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.

PI Owner(s): zPIS_PIAdmin; Joe Murray



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	98.3%
Current Target:	97%
Red Threshold:	91%
Amber Threshold:	94%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

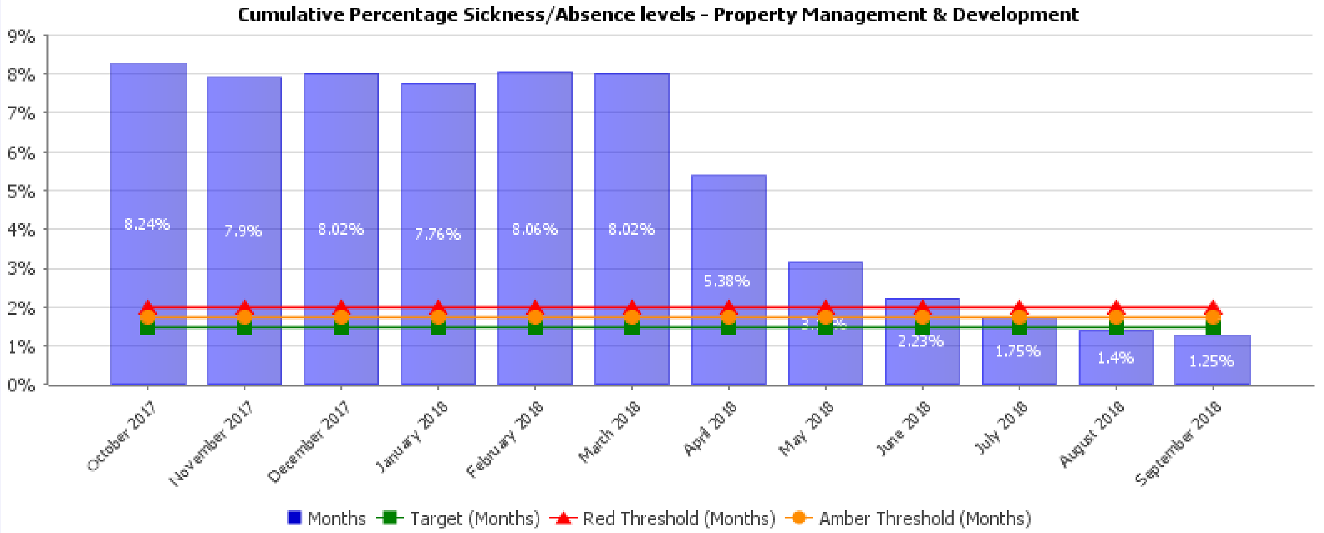
Quarter 2 2018/19 performance improved when compared to the previous quarter. There was a slight reduction in the number of applications required to be processed and the blue badge payment process issues were all resolved in quarter 1.

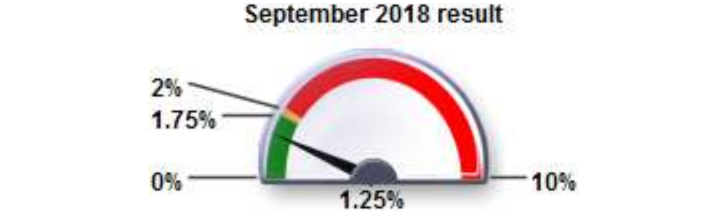
There was a dip in performance in Q1 2018/19 with the introduction of the blue badge charge. This was due to a technical issue with the online payment system that had to be resolved by the system supplier in the first few weeks of April 2018. The delay impacted upon the ability to take online payments and also the 5 day processing times for blue badge applications in the first part of Quarter 1 2018/19.

Quarters 1, 2, 3 and 4 2017/18 had sustained high levels of performance against target.

The target for 2018/19 has been set at 97 percent.

PI Code & Short Name	**PMD111b_7b.1 Cumulative Percentage Sickness/Absence levels - Property Management & Development**
Description	This performance indicator measures as a percentage the sickness/absence statistics relating to Property Management & Development, as provided by WLC Human Resources. Information is provided on a monthly basis.
PI Owner(s):	zPMD_PIAdmin; Matthew Fraser; Paul Kettrick





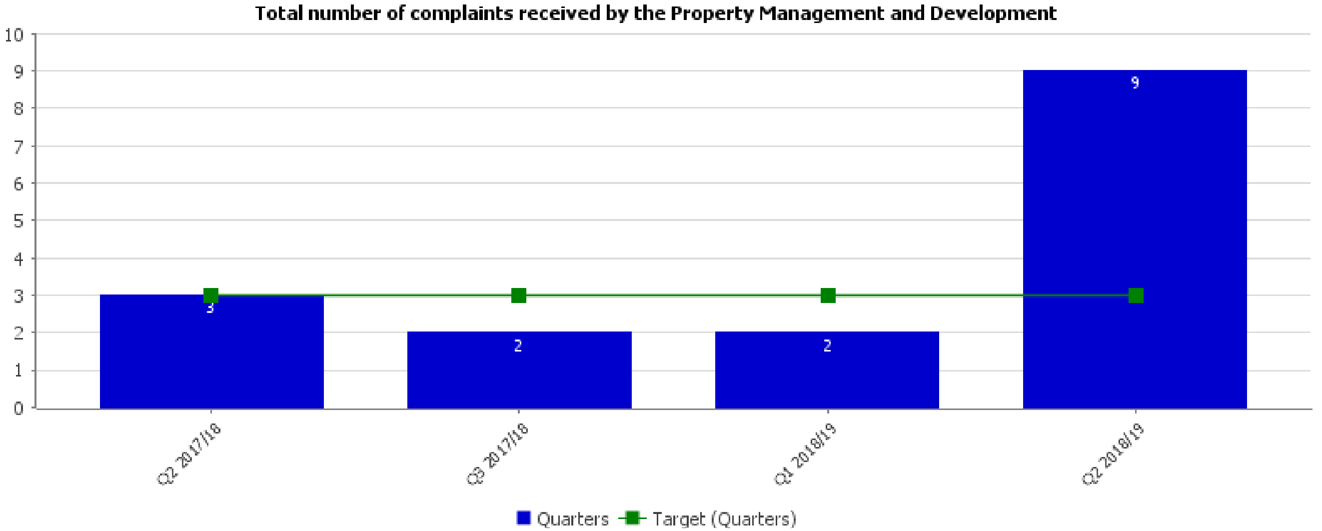
Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	1.25%
Current Target:	1.5%
Red Threshold:	2%
Amber Threshold:	1.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The pattern of sickness absence for the unit relates to long conditions and circumstances. Over the past year the unit has three members of staff off almost continually with one now completed the final absence process and the other reaching final absence interview stage, the other has now returned to work. There are 2 members of staff who have long term conditions that has resulted in periodic periods of absence and are being managed through the occupational health process. We have 2 members of staff who have required hospital attendance for period of time for operations and subsequent recuperation, one is now fortunately back to full health.

The West Lothian Council target of 3.6% was last hit this month as current performance was 1.25%. which is the lowest score this indicator has seen since October 2016. Target going forward will remain at the Finance & Property Service target of 1.5%.

PI Code & Short Name	**PMD144_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Property Management and Development**	PI Owner(s):	zPMD_PIAdmin; Matthew Fraser; Paul Kettrick; Jack Orr
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received during the financial year relating to Property Management & Development. This measure is reviewed on a monthly basis and the data for this indicator is extracted from the customer relationship management system (CRM). The complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers by the service management team. Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	9
Current Target:	3
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:
The service received two complaints in Q1, 2018/19 and nine Complaints in Q2. Of those nine complaints received only five where allocated to Property Management & Development. Four were incorrectly logged. These should have been for Construction Services and Operational Services. These were removed from PM&D and reallocated (out with the reporting period).

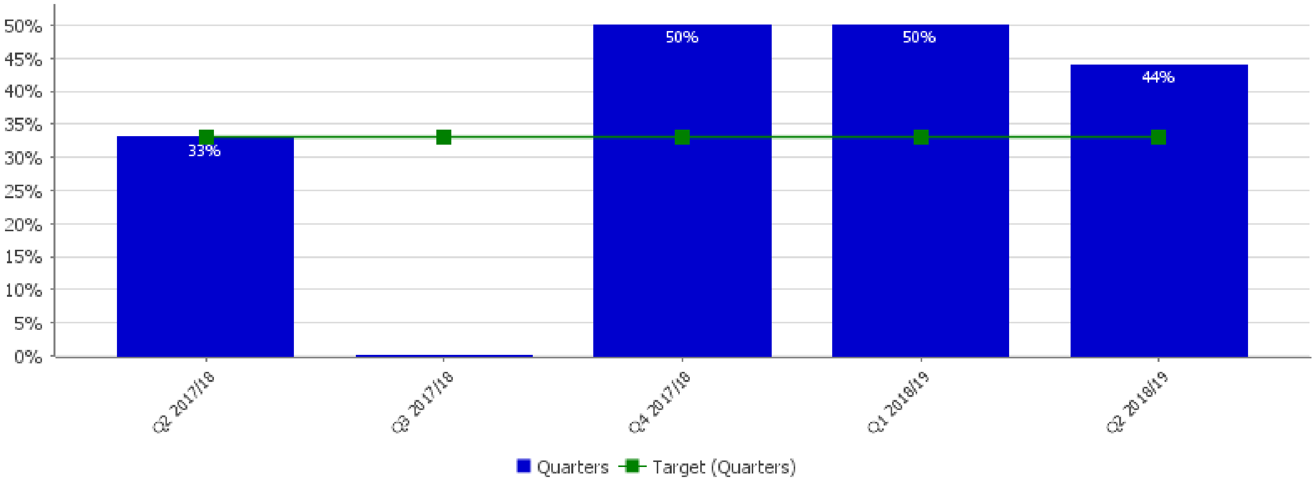
Regarding the increase from three (Target) to five (Outcome) for Q2 2018/19 is not related to a specific cause.
Of the five complaints that relate to Property Management and Development, three were 'Not Upheld', one was 'Party Upheld' relating to the failure to send a stage 2 notification email. One was 'Upheld' in relation to a piece of signage accidentally left up on the footpath near West Calder High School by the contractor.

The service received four complaints in Q1, 2017-18. Three complaints in Q2, 2017-18. Two complaints in Q3. 2017-18. Two complaints in Q4. 2017-18.

The target for 2018/19 remains at three complaints per quarter.

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(s):	zPMD_PIAdmin; Paul Kettrick
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of Property Management and Development 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 the customer relationship management system (CRM)The Complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers by the service management team each month.		

The percentage of complaints received by Property Management and Development that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	44%
Current Target:	33%
Red Threshold:	67%
Amber Threshold:	34%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>

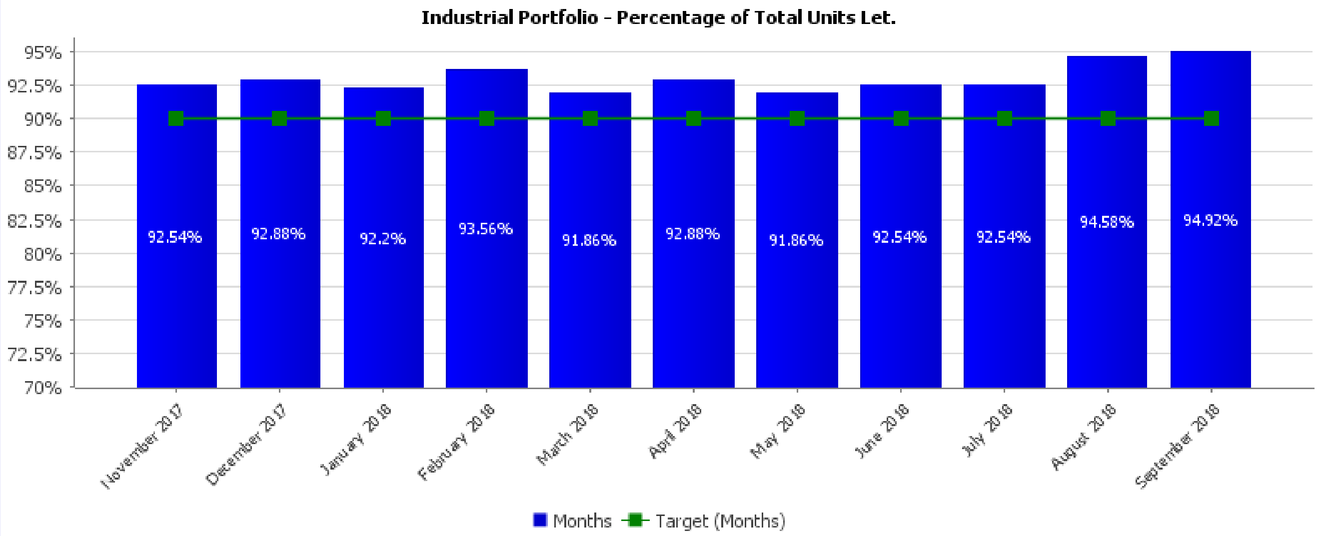
The service received two complaints in Q1, 2018/19, of which one was partly upheld. Four of the nine complaints received were upheld or partially upheld in Q2. However four of those nine complaints where incorrectly logged and reallocated accordingly including two that where upheld. Procedures are now in place to ensure this error doesn't re-occur going forward.

The service received four complaints in Q1, 2017-18, none were upheld or partly upheld. One of the three complaints received was upheld or partially upheld in Q2. None of the two complaints received was upheld or partially upheld in Q3, 2017-18. Q4 2 complaints received, one was partly upheld.

Investigation shows that these complaints that are upheld or partly upheld are no relation to each other and show no patterns or trends. As a result of this the figures for this indicator can fluctuate quite drastically depending on the number of complaints received during each quarter.

The quarterly target for 2018-19 will remain at 33% as this target was breached the previous two quarters and the service is working to bring this indicator back to acceptable levels.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:PMD161_9b.1a Industrial Portfolio - Percentage of Total Units Let.**		
Description	This performance indicator is part of the performance scorecard for the council's asset management strategy and will contribute to outcome 5 utilisation. This is one of three Performance Indicators (PI) that record the occupancy levels of the major parts of the council's Tenanted Non-Residential Property (TNRP) portfolio, i.e. those properties that the council owns but does not occupy itself, and which are leased to third parties. This PI is based on 300 industrial units. The calculation of the PI was reviewed in April 2010 to ensure it's comparability with PI's produced by our benchmarking partners in other local authorities, and again in August 2015 to reflect changes in the portfolio. The base figure primarily consists of properties that are let on short term agreements, where occupancy levels are expected to be more volatile. Targets are reviewed annually in April and take account of the economic climate, the property market, and our rental income target, with the objective of maximising occupancy levels. More details on the council's portfolio can be found on http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/2494/Land-and-Property	**PI Owner(s):**	zPMD_PIAdmin; Paul Kettrick



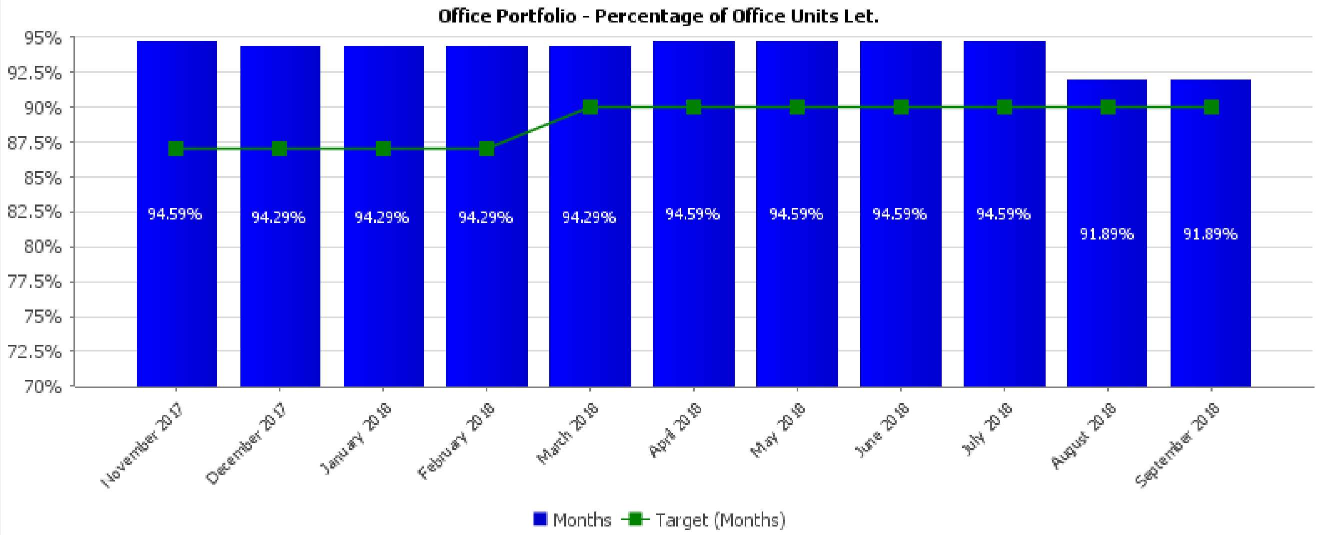
Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	94.92%
Current Target:	90%
Red Threshold:	81%
Amber Threshold:	85.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Development and Transport; PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

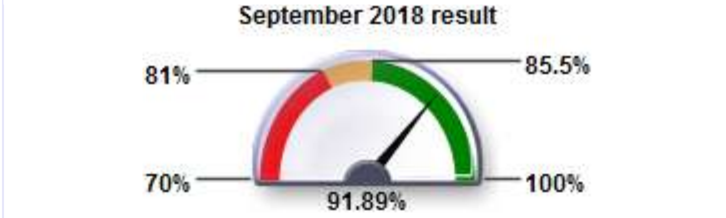
Trend Chart Commentary:
Occupancy for this month (November 2018) is 94. 24% and is at the top end of the 12 month range 91.86% to 94.94%. Occupancy levels are above target and have been relatively stable over the past 12 months. A number of larger size industrial units have come vacant. These take longer to re let and this is likely to affect the trend over the next six months.

The nature of most of the lease agreements - easy-in, easy-out, month to month - means that the occupancy level is particularly volatile. In previous years the performance has reflected the difficult conditions businesses faced in the economic recession, and occupancy fell regularly as a result of the credit crunch. Capital improvements have been undertaken over the past three years to preserve the income stream from the portfolio. We will continue to work on improving the appeal of our properties.

June 2018/19 target is set at 90% this allows us to maintain currently levels whilst investigating areas for improvements.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:PMD163_9b.1a Office Portfolio - Percentage of Office Units Let**
Description	This performance indicator is part of the performance scorecard for the council's asset management strategy and will contribute to outcome 5 utilisation. This is one of three Performance Indicators that record the occupancy levels of the major parts of the council's Tenanted Non-Residential Property (TNRP) portfolio, i.e. those properties that the council owns but does not occupy itself, and which are leased to third parties. This PI is based on 42 self contained offices, or suites in multi-occupancy buildings. The calculation of the PI was reviewed in April 2010 to ensure it's comparability with PI's produced by our benchmarking partners in other local authorities. The total also reflects recent changes in the portfolio (reviewed August 2015). Targets are reviewed annually in April and take account of the economic climate, the property market, and our rental income target, with the objective of maximising occupancy levels. More details on the council's portfolio can be found on http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/2494/Land-and-Property
PI Owner(s):	zPMD_PIAdmin; Paul Kettrick





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	91.89%
Current Target:	90%
Red Threshold:	81%
Amber Threshold:	85.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

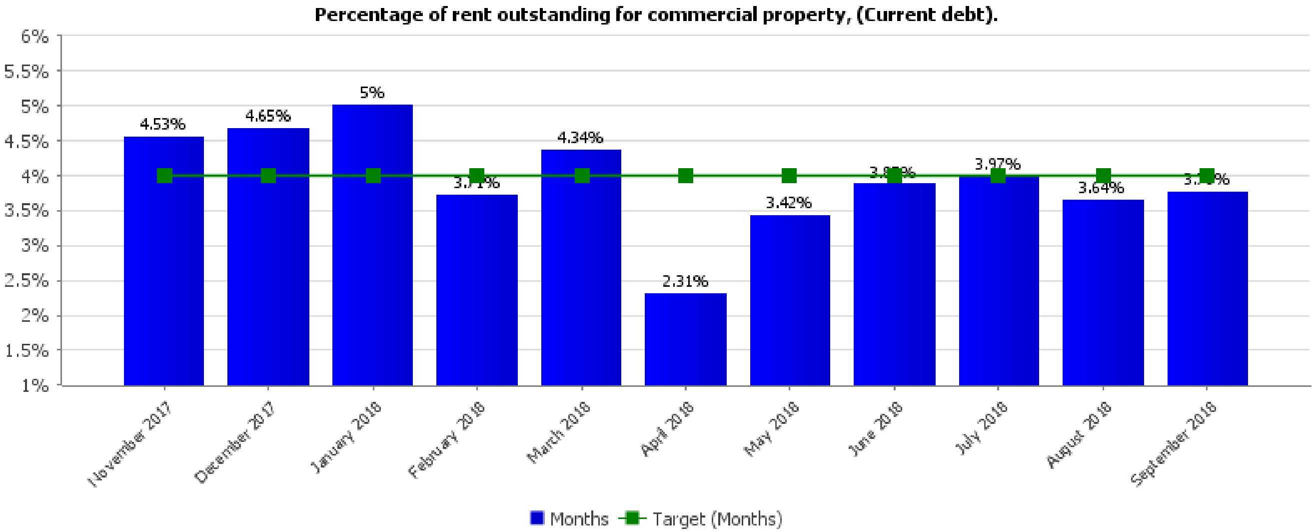
Trend Chart Commentary:

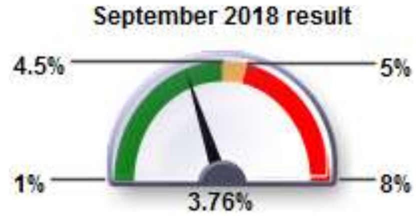
The 12 month range has been 91.89% to 95.59% and occupancy has been fairly stable. Where units do become void they are taking longer to re let compared to the shop and industrial properties, which is indicative of the weak office market.

The office market for larger suites in West Lothian continues to be challenging. A local commercial agent is assisting the marketing of the council's largest office void.

Target will be set at 90% going forward as over the past 12 month range the figures haven't dropped below 90%, by raising the target slightly will assist the team in maintaining currently levels.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:PMD164_9b.1c Percentage of rent outstanding for commercial property, (Current debt)**	**PI Owner(s):**	zPMD_PIAdmin; Paul Kettrick
Description	This Performance Indicator (PI) measures the amount of current debt from the council's Tenanted Non-Residential Property (i.e. commercial) portfolio. Current debt is considered to be rent due from an **existing tenant** that has been outstanding for over 30 days, expressed as a percentage of the total rental income billed. The portfolio comprises those properties that the council owns, but does not occupy for direct service delivery, and totals almost 700 properties, including shops, offices, and industrial units. Targets have been set in consultation with our benchmarking partners in other councils and reflect commercial levels. They are also considered against other council revenue income / debt levels.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	3.76%
Current Target:	4%
Red Threshold:	5%
Amber Threshold:	4.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

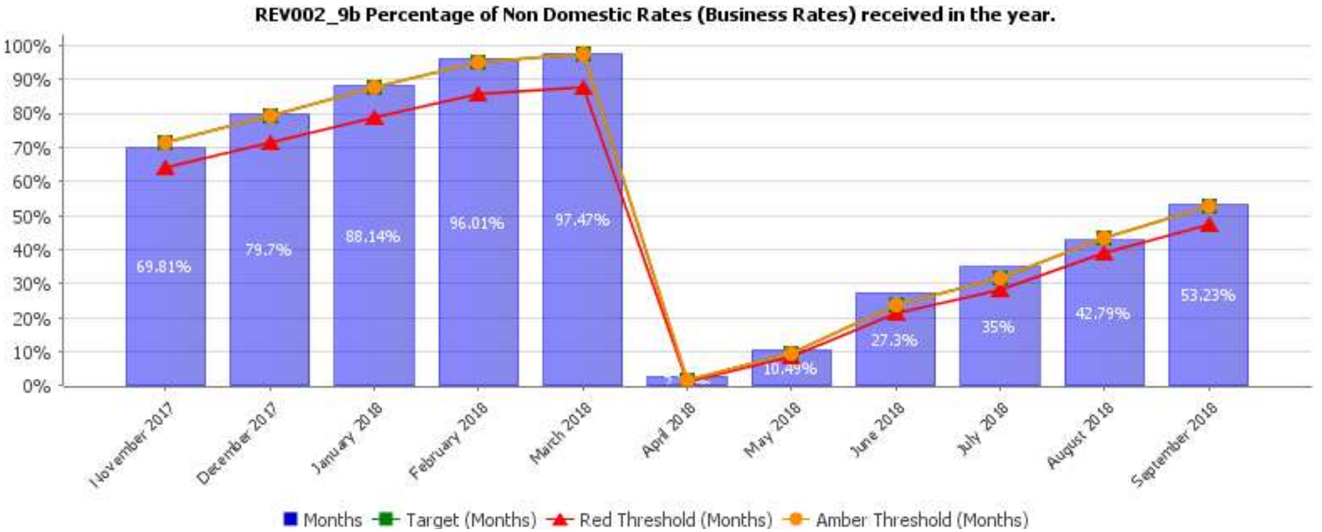
Trend Chart Commentary:

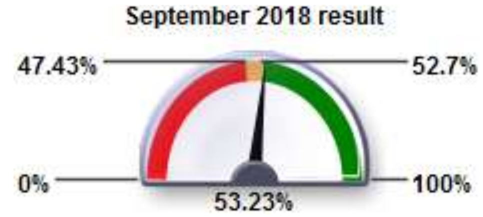
PM&D have established a debt recovery / rent arrears group led by the Corporate Estates Manager and involving other services (Revenues and Financial Management) to improve the recovery of debts. The council has a number of debtors already being progressed via Sheriff Officers.

Although the majority of payments are monthly, regular variations are to be expected from both quarterly and six monthly cycles, reflecting the timing and method of payment of rent by some tenants, i.e. where payments are for three or six month periods. This is particularly evident in older and longer leases where payments are not collected by Direct Debit, unlike the monthly payments. As a result we expect fluctuation after the annual, quarterly and six monthly payments become due. Internal and partner agreements are also regularly late in payment due to the "soft nature" of debt collection on these.

The target for October and November 2018/19 is set at 4% and reflects the unit targeting to improve these results in the future.

PI Code & Short Name	REV002_9b Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) received in the year	PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) received in the year. This indicator records the progress on a cumulative monthly basis.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	✓
Current Value:	53.23%
Current Target:	52.7%
Red Threshold:	47.43%
Amber Threshold:	52.7%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

This indicator shows the percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) collected cumulatively on a monthly basis for the current year. The cumulative collection target for 2018/19 has been reviewed and after taking in to account previous year performance, staffing levels and the impact of the ongoing impact of the 2017 revaluation has been set at 97.4%. The cumulative monthly target will be based on the collection rate achieved in the same month in the previous year as this will give us a guide on monthly performance against the end of year target.

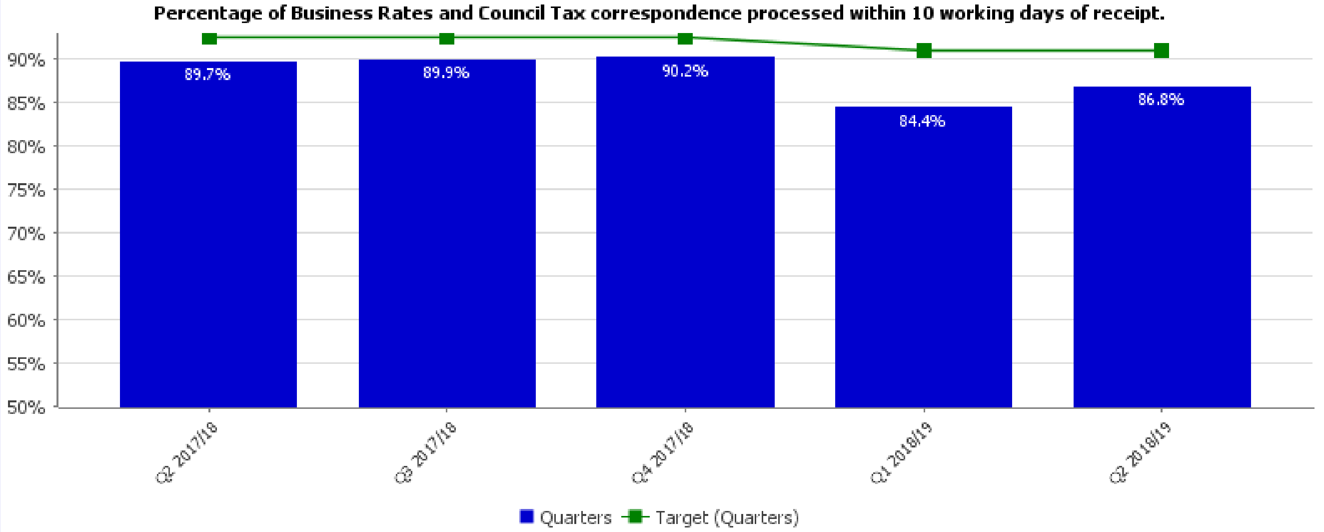
2018/19

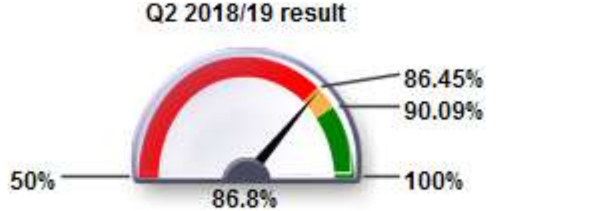
September 2018: In year collection is 0.53% above target. This increase was partly as a result of Final Notices being issued to all closed accounts for 2018 and the number of annual lump sum payments made in September.
August 2018: In year collection is 0.65% below target. Final Notices will be issued early September 2018 for all closed accounts and the annual lump sum payments are due by the end of September 2018. Additional resources will also be allocated to tasks to help improve the comparable monthly collection rate.
July 2018: In year collection has increased by 3.45%. This increase is partly as a result of some council liabilities being paid earlier than in previous years.
June 2018: In year collection has increased by 3.46%. This increase is partly as a result of some council liabilities being paid earlier than in previous years.
May 2018: In year collection is 1.08% above target.
April 2018: Customer payments for their Business Rates liability are not due until May 2018. The low collection for April 2018 is on trend.

2017/18

March 2018: In year collection is 0.29% above target. This has been attributed to the increase in intervention income.
February 2018: In year collection is 0.99% above target. A number of large payments were received in February 2018 following our intervention.
January 2018: In year collection is 0.39% above target. A number of large payments were received in January 2018 following our intervention.
December 2017: In year collection is 0.4% above target. The first sheriff officer file for 2017/18 debt was passed and a number of large payments were received in December 2017 following our intervention.
November 2017: In year collection is 1.90% below target. The first sheriff officer file for 2017/18 debt will be passed to them in December 2017 and a small number of large payments are outstanding.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV027_6b Percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax correspondence processed within 10 working days of receipt**
Description	This performance indicator is cumulative across the financial year. Where correspondence is received from customers in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax the aim is to process this correspondence within 10 working days of receipt.
PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid





Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	86.8%
Current Target:	91%
Red Threshold:	86.45%
Amber Threshold:	90.09%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

We have reviewed the target for 2018/19 and set it at 91%. This target has been set taking into account the increased number of properties and customer correspondence being received for both Council Tax and Business Rates as well as staffing levels within the Collection's Team.

2018/19

Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 was below target of 91% but improved by 2.4% from the previous quarter. 27,822 items of correspondence were processed with 24,163 processed within the target of 10 working days. This is an increase of 1,734 items of correspondence processed in this quarter against the same quarter last year. Although performance has improved from the previous quarter it remains below target due to an increase in correspondence received at a time when available staff resources were reduced due to maternity leave and the summer leave period. The increase in the level of correspondence received is mainly linked to those liable for Council Tax moving home.

Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 was below target of 91%. 13,702 items of correspondence were processed with 11,562 processed within the target of 10 working days. This is an increase of 551 items of correspondence processed in this quarter against the same quarter last year. Performance fell due to an increase in correspondence received at a time when available staff resources were reduced due to a vacancy and maternity leave.

2017/18

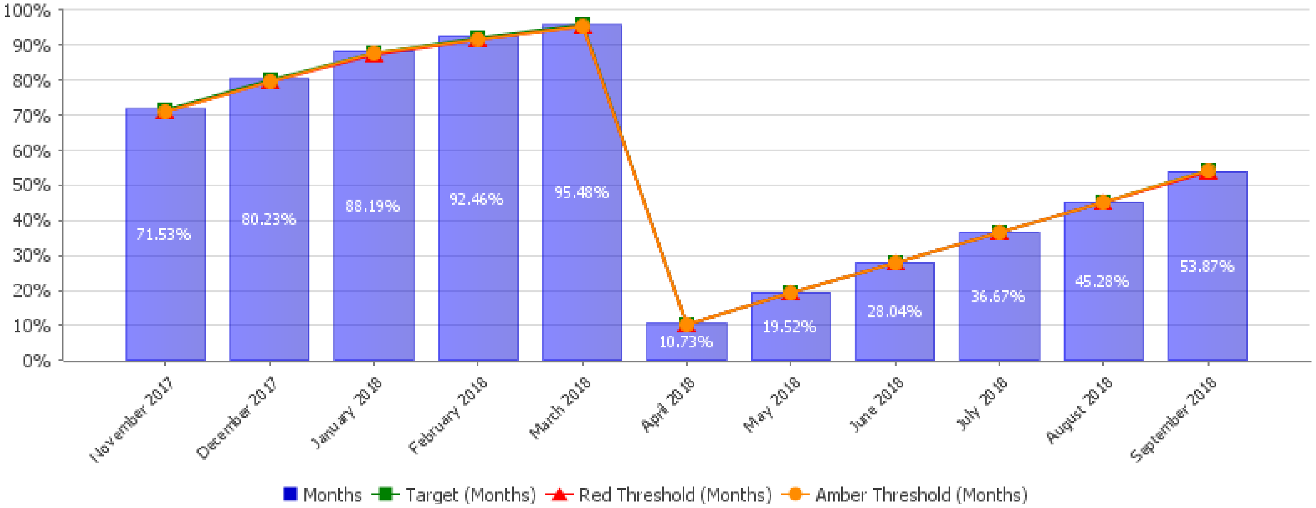
Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 increased to 90.2% against a target of 92.5%. 53,234 items of correspondence were processed with 48,043 within the target. There were 6,815 more items of correspondence received in quarter 4 2017/18 than in the same quarter in the previous year. Performance has improved from quarter 3 2017/18 but has not recovered fully from the drop in performance in quarter 2 2017/18.

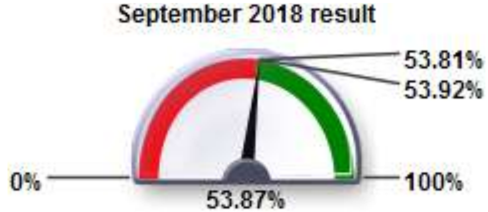
Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 increased to 89.9% against a target of 92.5%. 38,990 items of correspondence were processed with 35,049 within the target. There were 6,122 more items of correspondence received in quarter 3 2017/18 than in the same quarter in the previous year. This is partly due to the continued increase in customers reporting a change of address. Performance has improved in quarter 3 2017/18 but has not recovered fully from the drop in performance in quarter 2 2017/18.

Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 fell to 89.7% against a target of 92.5%. 26,088 items of correspondence were processed with 23,398 within the target.

PI Code & Short Name	**REV047_9b.1a Percentage of income collected in the current year from Council Tax.**
Description	This performance indicator measures the monthly cumulative percentage collected in the current year for Council Tax and enables the Revenues Unit to monitor performance in order to carry out any adjustments to achieve the target. Whilst recovery action to collect all previous year debt continues, in year collection is a recognised benchmark standard. The benchmark data for the in year collection is captured in the performance indicator SCorp 07.
PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid

REV047_9b.1a Percentage of income collected in the current year from Council Tax.





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	53.87%
Current Target:	54.08%
Red Threshold:	53.81%
Amber Threshold:	53.92%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

This indicator shows the percentage of Council Tax collected cumulatively on a monthly basis for the current year. The cumulative collection target for 2018/19 has been reviewed and after taking in to account previous year performance, staffing levels and the impact of the increased collection as a result of the implementation of Water Direct has been set at 95.4%. The cumulative monthly target will be based on the collection rate achieved in the same month in the previous year as this will give us a guide on monthly performance against the end of year target.

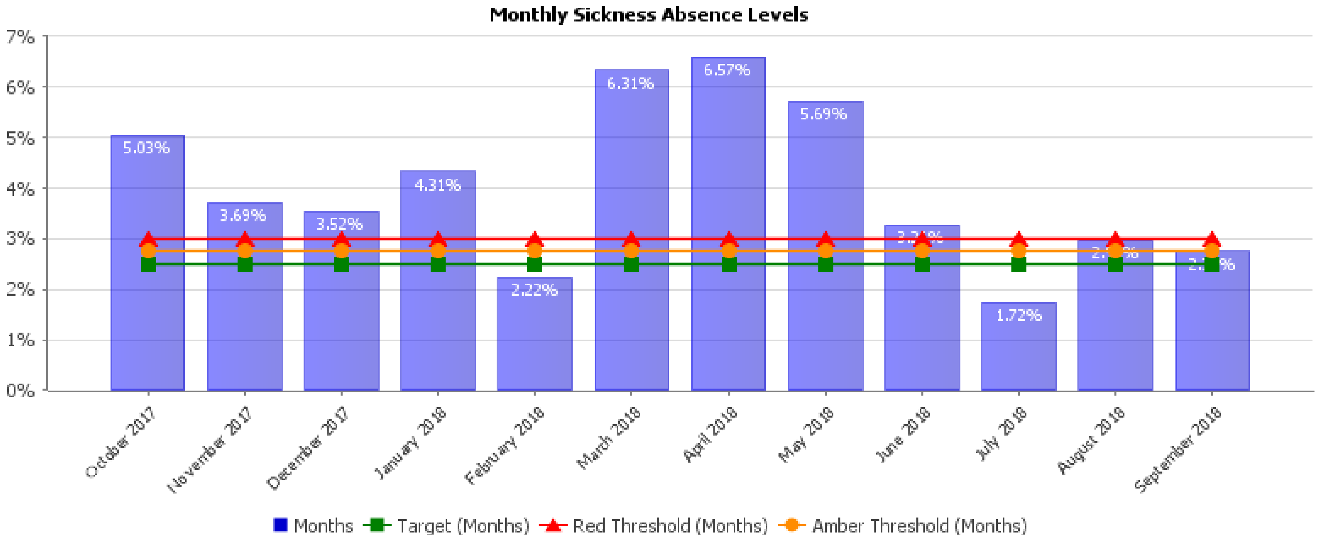
2018/19

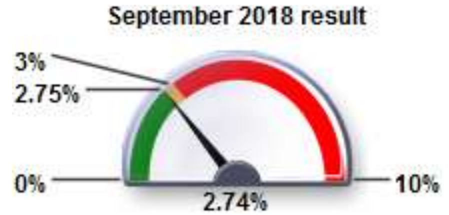
September 2018: In year collection is 0.21% below target. In comparison to last year there has been a drop in income from the DWP for Water Direct payments of approximately £50,000 and although the payments in relation to the council's liability for homeless and supported accommodation properties was authorised, payment allocation to the accounts was not processed before the end of September 2018.
August 2018: In year collection is 0.06% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the level of customers paying by direct debit.
July 2018: In year collection is 0.13% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.
June 2018: In year collection is 0.14% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.
May 2018: In year collection is 0.20% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.
April 2018: In year collection is 0.33% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.

2017/18

March 2018: In year collection is up 95.48% and 0.42% above target. The increase in collection has been attributed to increased income through the implementation of Water Direct and a high level of customers paying by direct debit.
February 2018: In year collection is up 92.46% and 0.67% above target. The increase in collection has been attributed to increased income through the implementation of Water Direct and a high level of customers paying by direct debit
January 2018: In year collection is up 88.19% and 0.50% above target. The increase in collection has been attributed to increased income through the implementation of Water Direct and a high level of customers paying by direct debit
December 2017: In year collection is up 80.23% and 0.52% above target. The increase in collection has been attributed to increased income through the implementation of Water Direct and a high level of customers paying by direct debit
November 2017: In year collection is 0.45% above target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the introduction of Water Direct and the increased level of customers paying by direct debit

PI Code & Short Name	REV048a_7b.1 Monthly Sickness Absence Levels	PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the levels of monthly sickness absence in the Revenues Unit. The monthly sickness statistics used for this performance indicator are recorded from data issued by HR services.		





Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	2.74%
Current Target:	2.5%
Red Threshold:	3%
Amber Threshold:	2.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

For 2018/19 the target across Finance and Property Services has been set at 2.5%.

2018/19

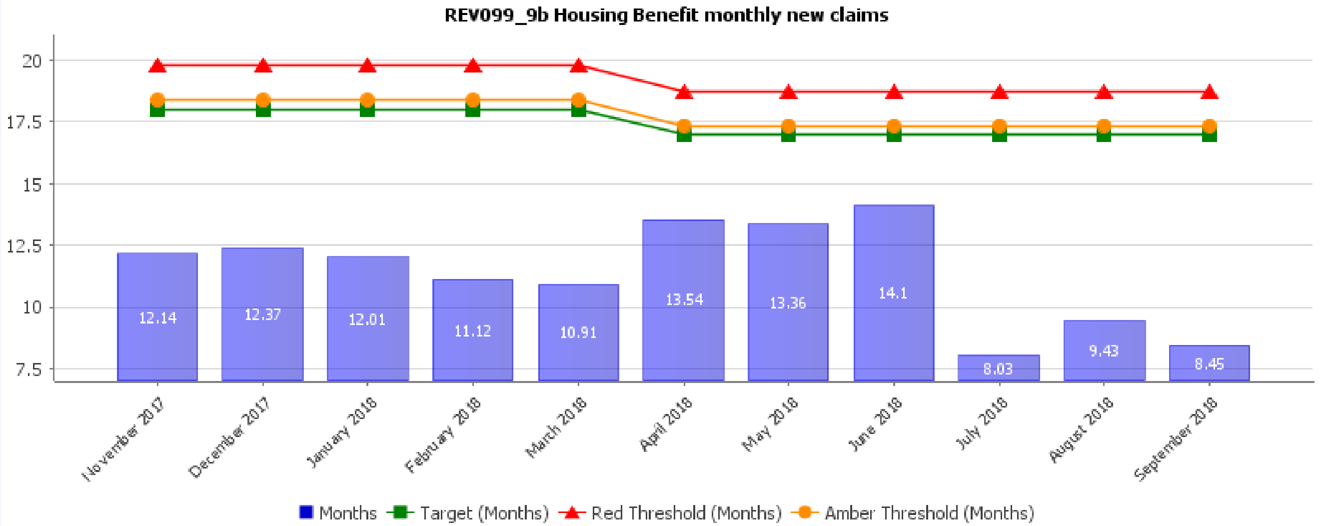
September 2018: Sickness absence levels for September 2018 reduced from the previous month. In September 2018 there were 55 sick days out of a possible 2,007 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 3.24% (173) days for August 2018.
August 2018: Sickness absence levels for August 2018 increased from the previous month. In August 2018 there were 62 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 3.19% (174) days for August 2018.
July 2018: Sickness absence levels for July 2018 decreased from the previous month. In July 2018 there were 36 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 2.02% (111) days for July 2018.
June 2018: Sickness absence levels for June 2018 decreased from the previous month. In June 2018 there were 66 sick days out of a possible 2,025 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
May 2018: Sickness absence levels for May 2018 decreased from the previous month. In May 2018 there were 119 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. Of the 119 sick days a total of 79 are attributed to long term absence and 40 for short term absence. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are above the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 4.89% (268) days for May 2018
April 2018: Sickness absence levels for April 2018 increased from the previous month. In April 2018 there were 133 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. Of the 133 sick days a total of 104 are attributed to long term absence and 29 for short term absence. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are above the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 4.09% (263) days for April 2018

2017/18

March 2018: Sickness absence levels for March 2018 increased from the previous month. In March 2018 there were 132 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
February 2018: Sickness absence levels for February 2018 decreased from the previous month. In February 2018 there were 42 sick days out of a possible 1,890days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
January 2018: Sickness absence levels for January 2018 increased from the previous month. In January 2018 there were 91 sick days out of a possible 2,111days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to

sickness absence monitoring.
December 2017: Sickness absence levels for December 2017 decreased from the previous month. In December 2017 there were 75 sick days out of a possible 2,130days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
November 2017: Sickness absence levels for November 2017 decreased from the previous month. In November 2017 there were 76 sick days out of a possible 2,062days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
October 2017: Sickness absence levels for October 2017 increased from the previous month. In October 2017 there were 108 sick days out of a possible 2,145days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.

PI Code & Short Name	REV099_9b Housing Benefit monthly new claims		
Description	This performance indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims on a monthly basis. The average number of days is calculated from the date of receipt of the application to the date that a decision is made. Receipt of a claim for Housing Benefit at any designated office will be the starting point at which the count for the processing time begins. The count for the processing time stops the day the decision is made. This data is gathered by the Single Housing Benefit Extract tool which reports to the Department for Work and Pensions on all data entered on the Housing Benefit processing system. This information allows management to monitor ongoing performance and to compare performance against other Local Authorities. The date that the SHBE is run differs from month to month and is set by the DWP, with the performance information being recorded against the month the data is gathered, regardless of the date of collection within the month.	PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Sandra Malloy



Last Updated:	September 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	8.45
Current Target:	17
Red Threshold:	18.7
Amber Threshold:	17.34
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for 2018/19 has been set at 17 days. The target has been reviewed and set based on last years performance and factoring in a number of changes that will impact the Benefit Team over the coming year. The main changes include the roll out of Universal Credit full service from May 2018 and the additional work that this will generate in the short term, additional work coming in to the team including the Verification of Earnings and Pensions project which will produce alerts to advise the team when a customers earnings or pension changes, and reduced staff resource going forward.

2018/19

September 18 - The number of days to process new claims remains well within target at 8.45 days.

August 18 - The number of days to process new claims remains well within target at 9.43 days. This is because we continue to priorities certain claim types due to the vulnerability of the tenants. This has a positive effect on the end to end processing times.

July 18 - Performance this month is significantly under target at 8.03 days, however, this is because we processed 86 housing benefit applications for bed and breakfast accommodation within 1 day which has had a positive impact on the overall end to end processing figures for this month.

June 18 - Performance this month has dipped slightly to 14.10 days. This is a result of the staff training that was delivered in preparation for the roll out of Universal Credit full service on 16 May 2018.

May 18 - Performance remains within target for May 18 at 13.36 days.

April 18 - Performance remains within target despite the additional work over the year end period; reduction in staffing numbers and staff leave over the Easter holiday period.

2017/18

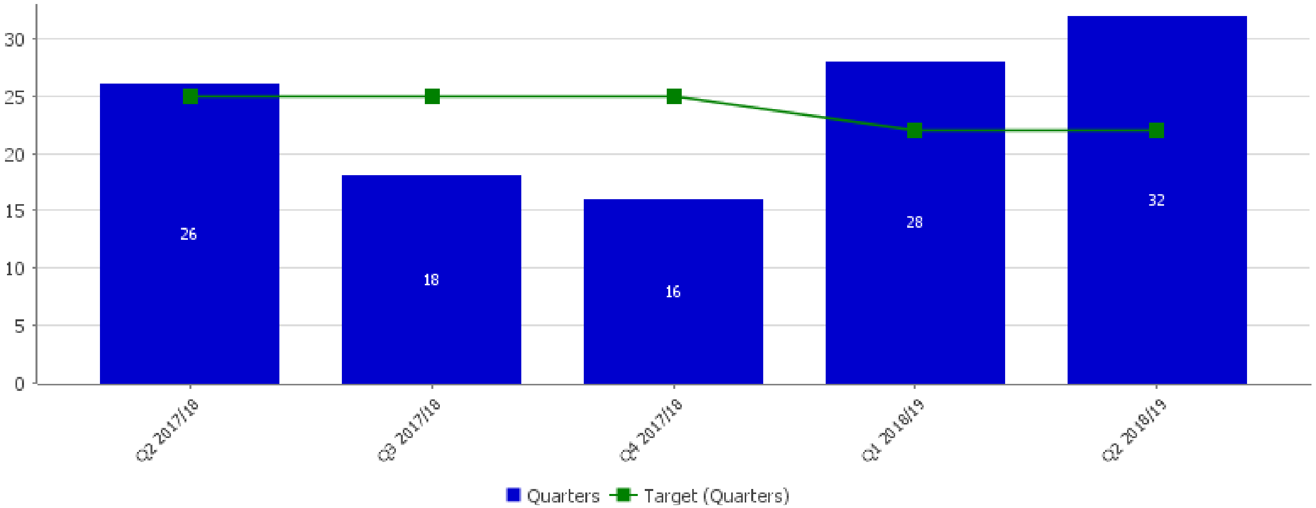
March 18 - Performance has improved to 10.91 days. This is the best performance recorded for this indicator.

February 18 - Performance has improved to 11.12 days which is a further improvement from last month and a new best ever performance.

January 18 - 12.01 days is our best reported performance for this indicator. Previous initiatives and improvements that we have put in place are continuing to deliver positive results. December 17 - Performance remains within target for November at 12.37 days.

PI Code & Short Name	**REV122_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Revenues Unit**	PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator (PI) measures the combined level of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received.		

Total number of complaints received by the Revenues Unit



Q2 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	32
Current Target:	22
Red Threshold:	28
Amber Threshold:	26
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

We have reviewed the target for 2018/19 and set it at 22 complaints received. This target has been set taking into account previous years' performance.

2018/19

Quarter 2: 32 complaints were received during this quarter. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information. Although the number of complaints increased in this quarter 75% of complaints were not upheld.

Quarter 1: 28 complaints in total were received during this quarter. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information. Although the number of complaints increased in this quarter only 2 complaints were partially upheld or upheld.

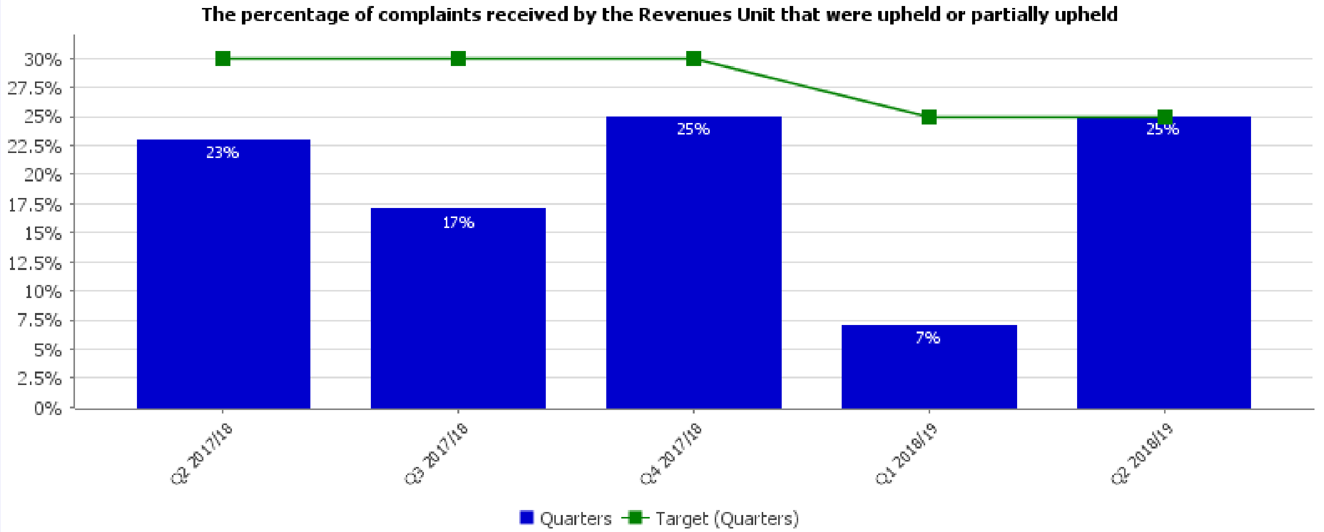
2017/18

Quarter 4: 16 complaints in total were received during this quarter. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information.

Quarter 3: 18 complaints in total were received during this quarter. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information.

Quarter 2: 26 complaints were received during this quarter, however this PI remains on target overall after the first 2 quarters of this year. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information.

PI Code & Short Name	REV123_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Revenues Unit that were upheld or partially upheld	PI Owner(s):	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator (PI) measures service failure of the combined level of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints shown as a percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld against the total number of complaints received.		



Last Updated:	Q2 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	25%
Current Target:	25%
Red Threshold:	27.5%
Amber Threshold:	25.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:
We have reviewed the target for 2018/19 and set it at 25% of complaints received were upheld or partially upheld. This target has been set taking into account performance in the previous year.

2018/19

Quarter 2: 7 of the 32 (22%) complaints received this quarter were upheld and another 1 (3%) was part upheld. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information. We are below the council average for quarter 2 2018/19 which was 51.8% of complaints were upheld or part upheld.

Quarter 1: 2 of the 28 (7%) complaints received this quarter were part upheld. We are below the council average for quarter 1 2018/19 which was 55% of complaints were upheld or part upheld.

2017/18

Quarter 4: 4 of the 16 complaints (25%) received this quarter were upheld or part upheld. 3 were upheld and 1 part upheld. We are below the council average for quarter 4 2017/18 which was 43% of complaints were upheld or part upheld.

Quarter 3: 2 of the 18 complaints received this quarter were upheld. 1 was part upheld.

Quarter 2: 5 of the 26 complaints received this quarter were upheld. 1 was part upheld.

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2018 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2018)

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report on the management of sickness absence in the council over the period 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018 together with a brief commentary on the early application of the new Policy and Procedure on Supporting Attendance at Work.

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 2018/19 at the start of the first quarter of the year was higher than it has been in any of the last 3 years (other than for June 2018 when it dipped marginally below the June 2017 figure).
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 Executive on 26 June 2018 approved a Policy and Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work which replaced the former Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence with effect from 1 September 2018.

This report covers the 5 month period from 1 April 2018 to 31 August 2018 when the former policy was in operation and the month of September when the new policy became effective.

D.2 SICKNESS ABSENCE RATES

Standard Performance Indicator – Council Wide

The sickness absence Standard Performance Indicator (SPI) for the full council for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018 (2018/19) is set out at Appendix 1 of this report together with the SPI performance indicators for the full years (2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18).

The SPI for September 2018 is 4.99%, which is marginally lower than at the same point in 2017 (5.22%). A total of 4655 employees were absent from work for the previous rolling 12 months.

Standard Performance Indicators – Services

The sickness absence SPI for each service area (figures for teaching and non-teaching staff shown separately), for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 September 2018 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), four reported sickness absence rates above the council target of 3.6% (CE Support, Finance & Property, Housing Customer & Building Services, Operational Services, and Social Policy).

Corporate Services (1.81%), Education Services (2.95%) and Planning & Economic Development (2.60%) are the only services reporting below the Council target of 3.6%.

A history of the last 3 years SPI's per service are attached as Appendix 3.

Long-Term/Continuous Absence (1 April 2018 – 30 September 2018)

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'. In the Supporting Attendance at Work Policy this is referred to as continuous absence as in paragraph 5.7.'

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 3,105 days lost in CEO Support, Finance & Property 2,211 (71.24%) is attributable to long-term/continuous absence and were accounted for by 64 employees.

- Of the total number of 13,557 days lost in Housing, Customer & Building Services, 10,555 (77.86%) is attributable to long-term/continuous absence and were accounted for by 249 employees.

- Of the total number of 27,497 days lost in Operational Services, 22,708 (82.58%) is attributable to long-term/continuous absence and were accounted for by 518 employees.

- Of the total number of 21,213 days lost in Social Policy 17,404 (82.04%) is attributable to long-term absence and were accounted by 435 employees.

The average percentage days lost due to long term absence across the four services was 80.89%. The average percentage of sick days lost due to long term absence across the council as a whole was 76.89%. The average length of long-term absence during the period was 74 days with the longest absence lasting 260 days.

Disregarded Absences (1 April 2018 – 31 August 2018)

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 automatic disregard 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 they should progress to the relevant stage of the sickness absence procedure.

From 1 April 2018 to 31 August 2018, of all days lost to sickness absences, 17.47% were disregarded under this provision; however, these days lost still count towards the sickness absence SPI. A total of 104 employees' absences were disregarded. From 1 September 2018 disregarded absences are no longer available.

The three most common reasons for disregarded absences in the quarter are Surgery (45.17%), Mental & Behavioural (14.27%) and Accidents & Injuries (10.01%),.

The average length of a disregard absence was 20 days, with the longest period of absence lasting 104 days.

Analysis of Categories of Absence (1 April 2018 – 30 September 2018)

The most common reason for long-term/continuous absence across the council during the period fell within the category of Mental and Behavioural (26,671 days).This category constituted 24.53% of all long term absence and 27.60% of all absences for the period (long/continuous and short/intermittent).

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

- Musculoskeletal (15,087 days) constituting 13.58% of all long-term absence and 15.61% of all absence

- Surgery (9,108 days) constituting 8.10% of long-term absence and 9.43% of all absences.

- Accidents, Injuries and Poison (8,489 days) constituting 7.21% of all long-term absence and 8.79% of all absence.

- Neoplasms (3,754 days) constituting 3.80% of all long-term absence and 3.89% 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 30 September 2018, compared to the previously reported positions.

Table 1

	Counselling/ Informal Review Meeting	**Stage 1**	**Stage 2**	**Total**
Total at 30 September 2018	346	438	293	1077
Total at 30 September 2017	590	515	225	1330
Total at 30 September 2016	1022	488	180	1690

A breakdown of live cases as at 30 June 2018 is set out in Table 2.

Table 2

	Counselling/ Informal Review Meeting	**Stage 1**	**Stage 2**	**Total**
Cases on going from 30 June 2018	304	374	267	945
New cases since 30 June 2018	42	64	26	132
Total	**346**	**438**	**293**	**1077**

ii) Other Support Initiatives

Occupational Health Contract

It is proposed that the council's current Occupational Health Contract will go out to tender in December 2018 with the implementation of the new contract on 1 June 2019. Discussions have taken place with West Lothian College with a view to considering a shared agreement for occupational services including counselling and physiotherapy.

HR Adviser Input – Management Meetings

During Quarter 2 (2018/19) six of nine service areas in receipt of targeted input and support from Human Resources reported reductions in overall sickness absence levels.

Employee Assistance Programme

An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is currently being trialled in the council and will run for seven months (introduced on 1 November 2018).

An EAP is a telephone based counselling services which is available 24/7, accessible at any location at any time via a free telephone number. Instant access is provided to a trained counsellor and a discussion can take place to determine the most appropriate intervention(s) i.e. structured telephone counselling, referral for face to face counselling, referral to other services etc.

This option supplements the 'face-to-face' consultation service already provided.

Healthy Working Lives

The Healthy Working Lives Winter Programme ran from 5 – 10 November 2018. A wide range of health information was made available to council employees at St David House, West Lothian Civic Centre, Kirkton Service Centre, Whitehill Service Centre and Strathbrock Partnership Centre.

This year the programme focused on *"Love to Ride"* which runs various campaigns to encourage more people to cycle. The programme also featured *"Macmillan at West Lothian",* for those affected by cancer as well as the "*Steps in Work*" challenge which invites employees in groups to undertake the most steps in a week.

The council has retained the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award accreditation for another year.

D.4 INTRODUCTION OF NEW POLICY FOR SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE AT WORK

The Policy for Supporting Attendance at Work Policy approved by the Council Executive on 26 June 2018 was implemented on 1 September 2018.

To support the rollout of the new policy 20 managers training sessions were delivered to more than 600 participants following completion of an accompanying e-learning module before they attended.

In accordance with the recommendations set out in the Council Executive report on 26 June 2018, a programme of monthly meetings with the trade unions (Teaching and Non-Teaching) has been put in place that are scheduled until September 2019. Discussions in those meetings focus on the application of the new policy and the supportive measures that can be put in place to improve levels of attendance at work.

Given that the new policy has only been in operation since from 1 September 2018 it is still too early to assess the longer term impact of the policy. However, one of the key changes brought about under the new policy is the discontinuation of the provision in the former policy for certain sickness absences to be automatically disregarded (referred to earlier at D2 of this report). Instead, the new policy provides for wider management discretion to be exercised not to progress an employee to the next formal stage of the procedure in extenuating circumstances where certain criteria is met.

Human Resources are responsible for monitoring the consistency of application of discretion across council services and in this regard, since the introduction of the new policy out of 21 cases considered, 13 have resulted in discretion being applied.

The application of the new policy will continue to be monitored and progress reported back to the Panel on a quarterly basis in the normal manner. In addition, the application of the new policy will be subject to review after 12 months (September 2019) and the outcome reported back to the Council Executive.

E. CONCLUSION

The level of sickness absence in the authority for the first quarter of 2018/19 continues the upward trend evident over the last 5 years. However, the expectation is that the introduction of the new Policy for Supporting Attendance at Work will better support the reduction of sickness absence across the Council and begin to reverse that trend.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence
- Policy & Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work

Appendices/Attachments: 3

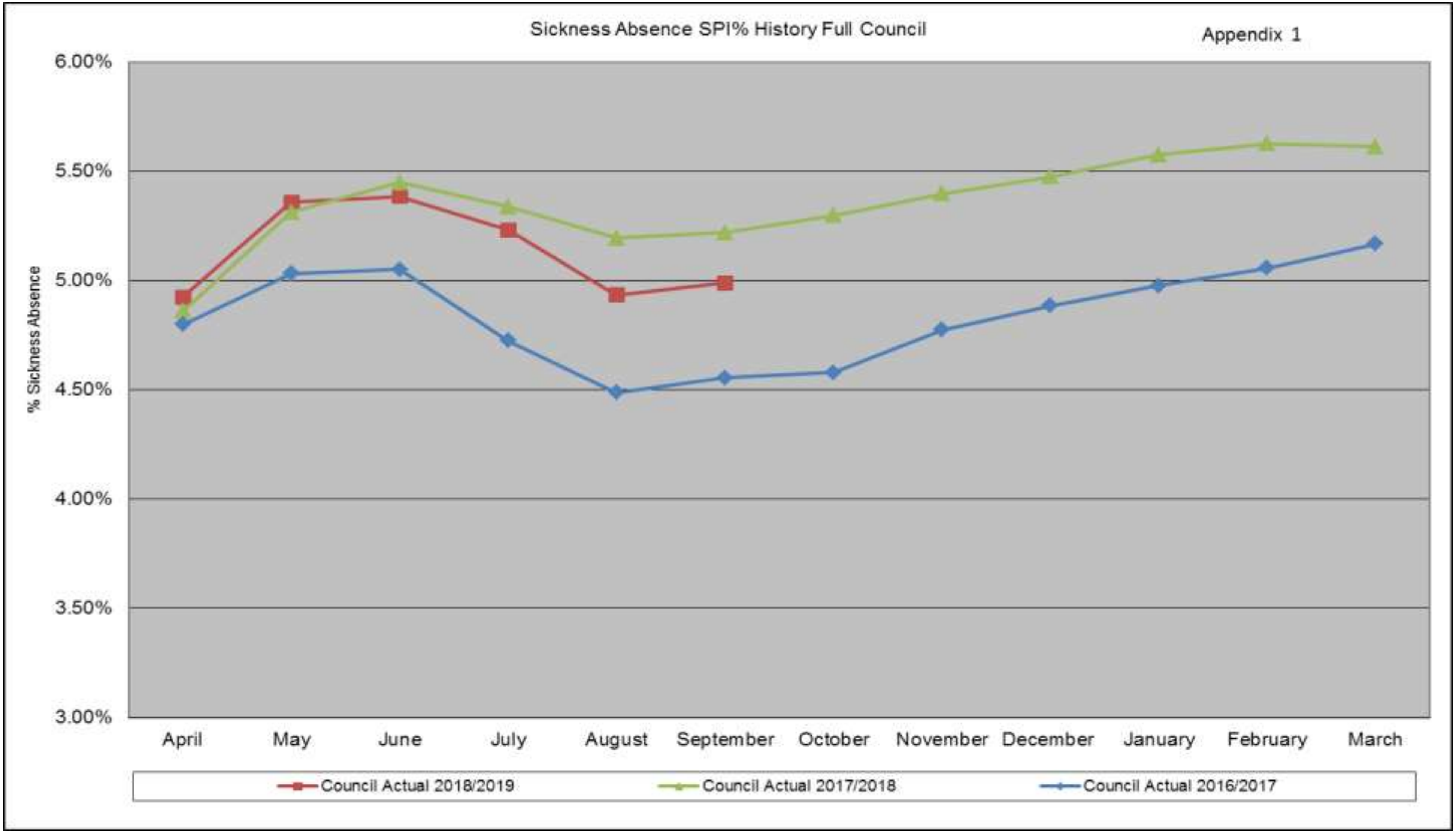
1. Sickness Absence SPI% History – Full Council
2. Sickness Absence SPI% all services – 2018/19
3. Sickness Absence SPI% History - Services

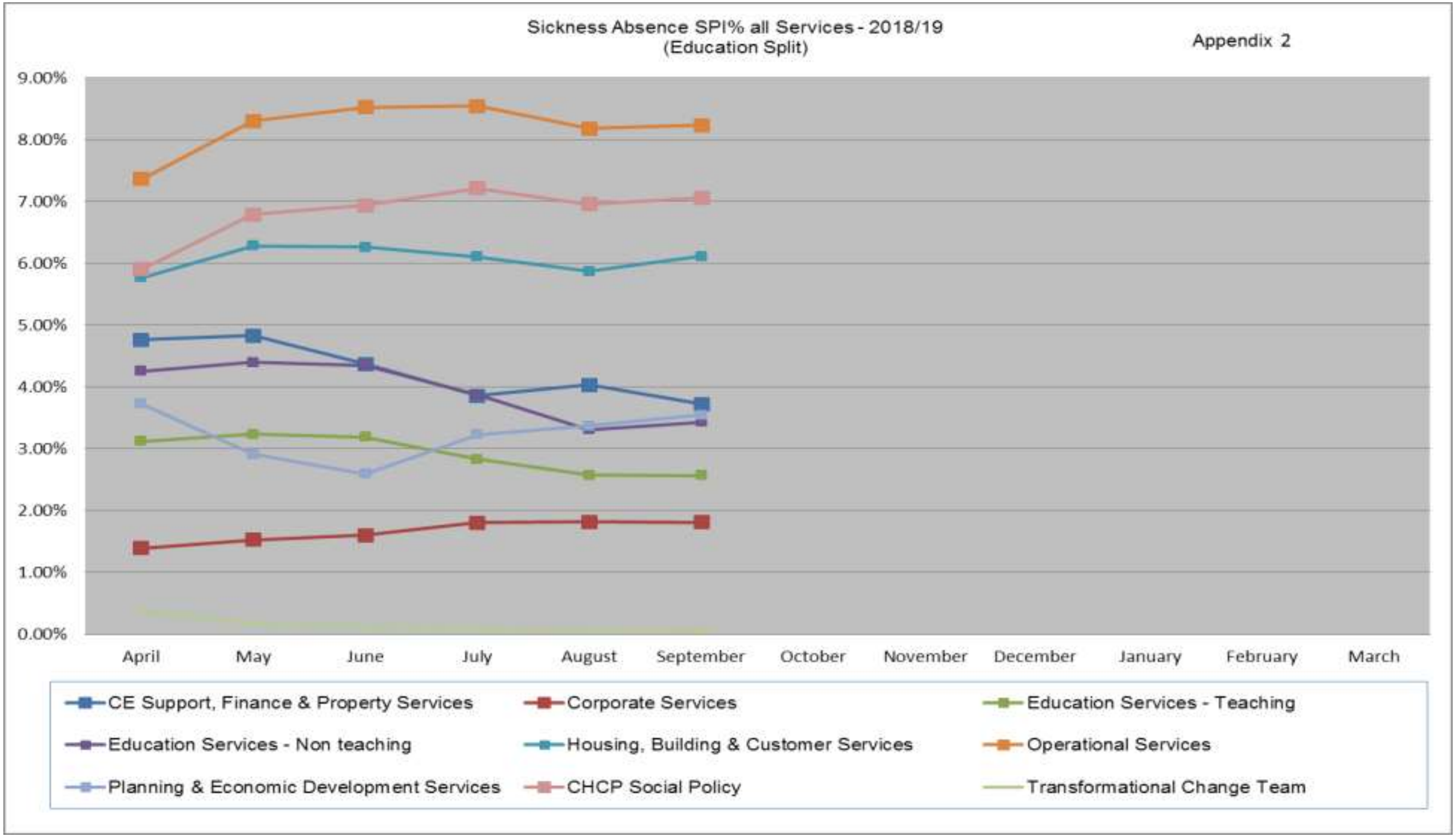
Contact Person: Fraser Mackenzie, HR Manager – Policy & Advice (01506 281422)

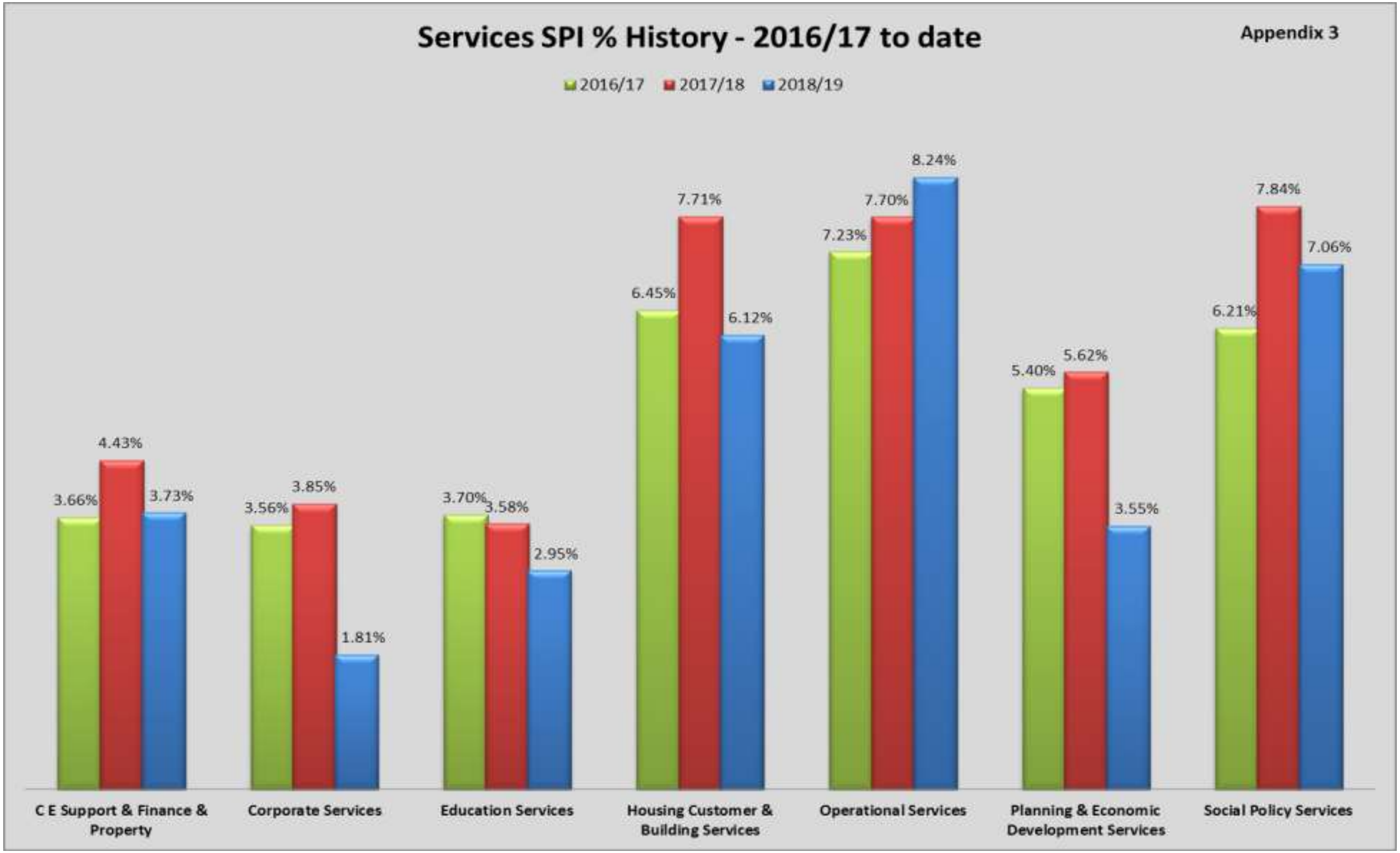
Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Date: 7 December 2018


Sickness Absence SPI% History Full Council
Appendix 1
% Sickness Absence
6.00%
5.50%
5.00%
4.50%
4.00%
3.50%
3.00%
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December
January
February
March
Council Actual 2018/2019
Council Actual 2017/2018
Council Actual 2016/2017


Sickness Absence SPI% all Services - 2018/19
(Education Split)
Appendix 2
9.00%
8.00%
7.00%
6.00%
5.00%
4.00%
3.00%
2.00%
1.00%
0.00%
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December
January
February
March
CE Support, Finance & Property Services
Corporate Services
Education Services - Teaching
Education Services - Non teaching
Housing, Building & Customer Services
Operational Services
Planning & Economic Development Services
CHCP Social Policy
Transformational Change Team


Services SPI % History - 2016/17 to date
Appendix 3
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
3.66%
4.43%
3.73%
3.56%
3.85%
1.81%
3.70%
3.58%
2.95%
6.45%
7.71%
6.12%
7.23%
7.70%
8.24%
5.40%
5.62%
3.55%
6.21%
7.84%
7.06%
C E Support & Finance & Property
Corporate Services
Education Services
Housing Customer & Building Services
Operational Services
Planning & Economic Development Services
Social Policy Services

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

BSL (BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE) LOCAL PLAN FOR WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL 2018-2024

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present for consideration a draft BSL Local Plan 2018 – 2024 for West Lothian Council.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel note and provide comment upon the content of the draft BSL Local Plan 2018 – 2024 for West Lothian Council which is intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 An initial Integrated Relevance Assessment has been completed with regards to the Draft Plan.
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 respond to local people's needs
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Ring-fenced funding from the Scottish Government of £11,000 has been allocated to West Lothian Council to assist with the implantation of the BSL Plan.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Partnership and resources PDSP 7 December 2018

VIII	**Other consultations**	Pan Lothian consultation involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups. West Lothian council specific consultation event involving council officers and partner organisations.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 22 October 2015. This legislation sets out ambitious plans to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit. The Scottish government published the National British Sign Language (BSL) Plan in October 2017.

The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 requires that all 'listed Authorities' in Scotland must produce an Authority Plan (local plan) demonstrating how they will work towards implementing the national plan and improving services for BSL users throughout the area.

The Council, as a listed authority, is required to have a local BSL plan in place by the end of 2018.

BSL Local Plan for West Lothian Council

West Lothian Council is required to consult on a draft plan and those to be consulted are to be those who the authority considers are likely to be directly affected by the Authority Plan or otherwise to have an interest in that plan and in particular are to include:

(a) persons who use BSL, and

(b) persons who represent users of BSL.

The Council is required to produce a BSL and English version of both the draft and final plan. The ring-fenced budget allocated by the Scottish Government will assist with this and the delivery of actions contained within the final plan.

In February 2018 West Lothian Council participated in a Pan Lothian consultation event involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups.

This was followed up in June 2018 with a West Lothian Council specific consultation event. This involved council officers from across service areas and partner organisations. West Lothian residents who use BSL took part to tell us what they would like in the plan.

Based on the consultation events held and the feedback received a draft plan was produced and published for consultation on the Council website from 3rd September to 21 September 2018.

The draft BSL Local Plan 2018 – 2024 for West Lothian Council, which is attached as an Appendix to this report, follows the format of the National Plan and sets out an ambitious suite of actions which will improve the way BSL users find out about and access council services.

E. CONCLUSION

The council recognises the need to deliver services that meet the needs of the diverse communities of West Lothian whilst ensuring legislative compliance. In consultation with BSL users and the deaf community of West Lothian a local plan has been developed that will support progress towards making West Lothian the best place for BSL users and the deaf community to live, work and visit..

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015
- Scottish Government consultation on British Sign Language National Plan

Appendices/Attachments: 1

- BSL (British Sign Language) Local Plan West Lothian Council

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Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

7 December 2018

West Lothian Council

British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan

2018-2024

Prepared under the British Sign Language (BSL) (Scotland) Act 2015

Contents

SECTION 2:

2.1 Introduction

The Scottish Government wants to make Scotland the best place in the world for British Sign Language (BSL) users* to live, work and visit. This means that people whose first or preferred language is BSL will be fully involved in daily and public life in Scotland, as active, healthy citizens and will be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives.

The British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 requires public bodies in Scotland to prepare and publish a BSL plan every six years, to set out how they will promote and support BSL. This is the first BSL Local Plan for West Lothian Council and sets out actions we will take over the period 2018-2024.

This BSL Local Plan follows the BSL National Plan published on 24 October 2017, which was developed through extensive consultation and engagement with Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them. It is framed around the same long term goals as the National Plan and sets out what we will do to support BSL users in West Lothian.

This Local Plan will link to our Strategic Commissioning Plans for all care groups to ensure we are meeting the needs of our diverse communities.

This Local Plan aims to protect and promote equal access to services and support for BSL users in West Lothian.

* Wherever we refer to 'BSL users' we mean D/deaf and/or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first or preferred language is BSL.

2.2 West Lothian in Context

West Lothian is a great place to live, work and do business, West Lothian Council aims to improve the quality of life and opportunities for all citizens. We are a top performing Council with a reputation for innovation, partnership working and customer focus.

The Council is central to the provision of services that affect people's everyday lives, for example, housing, education, libraries, leisure and benefits. We therefore recognise that all services provided by the Council need to reflect and consider the impact that they may have on equality. We aim to provide improved services that meet the needs and priorities of local communities.

West Lothian is the ninth largest local authority in Scotland serving a population of approximately 178,500, accounting for 3.3% of Scotland's population and one of the youngest and fastest growing in the country.

According to the last Census in 2011 there were 463 people living in West Lothian using BSL at home, 124 of those are under 18.

2.3 Consultation and Engagement

Consultation and engagement with the BSL users of West Lothian was key to the development of this Local Plan.

In February 2018 West Lothian Council participated in a Pan Lothian consultation event involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups.

This was followed up in June 2018 with a West Lothian Council specific consultation event. This involved council officers and Community Planning and other partner organisations and West Lothian residents who use BSL.

A draft Local Plan was developed based on the consultation and engagement undertaken and the draft plan was then available to view on the council's website in BSL and English.

The feedback from the consultation and engagement informed the final actions within this Local Plan.

SECTION 3

3.1 Executive Summary

The aim of the BSL Local Plan for West Lothian 2018-24 is to set out actions which will improve the way BSL users find out about and access our services. We will work more closely with the BSL users who are residents of West Lothian, so that they can inform us about their experiences and provide us with feedback to ensure we make our services more accessible.

The Local Plan will help us to work with the third sector partners we commission to make sure BSL users can access a range of services.

Below is a summary of some of the actions we plan to undertake:-

- Promote the use of the Scottish Governments nationally funded BSL Interpreting video relay services contactSCOTLANDBSL to employees and local BSL users as a means of making initial contact with West Lothian Council.

- Continue to support the Pan- Lothian Sensory Leads Group.

- Take forward advice developed by Education Scotland to:-
  a) Improve the way teachers engage effectively with parents who use BSL and

  b) Ensure that parents who use BSL know how they can be further involved in their child's education

- Improve recording systems within Education Services to enable us to determine how many BSL young people we have in our schools.

- Work with third sector providers and report on the number of BSL users who access their services.

- Increase our employees' awareness, knowledge and understanding of the deaf community, culture, language and service provision.

- Work with local BSL users and partners to develop systems and information to ensure our services are accessible.

SECTION 4:

BSL Local Plan for West Lothian

4.1: Across all our services

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users"

By 2024, we will:

- Analyse the existing evidence we have about BSL users in our organisation; so that we can establish baseline data and identify key gaps in information. We will use this information to focus resources on improving specific services and to measure progress of this plan.

- Increase employee awareness, knowledge and understanding of the deaf community, deaf culture, and language and service provision.

- Hold a central database of information relating to the BSL competencies and skills of our employees to help us focus training and development activities.

- Include a question in our equalities questionnaires/monitoring forms in relation to the use and understanding of BSL.

- Work with local deaf/deafblind organisations to develop a programme of training and awareness for front line employees and those who work directly with BSL users. Improve access to our information and services for BSL users including making our website more accessible to BSL users by:-

    - Working with local BSL users and partners to develop systems and information to ensure our services are accessible

    - Using the intranet and Internet to promote the use of the Scottish Government's funded BSL online interpreting video relay services contactSCOTLANDBSL to employees and to local BSL users.

    - Working with local residents who are BSL users to make the West Lothian Council website and other digital mediums more accessible.

4.2: Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"*The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL"*

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

- Provide staff training and information about BSL and deaf culture, and about the resources that are available in BSL, so that they can meet the needs of families with a D/deaf or deafblind child.

- Ensure families of D/deaf and deafblind children have access to nationally developed BSL resources.

- Promote Bookbug sessions that are available in West Lothian to D/deaf and deafblind families.

- Improve recording systems within Education Services to enable us to determine how many BSL young people we have in our schools and those young people who may have parents and / or guardians who are BSL users.

4.3: School Education

We share the long-term goal for school education set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"Children and young people who use BSL will get the support they need at all stages of their learning, so that they can reach their full potential; parents who use BSL will have the same opportunities as other parents to be fully involved in their child's education; and more pupils will be able to learn BSL at school"

By 2024, we will:

- Review the level of BSL knowledge and skills across our teaching and education support staff. This will enable us to complete competency assessments to identify and focus resources on areas of improvement and share good practice where it exists.

- Implement advice developed by Education Scotland to a)Improve the way teachers engage effectively with parents who use BSL and b) ensure that parents who use BSL know how they can be further involved in their child's education

- Contribute to the Scottish Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (SCILT) programme of work to support the learning of BSL in schools for hearing pupils as part of the 1+2 programme, including the sharing of best practice and guidance.

- Ensure that deaf parents/guardians have access to information in BSL. This includes report cards, parents evenings, routine information and to encourage their participation in Parent Councils.

4.4: Training, Work and Social Security

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland's economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career"

By 2024, we will:

- Ensure BSL speaking pupils and students are supported with appropriate and accessible information, advice and guidance about their career and learning choices and the transition process to these options.
- Work with partners both externally and internally who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability to help signpost them to specific advice on the needs of BSL users.
- Raise awareness locally of the UK Government's 'Access to Work' (AtW) scheme with employers and with BSL users (including those on Modern Apprenticeships) so that they can benefit from the support it provides
- Identify young people working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland.

4.5: Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

We share the long-term goal for health, mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives"

By 2024, we will:

- Signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL and b) contribute to the development of a directory of services across the Lothians for Deaf and hard of hearing residents.
- Work to improve the information available to BSL users regarding Psychological Services and ensure that these services and therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users.
- Take steps to improve access to information for BSL users about sport and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities.
- Ensure that any local work to tackle social isolation explicitly considers the needs of BSL users.
- Provide specialist assessment and support services for BSL users and people who are deaf until March 2019 together with interpretation duty sessions and equipment through a contract with an external provider until March 2019.
- Review the above provision and commission appropriate services to run from April 2019 in consultation with the BSL community.

4.6: Culture and the Arts

We share the long-term goal for culture and the arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"BSL users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of Scotland"

By 2024, we will:

- Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals.
- Encourage and support BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts.
- Increase information in BSL about culture and the arts on relevant websites and at venues.
- Improve access to the historical environment, cultural events and performing arts and film for BSL users.
- Explore the use of digital technology to enhance the experience of BSL users when visiting exhibitions and / or accessing museum collections.

4.7: Democracy

We share the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

"BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies"

Our Actions

By 2024, we will:

- Take opportunities to promote the Access to Elected Office Fund locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand for selection or election in local or Scottish Parliament elections.
- Support BSL users to participate in community engagement events.
- Raise awareness among Elected Members about contactSCOTLANDBSL.

Section 5:

Contact Information

If you would like more information about this plan please contact:

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BSL users can contact us via https://contactscotland-bsl.org/

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY (REVISED)

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present for the Panel's consideration, a revised draft Severe Weather Policy.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel;

a) Considers the revised draft Severe Weather Policy appended to this report with a view to submission to the Council Executive for approval,

b) Notes that the revised policy reflects the guiding principles for supporting employers and workers set out in Scottish Government's Severe Weather Fair Work Charter,

c) Notes that the revised policy will be supported by a programme of improved contingency planning measures and guidance for employees;

d) Notes that the revised policy provides discretion to the Chief Executive to over-ride the normal provisions of the policy during periods when a Red Weather Warning is issued;

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 council's existing Policy for Dealing with Disruptions to Normal Working Arrangements due to severe weather has been revised to take account of Red Weather Warning Events. An Integrated Equality Assessment has been undertaken to mitigate the risks for employees with disabilities, medical conditions, pregnancy etc.

III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	None
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	None
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None
VIII	**Other consultations**	The trade unions have been consulted on the revised draft policy.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

During the early part of 2018, the country experienced exceptionally severe winter weather causing considerable disruption to businesses, workers and the public in general and prompting a Red Weather Warning to be issued. While the council has in place arrangements for dealing with disruption caused by severe weather, the unprecedented harshness of the weather conditions on this occasion exposed some weaknesses of the current policy particularly in relation to the effectiveness of the supporting communication and contingency arrangements.

Following consideration of a motion at Full Council on 30 March 2018, the Council instructed the Chief Executive to ;

"*undertake a thorough review of communication procedures between managers and staff, engage with the recognised Trade Unions to establish clear lines of communication for adverse weather conditions and explore options in identifying ways to recognise staff who went above and beyond to attend work in such difficult weather conditions and undertake to bring a report to Partnership & Resources PDSP*"

A further amendment to the motion was also approved to include an instruction to the Chief Executive to *"undertake a review of the existing Severe Weather Policy"*

D.2 SEVERE WEATHER POLICY (REVISED PROVISIONS)

A review of the existing policy has resulted in the inclusion of a specific section relating to Red Weather Warnings and the contingency arrangements that should be invoked in these circumstances to ensure the safety and well-being of staff and the continuity of essential service delivery.

The review has also been informed by the *Severe Weather: Fair Work Charter* developed jointly by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) which provides a set of guiding principles to support employers and workers to plan for and manage the impact of severe weather.

Discussions have taken place with the recognised trade unions and a number of revisions to the policy have been made with a view to improving its effectiveness in dealing with extreme weather events. In particular there is an emphasis on the need for well communicated contingency arrangements to be in place especially where decisions are taken to close council buildings or where workplaces become inaccessible due to severe weather.

It has also been agreed that a list of post types deemed as ‘essential workers’ will be discussed with the recognised trade unions.

A further key change proposed is for the Chief Executive, in the exceptional event of a Red Weather Warning, to have discretion to over-ride the normal policy provisions which may include authorising the general application of special leave or crediting essential workers who attend work with their normal hours/pay during the period that the warning is in force.

A copy of the revised Severe Weather Policy is appended to this report.

E. CONCLUSION

The revised draft policy appended to this report supported by more proactive communication and contingency arrangements should enable the council to respond in a more robust and coordinated manner to periods of severe weather going forward. The policy also reflects the principles set out in the Scottish Government's Severe Weather: Fair Work Charter.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- Severe Weather : Fair Work Charter – Scottish Government

Appendices/Attachments: Revised Severe Weather Policy (Draft)

Contact Person: Fraser MacKenzie, HR Policy and Advice Manager, 01506 281422,
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Julie Whitelaw
Head of Corporate Services
7 December 2018

West Lothian Council

Severe Weather Policy

Approved by Full Council 18 October 2011
(Revised November 2018)

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

CONTENTS

SEVERE WEATHER POLICY

1 Purpose

1.1 This policy is designed to assist in maintaining continuity of service delivery during periods of severe weather and to provide employees with a range of options where adverse weather conditions prevent them from fulfilling their contractual obligation to attend work or comply fully with normal working arrangements.

1.2 The policy covers all council employees.

2 General Guidelines and Principles

2.1 The Chief Executive will invoke the terms of this policy according to the severity of the prevailing weather conditions and the impact on service delivery and normal working arrangements.

2.2 During periods of severe weather the council's priorities are to:

- ensure that essential council services are maintained, and
- ensure the safety and well-being of employees.

2.3 Employees have responsibility for ensuring their attendance at work and as such should not assume that they will automatically receive pay if they have been unable to attend work.

2.4 Whilst employees should not take unnecessary risks in attempting to get to work, they are expected to make every reasonable effort to report to their normal place of work at their normal start time. Employees should not interpret radio or television announcements that only essential journeys should be made as approval to remain at home. Contact must be made with the relevant line manager or other designated contact person to discuss the most appropriate course of action in the circumstances and/or agree to activate any pre-planned contingency arrangement.

2.5 Contingency plans should also include alternative arrangements for travelling to work such as using alternative means of transport, car sharing, public transport or walking where that is a reasonable and safe option taking into account individual personal circumstances and distance to travel. Contingency plans may also extend to agreeing arrangements with their line manager to work from a different council location or from home where such options are feasible.

3. Travel to Work Prevented or Disrupted

3.1 If despite all reasonable efforts, an employee is unable to attend their normal work location due to severe weather, he/she should contact their line manager, or if that manager is unavailable, the alternative designated contact person.

3.2 Contact must be made within one hour of an employee's normal start time (in the case of teaching staff, contact should be made prior to the start of the school day). Failure to notify the appropriate manager or designated contact without good reason will normally result in the absence being classed as unauthorised and unpaid. A Head of Service may accept late notification/approve absence retrospectively where it is accepted that mitigating or extenuating circumstances applied.

3.3 Weather conditions can change throughout the day and employees should continue to make efforts to attend work if the weather and/or transport conditions improve.

3.4 Where an employee is prevented from attending their normal place of work due to a day of severe weather, he or she may request to take annual leave, flexi leave (for those employees who participate in the council's Flexible Working Hours Scheme), unpaid leave or to make up the lost hours. Employees who have utilised their annual leave entitlement for that year, may request to bring forward a period of annual leave from the following year's entitlement. Similarly, employees who have insufficient flexi credit, may request flexi – leave to cover their absence on the condition that the time is worked back at a later date over a period agreed with their line manager.

3.5 In the event that weather conditions are sufficiently severe to prevent an employee from attending his or her place of work and the options outlined at 3.4 above are not feasible, the employee may make an application to the relevant Depute Chief Executive for special paid leave. When considering claims for special leave , the Depute Chief Executive will treat each request on its individual merits, taking full account of all relevant circumstances, including:

- Evidence to demonstrate that a contingency arrangement had been considered by the employee and their line manager and that it had either not been feasible or the contingency arrangement had ceased to be effective due to the prolonged severity of the weather;
- Did other employees living in the same locality report for work;
- The availability of public transport or alternative means of transport;
- The distance from the employee's home to their contractual workplace;
- Did the employee make contact at the earliest opportunity;
- Advice/guidance provided by and/or agreement reached with line manager;
- Safety advice and warnings given by the police regarding the state of the roads in a particular area;
- The employee's personal circumstances where relevant eg pregnancy, a medical condition or a disability which may affect their ability to travel to work during severe weather.

3.6 Where, having taken all relevant circumstances into account, the Depute Chief Executive feels it is not appropriate to grant special paid leave, the period of absence will be unpaid. Alternatively, an employee can, however, elect to take advantage of one of the other options set out in 3.4 above.

4. Temporary Variation to Normal Attendance Times

4.1 During periods of severe weather it may be appropriate for normal start and finish times to be varied.

4.2 There will be no deduction in pay for employees reporting for work after their normal attendance time due to severe weather provided that they comply with the notification requirements set out at 3.2 above.

4.3 When severe weather occurs or continues during the working day, managers should respond sensitively to requests from employees to leave work early in circumstances where they are likely to experience significant difficulty in getting home. This includes occasions where local conditions may be relatively settled but severe weather conditions elsewhere in the country have caused travel difficulties for individuals who commute to and from outlying areas. No deduction of pay will be made where employees are authorised to leave work before their normal finishing time in these circumstances.

4.4 It is important that when agreeing to requests to vary start and finish times due to severe weather, managers take care to ensure that there are sufficient employees remaining at work to continue to deliver the service. For certain services, it may not be possible to allow employees to leave early due to the nature of the function in which they are engaged (e.g. Care Line emergency operators, road gritting etc).

4.5 A list of posts designated as essential for the continuity of delivery of key council services during periods of severe weather will be maintained in consultation with the recognised trade unions.

5. Closure of Council Services and Buildings

5.1 In exceptional circumstances the Chief Executive or relevant Depute Chief Executive may decide that due to severe weather, a council service, building, depot or work location/site should be closed. Such a decision will only be taken in extreme circumstances when to continue with service delivery would endanger the health and safety of employees or members of the public.

5.2 Where services or buildings are closed, it may be necessary for employees designated as essential workers in accordance with paragraph 4.5 above to remain at work due to the essential nature of the service they deliver. In those circumstances, the appropriate Head of Service will determine those who are required to remain at work.

5.3 Employees who are required to remain at work as part of their normal working pattern, will receive normal pay appropriate to the hours worked.

5.4 School closures may in certain circumstances affect only pupils. Teaching and other staff may be required to attend work. Any decision in respect of the closure of a school and the staff affected will be that of the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Depute Chief Executives.

6. Red Weather Warning Events

6.1 The Met Office issues weather warnings, through the National Severe Weather Warning Service, when severe weather has the potential to impact the UK. These warnings are given a colour (yellow, amber or red) depending on a combination of both the impact the weather may have and the likelihood of it occurring.

6.2 In the event of a Red Weather Warning the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Depute Chief Executives will issue guidance to all staff and the Trade Unions outlining the contingency plans that will be invoked to ensure the safety and well-being of staff and continuity of essential service delivery during the period of the Red Weather Warning Event.

6.3 This may include staff being advised to attend their normal place of work, to attend an alternative place of work, or to remain at home. During the period of a Red Weather Warning Event, Heads of Service/Service Managers will be required to keep staff updated on any change to the position advised with regards to their attendance at work.

6.4 The Depute Chief Executive (Corporate, Housing and Operational Services)/Head of Corporate Services will be responsible for liaising with the recognised Trade Unions on a regular basis (at least daily during any such period).

6.5 In the exceptional event of a Red Warning Weather being issued, the Chief Executive will have discretion to over - ride the normal policy provisions which may include authorising the general application of special leave or crediting staff who are able to attend work, with their normal working hours/pay during the period that the warning is in force.

7. Disruption to Normal Care Arrangements

7.1 Where normal care arrangements are disrupted as a result of severe weather (eg school closure), the following arrangements will apply:

- employees may apply for special leave for the first day of disruption to care arrangements to allow for alternative arrangements to be made;
- employees may request annual leave, flexi-leave or unpaid leave for any additional time required to care for dependents; or
- employees may request to work the ‘lost’ hours at an alternative time.

8. Implications for Pay and Flexible Working Hours Arrangements

8.1 The implications for pay and flexible working hours arising from temporary disruptions to normal working arrangements and/or absence from work due to severe weather are set out in the Appendix to this guidance.

8.2 Other than in the case of closure of council workplaces referred to at 5.4 above or in the circumstances referred to at 6.5, discretion to apply those temporary variations to normal working arrangements and the council’s Flexible Working Hours Scheme lies with Heads of Service in conjunction with the relevant Depute Chief Executive.

9. Monitoring

9.1 Heads of Service will be responsible for monitoring the application of this guidance within their individual service areas. The Head of Corporate Services will monitor the effectiveness of application across all council services.

10. Review of the Policy

10.1 This guidance may be reviewed and amended to take into consideration variations in service requirements.

SEVERE WEATHER

PAY AND FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Red Weather Warning Event

Scenario	Employees Participating in Flexible Working Hours Scheme	Other Employees
Non-Essential worker	Paragraph 6.5 applies.	Paragraph 6.5 applies.
Essential worker required to attend work.	Time credit granted for the normal working day.	Payment for the normal working day

Other Severe Weather Events

Scenario	Employees Participating in Flexible Working Hours Scheme	Other Employees
Prevented from Attending Workplace	Dependent on option agreed. (Paragraph 3.4 applies)	Dependent on option agreed. (Paragraph 3.4 applies)
Delayed arrival at work	No deduction of pay. No time credit given if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work before 10am. Time credit given from 10am if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work after 10am and before 12 noon. No time credit given if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work between 12 noon and 2pm. Time credit given from 2pm if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work after 2pm.	No deduction of pay and requirement to work back all lost time excluding any time credits. No time credit given if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work before 10am. Time credit given from 10am if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work after 10am and before 12 noon. No time credit given if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work between 12 noon and 2pm. Time credit given from 2pm if employee arrives at normal place of work or agreed alternative place of work after 2pm.
Authorised request to finish early.	No deduction of pay. Permitted to infringe core time but no time credit given.	Authorised unpaid leave or agreement to work back lost time.
Compulsory early finish (decision taken to close workplace)	No deduction of pay. Time credit granted to the end of the standard working day (ie the time at which the employee's place of work would normally close to the public).	No deduction of pay. No requirement to work back lost time.

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

AVOIDANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES PROCEDURE

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present for the Panel's consideration, a revised draft Procedure for Avoidance of Industrial Disputes in respect of non – teaching staff.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel considers the revised draft of the Avoidance of Industrial Disputes Procedure appended to this report with a view to submission to the Council Executive for approval.

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)**	It is considered prudent that the council has in place a jointly agreed process with the trade unions for avoiding the escalation of potentially damaging disputes and for the maintenance of good industrial relations.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance**	None

	and performance Indicators	
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	An agreed Disputes process can assist in avoiding potential damage to service delivery pending resolution of workplace disagreements.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None
VIII	**Other consultations**	The non – teaching trade unions have agreed the draft revised Avoidance of Disputes Procedure as part of the consultation process.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

While the council is fully committed to maintaining a constructive and positive working relationship with the recognised trade unions, it is also accepted that situations can arise from time to time where proposed changes to working practices and conditions of employment result in a failure to agree. It is therefore important in these circumstances that there is a recognised protocol available for helping to resolve such matters before they escalate into damaging industrial disputes.

Following local government reorganisation in 1996, West Lothian Council adopted a number of employment policies and collective agreements from its predecessor authorities (Lothian Regional Council and West Lothian District Council). One such agreement is the former Lothian Regional Council, *Avoidance of Disputes Procedure* which was agreed with the trade unions representing former APT&C staff, former Manual Workers and Craft Operatives. The procedure has remained unchanged in format and application since that time and requires updating.

The conditions of service governing the employment of teaching staff are separate to those of non-teaching staff and in this regard, teachers have in place their own disputes procedure which remains fit for purpose. The teaching procedure allows for a dispute to be referred either jointly or separately to the disputes machinery of the appropriate national negotiating committee following a failure to agree at local level.

D.2 AVOIDANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES PROCEDURE (REVISED)

Following representations from the non-teaching trade unions through the council's Joint Consultative Group, the former LRC procedure has been modified and updated.

The revisions to the procedure are relatively minor in nature and include removal of out of date references to the National Joint Council (NJC) which became obsolete following the introduction of the Single Status Agreement in 1997.

The revised procedure also retains the option for parties to agree to third party assistance through the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in the event of failure to agree a resolution at the Avoidance of Disputes Committee.

E. CONCLUSION

The draft Avoidance of Industrial Disputes Procedure appended to this report replaces the current version previously adopted by the council at the time of local government reorganisation.

It is intended that the revised procedure should be regarded as a contingency measure that is invoked only in limited circumstances where it has proved difficult to achieve agreement on proposed material changes to working practices and conditions of service through the normal consultative process.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- Avoidance of Industrial Disputes Procedure (Collective Agreement) 1976
- Trade Union Consultation Protocol

Appendices/Attachments: Avoidance of Industrial Disputes Procedure (Draft)

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Julie Whitelaw
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7 December 2018

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

AVOIDANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES PROCEDURE

(All employees except Chief Officers and Teaching Staff)

1. CONSULTATION PROCESS

1.1 The council and the recognised trade unions acknowledge that the council must retain flexibility to respond to constantly changing service delivery needs and priorities going forward. Where proposed changes materially impact on existing working practices and conditions of service, the council is committed to achieving the changes through full consultation with those affected and their trade union representatives.

1.2 Where agreement cannot be achieved through the process outlined above, the council and the recognised Trade Unions agree that it shall be the joint responsibility of the relevant Depute Chief Executive and the Trade Union(s) to avoid such matters escalating into an industrial dispute by adhering to the consultative mechanisms set out in this procedure.

1.3 It is incumbent upon both parties to this agreement, that no restrictions, alterations in conditions of employment or industrial action shall be imposed by either party until the provisions of the procedure outlined below have been fully exhausted.

2. PROCEDURAL STEPS

2.1 It is the responsibility of the Trade Union concerned to notify the Depute Chief Executive, in writing, of an industrial dispute or an impending industrial dispute.

2.2 On receiving notification of an industrial dispute or impending industrial dispute, the Depute Chief Executive will, within seven days, make arrangements for a meeting between appropriate representatives of the council and representatives of the Trade Union(s) concerned in order to:

- Identify and define the nature and cause of the dispute; and
- Endeavour to resolve the dispute

2.3 In the event of failure to agree a resolution at 2.2 above, a meeting of the council's Avoidance of Disputes Committee will be convened as soon as possible, but in any event within 14 days.

2.4 In the event of failure to agree a resolution at the Avoidance of Disputes Committee, it shall be open to the parties to agree to consider whether third-party assistance, normally from the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), is suitable. A decision on whether this is required should be taken within 5 days of the meeting.

3. PROCEDURE PRIOR TO AVOIDANCE OF DISPUTES COMMITTEE

3.1 Prior to a hearing of the Avoidance of Disputes Committee, the Trade Union(s) will submit to Committee Services:

- a written statement indicating the nature of the dispute, reasons for failure to reach a mutually agreeable solution at an earlier stage, their desired resolution; and
- a copy of any other documents to be placed before the Appeals Committee.

3.2 Committee Services will issue the agenda for the meeting of the Avoidance of Disputes Committee, which will contain all the documents submitted under paragraphs 3.1 above, not less than 5 working days in advance of the appeal hearing.

3.3 The Avoidance of Disputes Committee may order such other information and/or documents to be submitted as it may consider appropriate.

4. CONDUCT OF THE AVOIDANCE OF DISPUTES COMMITTEE

4.1 The Avoidance of Disputes Committee will identify and define the nature and cause of the dispute by:

- considering the written submission of the Trade Union side and allowing the Trade Union representative(s) to present their case
- asking questions of both the council representative(s) and the Trade Union representative(s)

4.2 The Avoidance of Disputes Committee will endeavour to resolve the dispute by attempting to find a resolution that is mutually acceptable to both sides.

4.3 The Chair of the Avoidance of Disputes Committee is responsible for ensuring that both sides have a fair opportunity to present their cases, and that the members of the Committee are able to elicit the information necessary to come to a conclusion. This includes provision for either side to make representations through the Chair of the Committee on any aspects of the other’s submission that require clarification.

4.4 The Avoidance of Disputes Committee may consider referral to an appropriate Committee of the Council if a solution is proposed that overturns a previous Committee decision or policy.

4.5 The Avoidance of Disputes Committee may ask both sides to withdraw to allow consideration of the case in private.

4.6 The Avoidance of Disputes Committee will be advised as appropriate by officers from Human Resources and Legal Services

Human Resources
7 December 2018

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**	• Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed. • We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities. • Our economy is diverse and dynamic,

and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business.

- We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.
- People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances.
- We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.

VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group is assessing the ongoing 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 introduced several major changes to the welfare system which are now fully operational.

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 also provided for major DWP-led reforms to the welfare system, notably the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) to replace six current working age benefits/credits. The full UK wide roll out of Universal Credit has been subject to significant delays, with the latest amendments announced in the UK Government autumn budget 2018. West Lothian went live with UC Full Service on 16 May 2018.

The Scotland Act 2016 devolved certain aspects of welfare in Scotland to the Holyrood Parliament. These have been subject to various consultations and the Scottish Government has set out draft timetables and arrangements to implement the devolved welfare powers over the course of the current Parliament. The Social Security (Scotland) Bill was introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2017, and received royal assent on 1 June 2018.

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 or the housing cost element paid as part of their UC award, and who require further assistance to pay their rent.

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.

As shown in the table below, funding for DHP transferred from April 2017 to the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government reimburse councils for mitigating the impact of the bedroom tax 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 committed an additional £115,000. £34,000 of this top up was utilised in 2017/18, and the balance of £81,000 will be used in 2018/19 to help address increased demand arising from the full service rollout of UC.

In 2017/18 total DHP awarded was £2,412,648.

Funding arrangements for DHP for 2018/19 consist of three main categories, 'bedroom tax mitigation', 'other DHP's' and 'DHP administration'.

The funding for 'bedroom tax mitigation' follows the same approach as in 2017/18 to ensure the on-going full mitigation of the impact of the bedroom tax in Scotland. The estimated cost of bedroom tax mitigation for West Lothian in 2018/19, as calculated by the Scottish Government, is £1,997,228.

Funding across Scotland for the category 'other DHP's' is the same as in 2017/18, however the allocation across local authorities and the three streams of funding, Core, Benefit Cap and Local Housing Allowance varied. In particular the 'Benefit Cap' allocation was subject to a different calculation using more up to date data on caseload, the average amount capped in each local authority and the impact of the benefit cap on the UC full service caseload. West Lothian's allocation for 'other DHP's' for 2018/19 is detailed below;

Allocation of DHP funding 2017/18		Allocation of DHP funding 2018/19	
Core DHP	£46,800	Core DHP	£47,188
Local Housing Allowance	£47,016	Local Housing Allowance	£46,424
Benefit Cap	£237,344	Benefit Cap	£192,813
Council "top-up"	£34,000	Council "top-up"	£81,000
Total	£365,160	Total	£367,425

All applicants affected by the removal of the spare room subsidy or bedroom tax, who are entitled to Housing Benefit or the housing cost element paid as part of their UC award, will continue to be awarded full DHP to cover the shortfall during 2018/19.

The current DHP spend to 4 November 2018 is summarised as follows:

	Number of Awards	Spend to date £'000
Benefit Cap	167	77
Bedroom Tax	4037	1,342
Local Housing Allowance /Combination	204	52
Total	**4408**	**1471**

Funding for administrative costs, based on the number of claimants affected by the bedroom tax, local housing allowance and benefit cap, is £45,639 for 2018/19.

D.3 Scottish Welfare Fund

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

The final spend for 2017/18 was £1.066 million against the budget of £1.068 million, with 1,190 Community Care Grants and 4,830 Crisis Grants awarded. As in previous years, the budget was carefully managed during 2017/18, with priority levels being adjusted to help maintain the budget throughout the financial year.

The budget for 2018/19 is £1,067,475 and spending is again being managed to fully utilise the available budget. Priority levels have been set for November at high for Crisis Grants and high for Community Care Grants. The priority level has been set at high as a result of an increase in the level of applications being received. The priority level will remain under review.

The 2018/19 SWF spend to 12 November 18 is as follows:

	Number of Awards	Expenditure £'000
Crisis Grants	2566	190
Community Care Grants	697	417
Total	**3263**	**607**

On 19 October 2018 the preferred furniture supplier for the council, including furniture for the Scottish Welfare Fund, First Furnishings Ltd, went in to Administration. From that date no further goods have been ordered from that supplier. Interim arrangements were put in place by officers to facilitate ordering of goods from one of the alternative furniture suppliers on the domestic furniture framework. The council has elected to use CF Services Ltd, who were the preferred furniture supplier prior to First Furnishings Ltd.

Prompt action was taken to discuss ongoing requirements and procedures with CF Services Ltd in relation to the Scottish Welfare Fund, and as a result there has been a smooth transition to using them as the new supplier.

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, UC will affect the administration of those benefits retained by local authorities, including the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), DHP, and SWF. West Lothian went live with UC full service on 16 May 2018 with claims for UC now including couples and families.

The autumn budget statement of October 2018 contained key changes to UC operational delivery, and also confirmed further delays to the continued roll out of UC. The main announcements are detailed below, listed in chronological order of the change;

- December 2018 – Automatic entitlement to housing support for 18 to 21 year olds will be reinstated. This reverses the previously announced cut to support for this group and means they will be able to claim support for housing costs under UC.
- April 2019 –The Work Allowance, which is the amount that households with children, and people with disabilities can earn before their Universal Credit award begins to be withdrawn, will be increased by £1,000.

- July 2019 to September 2020 – For those who are self-employed, the Minimum Income Floor will apply after a 12 month grace period, not just for those in the first year of their business. The Minimum Income Floor is an amount the DWP sets, which uses the national minimum wage for the customer's age group, multiplied by the number of hours they are expected to look for, and be available for work. This comes in to effect from July 2019 for managed migration cases and from September 2020 for those moving across through a change of circumstances.
- October 2019 – The maximum rate at which deductions can be made from a Universal Credit award will be reduced from 40% to 30% of the standard allowance, (the money meant for adults living costs).
- July 2020 – People moving on to UC currently receive an additional payment of housing benefit during their transition to UC. This provision is being extended to cover the income-related elements of income support, employment support allowance or jobseeker's allowance, meaning the customer will receive a further two weeks payment of the above benefits during the five week wait for UC to be paid.
- October 2021 – the maximum period over which an advance of Universal Credit can be paid back will be extended from twelve to sixteen months.

In addition to the operational changes noted above, the UK Government stated that they will deliver the changes to UC slowly and carefully. As a result, the roll out timetable has been delayed further. The managed migration process will begin in July 2019 as planned but will be much slower with smaller numbers initially. The larger scale migration has been delayed until November 2020 and is not now due to end until December 2023.

The latest UC Official Statistics published by the DWP on 13 November 2018 state that, as at 11 October 2018, a total of 3,804 people in West Lothian are on UC. This shows an increase of 2,281 from the position reported as at 14 June 2018. Livingston Job Centre has 1,948 UC claimants and Bathgate has 1,856.

The DWP official statistics of 11 October 2018 show 1,120 UC recipients in West Lothian are in some limited form of employment and 1,902 are "searching for work".

Although UC is a reserved matter, in June 2017 the Scottish Government laid the Regulations to make UC payments more flexible. The Regulations, which came into force on 4 October 2017, represent the first use of the new devolved social security powers concerning two aspects of the payments of UC as shown below;

- 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.

D.5 Universal Support Provision

On 1 October 2018, the DWP announced a new partnership with Citizen's Advice and Citizen's Advice Scotland to deliver Universal Support. The new partnership is effective from 1 April 2019, and from this date local authorities will no longer be asked to deliver this support.

Currently Universal Support is provided by local authorities who work along with the DWP to provide Personal Budgeting Support and Assisted Digital Support for customers who need help transitioning to Universal Credit. This can include help and assistance on how to apply for Universal Credit, how to maintain their online journal and assistance on how to budget their money. The DWP provide grant funding to the local authority based on the estimated or actual number of interactions with customers. There will be no amendment to the current funding agreement until 31 March 2019, to allow for the joint running of the new arrangement to ensure there are no gaps in provision.

The council are involved in ongoing discussions with Citizen's Advice Scotland to ensure an effective handover in West Lothian.

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

The Scotland Act, includes provisions to devolve eleven benefits to Holyrood, and to give Holyrood the power to top up any benefits, reserved or devolved, provided the funding is met by the Scottish Government.

In April 2017 the Scottish Government published the outline business case for the agency for social security in Scotland. Following consultation the conclusion of the Scottish Government 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, co-located with current local partners.

The new social security agency will not use private companies to carry out assessments, including fitness for work health assessments, and the Scottish Government has stated that the system will be based on dignity and respect and an assessment process which is not demeaning or deliberately difficult.

Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018

The bill for this Act was passed by the Parliament on 25 April 2018 and received royal assent on 1 June 2018.

The Act sets out an over-arching legislative framework for the administration of social security in Scotland, making provision for operational functions such as overpayments, fraud, error, re-determinations and appeals.

On 1 September 2018, Social Security Scotland officially became an executive agency of the Scottish Government. This new public service is now open for business and is operating a freephone client helpline at its headquarters in Dundee.

During September, the first payments were made through Social Security Scotland with 76,000 carer's receiving the new Carer's Allowance Supplement. A further payment will be made in December.

This will be followed by the Best Start Grant (replacing the Sure Start Maternity Grant) which will be delivered by December 2018, six months earlier than originally planned. This will be a one-off grant of £600 for the first child in low income families – (an increase of £100 on the current rate), and the re-introduction of £300 for subsequent children and two payments of £250 each during a child's early years.

The Funeral Expense Assistance will also be delivered from summer 2019 and aims to process applications within ten days – significantly faster than at present and to make it easier for people to understand if they are eligible for assistance

The eleven benefits being devolved to Scotland comprise:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

• Attendance Allowance (AA)

• Severe Disablement Allowance

• Industrial Injuries Scheme

• Carer's Allowance

• Sure Start Maternity Grants

• Funeral Payments

• Cold Weather Payments

• Winter Fuel Payments

• Discretionary Housing Payments

Ten of the eleven devolved benefits, totaling around £2.9 billion of annual payments, will be delivered directly by the new Scottish Social Security Agency itself. Discretionary Housing Payments will continue to be delivered by local authorities.

D.7 Further Welfare Changes

A number of changes previously announced in relation to ongoing welfare reform that are still to be implemented, or, are being implemented are detailed below;

- The freeze on working age benefits, including Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowance, will continue 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.
- From February 2019 claimants with three or more children will be able to claim UC, however the child element will be restricted to two children.
- Claimants in receipt of Severe Disability Premium will remain on legacy benefits until the DWP move them as part of their managed migration plans. They will receive transitional protection at this point if their entitlement reduces as a result of moving to UC.
- New incentives will be introduced for parents to take up short-term or temporary work by making sure the cost of childcare costs does not reduce transitional protection.
- A short-term increase in earnings won’t end transitional protection as long as the claimant makes a new claim within three months of when they received the additional payment.
- Capital over £16,000 will be disregarded for twelve months for claimants who move from tax credits to UC.

Further changes have also been made to ensure that housing benefit continues to be targeted to support those who need it. This includes;

- The revision of the timetable for transferring rent support from Housing Benefit to Pension Credit, to delay the transfer by three years. This will ensure the transfer aligns with the full implementation of UC.
- Funding for supported housing will remain within the welfare system, rather than moving to a local funding model.

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 Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 and engagement with the new Social Security Scotland Agency and with COSLA, and the IRRV, as the practicalities of the proposed changes in Scotland are considered.

The potential issues arising from DWP led reforms, notably the roll-out of UC Full Service, will also be addressed.

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.

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services
7 December 2018

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

HORIZON SCAN

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

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with:

1. A summary of the latest UK economic indicators and announcements, including the potential implications following the referendum vote to leave the European Union (EU);
2. An update on the estimated revenue budget position facing the council as a result of ongoing unavoidable spending pressures and government funding constraints, including highlighting budget model risks and uncertainties.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Panel notes:

1. The latest economic and financial position and the potential financial implications for West Lothian and the council's future financial planning;
2. That whilst the council's estimated budget gap for the five years 2018/19 to 2022/23 continues to be £65.3 million, this will change as a result of the finance settlement in December and detailed review of the budget model currently being undertaken;
3. The specific risks which could have an adverse impact on the overall financial plan and the detailed revenue budget agreed for 2019/20;
4. The potential risks and uncertainties in the five year revenue budget strategy;

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)**	The council is required to approve a balanced revenue budget for each financial year. Audit Scotland and CIPFA best practice guidance recommends medium term financial plans are prepared for at least five years. 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**	No implications at this stage.
IV.	**Impact on performance and performance indicators**	The current EU programmes to 2020 support business development, community regeneration and employment projects. Ongoing government restraint has implications for the council's budget and performance.

V.	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The revenue budget provides the resources necessary to help deliver the Single Outcome Agreement. Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes.
VI.	**Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Scottish Government grant funding is not sufficient to meet increasing costs and demand for services. Based on agreed budget assumptions, the council faces a revenue budget gap of £65.3 million over the five year period. West Lothian Council agreed budget savings of £60.1 million, leaving a balance to be found of £5.2 million.
VII.	**Consideration at PDSP**	None.
VIII.	**Other consultations**	Heads of Service and Depute Chief Executives.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

Horizon scan and budget model updates are provided to the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) on a quarterly basis, including the latest information on the UK, Scottish, West Lothian and council economic position, and the potential impact on the council's medium term financial strategy. On 13 February 2018, Council agreed the five year priority based revenue budget strategy, noting an estimated budget gap of £65.3 million. Council also approved savings of £60 million and agreed a number of areas for officers to consider for additional potential savings.

The report includes the latest update on economic factors that could have an influence on the council's financial strategy. The report also provides an update on the council's approved revenue financial plan for the period as well as setting out the budget model risks and uncertainties.

D.2 HORIZON SCAN – UK

<u>EU Implications</u>

The UK formally triggered Article 50 on 29 March 2017, giving two years notice of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, meaning that the UK would cease to be a member of the EU from 29 March 2019. In March 2018 EU leaders approved guidelines for the negotiation of future relations with the UK after Brexit and also agreed a 21 month transition period to the end of 2020 if a deal on the relationship is reached before the exit date in 2019. In addition EU state aid and procurement rules will continue to be in effect until at least 2021.

The draft withdrawal agreement, agreed by the EU negotiators and the UK Government cabinet, was published on 14 November 2018. The agreement incorporates the financial payment from the UK to the EU, the 21 month transition period and commitments on the rights of EU and UK citizens. It also includes a "backstop" arrangement regarding the application of EU rules in Northern Ireland, arrangements between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK and creation of a temporary single custom territory.

The agreement has to be considered by the UK parliament and the other 27 EU member states and, until matters are concluded, there continues to be ongoing uncertainty at all levels and within all sectors of the economy. It is still possible that the negotiations, and the resulting draft withdrawal agreement, may not result in agreement meaning the UK could potentially leave the EU without a deal. The transition period agreed in March 2018 is conditional on a deal being finalised. If no deal is agreed, World Trade Organisation rules will apply to trade between the UK and EU which potentially would have major implications for imports and exports and could provide a shock to the economy.

UK Economic Update

Debt and Borrowing

The most recent forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) on 29 October 2018 provided updated borrowing forecasts. Public Sector Net Debt is expected to fall from 85.0% of GDP in 2017/18 to 83.7% of GDP in 2018/19 before gradually falling to 74.1% in 2023/24.

Borrowing has also fallen more than anticipated in the first half of 2018/19, relative to the same period last year. This reflects stronger tax revenues and lower than expected spending on welfare and debt interest. Although borrowing has reduced, debt as a percentage of GDP is reducing at a slower rate than historical precedents. In addition, the Chancellor's policy and spending announcements in the Autumn Budget 2018 will mean that the additional tax receipts have not accelerated the reduction in the debt deficit.

Economic Growth

In October 2018, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) published its World Economic Outlook Update. Growth projections have been revised down for the UK with the IMF expecting growth to slow from 1.7% in 2017 to 1.4% in 2018. Business investment is expected to remain weak in light of uncertainty about Brexit.

In November 2018, the Bank of England maintained its 2018 growth forecast at 1.5% whilst reducing their 2019 forecast by 0.1% to 1.7%. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released economic growth figures on 28 September 2018 with growth improving in the third quarter. Growth in the latest quarter was driven by the services sector, which increased by 0.6%, due partly to an increase in retail sales. The economy grew by 0.6% in quarter three of 2018, compared to 0.4% in quarter two and 0.2% in quarter one.

The economic outlook will depend significantly on how the EU withdrawal is practically implemented. Commentators expect the UK economy to experience tepid growth in 2018 due to higher inflation, reduced consumer spending and a loss of momentum in the Eurozone economy. In addition most commentators have assumed that the EU and UK will sign a withdrawal agreement and forecasts could be revised downwards if no stable transition is agreed. If growth in 2018 is in line with the forecasts above, this will be the weakest performance since 2012 and will be substantially below the post war norm of 2.4%. UK GDP growth is currently the lowest in the G7 with commentators assessing the growth as poor by historical, national and cyclical standards. With no anticipated improvement in productivity in the short to medium term it is expected that low growth will continue for the next three years as a minimum.

Exports and Inward Investment

In the immediate wake of the referendum, sterling fell sharply to a 31 year low versus the dollar, and was down about 6% against the euro. A weak pound makes the goods that the UK buys from abroad more expensive, pushing up the cost of living, but can also help support exports. The pound has been making a very slow recovery against the dollar and, on 22 November 2018, the pound was $1.28 against the dollar and €1.12 against the euro.

The British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) published its Quarterly Economic Survey in October 2018 which suggests that this year's annual economic growth is set to be the lowest since the financial crisis. The slowdown in manufacturing exports and many services businesses not employing new staff are is identified as causes for concern.

Inflation

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), was 2.4% in the year to October 2018 In the Autumn Budget 2018 announced in October, inflation is forecast to be above target for 2018 whilst quickly returning to the 2% target thereafter.

Interest Rates

The Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) agreed on 31 October 2018 to maintain the Bank Rate at 0.75%. The MPC judged that the current stance of monetary policy remained appropriate and that, were the economy to continue to develop in line with the November Inflation projections, an ongoing tightening of monetary policy would be appropriate to return inflation sustainably to the 2% target. Any future Bank Rate increases are likely to be at a gradual pace and to a limited extent.

Unemployment

The latest figures published on 16 October 2018 show that, over the period June 2018 to August 2018 the UK unemployment rate was 4.0%. There were 32.39 million people in work, 289,000 more than the previous year, giving an employment rate of 75.5%.

House Prices and Consumer Sentiment

The latest ONS House Price Index published on 17 October 2018 showed that, in the year to August 2018, average house prices in the UK increased by 3.2%. Over the past two years, there has been a slowing in UK house price growth, driven mainly by a slowdown in the south and east of England.

Consumer sales have improved during quarter 2, however the household saving ratio reached a record low in 2017 and is continuing to decline. The household savings ratio is at its lowest since records began in 1963 and, with reduced savings, the scope for consumption to be supported through consumers saving less is more limited. This is further compounded by stagnant wages growth, with household disposable income remaining considerably below the 1990s average of 3.1%, at only 1.3% in 2018.

Autumn Budget 2018 and UK Medium Term Outlook

The Chancellor of Exchequer delivered his Autumn Budget 2018 to the House of Commons on 29 October 2018. This is the last budget before the UK is due to leave the European Union in March 2019, however the Chancellor did state that the 2019 Spring Statement could be upgraded to a full budget if required. In summary, the key economic announcements were:

- Current and future UK tax revenues are expected to be higher than previously forecast.
- In line with the Spring Statement, the UK economy is expected to continue to grow every year, however GDP growth continues to be low.
- Public borrowing in 2018 is lower than forecast in the 2018 Spring Statement.
- Inflation is forecast to be above target in 2018 thereafter quickly returning to 2%.
- The OBR also anticipates that the labour market will slowly grow over the period increasing the forecast employment rates.

The Autumn Budget included a number of spending commitments, funded through increased UK tax revenues, which means that public services resource spending has improved with it now rising rather than falling post 2018/19.

As noted in the Spring Statement 2018, the UK Government will provide detailed spending plans for 2020 and beyond in a spending review scheduled for 2019. It was expected that the Autumn Budget 2018 would set the spending envelope for beyond 2019, however this was not provided. There is no clarity on when this overall spending envelope will be announced however the Chancellor did make a commitment of annual average growth of 1.2% in departmental spending budgets. Based on the NHS commitment, it is likely that the majority of that increase will be directed to health. It is expected that this increase will feed through to the Scottish block grant, however given the commitment to health, it is unlikely that non protected areas will see real terms increases in budget.

D.3 HORIZON SCAN – SCOTLAND

EU Implications

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 tax system now mean that Scotland's own economic performance will have a more direct impact on the Scottish Budget.

Scottish Economic Update

Economic Growth

The Scottish economy grew by 0.2% in quarter 1 of 2018 and 0.5% in quarter 2. This growth was marginally better than the UK as a whole, and is at the fastest level since 2015, however it is still substantially below the long term trend and the gap in the growth per head between Scotland and the UK has widened since 2014.

Unemployment

The latest Labour Market Briefing, published in October 2018, showed that in quarter 2 2018, the unemployment rate was 3.9%, with 106,000 people unemployed. The rate of employment is 74.9% with earnings forecast to continue to be behind overall UK levels.

2019/20 Scottish Budget and Longer Term Financial Outlook

On 8 November 2018 the Fraser of Allander Institute (FAI) published their Scotland's Budget Report 2018. This publication incorporates the outcome of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Budget 2018, along with the FAI's assessment of the potential future financial outlook for the Scottish Government and Scottish public services.

As a consequence of the spending commitments in the Autumn Budget 2018, the Scottish Government will receive an additional £950 million of Barnett Consequentials by 2020/21. The majority of this increase, £550 million, relates to health with much of the remainder arising from increases in local government spend in England. The Scottish resource block grant will increase marginally in real terms in 2019/20 compared to 2018/19. Block grant funding of £30.5 billion in 2019/20 is £552 million higher than 2018/19.

The FAI's analysis shows that the outlook has improved since the last Scottish Budget, however it is likely that some of the uplift will be offset by weak income tax forecasts from the Scottish Fiscal Commission (SFC). The transfer of tax responsibilities, and the associated block grant adjustment which amends funding to reflect comparable tax receipts, means that weak forecasts can have a substantial negative impact on the overall Scottish Budget.

During 2018 the SFC have had a relatively pessimistic outlook for income tax forecasts and associated Scottish public finances. Whilst economic growth in Scotland has improved recently, this follows a period where Scottish growth was behind overall UK growth and this gap is unlikely to reduce based on current forecasts. If the economy grows slower in per capita terms than the UK overall, the SFC's forecasts for tax revenues, which will be published along with the Scottish Budget in December, will be considerably worse.

As outlined above, following the transfer of income tax responsibilities, the block funding provided by the UK Government only represents a proportion of the total resources available to the Scottish Government. The total money available will not be known until the Scottish Budget is published on 12 December, with details on council allocations to be announced in the local government finance settlement scheduled for 17 December. Due to tax revenue forecasts potentially having a significant negative impact on potential spending power, the size of the Scottish Budget is unlikely to be much different in 2019/20 compared to 2018/19.

With regard to the financial outlook beyond 2019/20, the Barnett Consequentials should mean that the position will improve from that forecast in December 2017. Despite the risks, the FAI anticipate that the Scottish Budget, on a like for like basis, is likely to increase by 3% between 2018/19 and the end of the parliament, although it will remain below the 2010/11 peak.

The FAI project that NHS spending in Scotland is likely to account for 50% of the resource budget by the start of the next decade. This, coupled with the increasing demand for health services arising from an ageing population and the Scottish Government's other spending commitments, means that the overall Scottish Budget is increasingly under pressure. This trend is likely to continue, with any further increases in health spending to meet projected growth in demand leading to further restrictions in funding for non-protected areas of the Scottish Budget.

In May 2018, following the publication of Scotland's Fiscal Outlook, it was estimated that spending on non-priority areas would decline by 12% over the remaining life of the parliament. Given that the previous Scottish Government commitment regarding health will largely be funded through the allocation of health related Barnett Consequentials, the outlook for non-priority areas has improved with spending forecast to decline by 4% over the remainder of the parliament. It is anticipated, therefore, that whilst the outlook for unprotected areas has improved from 2017 they are still likely to continue to face a challenging financial position, with reductions in funding for non-priority areas.

D.4 HORIZON SCAN – WEST LOTHIAN

<u>EU Implications</u>

In the 2011 Census, the total number of West Lothian residents from other EU countries was 5,112 with 85% of the total EU group of working age. Total West Lothian employment sustained by exports to the EU is between 4,500 and 5,000 jobs. Excluding retail, around 40 companies of scale are European owned with total employment approaching 2,000.

<u>West Lothian Economic Update</u>

<u>Unemployment</u>

Unemployment at local authority level is measured by the proportion of working age people not in work. In West Lothian this is 2.1% for September 2018 which is lower than the Scottish rate (2.7%) and British rate (2.2%) although it is an increase from June 2018. Youth unemployment figures were 490 (3.4%) compared with 465 (3.2%) in June 2018.

<u>House Prices and Completions</u>

The number of homes sold in West Lothian in June 2018 was 316 compared to 352 in June 2017. The number of house completions is a useful indicator of the building sector's sensitivity to changing economic conditions. The number of house completions in October 2018 was 81. This is an increase in the figure from September 2017 which was 41. The 2018/19 quarter 2 completions were 257 with 573 completions to date in 2018/19.

D.5 HORIZON SCAN – WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

Economic implications of the decision to leave the EU remain highly uncertain and may not be clear for some time. Brexit affects the future funding of public services through the impact it has on the overall economy as public finances, such as tax receipts, are highly sensitive to economic performance. It is almost certain that an economic downturn would lead to further public sector expenditure reductions.

In addition, whilst the council only has funding confirmed for 2018/19 and a one year settlement expected for 2019/20, it is clear from forecasts and commentators that public sector funding will remain constrained. The confirmation of the six priorities in the Scottish Government medium term financial strategy, and the commitment to direct health Barnett

Consequentials to health, would suggest that local government will continue to receive constrained core funding settlements. This position would only be further deteriorated if additional resources have to be allocated to health to address projected increases in demand not be addressed by current saving initiatives.

As the council has an approved five year strategy, it is in as strong as possible a position to address continued future restrictions in public sector funding. Economic and budget announcements will continue to be reviewed and taken into consideration to ensure that the approved financial strategy remains reflective of current assumptions. In particular officers will continue to monitor key announcements in relation to public spending, interest rates, CPI forecasts and economic risks, in order to assess the likely impact on the council's budget position for 2018/19 to 2022/23.

D.6 BUDGET PLANNING SCENARIO AND CHANGES TO THE BUDGET MODEL

The revenue budget for 2018/19 to 2022/23 was approved by Council on 13 February 2018. Officers continue to monitor announcements and other information to review and refine budget assumptions.

Work is currently underway to review and update the budget model in advance of the 2019/20 annual revenue budget setting process. This exercise is focused on re-evaluating the assumptions underlying the approved model, especially where additional information or updated forecasts could impact on the original financial values. In particular, the review will focus on high risk areas, such as pay award, grant funding and recurring budget pressures. In summary the main high risk areas currently being reviewed are:

Pay Award

The approved 2018/19 budget included pay assumptions based on the original offer to employees. Following discussions with the Scottish Government regarding teachers' pay award, COSLA increased this offer to 3% for all non-teaching staff earning up to £79,999. Although discussions are ongoing, with no agreement on the pay award for 2018/19, this increase in the offer will result in a budgetary pressure for the council. Any increase above the 3% offered would increase this budgetary pressure further. Given the ongoing trends in relation to pay negotiations, future year assumptions on pay are being reviewed.

Teachers Pensions

The Autumn Budget confirmed a reduction in the discount rate for calculating employer contributions in unfunded public sector pension schemes resulting in additional pension costs to employers. This change will impact on the cost of the teachers' pension scheme resulting in a substantial additional cost to the council. At this stage the Scottish Government has not confirmed that they will provide additional funding to offset this cost, although COSLA are strongly maintaining the case that the cost of this increase should be funded in full by the Scottish Government.

School Demographics

Following the implementation of a new pupil forecasting system, and recognition that recent house building has not met forecast completions, school demographic assumptions are being reviewed. The figures within the budget model were based on 900 forecast completions per annum. Although initial work has been undertaken, further work is required to finalise the forecasts.

Revenue Consequences of Capital Programme

The five year financial plan included provision for property revenue consequences arising from the draft ten year capital investment strategy which was approved at the same Council meeting in February 2018. Following approval of these strategies, there have been ongoing discussions and developments, especially in relation to new schools in the Winchburgh area and additional support needs investment. Work is ongoing to quantify the potential resources required to cover relevant revenue consequences.

Recurring Service Budget Pressures
As previously reported, officers have identified a number of recurring service budget pressures. Heads of Service are taking steps to address these pressures, as agreed by Council Executive in September and November 2018, and the position will be further reviewed in December.

Inflation and Indexation
Although the potential for inflation to be greater than forecast remains a risk, the forecast level of inflation is broadly in line with the assumptions included in the approved model. The only potential deviation is energy costs for 2019/20, where information provided by Scotland Excel and the Scottish Government shows that the unit cost of energy which has already been procured is higher than anticipated. Changes from the carbon commitment to the climate change levy may offset some of this additional energy cost.

Council Tax Income
As required by law the council tax income budget for 2019/20 will be updated to reflect the August Band D council tax return to the Scottish Government. In addition, the budget assumptions for future years will be updated to incorporate the reduced house building assumptions of 700 houses per annum.

Local Government Finance Settlement
With the publication of the local government finance settlement on 17 December 2018, the council will receive confirmation of grant funding for 2019/20. At this stage the council's assumption of a core grant reduction of £7 million is retained, phased as a £4 million reduction in 2019/20 and a £1 million reduction in each of the three years 2020/21 to 2022/23.

It is increasingly likely that the risks outlined above will result in an increased budget gap for the period to 2022/23. In February 2018, the forecast budget gap was £5.227 million. Following completion of the work to update the budget model it is anticipated that the updated gap may be more.

D.7 HORIZON SCAN BUDGET MODEL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

In addition to the risks outlined in section D.6 of this report there remain a number of other risks and uncertainties in the long term financial assumptions underlying the budget model. These include the risk that the increase in costs associated with demand led services, such as social care, is greater than assumed and the emergence of policy or legislative changes by the UK or Scottish governments which restrict the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally.

The nature of forecasting means it is challenging to identify with any certainty expenditure pressures and income. In addition, there are more general risks and uncertainties which will continue to be monitored. Some of the more general risks and uncertainties are:

- Economic growth being less than forecast, resulting in further public spending reductions.
- Funding not being provided to fully cover the costs of introducing new legislation.
- Policy changes by the UK or Scottish governments which restrict the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally.
- Ring fencing of grant funding, constraining how local authorities allocate resources.
- Changes to local government remits with uncertainty for service provision and funding.

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 continue. Based on currently available forecasts and commentary, the outlook would suggest that in the short, medium and long term public finances will continue to be constrained. This will likely mean the funding envifronment for local government in Scotland generally and West Lothian Council specifically will remain challenging. The UK, Scottish, West Lothian and council position will be reported on a quarterly basis as part of the horizon scanning of factors that could have an impact on the council's medium term financial strategy. The council's funding for 2019/20 will be announced in the local government finance settlement on 17 December 2018. A report on the settlement will be presented to Council Executive in January 2019.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Fraser of Allander Institute Scotland's Budget Report 2018
(https://www.sbs.strath.ac.uk/economics/fraser/20181108/Scotlands-Budget-2018.pdf)

Appendices/Attachments: None

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7 December 2018

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCUTINY PANEL

PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT – PERFORMANCE UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report updates the Panel on the performance for Property Asset Management for 2017/18.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes:

1. The overall condition of Property Assets for 2017/18;
2. The overall suitability of Property Assets for 2017/18
3. The overall performance of Property Assets for 2017/18 against the performance measures outlined in this report; and
4. The projects delivered that have contributed to delivery of the council's property asset management priorities.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	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)**	The council is required to demonstrate best value through a structured framework for the management of its property assets. No environmental equality or health and safety issues have been identified.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Scottish specified performance indicator (scorpasset01) - Suitability Scottish specified performance indicator (scorpasset02) - Condition
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The management of our property assets supports all council services and those delivered by partners. Local outcome improvement plan priorities supported include: 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; and Outcome 8 – we make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	This report has been prepared for consideration by the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP).
VIII	**Other consultations**	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update members of the Panel on the current performance of the council's property assets. The council owns and manages property assets to support the delivery of services, which include schools, community, operational, administrative and commercial property. The estate extends to 242 properties comprising approximately 431,318m^2 (as at 1 April 2018).

The council's approved Corporate Asset Management Strategy for 2013/14 to 2017/18 established the need to manage our assets efficiently and effectively to support the delivery of our service and corporate priorities. In pursuit of this aim it set out six performance measures for the management of assets including property. These measures were compliance, condition, suitability, sufficiency, accessibility and sustainability.

D2 Property Asset Management Performance

The Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) for 2013/14 to 2017/18 which sets out the activity themes for the management of property assets highlights a number of performance indicators for each of the corporate measures. These are outlined in Appendix 1 together with the respective results. Two of the indicators are reported as part of the Scottish Specified Performance Indicators framework. Which are:

Condition – The percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition has improved to 95% for 2017/18 from 93.02% for 2016/17. In terms of gross internal floor area considered to be in satisfactory or better condition this has increased to 99.35% for 2017/18 from 96.6% in 2016/17.

Since the PAMP was approved in June 2013, condition has continued to improve. The percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition has improved from 87.3% in 2013/14 to 95% in 2017/18. In terms of gross internal floor area considered to be in satisfactory or better condition this has also increased to 99.35% in 2017/18 from 95.7% in 2013/14.

Suitability – The percentage of properties that are considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability improved to 93% in 2017/18 from 92% in 2016/17.

Since the PAMP was approved in June 2013 suitability has continued to improve. The percentage of properties considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability has improved from 89% in 2013/14 to 93% in 2017/18.

D3 Property Asset Management Highlights

Over the past year a number of significant projects and planned improvements have been undertaken and completed, including the following:

New West Calder High School – completion of the new high school represents the largest individual education investment by the council at approximately £32m. This is a landmark project for Scotland with the innovative and efficient design now being considered the exemplar and attracting interest from other authorities across the UK.

Whitehill Service Centre – The project is culmination of the council's depot modernisation programme, with the new service centre replacing a number of older depots including Guildiehaugh and Waverley Street which were reaching the end of their operational life in terms of condition and suitability. The new building accommodates a number of services including Highways and Transportation Services, NETS and Waste Services.

Blackburn Partnership Centre – The new partnership centre forms a central hub for the delivery of NHS and council services in Blackburn, bringing together local GP services, dentistry, community nursing, Library and Customer Information Services as well as providing community accommodation. Community organisations such as Community Action Blackburn and Blackburn and Seafield Credit Union are also based in the building.

East Calder Partnership Centre - The new partnership centre is home to the local library, changing accommodation and the community resource centre. Designed around community needs the centre is now supporting service delivery in East Calder.

Nursery Extensions (Boghall and Torphichen) – In support of the increasing demand for nursery provision and to improve the quality of early years accommodation two new extension at Boghall and Torphichen have been developed. These are part of the first phase of an extensive programme of expansion for nursery and early years accommodation.

All the projects above and the continued significant investment in planned improvements demonstrate the continued commitment to improving our property assets.

D4 Property Asset Management Plan – Activity Update

Within the approved Property Asset Management Plan there are a number of activity themes that encapsulate various projects and programmes to sustain and improve the performance of our property assets. These are outlined in Appendix 2 together with the current position.

D5 Capital Asset Management Strategy 2018/19 to 2027/28

As part of the councils continued commitment to the effective and efficient management of assets a new Corporate Asset Management Strategy for 2018/19 to 2027/28 was approved in February 2018. This set out the main performance measures and governance arrangements including the requirement for a new Property Asset Management Plan 2018/19 to 2027/28.

D6 Property Asset Management Plan 2018/19 to 2027/28

This is the final report under the PAMP for 2013/14 to 2017/18 with a new Property Asset Management Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28 being presented in a separate report to this meeting.

The new plan builds upon the previous success and emphasises the councils effective and efficient management of its property assets.

D7 Future Investment

It is worth noting key project and investment programme highlights for the coming years as follows:

Winchburgh Schools – The construction of new denominational and non-denominational secondary schools together with a new denominational primary school at Winchburgh will support the growing population associated with the core development area. These schools are being delivered a bundle of projects and will be largest education investment by the council in a single location.

Schools for the Future – The council is current developing business cases for submission to the Scottish Government for match funding to replace a number of primary schools. Within the approved capital programme for 2018/19 to 2027/28 match funding of approximately £14.5m now approved for replacement of Eastertoun, East Calder, Deans and St Josephs Whitburn primary schools.

School Estate Planned Improvements – Over £30m will be invested in the school estate over the next ten years and will include a number of significant investment programmes such as roof replacement, mechanical and electrical improvements, pupil toilet renovations, kitchen upgrades and window replacements. Schools which will benefit include St Ninians, Addiewell, Howden St Andrews, Greenrigg, Mid Calder, Croftmalloch and Winchburgh Primary Schools.

Additional Support Needs – The council will embark on its largest investment in our additional support needs schools with a replacement Beatlie ASN school proposed, together with proposals for a new Cedarbank School and extensions to Pinewood and Ogilvie ASN Schools. The total investment will exceed £18.5m.

New Whitburn Partnership Centre – This new £5m facility on the site of the existing Burgh Halls and Customer Information Services (CIS) / Housing office at the Cross Whitburn will provide a central hub for the location of council information and direct service delivery in the town. Accommodating CIS, Housing, Libraries and Museums together with accommodation to support community needs (i.e. hall and meeting rooms) the facility will seek to be a catalyst for the regeneration of the town centre.

Social Policy Property Planned Improvements – Investing over £2m in Social Policy planned improvements will include continuation of the bathroom and kitchen replacement programme and accommodation improvements at Whitdale Care Home.

Statutory Compliance – Investment of approximately £21m will be deployed on ensuring our property assets and safe and secure for our customers, visitors and members of staff. Works will include those relating to the management of asbestos, legionella, fire systems and gas safety.

General Operational Property Projects – Over £16.5m will be invested in the modernisation of general operational property assets with projects including homeless persons accommodation, energy saving and renewables, new sports facilities at Kirknewton and Watson Park, Armadale.

These significant investments reflect the council's commitment to investing in property assets to support the modernisation of service delivery; improving the built environment of our communities and working in partnership.

E. CONCLUSION

The Panel is invited to note the ongoing performance of our property assets, the achievements during 2017/18 and the improvement in performance over the term of the Property Asset Management Plan from 2013/14 to 2017/18.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2013/14 to 2017/18 approved by Council 19 December 2012

Property Asset Management Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 approved by Council Executive 4 June 2013

Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2018/19 to 2027/28 approved by Council 13 February 2018

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Property Asset Management Performance Measures

Appendix 2 – Property Asset Management Activity Theme Update Summary

Appendix 3 – Asset Management Performance 2013/14 to 2017/18:- Pentana Performance Indicator Report

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services

Date: 7 December 2018

Appendix 1 – Property Asset Management Performance Measures

The following are property asset management performance outcome measures that are used to demonstrate we are efficiently and effectively managing assets.

Condition – Ensuring that our property assets are maintained in a satisfactory or better condition to support service delivery.

This performance measure demonstrates that our property assets are being effectively maintained so that they can continue to be used to support the delivery of services. By ensuring property assets are in satisfactory or better condition we can minimise the number of days these are not available as a result of building failure.

- The percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition has improved to 95.04% in 2017/18 from 93.02% in 2016/17.
- In terms of Gross Internal Floor Area considered to be in satisfactory condition or better, this has increased to 99.35% in 2017/18 from 96.6% in 2016/17.
- The number of school days lost due to building condition failure for 2017/18 was 1.5 days. In 2016/17, 1.5 days were lost however this is still a significant reduction from 7 days lost in 12/13 and 2.5 days in 2015/16.

Condition continues to improve as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in planned improvements across our property portfolio and through the development of new property assets.

Suitability – Ensuring that our property assets are suitable to support the delivery of services

This performance measure demonstrates that our property assets are fit for purpose in terms of accommodation types and layout to support the delivery of services. By ensuring property assets are suitable, we can ensure the delivery of services is not impeded due to building constraints.

- The percentage of properties that are considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability has improved to 93% in 2017/18 from 92% in 2016/17.
- In terms of Gross Internal Floor Area considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of suitability, this has reduced to 95.5% in 2017/18 from 96.6% in 2016/17.

Suitability continues to improve as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in planned improvements across our property portfolio and through the development of new property assets.

Sufficiency – Ensuring that our property assets are sufficient to support existing service delivery demands.

This performance measure demonstrates that our property assets are of sufficient size to support the delivery of services whilst not being underutilised. By ensuring property assets are sufficient we can can ensure the delivery of services is not impeded due to building capacity constraints. This performance measure area primarily relates to the capacity of the school estate.

- The average percentage of school estate capacity occupied is approximately 80%, for 2017/18 this is a slight decrease from 81% in 2016/17.

The decline is as a consequence of the increasing school capacity to accommodation in advance of demand to accommodate localised population growth from new housing developments.

Accessibility – Ensuring that our property assets are accessible as possible for all service users and staff.

This performance measure demonstrates the proportion of our property assets that are considered fully accessible for service users and staff.

- The percentage of properties that are considered accessible has increased to 74.8% for 2017/18, from 74.4% in 2016/17. This is no longer a Scottish Specified Performance Indicator but will continue to be monitored and reported annually. The improvement in this performance measure is as a result of continued investment in improving accessibility across the portfolio. In 2004/05 when the indicator was originally measured, accessibility was 21.7%

Accessibility continues to improve as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in planned improvements across our property portfolio and through the development of new property assets.

Sustainability – Ensuring our property assets negative impact on the environment is minimised.

This trend of decreasing emissions from energy usage reflects the councils ongoing investment in renewables & energy efficiency.

- Total carbon emissions from property assets (CO2 tonnes) for 2017/18 are confirmed at 24,672 tonnes. This is a reduction from 26,750 tonnes in 2016/17.
- KWh of electricity and gas used per m^2 in the operation of our corporate property assets are 70 and 161.02 Kwh / per m^2 respectively in 2017/18. This has decreased from 70.04 and 167.55 Kwh / per m2 respectively in 2016/17. It is worth noting that weather can have a major impact on gas in particular.

The council can clearly demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and minimising its impact on the environment through its continued investment in energy reduction and efficiency works.

Appendix 2 – Property Asset Management Activity Theme Update Summary

School Estate Improvements

The schools planned improvement programme consists of investment of £1.206 million over the 2017/18 period, incorporating works to the school estate across West Lothian.

Planned improvement works have been undertaken at a number of schools around the estate including St Andrews (Howden), Addiewell/ St Thomas, Deans, Toronto and Our Lady of Lourdes Primary Schools. The continued investment in planned improvements has achieved 100% of schools being in satisfactory or better condition. In terms of satisfactory or better suitability currently 95.96% of schools achieve this rating. The challenge going forward will be to sustain this with an ageing portfolio.

Projects that were progressed during 2017/18 included; completion of the new West Calder High School, new nurseries at Boghall, Torphichen and Mid Calder primary schools and improved sports facilities at St Mary's Primary.

Service Support Accommodation

Work at Whitehill Service Centre is now complete and provides a consolidated, single location for Waste, Highways, NET's operatives and Operational Services support staff. It also includes a fleet maintenance garage, a waste transfer facility and a salt store.

Non-Operational (Tenanted Non-Residential) Property Portfolio

The performance of the Non-Operational (Tenanted Non-Residential) Property Portfolio (TNRP) which incorporates the Commercial Property Portfolio is reported separately. In summary however, the TNRP continues to provide significant revenues for the council and supports Economic Development activity.

Locality based service delivery

Partnership Centres are at the core of the councils' local service delivery with Strathbrock, Bathgate, Fauldhouse and West Lothian Civic Centre already playing crucial roles and being highly regarded both operational and by our communities. Works have now been completed at Blackburn, East Calder and Linlithgow Partnership Centres with all opening during 2017/18 and are now supporting service delivery in their communities together with being catalysts for greater community participation and activities. Armadale Partnership Centre has recently also been completed but will be reported as part of the 2018/19 performance report. The new partnership centre at Whitburn continues to progress with build upon this success and support the modernisation of local services and the community.

Risk Management and Compliance

Effective compliance and risk management is critical to the success of the Property Asset Management Plan. The council has approved Asbestos, Legionella, Electrical and Fire Safety policies and has undertaken a wide range of works relating to these to ensure that the risks of compliance failures are mitigated as much as practically possible. The policies and procedures relating to compliance are under continuous review to ensure our properties are as safe as possible.

A comprehensive responsible persons' framework incorporating guidance for those involved has also been deployed across the Council. All maintenance and planned improvement works are prioritised based on the evaluation of risk.

Resource Deployment and Financial Planning

Through established revenue and capital budget monitoring frameworks resources deployed by the council in the management, maintenance and improvement of our property assets is undertaken in a structured and effective manner. This ensures that the resources are used efficiently and that decision making processes are robust and transparent.

Energy and Sustainability

Energy efficiency works and the installation of renewables continue to reduce our impact on the environment. A number of policies relating to energy efficiency and carbon emissions are being implemented whilst others continue to be developed. These are reported separately through the Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plans.

The Biomass heating installation programme for schools has been completed and is fully operational in buildings including; James Young High School, Inveralmond Community High School, St Kentigerns Academy, Westfield Primary School, Strathbrock Partnership Centre and the Civic Centre. Revenue savings are being achieved as a result.

Appendix 3

Property Asset Management Plan 2013/17: - Performance Indicator Report

Data Label : OFFICIAL

Report Author: Matthew Fraser
Generated on: 16 November 2018 13:17

Asset Management Performance 2018/28

(a) Outcome 1 - Compliance

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart	Trend Chart Commentary
	CSg401_9b Number of Operational Properties issued with an updated Site Specific Asbestos Management Plan	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This indicator will vary due to the number of compliant asbestos survey reports received from external contractors. Performance has met target since March 2017 which is largely attributed to availability of compliant reports. There was decreased performance in September 2016 and February 2017 due to reduced team resources and training of new staff. targets were not fully met in February and May 2018 due to short term staff sickness impact on the team and pdf software issues in June 2018.

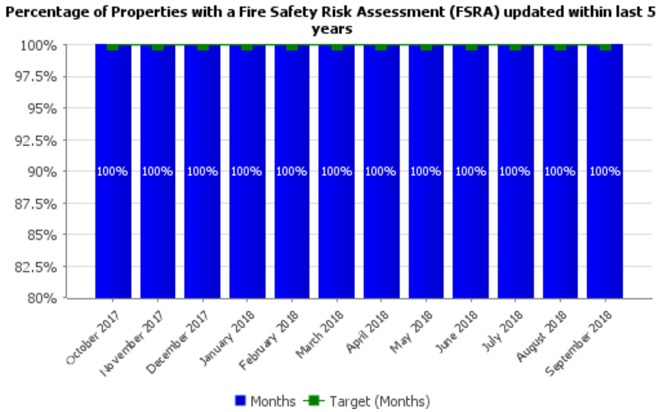
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

However domestic common continue to be reinspected with these being input into the asbestos database. Staffing levels have recovered and IT services aware of software issues. Levels are expected to recover in July 2018 and will be monitored moving forward.

The target will remain at 10 management plans per month initially in 2018/2019.
This target will be reviewed in conjunction with the stabilisation of the asbestos re-inspection program and targets will be amended to reflect true targets in Q4 of 2018/2019 and 2019/2020.

CSg430_9b.1a Percentage of Properties with a Fire Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) updated within last 5 years

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)

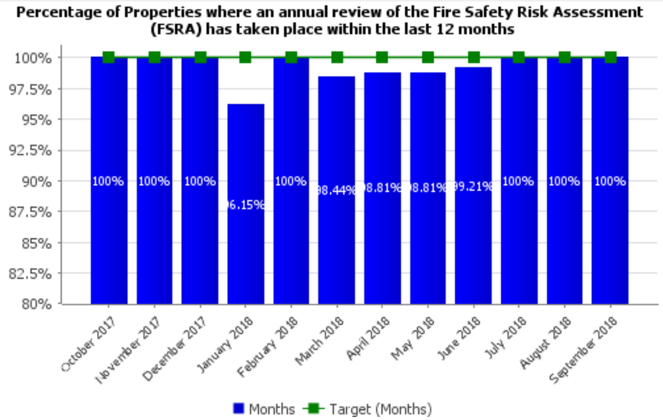


From September 2018 to October 2017 Construction Services achieved the target.

Following review of performance, the target for 2018/19 remains at 100%.

CSg431_9b.1a. Percentage of Properties where an annual review of the Fire Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) has taken place within the last 12 months

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)

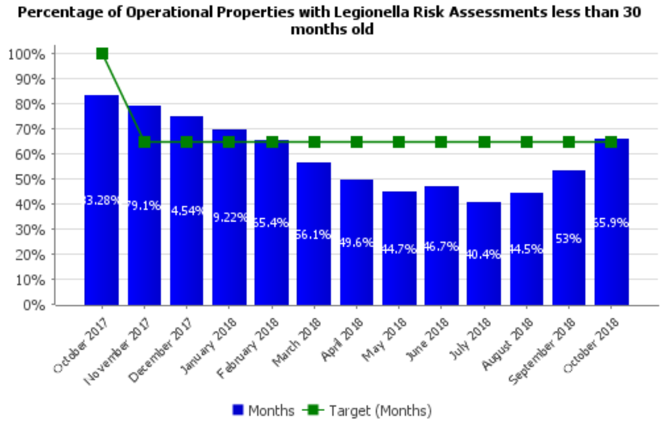


Trend Chart Commentary:

In the months from September 2018 to July 2018 we met our target. From the months of June 2018 to March 2018 we fell below target however, our performance has been consistently high, achieving over 97% of annual FSRA returns on time. In the month of February 2018 we met our target. In the month of January 2018 we fell below our target. From December 2017 to September 2017 our target has been achieved.

There have been a number of months when a small number of annual FSRAs have been outstanding. Outstanding FSRAs are highlighted to the senior management team within the relevant service area to address the issue. Construction Services continue to send out reminders 2 months before and 1 month before actual target date and we continue to monitor this.

Target for 2018/19 remains at 100%.

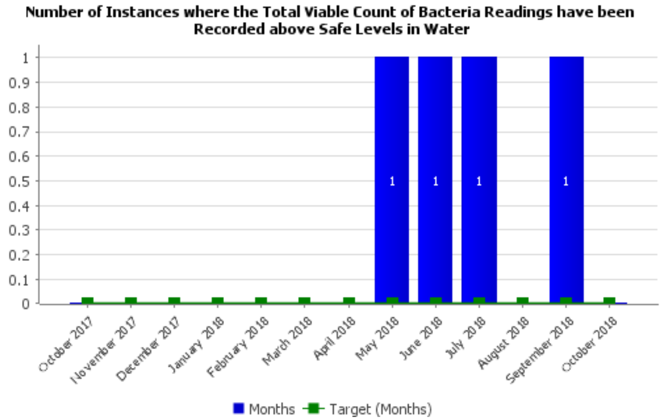
CSg450_9b.1a Percentage of Operational Properties with Legionella Risk Assessments less than 30 months old	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** Performance up to April 2017 has been consistently above target. However, a new Legionella Monitoring contractor was appointed in early 2017. Their performance was not in accordance with the contract and resulted in a delay in carrying out a number of risk assessments.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

This was not acceptable and ultimately led to the contract being terminated. An interim Legionella Monitoring contractor has been appointed to undertake all water monitoring while a new contract is put in place however the risk assessments will not be reviewed until the new contractor is in place therefore performance will decrease during this period.

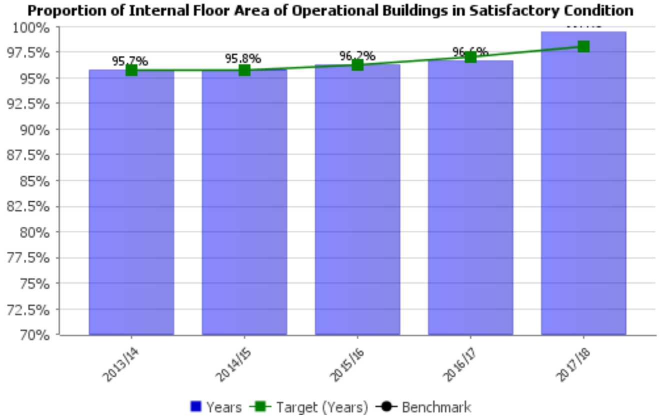
Water monitoring and flushing regimes continue to be undertaken to ensure there is no risk to building users.

The target has been reviewed in the interim until the new contract is in place in April 2018, when new risk assessments will be undertaken for all properties and reviewed thereafter. The interim target has been set at 60%.

	CSg451_9b.1a Number of Instances where the Total Viable Count of Bacteria Readings have been Recorded above Safe Levels in Water	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The trend reflects the rigorous monitoring regime implemented . However, there have been four instances where the TVC of bacteria has been recorded above safe levels. Three have been at the swimming pool Fauldhouse Partnership Centre and one was at St Margaret's Academy pool and all relate to the use of hose reels. In each instance, remedial action was taken and the bacteria readings were returned to normal. The target for 2018/19 remains at zero.

(b) Outcome 2 - Condition

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart	Trend Chart Commentary
	SCORPASSET02 Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		The Performance Indicator is applicable to all the councils operational property assets and seeks to identify the proportion of floor area that is considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of physical condition. Performance has improved from 96.6% in 2016/17 to 99.4% in 2017/18. Performance has also improved year on year as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and the rationalisation of accommodation used by services. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

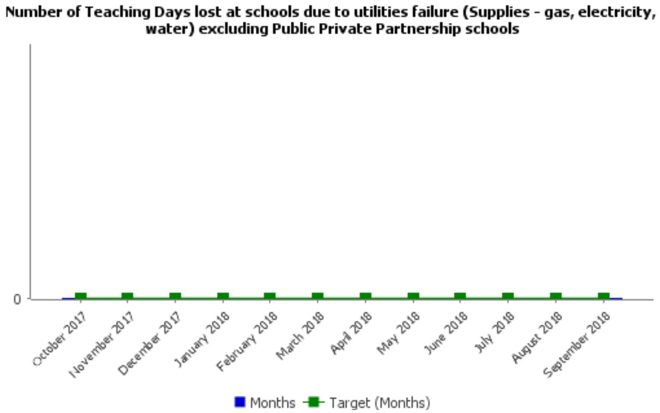
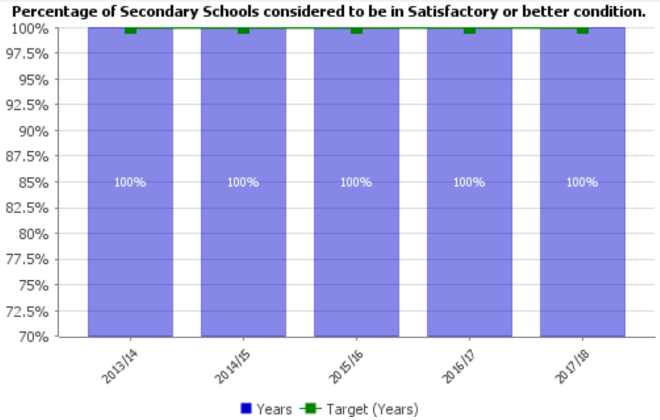


Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

West Lothian Council was ranked as 6th out of 32 Scottish Local Authorities for this indicator during 2016/17. Ranking performance for 2017/18 is expected to be released shortly however the data has not been made available by Audit Scotland / Improvement Service as yet. The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (currently 5th) for condition of its operational property assets as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

The methodology of assessing condition has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government (for the school estate) and is being adopted for other assets. The council has participated in the development of the new guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onwards.
The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals identified as part of the General Services Capital Programme and the completion of the next phases of our accommodation modernisation programme with the completion of Deans, Guildiehaugh, Waverly Street and Eagle Brae depots relocating over 2017/18 and 2018/19. Other properties where condition is considered below satisfactory include Blackburn Community Centre (which will be replaced by new partnership centre), Watson Park Pavilion (subject to planned improvements) and a number of small pavilions and bothy's.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 99% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained and where possible improved. It is recognised however, that over the longer terms that the condition of the operational estate will require significant investment to sustain performance or become more efficient through modernisation to allow greater investment on "core" properties with long terms service delivery requirements.

	Indicator	Owner	Trend Chart	Commentary
	CSg520_9b.1a Number of Teaching Days lost at schools due to utilities failure (Supplies – gas, electricity, water) excluding Public Private Partnership schools	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** No school teaching days have been lost due to utilities failure since October 2017. Following a review of performance, the target for 2018/19 remains at 0%.
	PAMP203_9b.2 Percentage of Secondary Schools considered to be in Satisfactory or better condition.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for Secondary Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all secondary schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last 5 years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate and the rigorous application (where appropriate) of its PPP contracts which is applicable to part of the education properties.

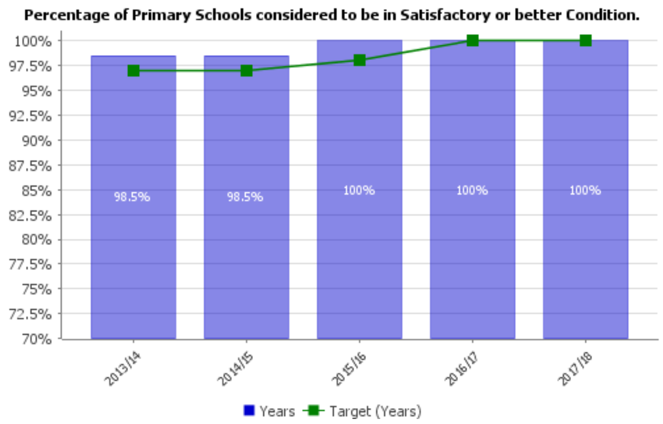
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued):

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts with performance consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 3 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.
Target for 2018/19 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained.

The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

PAMP204_9b.2 Percentage of Primary Schools considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition.

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



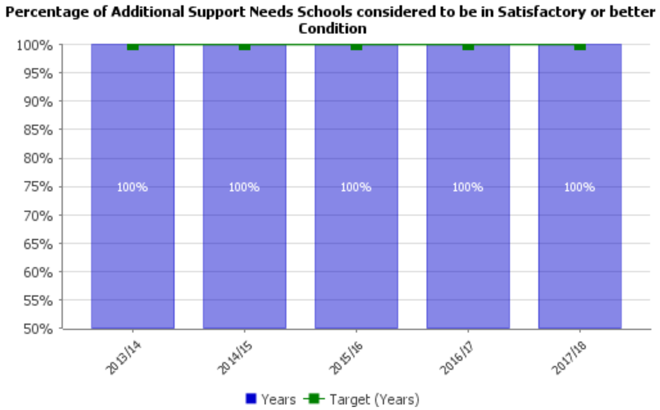
<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u>
The performance indicator for Primary Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all primary schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last 3 years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate and the rigorous application (where appropriate) of its PPP contracts which is applicable to part of the education properties. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

<u>Trend Chart Commentary (Continued):</u>
In 2013/14 performance was at 96.8% representing Toronto and Blackridge Primary Schools where condition was considered to be not satisfactory. Through planned improvement investments at these school this has been rectified.

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 3 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained.

The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

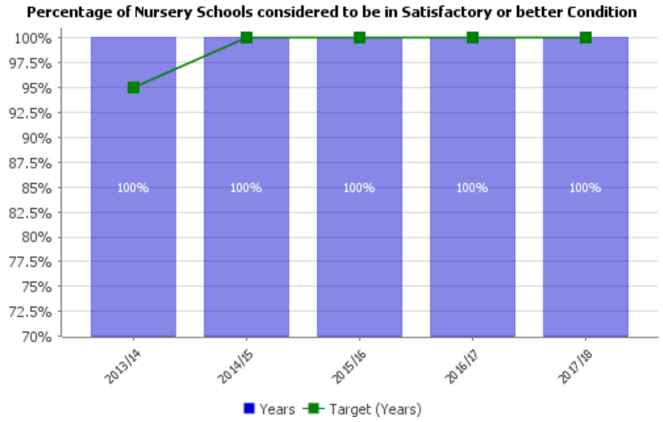
✓	PAMP205_9b.2 Percentage of Additional Support Needs Schools considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all ASN schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last 5 years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued):

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 3 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained. It is recognised however, that over the longer terms that the condition of the ASN estate will require significant investment to sustain performance and this is included in the councils General Services Property Capital Investment proposals (i.e. New Beatlie ASN School)

The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

✔	PAMP206_9b.2 Percentage of Nursery Schools considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for Nursery Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all Nursery schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last 4 years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued):

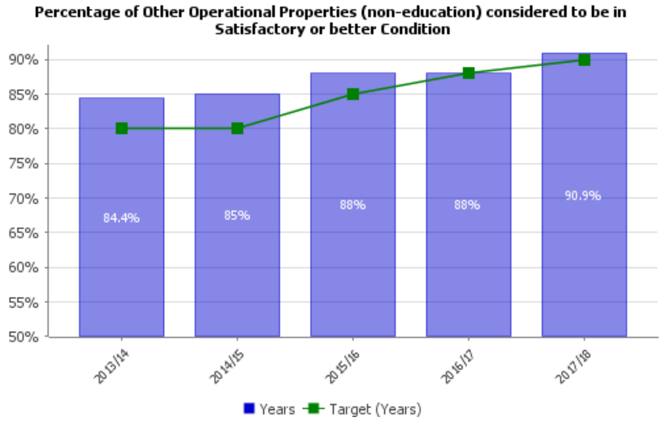
The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 3 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained. Due to the expansion of early years a number of nursery schools will be subject to significant investment to increase capacity and therefore it is proposed to undertake condition improvement works at the same time thereby maximising investment and sustaining long term condition.

The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

PAMP207_9b.2 Percentage of Other Operational Properties (non-education) considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for the councils operational (non education) property assets identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show improvement in condition across the operational estate with those considered to be in satisfactory or better condition increasing from 82.1% in 2012/13 to 90.9% in 2017/18. Performance has improved year on year as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and the rationalisation of accommodation used by services. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued):

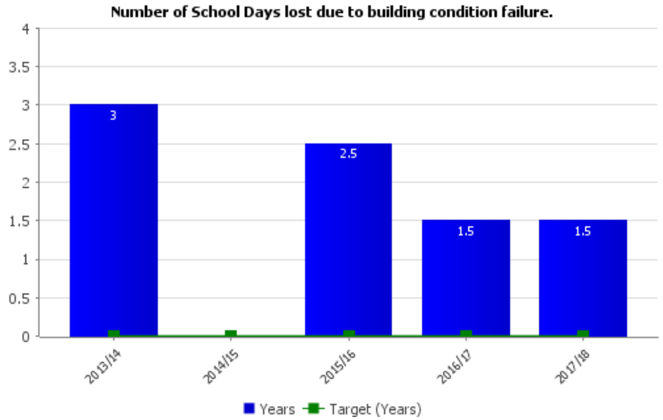
The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (currently 4th) for condition of its operational property (excluding education) assets as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 92% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will maintained and where possible improved. It is recognised however, that over the longer terms that the condition of the operational estate will require significant investment to8 sustain performance or become more efficient through modernisation to allow greater investment on "core" properties with long terms service delivery requirements.

The methodology of assessing condition has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government (for the school estate) and is being adopted for other assets. The council has participated in the development of the new guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward.

The council benchmarks it's results and is currently ranked 4th in relation to Operational Property amongst 21 local authorities who participate in the CIPFA benchmarking group. This is the same as last year but an overall increase from prior years where we had been ranked at 5th and 6th for this indicator.

Target for 18/19 is 92% reflecting projects being progressed.

	PAMP211_9b Number of School Days lost due to building condition failure.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This annual performance indicator shows that the number of school teaching days lost due to condition failure has not met the target for 2017/18 (zero). Whilst the aim is to achieve zero days this target has not always been achieved due to unforeseen events such as burst pipes. The general trend however, shows improvement in reducing in the overall teaching days lost (from 7 in 2012/13) to 1.5 in 2017/18). This reduction in days lost primarily relates to greater proactivity of maintenance (cyclical inspections and servicing, planning improvements and improve reactive repair response).

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued):

In 2017/18 there were 1.5 days lost across the school estate due to Polbeth Nursery being closed for 1.5 days due to burst pipe in adverse weather conditions causing a ceiling collapse

There is no benchmarking undertaken for this performance measure as other LA's who are involved in the CIPFA Scottish Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group do not collect this measure or are unwilling to publish.

The target for 2018/19 will remain at zero with the aim of achieving no days lost due to building condition failure. This will always be the councils target reflecting the high standards set for the management of our school estate.

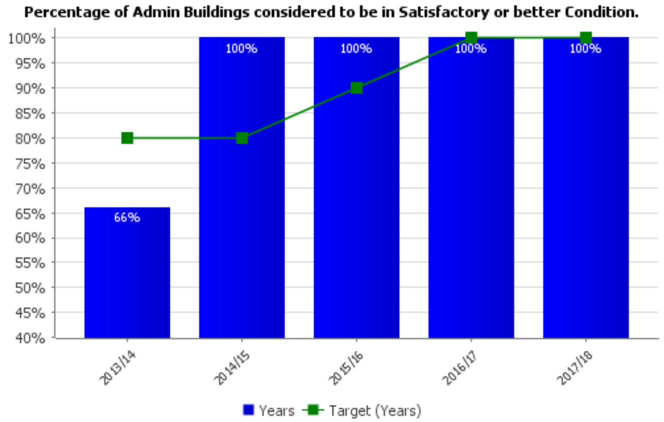
✔	PAMP213_6b.5 Percentage of Operational Properties Resurveyed for Condition (Number of Properties)	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** Condition is key priority performance measure within the councils Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan. Condition is measured and reported annually. Each year every asset is subject to a condition assessment that identifies maintenance requirements and considered risk elements for inclusion in short term investment requirements. In accordance with best practice and guidance all property assets should be subject to a full detailed condition survey to identify long term investment requirements and condition risks.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Whilst due to resource constraints the council adopted a risk based approach to the undertaking of full condition surveys over the past few years (whilst continuing to undertake annual maintenance assessments), we are now in the process of implementing a full quinquennial programme of detailed condition surveys to augment the annual assessments. Emerging guidance from the Scottish Government will require that for schools in particular the assessment of condition is undertaken on a rolling 4-5 year programme.

There is no benchmarking undertaken for this performance measure as other LA's who are involved in the CIPFA Scottish Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group do not collect this measure or are unwilling to publish.

Target for 2018/19 will increase 20% to reflect Scottish Government Guidance.

PMD181_9b Percentage of Admin Buildings considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for the councils administrative office property assets identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show improvement in condition across this part of the estate with those considered to be in satisfactory or better condition being sustained at 100%/. Performance will continue at this level as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and modernisation of office accommodation to support service needs. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

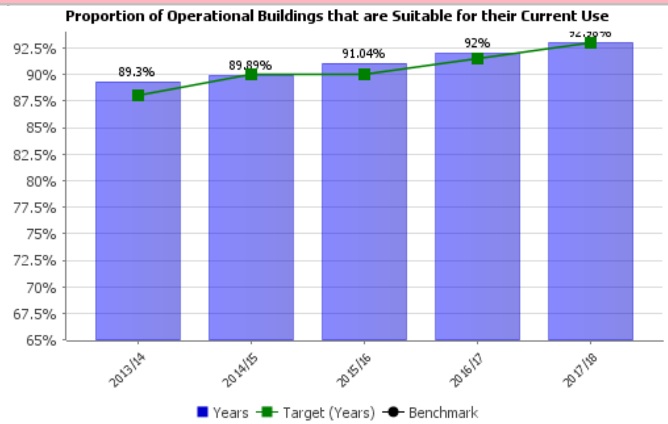
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (currently 4th) for condition of its operational property (excluding education) assets as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities. The office accommodation portfolio is a sub-set of this.

The methodology of assessing condition has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government (for the school estate) and is being adopted for other assets. The council has participated in the development of the new guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward.

Target for 18/19 Target will be 100% reflecting sustained performance and projects being progressed.

(c) Outcome 3 - Suitability

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart	Trend Chart Commentary
	SCORPASSET01 Proportion of Operational Buildings that are Suitable for their Current Use	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		The Performance Indicator is applicable to all the councils operational property assets and seeks to identify the proportion of Operational Buildings that are Suitable for their current use. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of the council's property assets has continued to improve for the last 5 years as a result of effective investment and property improvement programme and the replacement, closure and modernisation of property assets.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

For 2017/18 performance has improved to 92.98% from 92% in 2016/17. Whilst performance has been sustained and modest improvements made to most buildings a range of investments have been undertaken that have improved those that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers of the estate.

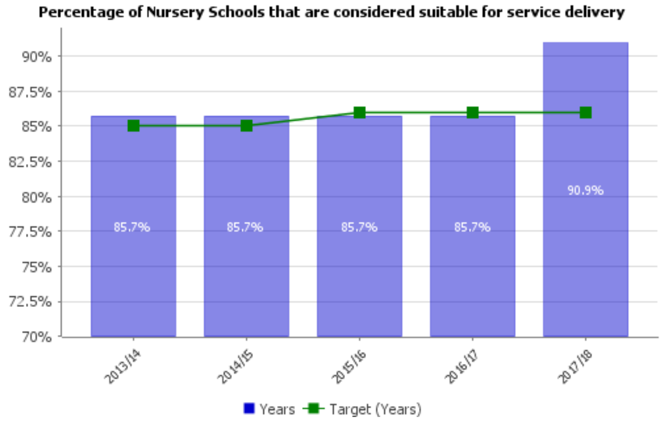
The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

West Lothian Council was ranked as 4th out of 32 Scottish Local Authorities for this indicator for 2016/17. Ranking performance for 2017/18 is expected to be sustained although this will not be confirmed until Audit Scotland/ Improvement service releases the data.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 94% based on existing suitability assessments and investment proposals.
The 2018/19 data will be updated and reviewed in July 2019 following an audit and review of the School Estate Core Facts data.

PAMP302_9b.2 Percentage of Nursery Schools that are considered suitable for service delivery

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Nursery Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment to satisfactorily enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of nursery schools has been sustained for the past 4 years and the assets generally perform well. Only one nursery school is not considered to be satisfactory of better in terms of suitability, this is Eastertoun Nursery School, Armadale.

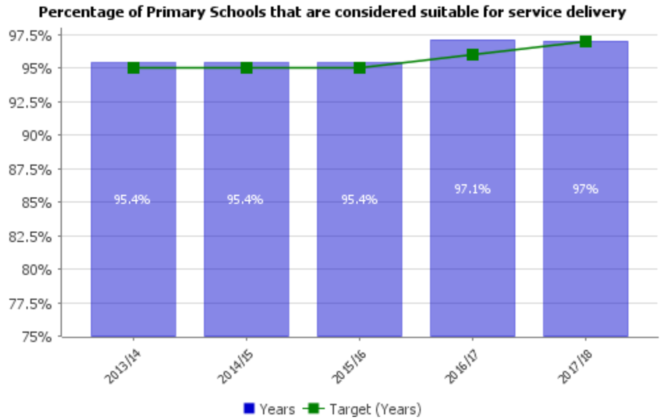
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Whilst performance has been sustained a range of improvements have been undertaken that have improved those that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers.

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for suitability as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 5 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 90% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained. Due to the expansion of early years a number of nursery schools will be subject to significant investment to increase capacity and therefore it is proposed to undertake improvement works at the same time thereby maximising investment and sustaining long term suitability.

The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

Indicator	Responsible	Trend Chart	Commentary
PAMP303_9b.2 Percentage of Primary Schools that are considered suitable for service delivery	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for Primary Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment to satisfactorily enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of Primary schools has been sustained for the last 4 years and improved over the past 2 years. Three primary schools are not considered to be satisfactory of better in terms of suitability, these are:

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

1.St Pauls Primary School, East Calder – access, internal layout and accommodation are not considered satisfactory.

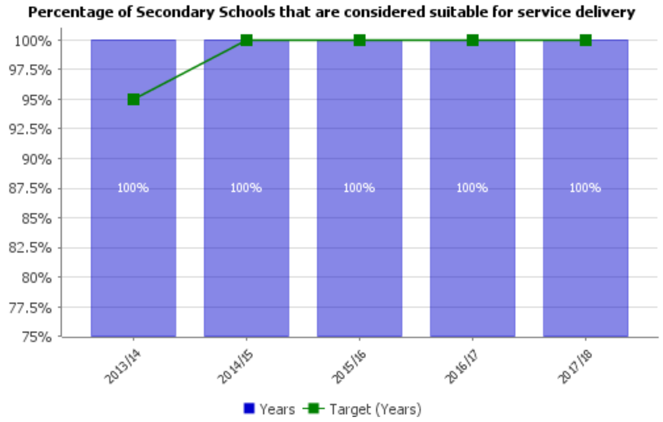
2.Seafield Primary School, Seafield – Storage, accommodation and parking / access not considered satisfactory.

Whilst performance has been sustained and modest improvements made for primary school suitability generally a range of investments have been undertaken that have improved those that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for suitability as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 5 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 97% based on existing suitability assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained and improved where possible.

The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

✔	PAMP304_9b.2 Percentage of Secondary Schools that are considered suitable for service delivery	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for Secondary Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment to satisfactorily enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of Primary schools has been sustained for the last 4 years and improved over the past 2 years. No secondary schools are not considered to be satisfactory of better in terms of suitability,

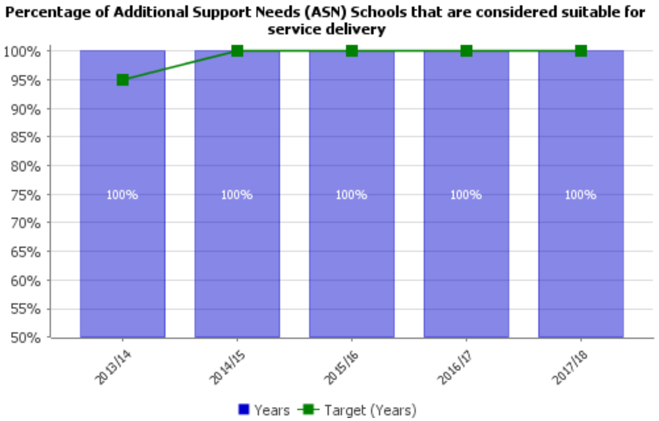
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Whilst performance has been sustained, suitability improvements continue to be made where appropriate within the secondary school estate thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers.

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for suitability as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 5 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 100% based on sustaining the existing suitability. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained over the longer term.

The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

	PAMP305_9b.2 Percentage of Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools that are considered suitable for service delivery	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** The performance indicator for Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment to satisfactorily enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of secondary schools has been sustained for the last 5 years. No ASN schools are not considered to be satisfactory of better in terms of suitability. Whilst performance has been sustained a range of investments have been undertaken that have improved those ASN Schools that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

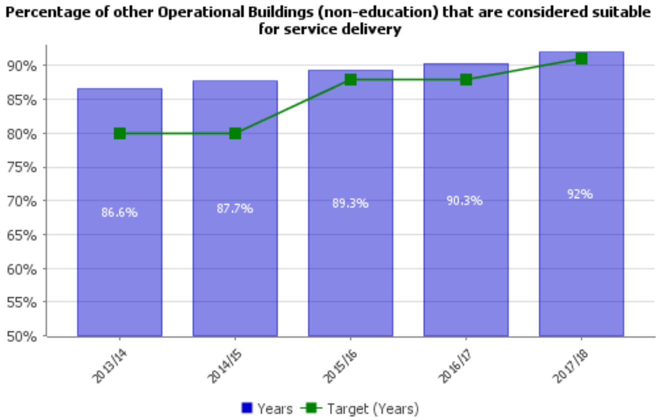
The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for suitability as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 5 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 20178/19 is set at 100% based on sustaining existing performance.

The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

PAMP306_9b.2 Percentage of other Operational Buildings (non-education) that are considered suitable for service delivery

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



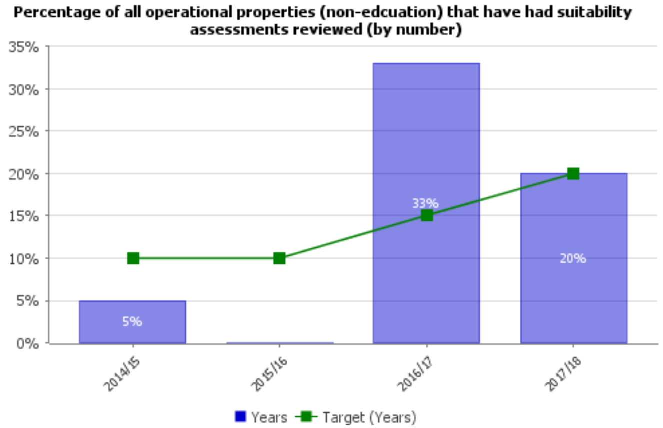
Trend Chart Commentary:
The performance indicator for the councils operational (non education) property assets identifies the suitability of the building to support service delivery. The indicator continues to show improvement in suitability across the operational estate with those considered to be satisfactory or better increasing from 86.6% in 2013/14 to 92% in 2017/18. Performance has improved year on year as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and the rationalisation of accommodation of unsuitable property used by services. Suitability is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)
The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile for suitability (currently 5th) of its operational property (excluding education) assets as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

Target for 2018/19 is set at 93% based on existing suitability assessments and investment proposals. It is projected that the current level of performance will be maintained and where possible improved. It is recognised however, that over the longer terms that the suitability of the operational estate will require significant investment to sustain performance or become more efficient through modernisation to allow greater investment on "core" properties with long terms service delivery requirements.

The methodology of assessing suitability has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government (for the school estate) and is being adopted for other assets. The council has participated in the development of the new guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward.

The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals identified as part of the General Services Capital Programme and the completion of the next phases of our accommodation modernisation programme with the completion of Deans, Guildiehaugh, Waverly Street and Eagle Brae depots relocating over 2017/18 and 2018/19. Other properties where suitability is considered below satisfactory include Blackburn Community Centre (which will be replaced by new partnership centre), Watson Park Pavilion (subject to planned improvements) and a number of small pavilions and bothy's.

	PAMP308_6b.5 Percentage of all operational properties (non-education) that have had suitability assessments reviewed (by number)	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	 	**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance measure has been implemented since 2014 and seeks to demonstrate the ongoing review of property assets for suitability. The trend chart supports the demonstration that West Lothian Council continues to review the suitability of its properties on a minimum of a 5-yearly basis and uses the findings to prioritise works to those properties that can achieve satisfactory or better suitability. During 2017/18 50 properties had assessments undertaken including the new Linlithgow Partnership Centre, Armadale Community Centre, Burgh Halls, Whitburn and various minor properties that we declared surplus.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

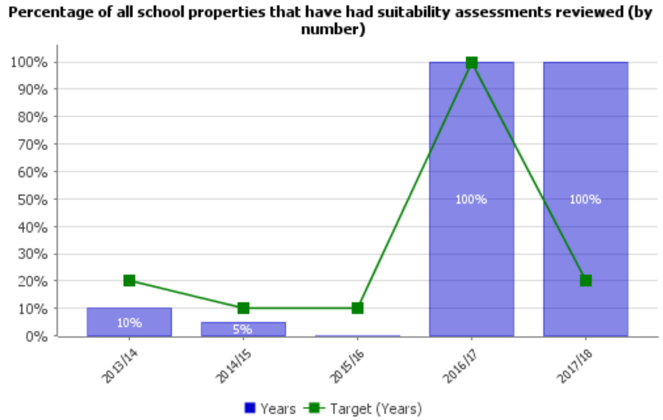
Assessments were also undertaken as part of the business case development process to advise the new 10-year capital investment programme. Whilst this is less than the 16/17 outturn of 90 properties it reflects the changing prioritisation of investment and a move towards undertaking assessments to support business cases, changing service needs and circumstances as opposed to simply undertaking assessment on a rolling programme basis.

Further Suitability Assessments for 2018/19 may be required as part of the new Scottish Government Core Facts Review. Property that were subject to investment have suitability assessments undertaken where it is considered as potentially affecting the suitability of a property. In addition to these a number of properties which are proposed to be subject to investment or declared surplus have assessments undertaken as part of the business case development or decision to dispose process. 50 properties were reviewed or had new assessments during 2017/18.

Benchmarking to be reviewed going forward for this performance measure and will reflect guidance from Scottish Government. Target for 2018/19 is 20% based on quinquennial programme.

PAMP309_6b.5 Percentage of all school properties that have had suitability assessments reviewed (by number)

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

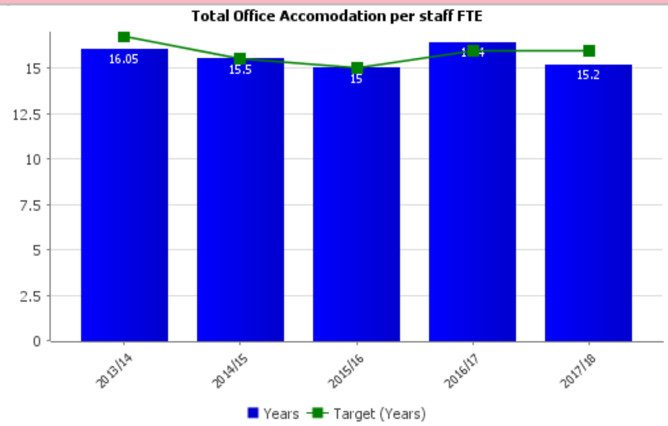
This performance measure has been implemented from April 2014 and seeks to demonstrate the ongoing review of school estate property assets for suitability. The trend chart supports the demonstration that West Lothian Council continues to review the suitability of its properties.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Formal Suitability Assessments for all schools have been undertaken during 2017/18 as part of the pilot for Scottish Government and the review / new suitability assessment guidance. This was also been implemented to form a benchmark for the new School Estate Property Asset Management Plan which is in development and to help support Capital Investment prioritisation as part of the new 10 year capital .

Benchmarking will be considered going forward as part national benchmarking groups and the review of submissions by Scottish Government who will monitor and publish the suitability core fact. It is likely a target of 20% per annum will be adopted. Target for 2018/19 of 20% has therefore been adopted but will be reviewed upon publication of guidance from the Scottish Government.

(d) Outcome 4 - Sufficiency

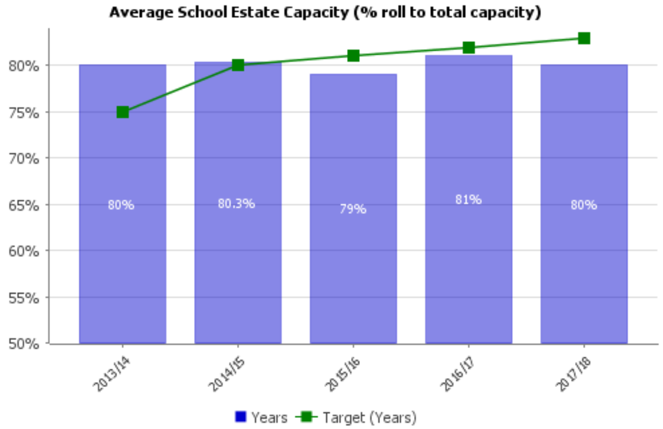
Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart	Trend Chart Commentary
	PAMP401_9b.1c Total Office Accommodation per staff FTE	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance measure illustrates the area per person within our Office Accommodation as expressed as a m2 per FTE. The current performance is 16.4 m2 per FTE for 2016/17 which is an increase from 15m2 per FTE for 2015/16.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

The general trend for the 4 years up to 2016/17 has been a reduction in floor area per employee as a consequence of office modernisation however, for 2016/17 there was an increase as a consequence of new floor space being added (Arrochar House and Strathbrock Partnership Centre), a small reduction in staff occupying the overall office properties and a re-measuring / calibration of floor areas (Civic Centre, Bathgate Partnership Centre and St Davids House) following office modernisation works. This has resulted in the a higher than target outcome.

The long terms trend going forwards will be to generally reduce the amount of space per staff member, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Office Modernisation Strategy. This indicator is benchmarked against another 21 local authorities as part of the CIPFA Scotland Benchmarking Group. The council is currently ranked 3rd for space utilisation.

The target for 2017/18 is 16 square metres per FTE recognising the introduction of Linlithgow Partnership Centre, Armadale Partnership Centre and the Depot Modernisation Project (re-measure and calibration required).

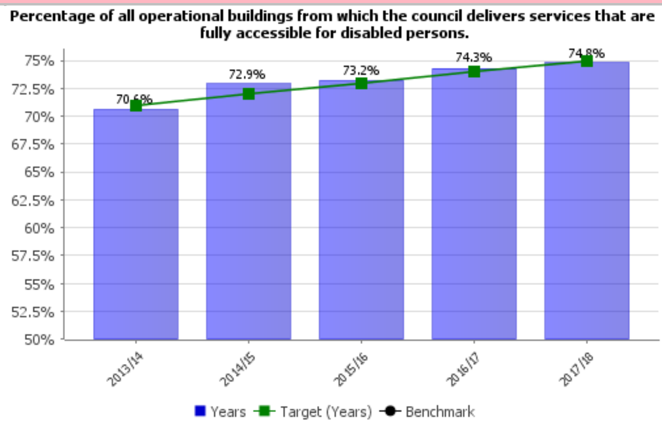
✔	PAMP405_9b.1c Average School Estate Capacity (% roll to total capacity)	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance indicator introduced in 2014 allows the Council to demonstrate that it maximises the utilisation of its school estate capacity to deliver curriculum activities – i.e. the percentage of the capacity to accommodate pupils that is used. The calculation is based on all primary and secondary school pupils attending as a percentage (the average school roll) against the capacity of the school. This is reported within the School Estate Core Facts.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

The general trend for this performance measure is an increasing utilisation of the school estate which when reflected against an increasing school population means that we are accommodating more pupils without adding excessive capacity. Performance measure is calculated by using Base Audible Summary of School Roll Forecasts provided by Education Planning. Primary: 15644 out of 19804, Secondary: 10928 out of 13420. Totals: 26572/ 33224. This was provided in May 2018.

Target for 2018/19 has been increased to 83% to reflect increasing school roll but no additional accommodation being constructed. The next update is due in June 2019. The long term trend sought will be to have ongoing improvement and the maximisation of utilisation for the coming years.

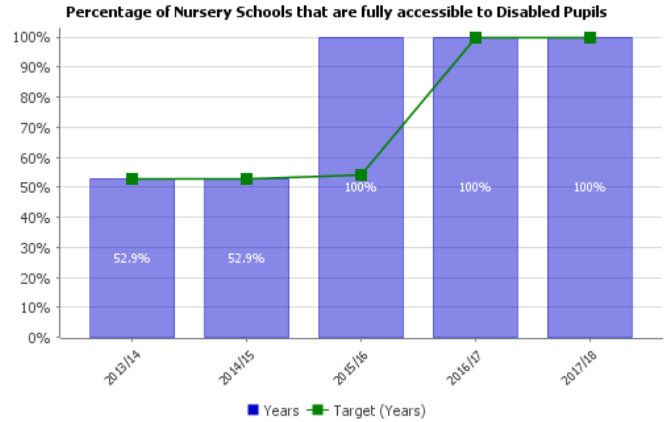
(e) Outcome 5 - Accessibility

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart	Trend Chart Commentary
	P:PAMP501_9b.2 Percentage of all operational buildings from which the council delivers services that are fully accessible for disabled persons.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** Performance has continued to improve due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the operational property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council is increasing the accessibility of our operational properties to those members of the public with disabilities as a result of an effective investment.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

The target for 2017/18 was 75% with an out-turn of 74.8%. Performance is expected to improve for 2018/19 to meet the target of 76% reflecting investment in accessibility works together with the delivery of new and redeveloped properties. The performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities.

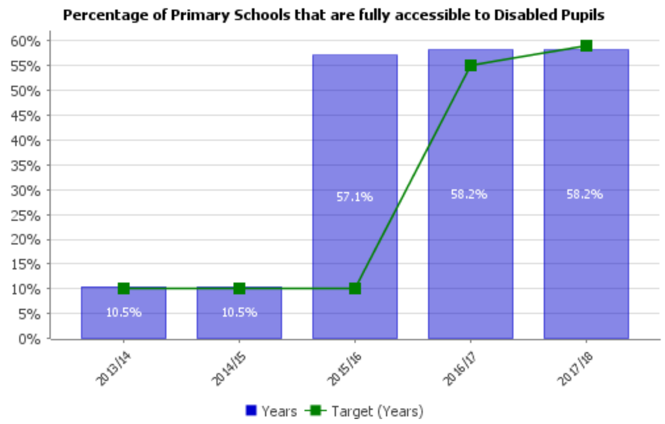
A review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

✔	PAMP502_9b.2 Percentage of Nursery Schools that are fully accessible to Disabled Pupils	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance measure aims to illustrate the number of the councils Nursery School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 100% of our nursery schools are considered accessible.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Performance has improved due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the nursery schools property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council is increasing the accessibility of our nursery properties to those members of the public with disabilities as a result of an effective investment. A significant investment during 14/15 and 15/16 say an increase of over 40% in the performance of the nursery school estate.

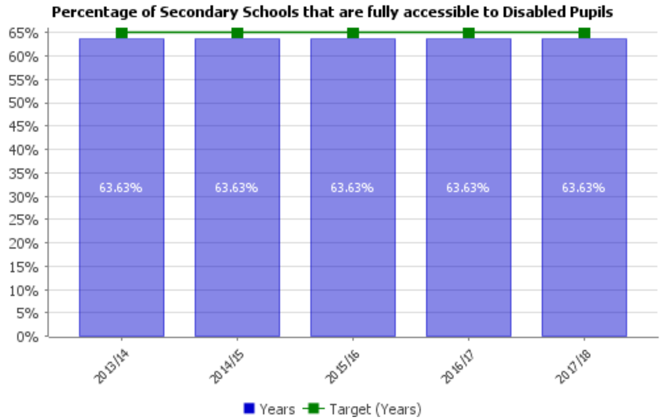
The target for 2018/19 is 100% representing a sustaining of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for Nursery Schools however, given results the council will be in the upper quartile.

PAMP503_9b.2 Percentage of Primary Schools that are fully accessible to Disabled Pupils	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance measure aims to illustrate the number of the councils Primary School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 58% of our primary schools are considered fully accessible.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Performance has improved due to the ongoing investment in pupils specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the primary schools property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council is increasing the accessibility of our primary school properties to those pupils with disabilities as a result of an effective investment. A significant investment since 2012/13 has seen an increase of over 35% in the performance of the primary school estate. The councils strategy is to have at least one fully accessible non-denominational and one fully accessible denominational primary school in each electoral ward and secondary school catchment area.

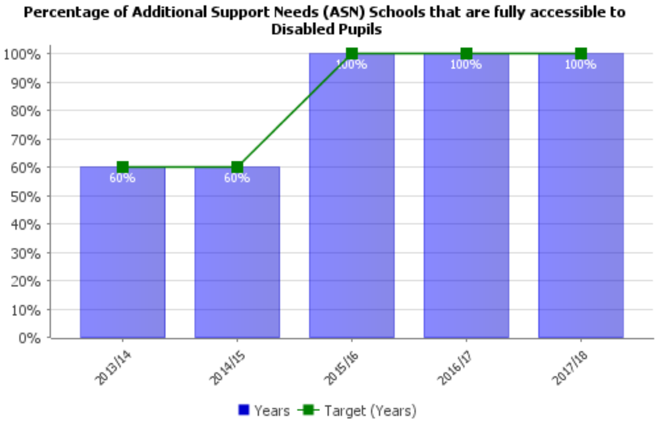
The target for 2017/18 is 58% representing a sustaining and modest improvement of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for Primary Schools.

PAMP504_9b.2 Percentage of Secondary Schools that are fully accessible to Disabled Pupils	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance measure aims to illustrate the number of the councils Secondary School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 63.63% of our Secondary schools are considered fully accessible.

Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Performance has been sustained and whilst investment in pupils specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the secondary schools property portfolio there are 4 schools which are not fully accessible these are Broxburn (PPP), Whitburn (PPP), Bathgate (PPP) and West Calder (being replaced). This trend chart shows that the council is sustaining the accessibility of our secondary school properties to those pupils with disabilities. Due to the nature of PPP contracts the improvement of these schools for accessibility is prohibitively costly. Improvement will occur for 2018/19 onwards as a result of the new West Calder High School which will be fully accessible.

The target for 201819 is 72.72% representing a sustaining of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for Secondary Schools.

PAMP505_9b Percentage of Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools that are fully accessible to Disabled Pupils	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** This performance measure aims to illustrate the number of the councils Additional Support Needs (ASN) School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 100% of our ASN schools are considered accessible.

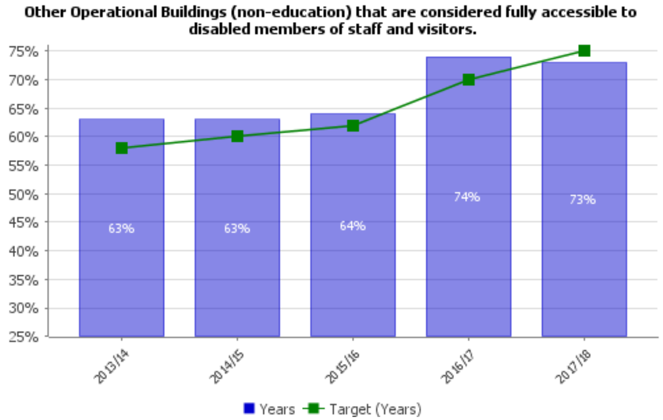
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

Performance has improved due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the ASN schools property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council has increased the accessibility of our ASN school properties to those pupils with disabilities as a result of an effective investment. A significant investment during 14/15 and 15/16 saw an increase of 40% in the performance of the ASN school estate.

The target for 2018/19 is 100% representing a sustaining of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for ASN Schools however, given results the council will be in the upper quartile.

PAMP507_9b.2 Other Operational Buildings (non-education) that are considered fully accessible to disabled members of staff and visitors.

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure aims to illustrate the number of the councils operational property assets (excluding schools) as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment.

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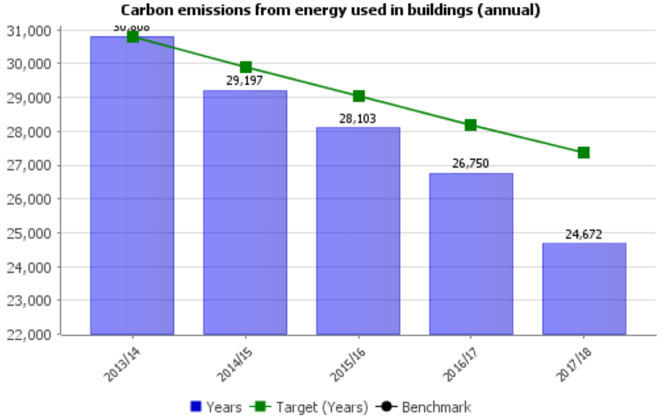
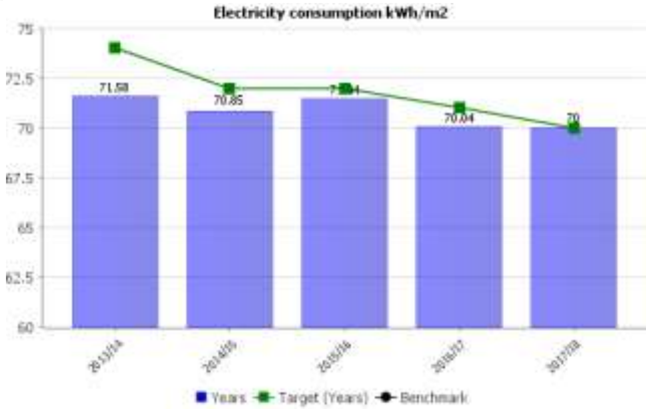
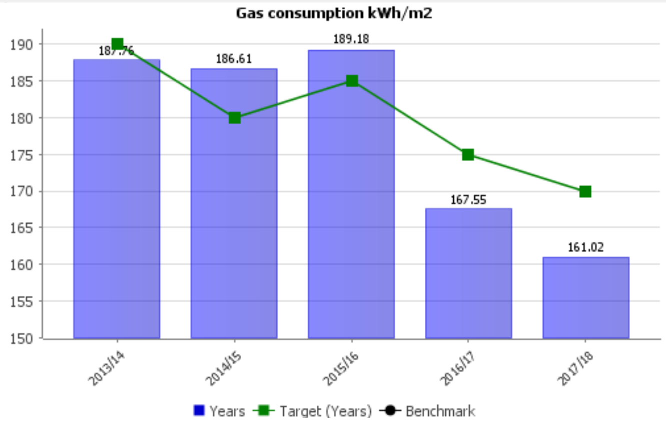
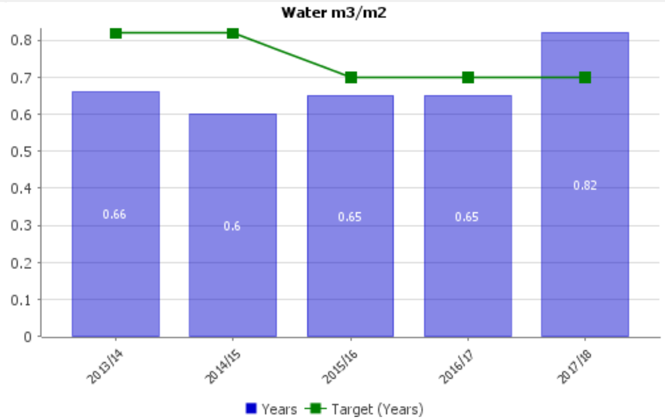
Trend Chart Commentary (Continued)

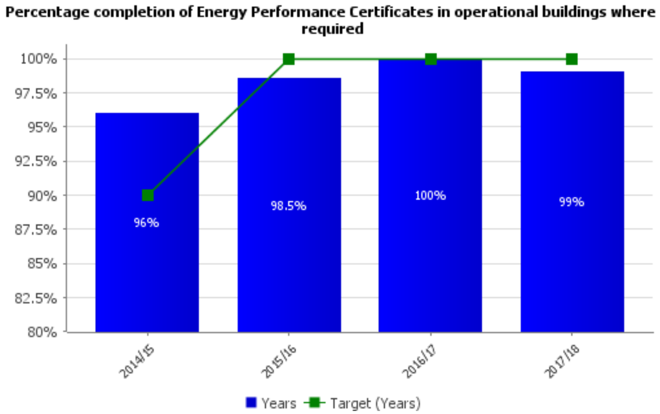
Performance has continued to improve due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the operational (non-education) property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council is increasing the accessibility of our operational properties to those members of the public with disabilities as a result of an effective investment.

The target for 2017/18 was 75% with an out-turn of 73%. The target for 2018/19 is 75% reflecting a number of projects that are currently in progress and investment in accessibility works. Non-Education assets are not segmented in terms of national benchmarking however, in relation to wider operational property (all asset) which is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group the council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities.

(f) Outcome 6 - Sustainability

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart	Trend Chart Commentary
✔	PMD191_9a.1 Carbon emissions from energy used in buildings (annual)	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** 2017/18 shows a continued reduction in emissions from previous year because of continued energy efficiency measures and further reductions in emissions factors (particularly for electricity). It is anticipated that further reductions will be seen in 18/19 due to predicted emissions factors and other projects coming forward. Targets to be reviewed as part of wider CMP refresh. Target for 2017/18 was 27,385 tonnes. Targets reflect the 2013/14 baseline figure and annual reduction of 2.9% set out in the council's approved Carbon Management Plan and Climate Change Strategy. Data will be updated following completion of the CRC process (including internal audit) in July 2019.
✔	PMD192_9a Electricity consumption kWh/m2	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** 2017/18 saw a reduction of 0.1kWh/m2 from 2016/17 with the current figure of 70kWh/m2 which is on target for the year, despite a significant cold spell increasing consumption at a number of sites (predominantly electrically heated). Target for 18/19 is 69kWh/m2. Further improvements to buildings including upgrading of lighting to LED and introduction of more efficient equipment and controls is the key contributor to

				reductions. Figure for 2018/19 will be available in late May once all electricity invoices have been processed.
	PMD193_9a Gas consumption kWh/m2	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** Figure for 2017/18 is 161.02kWh.m2 against the target of 170 and is a decrease on 2016/17 figure of 167.55 kWh/m2. Further projects are being taken forward in 2018/19 to reduce gas consumption including a number of boiler replacements and other measures. Target for 2018/19 is 165 kWh/m2. Outcome will be partly dependant on winter weather conditions and temperatures (degree days).
	PMD195_9a Water m3/m2	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		**Trend Chart Commentary:** Data shows that water consumption has increased from 0.65m3/m2 to 0.97m3/m2. There are a number of factors influencing this, including unexpectedly high consumption at a number of sites (some of which we were alerted to and have resolved throughout the year). A benchmarking exercise is now being undertaken to identify sites where there are high consumption issues with a view to targeting resources to improve this. In addition, supplier data has been improved this year, with consumption data available for more buildings. Some sites still seem high when compared to previous years and we are awaiting clarification on these from Anglian Water.

	PMD196_9b Percentage completion of Energy Performance Certificates in operational buildings where required	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)		<u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u> Changes to the EPC requirements have meant that a higher number of buildings must have a certificate displayed. All publicly accessible buildings with a floor space of more than 250m2 must now be included. Following a comprehensive audit in 2015/16, a number of EPC's were completed in early 2017 which took the council to 100% compliance. Figure for 2017/18 has reduced slightly to 99% due to no EPC being available for Whitehill Service Centre - this has now been commissioned and will be in place by mid-June. Target for 18/9 is to 100% compliance with certificates for all buildings where they are required.

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (2018/19 to 2027/28)

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To invite the Panel to scrutinise the proposed Property Asset Management Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To note the proposed Property Asset Management Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28 and the intention to report the plan to Council Executive for approval.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	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)**	The council is required to demonstrate Best Value through a structured framework for the management of its property assets. The establishment of this plan will support achievement of this.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	Not Applicable
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The implementation of the Property Asset Management Plan will sustain and where appropriate improve the performance measures highlighted in the plan.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The Property Asset Management Plan supports activities under a number of outcomes including the following: Outcome 1 -We make West Lothian an attractive place for doing business in Scotland. Outcome 3 – we are better educated, more successful, renowned for our research and innovation Outcome 10 – we live in well designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the services we need Outcome 12 – we value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations

		Outcome 14 – we reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production Outcome 15 - Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Corporate property revenue and general services capital investment will support the implementation of the Property Asset Management Plan 2018/19 to 2027/28.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	The plan is being presented to PDSP for consideration
VIII	**Other consultations**	The plan has been prepared with consultation with the relevant services.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

At its meeting on 13 February 2018 Council approved the new ten year general services capital programme for 2018/19 to 2027/28 together with the Corporate Asset Management Strategy for 2018/19 to 2027/28. The Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) establishes the priorities set out in the corporate plan and how these relate to the management of all the councils assets, together with aligning to the resources set out in the capital programme. The Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) distils these priorities and how they relate to the management of property assets. In addition the PAMP re-establishes the corporate framework for the management of property.

The proposed PAMP included in the appendix applies to the period from 2018/19 until 2027/28 and has at its core the overall aim to manage our property assets efficiently and effectively whilst continuing to improve performance. The plan is for a ten year period progress and will be reported annually. The plan will be formally reviewed and recalibrated in 2022/23.

Property assets of the correct type, size and condition in the right location can make the difference between good and poor service delivery. Properties owned and managed by the council are high in our community's perception of the council and the services we deliver from them. It is therefore essential that they are looked after properly to ensure that they benefit future generations.

D2 Plan Contents

The plan sets out the council's approach to the management of its property assets. It supports the delivery of the council's priorities by:

- Establishing a corporate framework for the management of our property assets;
- Highlighting corporate outcomes and priorities and how they will be supported through the effective and efficient management of property assets;

- Presenting an overview of the extensive property assets owned by the council;
- Identifying the internal and external influencing factors and challenges affecting property;
- Identifying a number of activity themes to improve the performance of property asset management; and
- Outlining the investment we will make in our property assets over the next ten years.

D3 Corporate Asset Management Performance Measures

The monitoring of performance is critical to measuring the success of the plan's implementation. The key performance measures which reflect the Corporate Asset Management Strategy are:

- Compliance;
- Condition;
- Suitability;
- Sufficiency;
- Utilisation;
- Accessibility; and
- Sustainability

Specific performance measures that relate to each of these are detailed in the appended plan. These will be reported on an annual basis throughout the life of the plan.

D4 Governance

Management and decision making processes are outlined in the plan and will continue to be structured to ensure effectiveness and transparency. The Plan sets a management hierarchy that incorporates both elected member decision making and officer level delegated authority.

D5 Performance Improvement Activity Themes

To drive improvement in performance a number of themes have been identified which will concentrate on specific activities and property types. In summary these areas follows:

- Learning Estate Modernisation – This area will concentrate on the modernisation of the learning estate to ensure long terms sustainability and suitability.

- Corporate Property Modernisation – Activities in this area will continue the ongoing process of modernising, rationalising and improving utilisation of our office and administrative accommodation;

- Community Property Modernisation – This theme will concentrate on modernising, rationalising and improving utilisation of our community facilities (community centres and pavilions etc) together with encouraging asset transfer.

- Commercial Property Portfolio Modernisation – Activities in this area will seek to improve the overall financial performance of our commercial properties whilst continuing to support economic development;

- Information and Performance Management – This theme encompasses a number of individual projects to improve the use of ICT (asset management software and digital property records and portal) together with performance management and benchmarking;

- Financial Management and Resource Deployment – This activity will seek to build upon the effective prioritisation and efficient deployment of resources towards corporate priorities and property performance measures;

- Risk management and compliance – Activities in this area will concentrate on implementing a comprehensive framework for managing risks associated with our property assets and prioritising statutory compliance;

- Governance, Project Management and Delivery Models – This theme will build upon the effective governance and decision making arrangements and will review delivery models for the management and procurement of projects.

- Partnership working – Activities in this area will concentrate on establishing a framework for the management and development of existing and new property assets with our partners;

- Energy and Sustainability – This area will encompass a number of projects and initiatives to reduce our energy usage, increase our generation from renewable sources and ensure buildings meet their expected life; and

Timescales and performance impacts for the individual activities within each of the themes outlined above are highlighted within the proposed plan.

D6 Capital Investment

The Plan also highlights the capital investment that will be made in our property assets over the next ten years from 2018/19 to 2027/28. This totals over £256m and includes a number of key areas, such as:

- School Estate Planned Improvements – £30m
- Schools Estate Projects (Early Years, Additional Support Needs and estate wide projects and programmes) – £48m.
- Schools for the Future (match funding) – £14.5m
- New School and Increased Education Capacity projects – £52m
- Operational buildings modernisation – £22m
- Statutory Compliance and Accessibility Works – £16m
- Partnership Centres (including new Whitburn Centre) – £7.2m
- Social Policy Property Planned Improvements – £2m

These significant resources demonstrate the councils commitment to sustaining and improving property asset performance and will support the implementation of the proposed plan.

D7 Property Asset Management Best Practice

The council has been at the forefront of property asset management for a number of years and has been active in a number of professional body and government working groups which have developed various guidance and best practice. This has included involvement through the Scottish Heads of Property with the Scottish Government on the development of new condition and suitability assessments for schools and the development of a scorecard approach to measuring the performance of assets.

The plan has been produced in accordance with national best practice guidance and recognises good asset management practices deployed by the council in support of our corporate priorities and seeks to progress these further.

E. CONCLUSION

The proposed Property Asset Management Plan has been prepared to reflect and support the priorities of the Corporate Plan and Corporate Asset Management Strategy. It sets out a framework and resource requirements for the next ten years to ensure we manage our property assets effectively and efficiently whilst ensuring we seek continuous improvement.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Corporate Asset Management Strategy and General Services Ten Year Capital Investment Strategy Year 2018/19 to 2027/28 Report approved 13 February 2018.

Appendix: Property Asset Management Plan 2018/19 to 2027/28

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Tel: (01506) 281826

Donald Forrest Head of Finance and Property Services

Date: 7 December 2018

APPENDIX 1

Property Asset Management Plan

2018/19 to 2027/28

West Lothian Council

Contents

Data Label: PUBLIC

1 Foreword

West Lothian Council is committed to managing its property assets efficiently and effectively. The appropriate use of property assets in the right locations can make the difference between good and poor service delivery. Property assets rank high in our community's perception of the council and the services we deliver from them. It is therefore essential that we look after property assets and ensure that they benefit future generations.

This plan sets out the council's proposed framework for the management of our property assets over the next ten years. It has been produced in accordance with national guidance and recognises good practices to support the delivery of our corporate priorities.

The plan recognises the outcomes of the Corporate Plan and the Delivering Better Outcomes consultation and, in particular, the importance that is placed upon ensuring our property assets are managed in a sustainable manner. It also builds upon the approved Corporate Asset Management Strategy which sets out the main outcomes we will use to demonstrate that our assets are managed efficiently and effectively.

It is widely recognised that the application of modern asset management practices can enable efficient resource deployment, service modernisation, long term financial planning and improved risk management. In these challenging times, is it essential that the council embraces this approach and strives to ensure that we invest as wisely as possible and ensure our property assets are fit for purpose.

Significant resources are deployed in the management, maintenance and construction of our property assets and therefore it is essential that these are deployed to deliver the best possible outcomes for West Lothian's Communities. This plan forms an important part of the council's commitment to achieve this.

Paul Kettrick
Corporate Estates Manager
Asset Lead Officer (Property)

2 Introduction and Background

2.1 Introduction

Welcome to the Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP). This plan sets out the council's plans for the management of our property assets for the period 2018/19 to 2027/28. This builds upon the achievements of the previous plan that was widely recognised as being at the forefront of good asset management in local authorities. The management of our property assets involves a number of significant elements including the day to day management of their use and maintenance, to significant renovation and the development of new buildings.

The council has an approved Corporate Plan, which sets out eight priorities that have been developed in consultation with our local communities, partner organisations, stakeholders, staff and trade unions. These priorities, inform the activities that the council will undertake in order to achieve better outcomes for West Lothian. Successful management of property assets will be critical to ensure the delivery of these priorities. The effective and efficient management of assets together with a range of modernisation programmes and projects were identified as part of the council's corporate plan, budgetary strategy and service modernisation public consultation.

To ensure a consistent approach to the management of our assets, the council has approved a Corporate Asset Management Strategy that sets out a number of performance outcomes within the context of our vision *"to manage assets efficiently and effectively to support the achievement of corporate priorities and outcomes".*

The purpose of this Property Asset Management Plan is to support the achievement of this vision and ensure our Property assets continue to play an active role in the delivery of our services. The plan also seeks to ensure fit for purpose Property that will support delivering our corporate priorities and facilitate the modernisation of services.

This Property Asset Management Plan sets out the council's approach to the management of its property assets. It supports the delivery of the council's priorities by:

- Establishing a corporate framework for the management of all our property assets;
- Highlighting our corporate outcomes and priorities and how they will be supported through the effective and efficient management of our property assets;
- Presenting an overview of the extensive property assets owned by the council;
- Identifying the internal and external influencing factors and challenges affecting property;
- Identifying a number of activity themes to improve the performance of property asset management; and
- Outlining the investment we will make in our property assets over the next ten years.

After staff costs the revenue resources deployed in the management of our property assets represent the next highest area of expenditure. It is therefore essential that these significant resources are deployed effectively and efficiently to sustain and where possible improve the performance of our property assets. The council currently spends significant resources on the management of its property assets on matters such as statutory compliance, energy, non-domestic rates and maintenance. The council has an approved five year revenue strategy and the management of property budgets will continue to play a large role in the councils financial planning and modernisation programmes delivery.

The Council has approved a ten year general services capital programme for 20017/18 to 2027/28, that has been formulated based on our corporate priorities, managing risks, ensuring asset management best practice and adherence to the prudential code. By having the asset management strategy, capital and revenue resources agreed for the next ten years the Council has established a sound basis for aligning our resource deployment with achievement corporate priorities and the modernisation of services to meet the aspirations of our communities.

This approach has enabled us to commit to a number of significant investments over the next ten years that will substantially improve the performance of our property assets and support achievement of our corporate priorities and support service modernisation. These include:

- Undertaking planned improvements of over £37m;
- Delivering property projects and programmes totalling £198.6 m; and
- Improving and sustaining our property statutory compliance responsibilities on matters such as asbestos and accessibility etc with investment of over £20 m.

These investments, together with a wide range of other modernisation activities to improve and sustain the performance of our property assets, clearly demonstrate the commitment of the Council to ensuring our buildings are fit for purpose and able to support service delivery in our communities.

2.2 Background - Property Assets Overview

Property assets are essential to the services delivered by West Lothian Council. Managing these assets is a structured process that seeks to ensure best value; continuous improvement in performance; achievement of our corporate priorities; and service modernisation.

It is recognised that:

- Managing property assets effectively is a key element of supporting service delivery;
- Resources employed in the management of our property assets are significant and therefore the efficiency of their deployment is critical;
- Property assets can be a key driver of service transformation and modernisation;
- The value of property assets owned by the council is significant; and
- Properties are at the centre of public perception of our local authority.

West Lothian Council manages a property portfolio of over 700 properties plus development land, which consists of two distinct types of property:

Operational Properties

Operational properties are those that are used to directly support Council service delivery such as schools, partnership centres and depots together with those operated by partner organisations such as West Lothian Leisure. There are currently 242 operational property assets.

Non-Operational Properties

Non-Operational properties are those used to enable the council to support local business space and economic development, indirectly support corporate or community planning objectives (i.e. third sector accommodation) and provide the council with a revenue stream. This category also includes surplus assets for disposal to support capital programmes and strategic development land.

Analysis by property type is shown in Appendix A.

Given the foregoing, the influence that property has in supporting service delivery is hugely significant. To ensure that these assets are fit for purpose to support service delivery, significant resources are deployed. Against a backdrop of challenging public finances it is important that we continue to manage our resources efficiently and effectively.

2.3 Background – Management

Management of all the council's property assets sits within Finance and Property Services with the stewardship from a strategic to an operational level including the management of all related resources being the responsibility of Property Management and Development. This role consists of the following main activities:

- Leading on the scope and direction of this Property Asset Management Plan;
- Responsibility for ensuring that services use property assets effectively and efficiently;
- Prioritising and managing the deployment of revenue resources for all aspects of property management, including statutory compliance, cyclical and reactive maintenance, energy and utilities, facilities management and non-domestic rates etc;
- Prioritising and managing the deployment of capital resources to support and undertake planned improvements, statutory compliance works, and to deliver new Property projects;
- Managing the capital receipts programme;
- Providing professional services to the council and partners relating to the management of Property assets;
- Operational and facilities management of the councils corporate and partnership buildings
- Managing the council's tenanted non-residential property (TNRP) portfolio including the Commercial Property Portfolio (CPP);
- Managing Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Design Build Finance and Maintain (DBFM) property projects and contracts; and
- Leading on Corporate Asset Management initiatives.

Individual council services are the custodians of property assets they use for the delivery of services. The general parameters of this role are as follows:

- Ensuring properties are used for activities that support service delivery and corporate plan priorities;
- Ensuring service use is appropriate for the type and size of property available;
- Preventing use for illegal purposes or uses that represent a reputation, financial or legal risk to the council or the property;
- Ensuring compliance records are maintained on site and updated as required in liaison with Construction Services;
- Through the role of responsible persons ensuring that compliance and required management activities are undertaken as appropriate;
- Not undertaking works other than those expected as part of normal janitorial services to any property, without consulting Construction Services; and
- Not entering in to any contracts conveying property interests without consent of Property Management and Development.

2.4 Background - Influencing factors

The management of our property assets is influenced by a variety of factors, which can be summarised as follows:

External

- The current economic climate means that not only do we have fewer resources to deploy in the management and maintenance of property, but also we generate lower receipts from the sale of surplus assets;
- Regulatory and statutory changes at both UK and Scottish Government level will occur throughout the life of this plan. These will be responded to and will affect how we manage and improve our property assets;
- Demographic changes mean that the West Lothian population will grow in the future and the age profile will become older and our long term property requirements will change as a result;
- Best practice guidance issued by professional organisations or other relevant bodies will be considered;
- Property requirements of strategic partners will influence the delivery of joint projects;
- Costs for energy, construction materials and professional advice will vary during the plan period with generally upward inflation pressures and therefore need to be considered on an ongoing basis; and
- Community Empowerment and in particular asset transfer is encouraged particularly where communities take responsibility for the management of local assets.

Internal

- Service modernisation and new ways of working mean that existing properties all need to evolve and be flexible in use;
- Efficiencies in resource usage will require to be achieved to reduce long term operating costs;
- New properties and extensions will be required to facilitate service delivery in areas where population increases occur. This means additional running costs;
- The council is committed to reducing carbon and improving the energy efficiency of our buildings. This will influence our planned improvements and the construction of new assets.

3 Council Corporate Plan Priorities

The Council has set eight priorities in the current Corporate Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28 in consultation with the local community, partners, stakeholders, staff and trade unions. These priorities, along with the three enabling themes, represent all the vital activities that the council will undertake in order to achieve better outcomes for West Lothian. Figures 1 and 2 below illustrate where Property assets *directly* contribute to, or are influenced by, the delivery of the council's priorities and/or enablers:

1. Delivering positive outcomes and early intervention for early years	✓	The council has a number of early years facilities and will support these further through improvements to our nursery schools and partnership centre development.
2. Improving the employment position in West Lothian	✓	The investment in property assets is significant and supports employment directly in the council through services and indirectly through the engagement of local contractors. The tenanted non-residential property portfolio supports business space and local small businesses.
3. Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children	✓	Schools represent a significant proportion of our operational property portfolio. Ensuring these are in good condition and fit for purpose is a key objective and creates a positive environment for learning.
4. Improving the quality of life for older people	✓	The Council owns and operates a number of care homes and developments for housing for the elderly are supporting a better quality of life for older people.
5. Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality	✓	Our property assets, by providing accommodation for services in communities with multiple deprivations support this priority. Significant investment is also made in improving accessibility, thereby supporting equal access to our services.
6. Reducing crime and improving community safety	✓	Property assets are used for youth projects thereby providing support to alleviate anti-social behaviour. A large proportion of our assets have secure access and provide safe environments.
7. Delivering positive outcomes on health	✓	Our partnership centres enable the coordination of services with the NHS, and the use of our properties to deliver services relating to physical activity and sports has a positive impact on community health.
8. Protecting the built and natural environment	✓	By investing in our property assets and ensuring they are managed in a sustainable manner we ensure that there is a vibrant environment in West Lothian impact on the environment is minimised.

Figure 1: Council Priorities

Enabling Priorities

Financial planning	✓	The significant resources employed in property assets mean that financial planning is required to allocate resources where they are most required and identify investment needs over the longer term
Corporate governance and risk	✓	We ensure that our property assets are compliant in terms of statutory and legislative requirements, safe for use and fit for purpose in terms of condition, thereby mitigating risks of building failure and closure.
Modernisation and improvement	✓	Through pro-active management our property assets act as a catalyst for modernisation and improvement of service delivery (i.e. office modernisation)

Figure 2: Council Enablers

4 Corporate Asset Management Strategy – Property Performance Outcomes

The corporate asset management plan sets out that we will manage our assets efficiently and effectively to support the delivery of our service and corporate priorities. To demonstrate this seven performance outcomes have been developed for all asset categories including property. The following table demonstrates how these relate to property and sets out appropriate high level performance indicators.

Strategy Outcome	Primary Performance Indicators	Activity Aims
Compliance	▪ Percentage of buildings with responsible persons identified ▪ Percentage of buildings that are fully compliant in terms of having a current fire safety risk assessment, up to date asbestos register, legionella testing and management processes in place.	Demonstrating that our property assets comply with statutory and regulatory requirements. Ensuring properties are safe and available for use to deliver services by having them regularly inspected and retaining compliance logs.
Condition	▪ Percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition (specified performance indicator) ▪ Percentage of gross internal floor area (m^2) that is in satisfactory or better condition ▪ Number of days school properties are closed due to building condition failure	Demonstrating that our property assets are maintained in satisfactory or better condition to support service delivery Minimising the number of days our buildings are not available for service delivery
Suitability	▪ Percentage of properties that are considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability (specified performance indicator)	Demonstrating that our property assets are fit for purpose in terms of accommodation type and layout to support the delivery of services.
Sufficiency	▪ Percentage of properties that are considered satisfactory or better in terms of sufficiency, utilisation and usage to support service delivery	Demonstrating that our property assets are sufficient for service delivery.
Utilisation	▪ Percentage of time properties are used versus operational availability	Demonstrating that our property assets are sufficient for service delivery and utilised as much as possible by our communities.

Data Label: PUBLIC

Strategy Outcome	Primary Performance Indicators	Activity Aims
Accessibility	■ Percentage of properties that are considered accessible (specified performance indicator) ■ Percentage of gross internal floor area (m^2) that is accessible	Demonstrating that our property assets provide accommodation that is accessible for all service users and staff
Sustainability	■ Total carbon emissions from corporate property assets (CO^2 tonnes) ■ KWh of energy used per m^2 in the operation of our corporate property assets ■ Percentage properties with Energy Performance ratings of D or better.	Demonstrates the impact our consumption of energy has on the environment. The energy performance of our property assets is monitored, and improvements undertaken where financially viable and technically feasible.

Figure 3: Corporate Asset Management Strategy – Property Performance Outcomes

Additional management performance indicators will, where appropriate, also be reported within annual updates of this property Asset Management Plan. These support the higher level performance measures and also specific activity themes outlined in the plan.

5 Property Asset Management Plan

5.1 Strategic Hierarchy

Property assets are managed within an integrated strategic framework that has, at its highest level, the Corporate Plan where direct and enabling service priorities are identified. These priorities are reflected in the Corporate Asset Management Strategy that sets out the primary outcomes required to ensure effective and efficient asset management. At this level financial resources are considered within the context of the council's financial strategy, which sets the framework for the prioritised deployment of revenue and capital resources for the different asset categories. This Property Asset Management Plan builds upon these and sets out the direct requirements for property to support the delivery of the corporate level outcomes and priorities. The following illustration shows the strategic hierarchy for the Property Asset Management Plan.

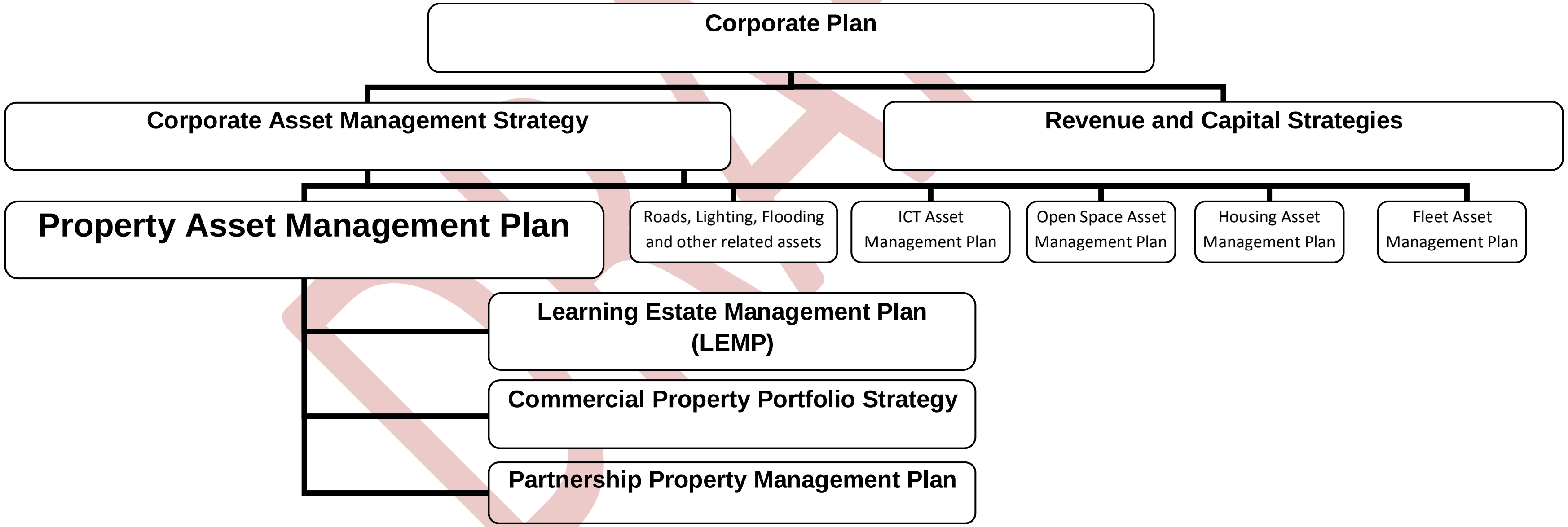

Figure 4: PROPERTY Asset Management Plan – Strategic Hierarchy

The Property Asset Management Plan establishes the framework for other property focused plans for the learnings estate assets (schools), commercial property portfolio and partnership properties. The separate Learning Estate Management LEMP) represents a significant operational activity area that will have additional specific requirements.

Whilst all priorities and outcomes from the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan are applicable to these supplementary plans, there are additional requirements that are relevant. In summary these are as follows:

Learning Estate Management Plan

The emerging Learning Estate Management Plan will set out the framework for the management of our educational estate to support the Scottish Governments "Building Our Future" vision for 21st century schools. This aims to provide well designed, well built and well managed schools that support national and local priorities and inspire children, young people and communities. In addition to the core Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan, the Learning Estate Management Plan has a number of key aims for the future of our educational establishments. These are:

- Putting pupil development and attainment at the centre of our decision making;
- Ensuring management is flexible to meet the needs of individual children;
- Ensuring our school estate establishments meet our aspirations; and
- Managing the school estate to build in flexibility so that it can evolve to address future needs.

The Learning Estate Management Plan will be reported for adoption in Spring 2019 with performance updates provided annually.

Commercial Property Portfolio Strategy

The Commercial Property Portfolio (CPP) has its own additional priorities, management and governance structure due to its commercial non-operational nature which is focused influencing local business space provision, supporting economic development and delivering revenue income. It comprises a diverse range of property types, including industrial, retail and office properties together with strategic land and other miscellaneous assets. These are located across West Lothian and in areas that are unviable for the private sector. The CPP generates a gross annual income of approximately £4.2m for the council.

The portfolio has developed organically and it is important to the local economy, with the council being one of the largest commercial property owners and providers of business space in the area. The council also offers locations, flexible lease terms and small sized units that the majority of the private sector do not consider attractive. The basic aims of the CPP Portfolio are as follows:

- Identifying new opportunities for the creation of additional business space to support economic development;
- Improving the recovery of rents, insurance and service charges;

- Identifying new opportunities to produce income;
- Developing a plan to change the balance and profile of the portfolio, resulting in a dynamic portfolio capable of providing sustained improvement in rental income, together with the removal and reduction of risk within the portfolio;
- Developing processes to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the portfolio's management; and
- Improving the level of net annual income generated from existing commercial property assets;

Strategic land is held by the council to support long term development aspirations, generate capital receipts and economic development.

Surplus assets are those for which the council no longer has an operational requirement. In such circumstances these assets are then processed through the councils approved surplus property procedures.

The CPP performance together with modernisation proposals are reported annually and separately to the main Property Asset Management Plan.

Partnership Property Plan

The council is committed to working with our strategic partners, organisations, communities and businesses to deliver property assets that support our corporate and service priorities to meet community aspirations and needs. At the centre of the Partnership Property Plan is our network of partnership centres at Fauldhouse, Bathgate, Strathbrock (Broxburn), Almondbank (Craigshill), Blackburn, Armadale, Linlithgow and East Calder, and additionally the new facility at Whitburn from 2020. The partners and services involved in these developments vary from location to location however, the ethos of collocation and collaboration is now embedded in the public sector culture of West Lothian and therefore all future new property developments will continue to seek to maximise partner involvement.

Further opportunities for shared premises and integrated service delivery will continue to be considered. To achieve this, and to establish a formal framework for the management of existing facilities and the delivery of new opportunities, a Partnership Property Plan will be developed.

The basic activities of the Partnership Property Plan will be as follows:

- Developing a joint approach to property asset management and clearly establishing existing and future service demand in order to identify shared accommodation requirements;
- Identifying resources required and timescales for delivery of any proposed or agreed projects;
- Establishing specific delivery models that are fit for purpose and meet all partners requirements;

- Developing a framework for the management of existing and future partnership property projects from development to physical delivery and ongoing facilities management;
- Establishing and progressing key service integration opportunities that could be accommodated within shared property assets; and
- Clearly identifying benefits; demonstrating best value and outcomes that will be achieved; and monitoring performance through the life of an asset.

Annual updates will be provided on the plan and to monitor performance.

5.2 Property Asset Management Plan Decision Making Hierarchy

To ensure that Property assets are management consistently, within a clear decision making framework that facilitates effective and efficient management, the following structure has been established.

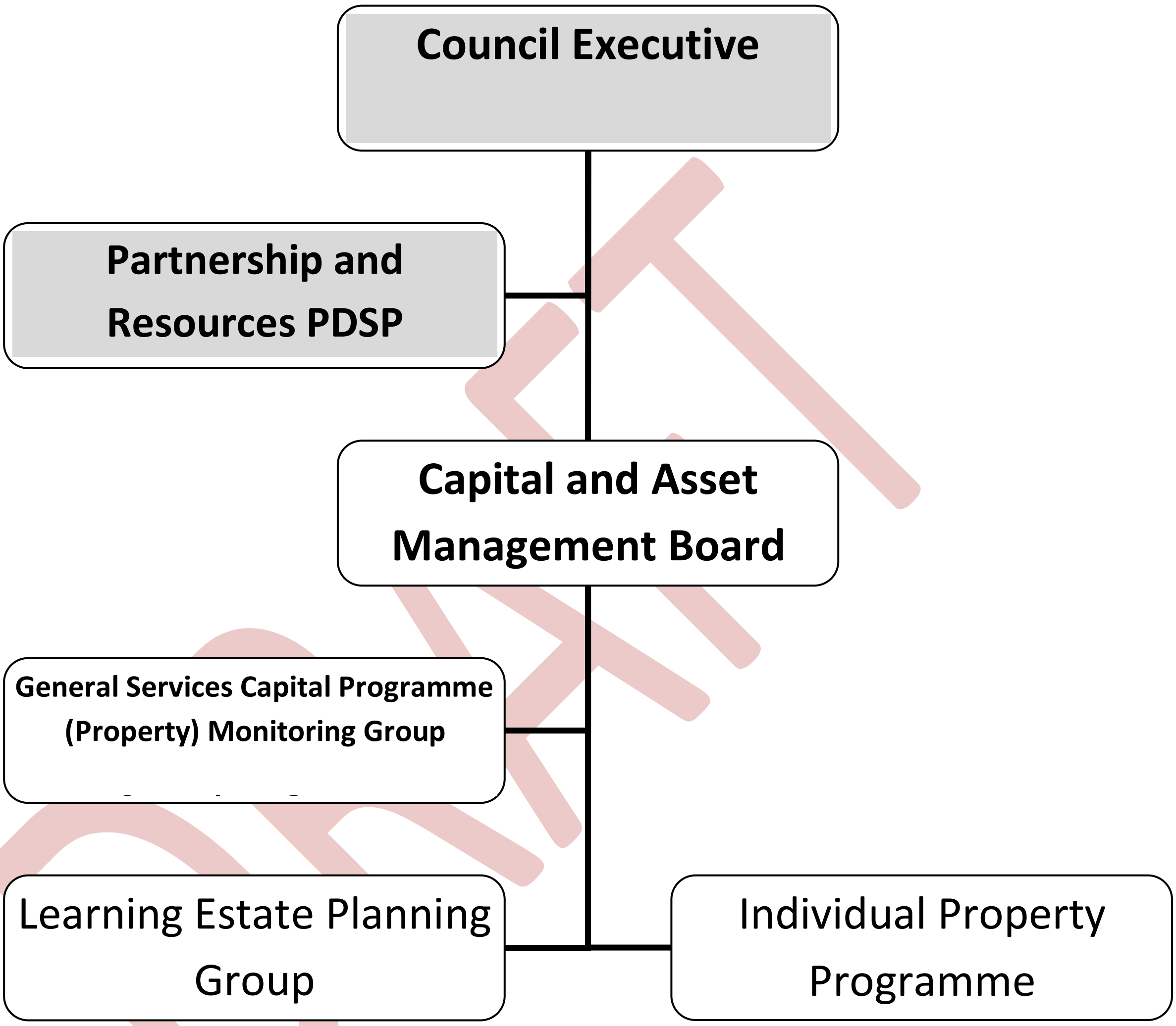

Figure 5 – Property Asset Management Structure

Each of these groups remit and responsibility is shown on the following table.

Level	Group Name	Remit and Responsibility	Frequency / Attendance
1.Elected Members	**Council / Council Executive**	• Approval of Corporate and Property Asset Management Strategies • Approval of General Services Capital Programme • Approval of General Services (Property) capital programme monitoring reports. • Approval of property asset management policy and project reports that require decisions by elected members • Approval of property asset management plan	Quarterly (as required)
1.Elected Members	**Partnership and Resources PDSP**	• Consideration of Property Asset Management Performance reports. • Consideration of asset management and General Services capital • Property policy reports that require consideration by elected members.	Annually (as required) / Elected Members
2.Senior Officer	**Capital and Asset Management Board**	• Responsibility for the direction and scope of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan. • Corporate monitoring of general services capital programme and consideration of variances. • Evaluation of emerging investment requirements and strategic outline business cases (SOBCs). • Oversee the coordination of corporate asset management projects and initiatives.	Seven times per annum / Head of Finance and Estates, Asset Lead Officers and Service Representatives

Data Label: PUBLIC

Level	Group Name	Remit and Responsibility	Frequency / Attendance
3.Officer	**General Services Capital Programme (Property) Group**	• Management of General Services Capital Programme (Property) • Responsibility for the implementation of the Property Asset Management Plan. • Reviewing project management of property projects and considers post project evaluations • Initial evaluation of emerging investment requirements and SOBCs. • Facilitate service liaison on specific Property asset projects and general operational Property management issues. • Monitoring performance and progress on initiatives relating to property Assets • Oversees the coordination of corporate property projects.	Monthly, Property Asset Lead Officer Construction and Design Manager and appropriate service representatives.
4.Officer	**Learning Estate Planning Group***	• Responsible for developing the scope and direction of the school estate management plan • Managing school estate capacity and coordination of related projects	Monthly / Development Planning Manager, Education Strategic Resource Manager, Planning and Information Manager and representatives from both Construction and Property Management.
5.Officer	**Individual Property Project Groups***	• Management of Specific Projects and Initiatives	As appropriate / variable depending upon project

Figure 6 – Property Asset Management Decision Making Groups Hierarchy

6 Property Asset Management Activity Themes

The Corporate Plan sets the service delivery priorities that we will support through the use of our assets. The Corporate Asset Management Strategy sets the higher level performance outcomes that are used to measure that we are effectively and efficiently managing our assets and resources in pursuit of these priorities.

This Property Asset Management Plan insets out activity themes that will be undertaken over the next ten years to support the achievement of the corporate priorities; the asset management strategy outcomes: and the modernisation of services.

The key activity areas services involved in summary are as listed in the table below.

Activity Theme	Activity Description	Lead Service (s)
Learning Estate Modernisation	• Continued modernisation of the learning estate to ensure long term sustainability and suitability.	Property Management and Development, Education and Construction Services
Corporate Property Modernisation	• Modernise and rationalise our Corporate property accommodation	Property Management and Development, Construction Services and custodian services (as appropriate)
Community Property Modernisation	• Modernise and rationalise our Community based property assets and encourage community asset transfer of appropriate properties.	Property Management and Development ,Customer Information Services and Construction Services
Commercial Property Portfolio Modernisation	• Modernise our Commercial Property Portfolio to improve financial performance whilst continuing to support economic development	Property Management and Development
Risk Management and Compliance	• Implement comprehensive compliance and risk management monitoring and works prioritisation framework for property assets.	Construction Services and Property Management and Development

Activity Theme	Activity Description	Lead Service (s)
Information and Performance Management	• Greater use of IT systems (Asset Management Software, GIS, Autocad, web-based systems etc) to improve the recording of management information and access. Reporting of performance and benchmarking.	Construction Services, Property Management and Development and Custodian Services
Financial Management and Resource Deployment	• Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of financial and staff resources deployed in the management of property assets	*Property Management and Development and Construction Services*
Governance, Project Management and Delivery Models	• Ensure continued transparent governance, effective project management and appropriate delivery models are used within all projects.	*Property Management and Development and Construction Services*
Partnership Working	• Seek to establish a more comprehensive approach to the delivery, occupancy and management of partnership property assets in West Lothian such as shared facilities, financial transparency and project delivery. Partner agencies covered would include (i.e. NHS, Police, Fire, Ambulance and other government agencies together with voluntary and other organisations)	*Property Management and Development, Community Health and Care Partnership, Integrated Joint Body and Community Planning Partners*
Energy and Sustainability	• Reduce our consumption and increase our self-generation of energy from sustainable sources.	Property Management and Development

Figure 7: Corporate Asset Management Strategy – Property Performance Outcomes

These themes represent the main modernisation activity areas for the management of our property assets. There are, however, other significant areas of operation involved in the ongoing day to day management of our property assets which are covered within the appropriate service management plans. These are reported separately, together with their appropriate performance measures. The activity themes will impact on the service management plans as resources are required to manage and deliver the activities outlined in this plan.

Throughout the ten year life of this plan additional modernisation opportunities will arise and these will be incorporated and reported within annual monitoring performance reports, as appropriate.

The impact that the theme activities will have in terms of the outcomes varies from project to project. The following table provides an indication of the cumulative impact that activities within themes will have on the outcomes.

	Property Asset Management Plan Activity Themes Impact										
Corporate Asset Management Outcomes	**Office Modernisation**	**Service Support**	**TNRP Modernisation**	**Place Based Review**	**PROPERTY Consolidation**	**Risk Management**	**Information**	**Resource Deployment**	**Partnership Working**	**Energy**	**Planned Improvements**
Compliance	4	2	6	5	1	1	1	2	3	5	1
Condition	3	3	2	4	4	2	2	1	4	3	2
Suitability	2	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	1	4	4
Sufficiency and Utilisation	1	4	3	2	2	5	4	6	2	2	6
Accessibility	5	5	4	3	5	4	6	4	5	6	3
Sustainability	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	6	1	5

Figures denote level of impact on outcome (1=largest, 6 = smallest)

7 Financial Resources

7.1 Capital Investment

Significant resources are employed in the management and improvement of our Property assets. The table included in Appendix C highlights the new investment being made to support corporate priorities and deliver improvements in the asset management outcomes. This includes the following investment over the next 10 years:

Capital Budget Category	10-Year Budget Allocation (£'000)
Nursery Schools Planned Improvements	500
Primary Schools Planned Improvements	7,694
Secondary Schools Planned Improvements	5,920
Special Schools Planned Improvements	200
School General Planned Improvements	9,280
School Estate Wide Planned Improvements	13,876
Partnership Centre Planned Improvements	2,300
Social Policy Planned Improvements	2,000
Tenanted Non-Residential Properties (TNRP) Planned Improvements	2,000
General Statutory Compliance	20,460
School General Projects	54,192
School Projects – Developer Funded	118,322
Operational Building Projects	22,554
Miscellaneous Projects	6,535
Total Investment 2018/19 to 2027/28	**265,833**

7.2 Revenue Budget

Whilst capital investment is predominantly used to improve the performance of our property assets whether through new projects or planned improvements significant revenue resources are also employed in the general ongoing day to day management activities. The table below outlines the revenue budgets employed for corporate properties.

Budget Description	Approx. Annual Budget (£'000)
Maintenance (cyclical and reactive)	3,000
Non-Domestic Rates	9,060
Energy and Utilities (gas, electricity, biomass and CRC allowances)	7,200
Other Property Costs (insurance and ancillary costs)	1,400
Approx. Net Total:	**20,660**

These revenue budgets cover a number of expenditure items including utilities costs, reactive repairs, cyclical works (servicing and testing), non-domestic rates charges, legal and other professional fees, carbon reduction credit allowances and software licences etc.

8 Customer Consultation

In the development and implementation of this property asset management plan it is important for us to ensure that we are aware of our unique customers groups, their needs and expectations. The following table highlights the customer consultation schedule that will be implemented which will influence any changes to the plan as it is deployed over the next ten years and will form part of periodic reviews and updates.

Customer Consultation Schedule				
Customer Group	Survey Method	Frequency	Responsible Officer	Feedback Method
Members of Public	On-line and Physical Questionnaire	Annually	Corporate	Annual Report
Custodian Services	Face to Face Interviews and Feedback	Annually	Asset Manager	Annual Report
Service Users	Questionnaire	Annually	Custodian Services	Annual Reports
Individual Project Customers (communities, elected members, partner organisations and all other interest parties	Questionnaires, face to face, group meetings, workshops and public meetings	As appropriate	Individual Project Managers	Project Reports
Civic Centre and Administrative Buildings Occupier Survey	Questionnaire	Annually	Group Facilities Manager	Annual Report
TNRP / CPP Tenant Survey	Questionnaire	Annually	Group Commercial Property Manager	Annual Report
Property Management and Development Customer satisfaction survey	Questionnaire	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Annual Report
Construction Services Customer satisfaction survey	Questionnaire	Annually	Construction and Design Manager	Annual Report

9 Risks to Property Asset Management Plan

In the delivery and implementation of this plan there are a number of risks that require to be mitigated. These include the following:

- **Political** – Ensuring that there is appropriate political approval is essential to the success of the plan;
- **Managerial** – It is vital to the success of the Property Asset Management Plan that high level managerial support is in place across all services;
- **Budgetary** – In dealing with construction projects and maintenance there is considerable expenditure on items where the price is influenced by external factors. These include fuel costs, material costs and professional fees. Unforeseen increases in these could lead to the full implementation of this plan being compromised;
- **Legislative** - changes in statutory compliance regulation may mean that certain properties are no longer compliant for use. This would mean unplanned increased costs to make them compliant, or the potential closure of buildings. There could also be changes that affect construction standards thereby increasing costs;
- **Staff Resources –** To progress the various activity themes and projects within the scope of this plan, the appropriate staff resources require to be available.

In terms of scale, each of these risks would have a significant effect on the successful implementation of the plan. Each has been considered and there are appropriate controls in place to mitigate risks. Whilst it is recognised that there will be instances where each of these will have some impact, whether on specific projects or activity themes, these are not considered to be highly likely, or insurmountable to the overall implementation and success of the plan.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Property Assets Breakdown-

The following table details the type and number of properties owned and managed by the Council which are covered by this management plan.

Operational Property

Property Use / Type	No of Properties
Care Homes	3
Cemetery Buildings	16
Civic Amenity Buildings	3
Community Centres and Village Halls	28
Service Centre, minor depots and operational stores	12
Day Centres & Hostels	15
Libraries	7
Nursery Schools and Early Years	5
Operational Offices	11
Partnership Centres	5
PPP Primary Schools	3
PPP Secondary Schools	5
Primary Schools	64
Secondary Schools	6
Special Schools	5
Sports Pavilions	42
Theatres	2
West Lothian Leisure	10
Total:	**242**

Tenanted Non-Residential Property Portfolio (non-operational)

Property Use / Type	No of Properties
Industrial	297
Offices	28
Retail	110
Other Commercial Leases	308
Total:	**743**

APPENDIX B - Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan Activities and Performance

The following table is provided to identify how the activity themes contained in this plan relate to our corporate priorities and asset management outcomes. The table also identifies the performance impact, when activities are estimated to complete, and who is the responsible officer for their delivery.

Activity Theme Performance and Timescales

Activity Theme	Activity Description	Main Corporate Asset Management Performance Outcomes	Performance Impact	Progress / Performance Reported	Owner	Start	End
Corporate Property Modernisation	Ongoing review and modernisation of office accommodation	Suitability, Sufficiency, Sustainability	Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Learning Estate Modernisation	Development and implementation of Learning Estate Management Plan	All performance measures	Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-19 (then ongoing)
Learning Estate Modernisation	Delivery of learning estate investment programmes	All performance measures	Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Community Property Modernisation and Partnership Working	Promotion of Community Asset Transfer and Community Empowerment Opportunities.	Potential to impact all performance measures	Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28

Activity Theme	Activity Description	Main Corporate Asset Management Performance Outcomes	Performance Impact	Progress / Performance Reported	Owner	Start	End
Commercial Property Modernisation	Ongoing review and performance evaluation of commercial property portfolio.	Condition and Suitability	Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Financial Management and Resource Deployment	Review of building maintenance costs, delivery models and approaches to ensure value for money and effective prioritisation of resources	Compliance, Condition and Accessibility	Sustain and Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Financial Management and Resource Deployment	Delivery of capital programme, prioritisation and optimisation of capital resources deployed in projects	Compliance, Condition, Suitability, Sufficiency, Accessibility and Sustainability	Sustain and Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Financial Management and Resource Deployment	Alternative models of investment and delivery of assets will be considered together with securing additional funding	Potential to impact all performance measures	Improve	As appropriate	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Governance, Project Management and Delivery Models	Effective and efficient project governance, procurement and management processes will be deployed for all projects	N/A	N/A	As appropriate	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28

Activity Theme	Activity Description	Main Corporate Asset Management Performance Outcomes	Performance Impact	Progress / Performance Reported	Owner	Start	End
Information and Performance Management	All projects and investments will be correlated to specified performance measures.	N/A	N/A	As appropriate	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-18	Mar-28
Partnership Working	Development of Partnership Property Plan	N/A	N/A	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-19	Mar-20 (then ongoing)
Financial Management and Resource Deployment	Surplus Property and Disposal of Assets	Potential to impact all performance measures	Improve	Annually	Corporate Estates Manager	Apr-19	Mar-28
Risk Management and Compliance	Developing and implementing policies and processes to ensure buildings are safe and that risks associated with the built environment are effectively managed.	Compliance	Sustain	Annually	Construction and Design Manager	Apr-19	Mar-28
Climate Change Strategy and Management Plan Review	Review of Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plan	Sustainability	Improve	Annually	Energy Manager	Apr-19	Mar-20 (reviewed bi-annually)
Information and Performance Management	Delivery of new Asset Management Software	N/A	N/A	N/A	Construction and Design Manager	Apr-18	Mar-20

Further activities will be added as appropriate.

APPENDIX C – General Services Property Capital Programme 2018/19 to 2027/28

Property Assets - Capital Investment Strategy Budgets 2018/19 to 2027/28	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	Total £'000
Schools Planned Improvements											
Nursery Schools	25	30	30	70	70	70	55	50	50	50	500
Primary Schools	424	1,220	1,000	550	550	550	1,000	700	925	775	7,694
Secondary Schools	580	1,120	590	500	500	500	510	550	560	510	5,920
Special Schools	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	200
School General Planned Improvements	890	1,040	1,285	655	655	655	1,117	922	969	1,092	9,280
Schools Planned Improvements - Total	**1,939**	**3,430**	**2,925**	**1,795**	**1,795**	**1,795**	**2,702**	**2,242**	**2,524**	**2,447**	**23,594**
School Estate Wide Planned Improvements	963	1,922	1,621	1,135	1,135	1,110	1,590	1,329	1,539	1,532	13,876
Operational Buildings Planned Improvements											
Partnership Centres	100	325	340	150	150	150	200	300	335	250	2,300
Social Policy	285	400	260	320	135	120	120	120	120	120	2,000
Operational Buildings Planned Improvements - Total	**1,348**	**2,647**	**2,221**	**1,605**	**1,420**	**1,380**	**1,910**	**1,749**	**1,994**	**1,902**	**18,176**
Tenanted Non Residential Properties Planned Maintenance	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2,000
Planned Improvements Total	**3,487**	**6,277**	**5,346**	**3,600**	**3,415**	**3,375**	**4,812**	**4,191**	**4,718**	**4,549**	**43,770**
General Statutory Compliance	2,148	2,138	2,203	2,018	1,913	1,837	2,107	1,977	2,047	2,072	20,460
Planned Improvements & Statutory Compliance Total	**5,635**	**8,415**	**7,549**	**5,618**	**5,328**	**5,212**	**5,919**	**6,168**	**6,765**	**6,621**	**64,230**
Property Projects											
Schools General Projects	2,329	15,283	24,364	8,968	2,818	255	145	10	10	10	54,192
Schools Projects - Developer Funded	2,195	6,536	35,299	29,980	8,795	2,100	2,380	2,380	7,600	21,057	118,322
Schools Total	**4,524**	**21,819**	**59,663**	**38,948**	**11,613**	**2,355**	**2,525**	**2,390**	**9,610**	**21,067**	**172,514**
Operational Buildings & Depot Modernisation	4,142	10,912	5,300	600	500	400	200	200	200	100	22,554
Miscellaneous Projects	654	724	834	679	644	600	600	600	600	600	6,535
Property Projects - Total	**9,320**	**33,455**	**65,797**	**40,227**	**12,757**	**3,355**	**3,325**	**3,190**	**8,410**	**21,767**	**201,603**
TOTAL PROPERTY ALLOCATION	**14,955**	**41,870**	**73,246**	**45,845**	**18,085**	**8,567**	**10,244**	**9,358**	**15,175**	**28,388**	**265,833**

Data Label: Public

Finance and Property Services
Property Asset Management Plan 2018/19 to 2027/28

Donald Forrest
Head of Service

December 2018

For more information:

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PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2018/19 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – MONTH 6 MONITORING REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Panel with an update on the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources portfolio.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources portfolio as at month 6;
2. Notes that the Partnership and Resources portfolio position at month 6 is part of the overall council budget position which was reported to Council Executive on 13 November 2018;
3. Notes any actions required to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on customers' needs, being honest, open and accountable, making best use of resources, working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Section 95; Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, section 1-14.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	No implications at this stage.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance indicators**	Effective budget management is an essential element of service performance. Additional financial reporting provides elected members with information to allow for proper scrutiny of performance of services.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The revenue budget provides resources necessary to help deliver the Single Outcome Agreement. Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes.
VI	**Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The forecast position for the Partnership and Resources portfolio revenue budget is an underspend of £1.476 million.

		There is anticipated slippage of £1.678 million on the capital budgets for the portfolio.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	A financial performance report will be presented to the Panel twice yearly on an ongoing basis.
VIII	**Other Consultations**	Depute Chief Executives, Head of Operational Services, Head of Corporate Services, Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services, Performance and Improvement Service

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Introduction

This report provides an update on the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) portfolio of services as at month 6. It is important to note that the council's revenue budget is operationally managed at a Head of Service level, and the financial position included within this report is part of the overall council forecast position which was reported to Council Executive on 13 November 2018. This report also includes the position on the delivery of approved budget reduction measures relevant to the Partnership and Resources portfolio for 2018/19.

The budget monitoring process is undertaken in line with the council's budgetary control framework and procedures, which places particular focus on a risk based and pro-active approach to budget monitoring. The projected out-turn for 2018/19 which was reported to Council Executive on 13 November 2018 indicated that the overall General Fund Revenue budget is forecasting an overspend of £1.352 million for 2018/19, which is partly offset by £1.052 million of early delivery of budget reductions within Social Policy, producing a net projected 2018/19 overspend of £300,000. Included within the overall forecast, there are recurring pressures of £3.894 million. The next update on the revenue monitoring position to Council Executive will be the outcome of the month 9 monitoring exercise on 26 February 2019, including an update on the mitigating actions that were previously agreed for recurring pressures.

This report focuses on the financial performance of council services which further enhances the information presented to elected members to allow scrutiny of service and financial performance. The report contains reference to key performance measures for service areas which are contained within Service Management Plans and referenced in the 2016/17 Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data-set. LGBF data for 2017/18 is currently being collated by the Improvement Service and will be made available later in the financial year and included in the month 12 PDSP updates.

D.2 Financial Information for 2018/19 Month 6 Forecast Position

The table below summarises the position in relation to service and capital expenditure and provides an update on the forecast position. The forecast revenue position is an underspend of £1.476 million for the Partnership and Resources portfolio. There is net slippage of £1.678 million in the capital programme. As part of the monitoring exercise, a number of key risks and service pressures have been identified and these are noted in the narrative for the relevant service area.

Service	2018/19 Budget £'000	Forecast Month 6 £'000	Variance £'000
GENERAL FUND REVENUE			
Chief Executive, Finance and Property Services			
Chief Executive and Elections	677	670	(7)
Revenues and Benefits	4,452	4,190	(262)
Financial Management	2,106	1,991	(115)
Internal Audit & Risk	380	353	(27)
Advice Shop	1,648	1,584	(64)
Construction Services	0	0	0
Property Services	14,942	15,108	166
Total	**24,205**	**23,896**	**(309)**
Corporate Services			
Corporate Procurement	328	290	(38)
Information Technology	4,327	4,208	(119)
Performance & Improvement	802	767	(35)
Corporate Communications	424	449	25
Legal Services	815	756	(59)
Human Resources and Support Services	4,302	4,384	82
Total	**10,998**	**10,854**	**(144)**
Operational Services			
Facilities Management	8,244	8,557	313
Fleet Management	482	672	190
Total	**8,726**	**9,229**	**503**
Housing, Customer and Building Services			
Customer Service Centre	1,257	1,172	(85)
Customer & Community Services	2,750	2,750	0
Total	**4,007**	**3,922**	**(85)**
Joint Boards			
Joint Boards	1,128	1,128	0
Total	**1,128**	**1,128**	**0**
Non Service Expenditure			
Non Service Expenditure	36,666	35,225	(1,441)
Total	**36,666**	**35,225**	**(1,441)**
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE	**85,730**	**84,254**	**(1,476)**

GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL			
Property	13,189	11,908	(1,281)
ICT	6,846	6,449	(397)
TOTAL GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL	**20,035**	**18,357**	**(1,678)**

D.3 Summary of Main Issues in Service Expenditure Budgets and Impact on Performance

D.3.1 General Fund Revenue – Chief Executive, Finance and Property Services

A underspend of £309,000 is expected for this area in 2018/19 mainly as a result of early delivery of approved staffing savings. There are pressures on energy costs with an increase in utility unit rates which is currently sitting at an 8% increase on last year's rates which compares to a budgeted rate of 5%. Work will continue to identify how this pressure will be met on a recurring basis.

Property maintenance spend continues to be a risk and revenue works are only being carried out on an emergency or essential maintenance basis across the property portfolio to ensure delivery of approved savings are met.

The Scottish Government is consulting on the implementation of the proposals in the Barclay Review on non-domestic rates. An update on the outcome of this consultation will be provided in due course.

The LGBF includes a number of key indicators that relate to Finance and Property Services including percentage of invoices paid within 30 days and the cost per dwelling of collecting council tax. The LGBF data shows that West Lothian's performance has remained consistent since 2013/14, with approximately 96% of invoices paid within 30 days, and consistently ranking fifth or sixth out of the 32 Scottish local authorities. The data for council tax collection is also positive, with West Lothian remaining in the top six for lowest cost per dwelling of collecting council tax since 2013/14. West Lothian's cost of support services as a proportion of total council expenditure is ranked fifth lowest out of the 32 Scottish Local authorities.

D.3.2 General Fund Revenue – Corporate Services

An underspend of £144,000 is forecast, mainly as a result of vacancies throughout the service. This is offsetting an overspend on occupational health expenditure and this remains a risk area with close monitoring taking place for the remainder of the year.

In terms of available benchmarking information from LGBF, as noted above, West Lothian Council ranks fifth lowest in Scotland with regard to the cost of support services as a percentage of gross budget.

Although not specific to Corporate Services, the overall sickness absence levels for the council remain higher than in other councils. The most recent LGBF data for 2016/17 indicated that there were on average 5.46 absence days per teacher and 12.73 days per non-teaching staff, with the council ranked 11^{th} and 30^{th} respectively within Scotland. Figures for 2017/18 were 5.06 absence days per teacher and 13.78 absence days for non-teaching staff. Increased levels of sickness absence has an impact on the delivery of councils services and can increase costs where periods of absence must be covered. Additional expenditure on occupational health costs can assist in reducing absence levels. An update on sickness absence and the application of revised policies is also reported in a separate paper to this PDSP.

D.3.3 General Fund Revenue – Operational Services

Expenditure within Operational Services reporting to the Partnership and Resources portfolio relates to Facilities Management (facilities management within schools and building cleaning) and also the green fleet budgets. Within Facilities Management, there is an overspend of £313,000 which mainly relates to an overspend on shift allowances and staffing costs above budget due to sickness absence levels. A review of shift working is required to match actual work patterns and customer demand and this will be carried out as part of the review of terms and conditions for 2020/21. Sickness absence levels are continuously monitored to identify where expenditure can be managed.

In terms of performance, the cost of cleaning and delivering a facilities management service continues to increase year on year, due to increases in the living wage which is fully provided for within the council's approved budget. Benchmarking information, in particular through the LGBF is contained within support services and cost per pupil performance indicators.

Green fleet, expenditure is forecast to overspend by £190,000. The green fleets assists the council in delivering approved budget reductions in business mileage and this has largely been the case with year on year reductions being achieved. The transition to the new pool fleet has resulted in additional one-off costs due to the overlap of the older to the newer fleet, however, the transition is progressing well and this will assist in achieving approved budget reductions for 2018/19.

D.3.4 General Fund Revenue – Housing, Customer and Building Services

Expenditure within Housing, Customer and Building Services relating to the Partnership and Resources portfolio includes Customer and Community Services and the Customer Service Centre. An underspend of £85,000 is expected in the Customer Service Centre due to staffing savings. A breakeven position is forecast for Customer & Community Services, helped by a number of one-off or short-term measures. There is an underlying cost pressure in Customer and Community Services and Officers are progressing options to deliver a sustainable solution going forward.

Performance information for the Customer and Community Services indicates that, for the first 6 months in 2018/19, the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent was above target at 99.4% and, for the Customer Service Centre, was marginally below target at 97% against a target of 98%.

D.3.5 General Fund Revenue – Joint Boards

A break-even position is forecast for 2018/19.

D.3.6 General Fund Revenue – Non Service Expenditure

A underspend of £1.441 million is currently forecast for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. There are a variety of factors which are impacting on the uptake levels and a focus group is investigating these. One of the actions which is being taken forward is to contact those who may be entitled to qualify for the scheme. The impact of Universal Credit may see further changes in this area. Further work is being carried out to ascertain the recurring position for the scheme.

D.3.7 General Fund Revenue – Monitoring of approved budget reductions

For the Partnership and Resources portfolio, savings of £3.917 million in 2018/19 have largely been delivered in full. Savings of £275,000 in relation to cleaning and facilities management are categorised as amber. The operational delivery of the savings are progressing well. The savings require staffing reductions to be delivered and it is envisaged that in the coming months sufficient vacancies arising from early retirement or staffing turnover will deliver these savings in full.

D.3.8 General Services Capital

The forecast position in this report relates to the Property and ICT asset categories, with net slippage of £1.678 million forecast for the financial year. The Roads and Related Assets and Open Space Asset categories was reported to the Environment PDSP on 30 October 2018.

Property

The forecast for property assets is £11.908 million spend against a budget of £13.189 million. A number of projects are not progressing as quickly as anticipated, resulting in forecast slippage of £1.281 million for the financial year. Potential cost pressures with projects have been highlighted due to a number of emerging issues. These cost pressures will be considered and value engineering will be undertaken wherever possible to reduce costs.

ICT

The draft outturn for ICT assets is £6.449 million spend against a budget of £6.846 million. A few projects are not progressing as quickly as expected, meaning that there is slippage of £397,000 in the ICT capital programme. This slippage was accounted for and reported to Council Executive on 13 November 2018, and it is still expected that the projects will be delivered within budget as part of the new ten year capital programme.

The LGBF includes comparative information on operational buildings. West Lothian performs favourably compared to other Scottish local authorities, with a current ranking of fourth for the percentage of operational buildings assessed as suitable for their current use and sixth for the percentage of internal floor area of operational buildings assessed as being in satisfactory condition.

E. SUMMARISED BUDGET POSITION FOR 2018/19

The month 6 forecast position is a net underspend of £1.476 million within the general fund revenue budget for the Partnership and Resources portfolio, mainly as a result vacancies as a result of early delivery of approved savings and an underspend within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The report highlights pressure areas within the portfolio area where action is required to identify options to sustainably manage spend within budget resources available. In terms of capital there is net slippage of £1.678 million for the Property and ICT programmes.

F. FUTURE BUDGET ISSUES AND RISKS

West Lothian Council approved savings of £41.281 million for the three year period 2018/19 to 2020/21 as part of a five year budget strategy on 13 February 2018. For 2018/19, there remain risks around the deliverability of budget reductions. In addition, recurring pressures of £3.894 million will have an impact on how the council can contain overall spending within the approved budget. It is therefore essential that mitigating actions, which have been agreed are progressed to ensure these pressures are managed on a recurring basis.

The forecast out-turn position reflects the very challenging financial position the council is now facing after many years of funding constraints and requirements to make significant savings with demand for services continuing to grow. There are considerable risks and uncertainties around various aspects of council spending, including the level of future pay awards, the costs of demand led services especially in social care, the level of inflationary increases in budget and the recycling market. There are also major risks connected to the future level of UK and Scottish Government funding and of policy changes that impact on local government in Scotland. As a result, there is a considerable risk that the forecast indicated within this report could increase further during the financial year.

Specifically for the Partnership and Resources portfolio, the key risks and uncertainties include staffing pressures within Customer and Community Services, the potential impact of welfare changes and the achievability of non-domestic rates savings within Finance and Property Services. With regard to Corporate Services there are anticipated challenges in delivering the support that will be required in the delivery of the Transforming Your Council programme. This will present particular pressures for Procurement, Human Resources and Legal Services.

The council's risk based approach to budget monitoring will ensure that effective action is taken to manage risks during the course of the financial year. Officers will continue to provide updates on risks as part of the quarterly budget monitoring reporting to Council Executive at period 4, 6 and 9.

G. CONCLUSION

The forecast position for the Partnership and Resources portfolio is a revenue budget underspend of £1.476 million and net slippage of £1.678 million for the Property and IT capital programme. The Heads of Service and budget holders will continue to progress the mitigating action required to ensure the pressures identified within the portfolio area are managed accordingly in 2018/19.

As noted, the forecast position for the Partnership and Resources portfolio is part of the overall position for 2018/19 was reported to Council Executive on 13 November.

H. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

1. Council Executive 2018/19 General Fund Revenue Budget – Month 6 Monitoring Report – 13 November 2018
2. Scheme of Administration
3. Local Government Benchmarking Framework

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Donald Forrest

Head of Finance and Property Services

Date: 7 December 2018

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP & RESOURCES PDSP

COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT – ANNUAL REVIEW 2017/18

REPORT BY GOVERNANCE MANAGER

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform members of significant issues in 2017/18 in relation to the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider the following recommendations to be made to Council Executive:-

1. To note the summary of the issues arising in relation to the Councillors' Code of Conduct in 2017/18
2. To note that a new date for the annual presentation to members has yet to be fixed
3. To note in particular the continuing interest in "respect" cases and the related issues of enhanced Article 10 rights to freedom of expression in political matters and inappropriate involvement of members in operational matters

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 and related regulations – members' duties to observe and uphold the Code; council's duties to promote the Code and assist members in its observance
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	N/a
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	N/a
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	N/a
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	N/a
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Ongoing

VIII Other consultations	Monitoring Officer; Corporate Management Team

D. TERMS OF REPORT

1 Background

1.1 The maintenance of high ethical standards in public life is crucial to public confidence in public institutions. The Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 created a statutory framework which applies to local authorities and to other devolved public bodies. A statutory Code of Conduct for Councillors (the Code) was approved by the Scottish Parliament, first in 2003, then in 2010 and amended in 2018. It is supplemented by statutory guidance (refreshed in September 2017 and July 2018) and a growing library of Advice Notes on specific issues. The Code is enforced through complaints to the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland (the CES) and onwards to the Standards Commission (the SCS). Members found to have breached the Code may be censured, suspended or disqualified from being a councillor. Complaints alleging breaches of the Code can also be submitted to the council. There is an internal procedure for carrying out those investigations which may divert an issue away from the more formal path but which does not provide a substitute for it.

1.2 The council's duties are to raise awareness of the Code; to promote the observance by members of high standards of conduct; to assist members to comply with the Code; and to provide induction and training sessions.

1.3 Members' obligations include compliance with the Code and its underpinning statutory rules, having regard to the statutory guidance; attending training and induction sessions; knowing and understanding the Code and Guidance; promoting and supporting the Code and encouraging compliance by others.

2 The CES's year

2.1 Table 1 in the appendix summarises the complaints received by the CES during the year. Table 2 is a summary of the cases in which the CES found a breach and referred a case on to the SCS for determination.

2.2 The highlights from the CES's year and from the complaint figures:-

- There was again a reduction in the total number of complaints. There is a marked reduction in complaints against councillors in local government elections years (2007, 2012, 2017)

- The largest category of complaints (as opposed to cases) was of misconduct in dealing with individual applications, mainly planning cases. The majority of those were from someone with a known material interest in the case

- The largest category of cases (as opposed to complaints) referred on to the SCS was of disrespect. Enhanced Article 10 rights to freedom of expression in political matters featured in many of those

- The number of complaints from officers reduced again, down now for two consecutive years from an uncommonly high figure in 2015/16 (only 1 complaint this year)

- Complaints are being processed more quickly but the reduction in numbers of complaints has helped that. The sifting process has helped as well, whereby cases felt to have no prospect of success are determined without a full investigation

- Only three complaints were made against members of devolved public bodies. None of those resulted in a reference on to the SCS for a hearing

2.3 The public reporting of cases has changed. Previously, a web summary was published of a reasonably large number of decisions felt to be of wider public interest. Historic web summaries have now been removed from the CES website. In future, only a small number of anonymised decision summaries will be published. The CES's decision may be available on the SCS website when cases are referred on to the SCS for a hearing. This change makes it harder to keep track of and comment on trends amongst "the ones that got away".

2.4 Going forward, the CES still pursues the introduction of a Case Management System and sees a risk in continuing to use outdated technology. Its website is to be redesigned and relaunched and should facilitate online complaints. The expectation is that the volume of complaints will increase and return to the level of years pre-2017/18.

3 The SCS's year

3.1 Some of the highlights from the SCS's activities for the year are:-

- It reported its busiest year ever in terms of the hearings it held and cases it concluded. It held 12 hearings. Those involved 13 councillors. No hearings involved members of other public bodies. There were findings of breach in 11 of the 12 hearing cases

- Unusually, it decided not to proceed to a hearing in a case referred on by CES. It agreed that *prima facie* there had been a breach but the evidence had been uncovered by CES in another investigation and no complaint about the newly-discovered facts had been made

- It continued to improve the speed with which it deals with cases referred on by CES. The average time from referral to decision was 12 weeks (down from 16 weeks last year). The longest took 19 weeks and the shortest took 6 weeks

- It held four post-elections road-shows for councillors and one for Standards Officers of devolved public bodies

- It issued revised Guidance for councillors on their Code of Conduct and Advice Notes for councillors and others about enhanced Article 10 right to free expression in connection with political issues (October 2017); and on How to Declare Interests (August 2017)

- It continued to issue quarterly Professional Briefings and it built on its presence on twitter (@StandardsScot)

3.2 The sanctions it imposed in the 11 breach decisions comprised 9 censures; 1 full suspension (from all meetings); and 1 partial suspension (from designated committees). No disqualifications were imposed. The SCS commented in 4 censure cases that if suspension or disqualification had been possible then suspensions would likely have been imposed.. Because the respondents were no longer councillors, suspension and disqualification were not available as sanctions.

3.3 Table 3 in the appendix summarises the SCS hearing cases for the year.

3.4 Looking forward, the SCS identified these issues and areas of activity:-

- Issuing advice for councillors on distinguishing between policy-making and operational management and avoiding straying into the latter (done in July 2018)

- Holding a Workshop for IJB members and Standards Officers (done on 24 September 2018)

- Holding more roadshows for councillors in 2018/19 (now arranged for early 2019)

- Amending Codes of Conduct to make more explicit that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and will be a breach of the Code (done for councillors in July 2018)

- Working with the Scottish Minsters to revise more extensively the Codes of Conduct for councillors and public body members

3.5 The SCS expects that parliamentary time will be found to amend the Model Code for devolved public bodies by adding an express reference to bullying and harassment. That has been done already for the Councillors' Code. It is also still hopeful of persuading the Scottish Government to find parliamentary time to embark on a wider review and revision of the Code. It is at the moment welcoming suggestions for change from officers and from members.

3.6 The SCS is also dealing with its first substantive appeal to the courts against the findings in one of its cases. It was determined by the SCS after the reporting year end. It concerned a Fife councillor sitting at a licensing committee who made comments regarding the character of an applicant which were felt to be gratuitous and disrespectful. The decision is awaited.

4 The council's year

4.1 Training for members was concentrated in the post-election induction programme. A series of (comparatively) short sessions was provided on the different components of the Code. They were in general well-attended, especially by newly-elected members. Other more targeted sessions were provided during the year.

4.2 The annual presentation on the year 2016/17 was given on 7 November 2017. 22 members attended for at least part of the session, and 14 officers were present. The annual report was made to P&R PDSP in December 2017 and to Council Executive in January 2018.

4.3 The council's updated history of involvement with the CES and the SCS, and of its internal procedures, is shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6 of the appendix.

4.4 Six complaints were made and determined through the council's internal complaints procedure. Two of those six complaints related to the same circumstances and so five cases were dealt with as follows:-

- Personal and insulting comments made on social media. The councillor was held not to have been acting as a councillor and so the complaints were not upheld

- Failure to deliver on undertakings given to members of the public. On investigation it was found that the undertakings given had been honoured and so the complaint was not upheld

- Inaccurate words attributed to another councillor in a quotation given to and published by the local press. It was held to be covered by the enhanced Article 10 protection in relation to political matters or matters of public concern

- Failure to engage with constituents to their satisfaction. The complaint was not upheld because the Code does not impose performance standards on members in relation to how they choose to perform their duties

- Aggressive words and behaviour in a meeting. The complaint was not upheld

4.5 No complaints against West Lothian councillors were made to the CES during the year.

4.6 One complaint made in 2016/17 against a (now former) West Lothian councillor was determined by the SCS in 2017/18 after a hearing in the Civic Centre. It concerned a failure to declare personal interests in a voluntary organisation, and the interests of the organisation itself, in business affecting council funding of that organisation. The former councillor was censured. The full findings of the SCS were reported to full council as required by the 2000 Act. No comments, questions, motions or amendments resulted.

5 Significant messages

5.1 Although there were the usual CES and SCS cases about failure to register and failure to declare interests, the more noteworthy cases relate to (a) the "respect" obligation, (b) the blurring of lines by members between their strategic/policy role and operational management, and (c) a failure to properly distinguish between their own personal interests and their councillor role.

5.2 This year's SCS hearing cases are not as egregious as the two cases featured last year (Breslin in Argyll & Bute and Drummond in Clackmannanshire) but the same themes continue this year. These trends have been recognised and the messages have been reinforced in 2018/19 by the SCS Advice Notes on (a) Distinguishing between Members' Strategic Role and Operational Work and (b) Bullying and Harassment.

E. CONCLUSION

1 The number of complaints against West Lothian Council in 2017/18 was higher than in recent years. Their most significant aspect is the use of social media. That is an area which is difficult to directly influence by advice from officers and by other members since it happens outwith the normal run and place of council business.

2 An awareness of issues relating to the Code of Conduct will help members in applying the Code to their council work and will assist officers in their dealings with members and their working relationships.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

1 Councillors' Code of Conduct and Guidance
http://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/uploads/files/1542107127180709CCfCouncillorsGuidance_July2018FINAL.pdf

2 SCS Annual Report 2017/18 -
http://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/uploads/files/1533553773180723SCfSAnnualReportFINALLAYING.pdf

3 CES Annual Report 2017/18 -
http://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/publications/publication/862/cespls-annual-report-and-accounts-201718

Appendices/Attachments: 1. Summary of complaints and statistics

Contact Person: James Millar, Governance Manager, Chief Executive's Office, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden Road South, Livingston, EH54 6FF, 01506 281613, james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk

Date of meeting: 28 November 2018

APPENDIX 1

Table 1 – CES cases

Where two figures are shown the first is the number of complaints received. The second, in brackets, is the number of cases dealt with after complaints are combined and/or respondents grouped together.

	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18
Against everyone	311 (146)	692* (111)	245 (132)	174 (106)	146 (80)
Against councillors	298	680	202	165	134
Against non-councillors	13	12	33	9	3
From members of the public	257	663	202	110	123
From councillors	44	20	36	54	19
About planning	131	81	85	35	39
About registration of interests	14	4	4	6	4
About declarations of interests	43	26	19	22	5
About disrespect	23	33	75	63	31
Completed	291	692 (99)	214 (111)	224	176 (90)
Dropped, not competent	219	135 (73)	157 (82)	111	121 (59)
No breach	67	17 (14)	49 (22)	95 (55)	43 (23)
Breach found and referred on	5	540 (12)	8 (7)	18 (14)	12 (8)

* The number of complaints in 2014/15 was skewed by a large number made against the same councillors arising from the same facts (sending a letter stating the council's position on the independence referendum along with annual council tax notices).

Table 2 – CES cases referred to SCS

No.	Complaint Number	Nature of Complaint	Decision	Sanction imposed
1	LA/G/1942	Made loud, aggressive and disrespectful comments	Breach	Censure
2	LA/ED/1863	Disclosure of confidential information	Breach	Censure
3	LA/R/1946, 1973	Disrespect of councillors	Breach	Suspension from Council and Sub-committee meetings for seven months
4	LA/AB/1972/A-B	Failure to declare an interest		Standards Commission for Scotland – take no action
5	LA/E/2028	Failure to register an interest	Breach	Censure
6	LA/Fi/2044	Used official mail to make a request for assistance in the distribution of election literature	Breach	Censure
7	LA/DG/1929	Disrespectful posting on social media	Breach	Censure
8	LA/Fi/2050*	Disrespect towards applicant for licence	Breach	Suspension from the Licensing Committee for 2 months

*Concluded and referred to the SCS in 2017/18 but determined by SCS in 2018/19. Case appealed to the Sheriff Principal

Table 3 – SCS cases

Main complaint	Case	Decision	Sanction
Registration of interests	LA/NL/1940	Breach	Failure to timeously register paid employment as MSP's office manager Censure – employment had been public knowledge and not been concealed
	LA/WL/1824	Breach	Failure to register paid employment, failure to declare own and employers' interests at meetings Censure – no direct financial benefit resulted
	LA/NL/1936	Breach	Failure to register property interest Censure – accepted misunderstanding of the position in light of the property interest involved
	LA/E/2028	Breach	Failure to register a shareholding in a company Censure – failed to appreciate requirement applied to dormant company and active company, did not accept a form had been submitted making the change
	(LA/AB/1967, 1969, 1972, 1979 & 1986)	No hearing, no breach	Information uncovered through CES investigations into other complaints against the same councillors. No complaints had been made by anyone on these new facts. On the face of it, breach had occurred. SCS decision to take no further action, no hearing held:- • from the terms of the complaint there was good public awareness of the councillors' interests • no evidence or suggestion that there had been any practical consequence or impact of the apparent breach • not in the public interest or proportionate to hold a Hearing
Disrespect	LA/E/1737	No breach	Disrespect to officers by naming them at Audit Committee meeting in the context of misconduct No sanction – in the circumstances, just fell within acceptable Article 10 bounds
	LA/E/1924	Breach	Disrespect to fellow councillor by allegations of serious wrongdoing in an online blog Censure because suspension not available – unjustified personal attack made in an inappropriate way, fell outside Article 10 protection

	LA/G/1942	Breach	Disrespect to a police officer by making unfounded allegations during telephone calls on council business Censure because suspension not available – unjustified personal attack on a public servant made in an inappropriate way, not covered by Article 10 protection
	LA/ED/1863	Breach	Disrespect and inappropriate and unwanted personal and social behaviour towards a junior officer, and disclosure of confidential medical information regarding the officer Censure because suspension not available – inappropriate behaviour towards officer despite it not being reciprocated and warnings from senior officers
	LA/R/1946 and 1973	Breach	Disrespect towards fellow councillors at council meeting Suspension from all meetings for 7 months – deliberate misconduct at public meeting, airing personal grievances, making personal attacks, failure to heed warnings and comply with Chair's rulings
	LA/DG/1929	Breach	Disrespect by posting discriminatory remarks (sexual orientation) on Facebook Censure because suspension not available – personal attack using demeaning and discriminatory words, not covered by Article 10 protection
Misuse of facilities	LA/As/1963 and 1993	Breach	Misuse of council facilities, seeking preferential treatment and lobbying other councillors (planning application by own company) Suspended for 6 months from regulatory committees
	AL/Fi/2044	Breach	Misuse of council facilities Censure – used council computer and email account for party political and campaigning reasons despite standard pre-election advice

Table 4 – Council complaints to CES (numbers)

2004/05	4
2005/06	6
2006/07	4
2007/08	1
2008/09	7
2009/10	6
2010/11	1
2011/12	2
2012/13	6
2013/14	3
2014/15	2
2015/16	4
2016/17	1
2017/18	0
Total	**47**

Table 5 - Council complaints to CES (Subject matter)

Conduct in the Chamber	11
Payment of allowances	1
Key principles generally (respect)	9
Principles of leadership & accountability	2
Principle of respect regarding employee of other public body	1
Dealing with planning applications/declarations of interest	14
Use of council facilities	3
Declaring financial interests/withdrawal from meeting	4
Lobbying on planning applications	1
Other (matters not relevant to Code)	1
Total	**47**

Table 6 – Internal complaints

2011/12	4
2012/13	6
2013/14	4
2014/15	1
2015/16	3
2016/17	1
2017/18	6
Total	**25**

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN: ANNUAL REPORT 2017 - 2018

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Panel on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's annual report 2017-2018.

B. RECOMMENDATION

1. The Panel is asked to note the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) annual report 2017-2018, and recommend that it be submitted to the Council Executive for information; and,
2. The Panel is asked to note West Lothian Council's performance in relation to the number of complaints received by the SPSO and the outcome; and,
3. The Panel is asked to note the learning from SPSO complaints which is appended to this report for information.

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;
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 council is required to report against a set of performance indicators developed by the SPSO.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	None.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	The previous annual report was considered by the Partnership and Resources PDSP at its meeting of 19 January 2018.

VIII Other consultations None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) handles complaints at the final stage for public services in Scotland, including local authorities, the National Health Service (NHS), housing associations, prisons, most water and sewage providers, the Scottish Government and its agencies and departments, universities and colleges and most Scottish Public Authorities. The SPSO investigates complaints when the complainer has exhausted the formal complaints procedure of the relevant authority.

D2 Local Government – Annual Review of Complaints and Issues

The SPSO reports that the number of complaints received regarding local government has increased by just less than 1% to 1542 for 2017-18 from 1528 the previous year.

In 2017-18, complaints about local government made up 36% of all complaints to the SPSO, which has decreased from 37% in 2016-17. Complaints about local government remain higher than all other sectors.

The percentage of premature complaints about local government has decreased slightly from 35.7% in 2016-17 to 28.1% in 2017-18. This is in line with the decline in the overall rate of premature complaints across all sectors from 27.8% to 24.1%.

This year, the number of upheld complaints for local government decreased from 60% in 2016-17 to 58.8% in 2017-18. The report highlights the top areas complained about, with the greatest number of complaints being received about Housing and Social Work respectively with Education following in third place. These three subjects accounted for 48.9% of all complaints in 2017-18.

D3 West Lothian Council – Statistics and Update

The SPSO provides each council with information specific to that local authority to consider. The SPSO's Annual Letter is attached as Appendix 1. Appendix 2 provides tables of statistics about complaints to the SPSO regarding West Lothian Council in the past two years. The tables illustrate complaints received by subject area and complaints determined by outcome for 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Appendix 2 highlights that the total number of complaints received about West Lothian Council is 71, which has decreased from the 73 complaints received in 2016-17. As detailed in Appendix 2, the greatest number of complaints about West Lothian Council was in relation to Housing, which is in line with the sector as a whole. Social Work and Education were ranked the second and third most complained about areas in West Lothian, respectively.

There were 28 complaints about West Lothian Council which were dealt with at the advice stage as they were not suitable for the SPSO, whilst a further 34 were considered to have had an early resolution. This is comparable to the 36 complaints considered to have had an early resolution in 2016-17. The percentage of premature complaints has decreased to 23% in 2017-18 in comparison to 25% in 2016-17.

There were 12 complaints regarding West Lothian Council which were fully investigated by the SPSO. Of these complaints which were investigated, four were fully upheld, one was partly upheld and six were not upheld. One complaint was resolved. This is in comparison to 2016-17 when no complaints were fully upheld.

D4 Improving Complaints Standards

Compliance with the model Complaints Handling Process (CHP) is monitored in line with the Shared Risk Assessment and annual audit arrangements. Local authorities are also expected to have appropriate self-assessment arrangements in place to ensure that their CHP is operating in accordance with the model CHP, which requires councils to publish annual complaints statistics and learning against performance indicators. There is also a requirement for councils to report internally and to publish information on complaints trends, outcomes and actions taken.

The council has put in place clear governance arrangements for complaints. The Corporate Complaint Steering Board is an officer group that monitors the implementation of the corporate complaint procedure and the corresponding performance and reporting activity. The board ensures that the council is compliant with the complaint procedure requirements. The board is chaired by the Depute Chief Executive for Corporate, Operational and Housing Services and the membership consists of council Heads of Service. Complaint performance is reported on a quarterly basis to both the council's Corporate Management Team and the council's Performance Committee. All complaint performance statistics are reported to the public and are available on the council's website.

D5 SPSO Recommendations

The SPSO's Annual Letter for 2017-18 notes the continued focus by the SPSO on helping authorities improve public services through learning from complaints. One of the ways this is progressed is through the recommendations made by the SPSO to local authorities. The SPSO has changed its approach to making recommendations with more of a shift on outcomes in relation to services and remedying justice to individuals.

Appendix 3 sets out the SPSO recommendations and service improvement actions for complaints closed by the Ombudsman in 2017-18.

Learning from SPSO decisions are also reported to the council's Complaints Steering Board and Performance Committee on a quarterly basis.

E CONCLUSION

The SPSO has published its annual report along with its annual letters to local authorities.

The SPSO reports that the total number of complaints received about West Lothian Council has decreased to 71 in 2017-18, although there were four fully upheld complaints after SPSO investigation. It should also be noted that 37.8% of complaints were decided as having been reported prematurely, not duly made or withdrawn, or were considered to be out of jurisdiction.

The SPSO reports that whilst the total number of complaints received about West Lothian Council has increased very slightly in 2016-17, there were no fully upheld complaints after SPSO investigation. The majority of complaints continue to have been made prematurely, not duly made or withdrawn, or are considered to be out of their jurisdiction.

Local Authorities are required to report against the performance indicators established by the complaints handlers' network on an annual basis.

The SPSO continue to expect organisations to be more proactive in ensuring that opportunities for learning from complaints are taken and mistakes are not repeated through the measures outlined in this report. A report will continue be submitted quarterly to the council's Complaints Steering Board and quarterly to Performance Committee, outlining the learning from SPSO decisions, which have been implemented by the council in response to complaints made.

F BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Annual Report 2017-2018
- Partnership and Resources PDSP, 19 January 2018

Appendices/Attachments: 3

Appendix 1: Letter to West Lothian Council from Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Appendix 2: Tables of statistics to illustrate West Lothian Council complaints received by subject area and complaints determined by outcome for 2016-17 and 2017-18

Appendix 3: Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning 2017-18

Contact Person: Caitlin Hirst, Project Officer, 01506 281278
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Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Date of meeting: 7 December 2018

SPSO Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS
Tel 0800 377 7330
Fax 0800 377 7331
Web www.spso.org.uk

23 August 2018

Mr Graham Hope
Chief Executive
West Lothian Council
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
West Lothian
EH54 6FF

Annual Letter from SPSO

Dear Mr Hope,

I am pleased to send you SPSO's annual letter. This year's letter includes statistics relating to cases we handled about your organisation in 2017-18. It also includes further information about our work which I hope you will find helpful.

We provide statistics to inform you about service issues the public have complained to me about. This is so that you can use it with your own data to build a picture of what drives dissatisfaction with your organisation and whether there are systemic changes that you can make.

Complaints data and reporting

SPSO statistics are just part of the detailed complaints picture that your organisation is responsible for gathering and publishing.

As you will know, in line with the model complaints handling procedure (CHP), each authority is required to report and publicise complaints information on a quarterly and annual basis. This includes the publication of your organisation's annual complaints report detailing your performance against the complaints performance indicators.

This annual performance information is more than simply a requirement of the model CHP; it is also an opportunity to understand your complaints and gain insight into your services. This, in turn, enables learning and improvement. The data is also an excellent platform for you and others in the sector to benchmark performance and to identify and work together on common challenges.

Ideally, learning from complaints should be embedded in governance structures, to promote an organisational 'valuing complaints' culture. I encourage you to share the enclosed information widely within your organisation, especially with staff who have service delivery or service improvement responsibilities.

This year we have noticed an increasing number of complaints are coming to us having first been handled by health and social care partnerships. When this happens, we log the complaint as relating to the HSCP as they have taken on the role of complaint handler. This also reflects the experience of the complainant who has dealt with the HSCP through their complaints process.

This means that if you have delegated any of your complaints handling to an HSCP, complaints that come to us through that route will not be reflected in the enclosed statistics. Details of HSCP complaints we have logged are on our website and you should confirm with the relevant HSCP whether any relate to services that they are delivering on your behalf.

The model CHP: Complaints performance indicators

Last year I asked you to reflect on how and when you collect, collate and report your complaints data to ensure that it is timely, robust, and has integrity. I am pleased to note that the most recent annual performance data from the sector was compiled by the complaints network quicker than ever before and through a revised process that reduces the potential for errors in reporting. However, we do not yet hold a full set of data as two local authorities did not submit their data within the timescale set by the network. The network's benchmarking activities can only achieve the best outcomes where we are able to compare and contrast performance across <u>all</u> local authorities. Therefore, I have asked my CSA staff to ensure that those authorities that have not yet submitted their data to do so as soon as possible. Going forward, the complaints network members have agreed to move to quarterly reporting of the key complaints performance indicators in 2018-19. This is a very positive move and will allow the group to compare and contrast current data as we go through the year.

I was disappointed, however, to note that across the local government sector, the average timescales for closing complaints at stage 1 of the complaints procedure is 8.1 working days (against a performance measure of 5 working days) and the average timescales for closing complaints at stage 2 of the complainants procedure is 23.8 working days (against a performance measure of 20 working days). This is a deterioration from the previous year's reported performance for the sector. I noted that only around a third of all councils close complaints within the timescales at each stage. Therefore, I would again encourage you, through your participation in the complaints network to actively support the benchmarking of your complaints handling performance to help drive up the overall levels of performance across the sector.

As part of this year's business plan, my Standards team will be working to assess the effectiveness of the model CHPs in place across the public sector in Scotland. I would encourage you to feedback to us on where the procedure works well and where it may be improved to ensure we put people at the heart of public service provision.

Uphold Rate

This year we have calculated the uphold rate using the number of complaints where we made a decision on the complaint, ie upheld, some upheld or not upheld. We feel that excluding withdrawn, resolved and otherwise incomplete investigations from this calculation gives a more accurate representation of the performance of organisations and allows you to benchmark more effectively.

You will therefore find the figures for uphold rate this year do not directly compare with previous years.

For information, we have included both our new uphold rate calculation, and the old uphold rate calculation on the tables for your organisation.

Complaint Handling Marker

As you will be aware, in our complaints investigations we review to what extent authorities' complaints handling was in line with the requirements of the model CHP.

During 2017-18, we found that just over 22% of the cases we closed included one or more complaints handling failings. While it is pleasing to note that in many cases authorities identified shortcomings themselves prior to receiving feedback from us, I would like to draw your attention to the three key areas where authorities were likely to fail to meet the CHP requirements:

1. Identifying fully each issue being complained about and providing an accurate, proportionate and evidence-based decision for each complaint.
2. Communicating clearly with the complainant and managing their expectations in respect to the complaints process and likely outcomes.
3. In respect of timescales at stage 2 of the model CHP, keeping the complainant updated where timescales will not be met.

Even if you did not have a complaint upheld by us, or we didn't make any findings about complaint handling, you might find it useful to consider your organisaton's performance in these three areas when reviewing annual complaints data.

As always we are keen to support you in developing and maintain good complaints handling practice.

Best practice website

All of our resources, guidance, updates and training opportunities for complaints handlers and governance teams are available on our website: www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk

In 2017/18, we also published a thematic report under the title 'Making complaints work for everyone', which was launched at our SPSO conference in December 2017. The report focuses on the impact of complaints on staff who have been complained about. It highlights that organisations need to actively support their staff through complaints processes and engage staff in positive and purposeful activities to manage and learn from complaints. Although focused on staff, it also makes reference to service users and how supporting staff can support service improvement.

If you haven't done so already, I'd encourage you to read it at http://www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk/spso-thematic-reports

This website is regularly updated with further materials. If there are any other areas of information that you think it would be helpful to include, please contact Communications@spso.org.uk .

Scottish Welfare Fund

A number of authorities asked us whether Scottish Welfare Fund reviews data could be included in our annual letter, so we have included a short summary. The full set of statistics were sent to you by the Scottish Welfare Fund team with the SPSO SWF Annual Report, at the end of July. They are also available on our website at https://www.spso.org.uk/scottishwelfarefund/statistics

Customer service satisfaction

We are committed to continuous improvement of our own services. In this respect your feedback to us is crucial and I would be very grateful for any views you have on:

- challenges to implementing SPSO recommendations and how we could overcome them, and
- our service in general and ways in which we could improve.

You are welcome to write to me. Additionally we have relaunched a survey that is sent to all authorities with which we interact, on a rolling basis. I appreciate that we are all busy, but if you could complete the online questionnaire when you receive it it will help us understand your experience of our services, how we could improve (for everyone's benefit) and how we meet our service standards.

Please contact me directly if you have an questions or comments, ot would like to discuss any aspect of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Agnew.

Rosemary Agnew
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

CC'd:
Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Ms Morgan Callachan
Ms Karen McMahon

Local Authority Complaints Received 2017-18

Subject Group	West Lothian Council: West Lothian Council	West Lothian Council: Rank	West Lothian Council: Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Rank	Complaints as % of total
Housing	23	1	32.39%	316	1	21.44%
Social Work	11	2	15.49%	254	2	17.23%
Education	8	3	11.27%	151	3	10.24%
Roads & Transport	6	4	8.45%	104	7	7.06%
Environmental Health & Cleansing	5	5	7.04%	116	5	7.87%
Planning	4	6	5.63%	134	4	9.09%
Finance	1	7=	1.41%	112	6	7.60%
Legal & Admin	1	7=	1.41%	71	8	4.82%
Recreation & Leisure	1	7=	1.41%	24	9	1.63%
Land & Property	1	7=	1.41%	17	10	1.15%
Personnel	1	7=	1.41%	12	12	0.81%
Building Control	0	-	0.00%	16	11	1.09%
Welfare Fund - Community Care Grants	0	-	0.00%	7	13	0.47%
Other	0	-	0.00%	6	14	0.41%
Consumer Protection	0	-	0.00%	4	15=	0.27%
National Park Authorities	0	-	0.00%	4	15=	0.27%
Fire & Police Boards	0	-	0.00%	3	17	0.20%
Economic Development	0	-	0.00%	2	18=	0.14%
Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	0	-	0.00%	2	18=	0.14%
Subject Unknown or Out Of Jurisdiction	9	-	12.68%	119	-	8.07%
Total	**71**		**100.00%**	**1,474**		**100.00%**
Complaints as % of Sector	*4.8%*			*100.0%*		

Complaints Received by Subject 2016-17

Subject Group	West Lothian Council	Rank	Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Rank	Complaints as % of total
Housing	18	1	*24.7%*	388	1	*25.4%*
Education	14	2	*19.2%*	144	4	*9.4%*
Roads & Transport	9	3	*12.3%*	112	7	*7.3%*
Finance	8	4	*11.0%*	120	6	*7.9%*
Social Work	6	5	*8.2%*	219	2	*14.3%*
Planning	4	6=	*5.5%*	160	3	*10.5%*
Environmental Health & Cleansing	4	6=	*5.5%*	124	5	*8.1%*
Land & Property	2	8=	*2.7%*	19	11	*1.2%*
Welfare Fund - Community Care Grants	2	8=	*2.7%*	14	12	*0.9%*
Legal & Admin	1	10=	*1.4%*	73	8	*4.8%*
Other	1	10=	*1.4%*	8	13=	*0.5%*
Economic Development	1	10=	*1.4%*	5	16=	*0.3%*
Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	1	10=	*1.4%*	5	16=	*0.3%*
Building Control	0	-	*0.0%*	34	9	*2.2%*
Recreation & Leisure	0	-	*0.0%*	29	10	*1.9%*
Valuation Joint Boards	0	-	*0.0%*	7	13=	*0.5%*
National Park Authorities	0	-	*0.0%*	6	15	*0.4%*
Personnel	0	-	*0.0%*	5	16=	*0.3%*
Consumer Protection	0	-	*0.0%*	4	16=	*0.3%*
Fire & Police Boards	0	-	*0.0%*	4	16=	*0.3%*
Subject Unknown or Out Of Jurisdiction	2	-	*2.7%*	48	-	*3.1%*
Total	**73**		*100.0%*	**1528**		*100.0%*
Complaints as % of Sector	*4.8%*			*100.0%*		

Local Authority Complaints Determined 2017-18

		West Lothian Council	
Stage	**Outcome Group**	**West Lothian Council**	**Sector Total**
Advice	Not duly made or withdrawn	14	253
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	0	3
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	0	5
	Premature	14	381
	Total	28	642
Early Resolution	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	38
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	2	99
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	11	113
	Outcome not achievable	3	85
	Premature	3	53
	Proportionality	14	314
	Resolved	1	29
	Total	34	731
Investigation	Fully upheld	4	47
	Some upheld	1	49
	Not upheld	6	69
	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	1
	Resolved	1	3
	Total	12	169
Total Complaints		**74**	**1,542**

Total Premature Complaints	17	434
Premature Rate	23.0%	28.1%
Total Investigation Decisions	11	165
Total Upholds	5	96
Uphold Rate	45.5%	58.2%
Old Uphold Rate Calculation		
Total Cases 'Fit for SPSO'	12	169
Total Upholds	5	96
Uphold Rate	41.7%	56.8%

Local Authority Complaints Determined 2016-17

		2016-17	
Stage	**Outcome Group**	West Lothian Council	SectorTotal
Advice	Not duly made or withdrawn	13	279
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	0	3
	Outcome not achievable	0	1
	Premature	18	467
	Total	**31**	**750**
Early Resolution	Not duly made or withdrawn	4	43
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	3	82
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	7	111
	Outcome not achievable	9	115
	Premature	1	57
	Proportionality	11	132
	Resolved	1	20
	Total	**36**	**560**
Investigation	Fully upheld	0	52
	Some upheld	1	42
	Not upheld	7	60
	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	1
	Resolved	0	1
	Total	**8**	**156**
Total Complaints		**75**	**1,466**

Total Premature Complaints	19	524
Premature Rate	25.3%	35.7%
Fit for SPSO Total (Investigations)	8	156
Total Cases Upheld / Some Upheld	1	94
Uphold Rate (total upheld / total fit for SPSO)	12.5%	60.3%

SCOTTISH
PUBLIC SERVICES
OMBUDSMAN

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2017/18

Welcome to the SPSO's 2017-18 Annual Report

Read more on page 4

We handled

904

enquiries

Read more on page 7

We received

4,125

complaints and closed

4,226

complaints

Read more on pages 8–9

We upheld

58.8%

of complaints

Read more on page 11

We handled

764

Scottish Welfare Fund applications

Read more on page 12

The first full year of **NHS** model Complaint Handling procedure

Read more on page 15

38%

of cases needed multiple pieces of specialist advice

Read more on page 11

We made

635

recommendations about learning and improvement

Read more on page 20

We closed

97.1%

of complaints within 260 days against a target of 95%

Read more on page 26

100%

of Crisis Grant review applications were decided within 5 working days

Read more on page 28

Our budget was

£4.3m

Read more on page 35

We are developing a **Support and Intervention Policy**

Read more on page 39

Overview
Ombudsman's introduction

Performance highlights

I think it fair to say, it's been a challenging year for every single part of the organisation. When I took up office in May 2017 we had high complaint caseloads, increasing Scottish Welfare Fund review applications, and compliance monitoring of the NHS, social work and Integration Joint Boards implementation of their new model complaints handling procedures. We also had to start planning for our office move in autumn 2018 and the taking on of new powers as the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer for the NHS in Scotland in 2019.

This was on top of all the business as usual such as our advice service, training provision, advice and guidance, corporate management, stakeholder engagement and clearing the backlog of cases from when there was a spike in complaints in 2015.

My personal highlights included:

- clearing our backlog of cases in December 2017 (see page 27)
- laying of our new strategic plan before Parliament in early 2018 (see page 25)
- maintaining a good level of output. We marginally missed one of our performance indicators, but given the number of old cases we closed, overall performance was excellent (see page 26)
- issuing of our thematic report "Making Complaints Work for Everyone" (see page 26)
- engagement with a wide range of stakeholders about a range of matters from good complaints handling to giving evidence to Parliament (see pages 22–24).

The challenge for us now is to make complaints handling and learning from complaints even better.

Key issues and risks

We actively monitor and review our approach to risk. As a result, we have revised our risk policy and monitoring. This year (2018–19) we have introduced a strategic risk register, to reflect our strategic risks and how they impact on, and integrate with, operational risks and delivery of our strategic and business plans.

Like many organisations, we recognise and are addressing the increasing risks associated with cyber security. Our chief risk, however, remains that of resources. Clearing our backlog of cases moved the work on within our processes, but for some months we had exceptionally high personal workloads. The resources we have are sufficient only for as long as there is no increase in complaints coming in. If complaint volumes rise by more than a few percent, our resources are no longer sufficient to maintain current levels of performance.

It is not only timescales that are affected: high caseloads impacts on us in other ways and I remain deeply concerned about the impact of high caseloads on staff wellbeing.

Ombudsman's introduction

Quality Assurance

We strive to deliver good quality and pride ourselves on being a learning organisation. Quality Assurance of our casework is an integral part of our business and an important source of learning and improvement.

In 2018–19 we are taking a different approach: a risk based approach. We are putting in place a quality assurance plan based on identifying types of cases or decisions that present the highest potential risk. For example a review of cases where we consider whether complaints were made to us within time limits and how we applied our discretionary powers. Our aim is to ensure we are making good decisions consistently.

Improving complaints handling

The Complaints Standards Authority passed a major milestone: 2017–18 saw the implementation of a model complaints handling procedure by the NHS. This means that all Scottish public services now take the same, two-stage approach to complaints handling.

The challenge for us now is how we build on that, with public bodies and complainants, to make complaints handling and learning from complaints even better.

Future

Things are not standing still for us.

This year we put in place a challenging business plan, to which everyone in the organisation was able to contribute. It recognises both the huge volume of the "business as usual" work we do, and the work we are doing to develop complaint handling, drive public sector improvement and develop ourselves. Derived from, and linked to, our new strategic aims, it highlights just how wide-ranging our functions are in practice.

Oh, and there are a few more things coming up too:

- new offices
- implementation of the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer role for the NHS
- developing a Support and Intervention Policy.

See page 39 for more information.

Rosemary Agnew.

Rosemary Agnew
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman in September 2018 in pursuance of section 17(1) and (3) of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002.

Overview
The SPSO's Role and Function

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) has a wide remit, covering a variety of functions and services.

Her powers and duties come from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 which gives her three distinct areas of statutory functions:

1. the final stage for complaints about most devolved public services in Scotland including councils, the health service, prisons, water and sewerage providers, Scottish Government, universities and colleges

2. specific powers and responsibilities to publish complaints handling procedures, and to monitor and support best practice in complaints handling

3. Independent Review Service for the Scottish Welfare Fund with the power to overturn and substitute decisions made by councils on Community Care and Crisis Grant applications

Strategic Objective 1:
To provide a high quality, user-focused independent complaints handling service

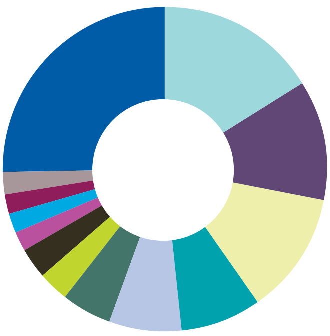
Here we highlight how we handle enquiries and complaints; the functions covering the majority of our work.

Enquiries received

We received 904 enquiries.

Enquiry type	No.	%
General enquiry	10	1%
Matter or organisation out of jurisdiction	534	59%
Complaint not made to the public body	360	40%
	904	**100%**

If we can't help, we signpost people to other organisations better placed to give assistance. We signposted 534 people to 37 different organisations. It is notable that 75% of those signposted were to just 12 (one third) of the total 37.



Signposted to	Number	% of signpost enquiries
Financial Ombudsman Service	85	16%
Ombudsman Services: Energy	66	12%
Citizens Advice Bureau	65	12%
Shelter Housing Advice Line	43	8%
Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman	36	7%
Ombudsman Services: Communications	28	5%
Consumer Direct	18	3%
Water Industry Commission for Scotland	17	3%
Referred to Employer / Human Resources	13	2%
Housing and Property Chamber	11	2%
Planning Aid for Scotland	11	2%
Information Commissioner Office – Scotland (DPA)	10	2%
All others	131	25%

Performance Report

Complaints received

The number of complaints received this year was broadly comparable with last year but our overall caseload was higher. 14.5% of our complaints caseload were cases carried forward from the previous year. Many of these were being held unallocated because we did not have the resources to look at them. Addressing this backlog of cases was a key priority for us.

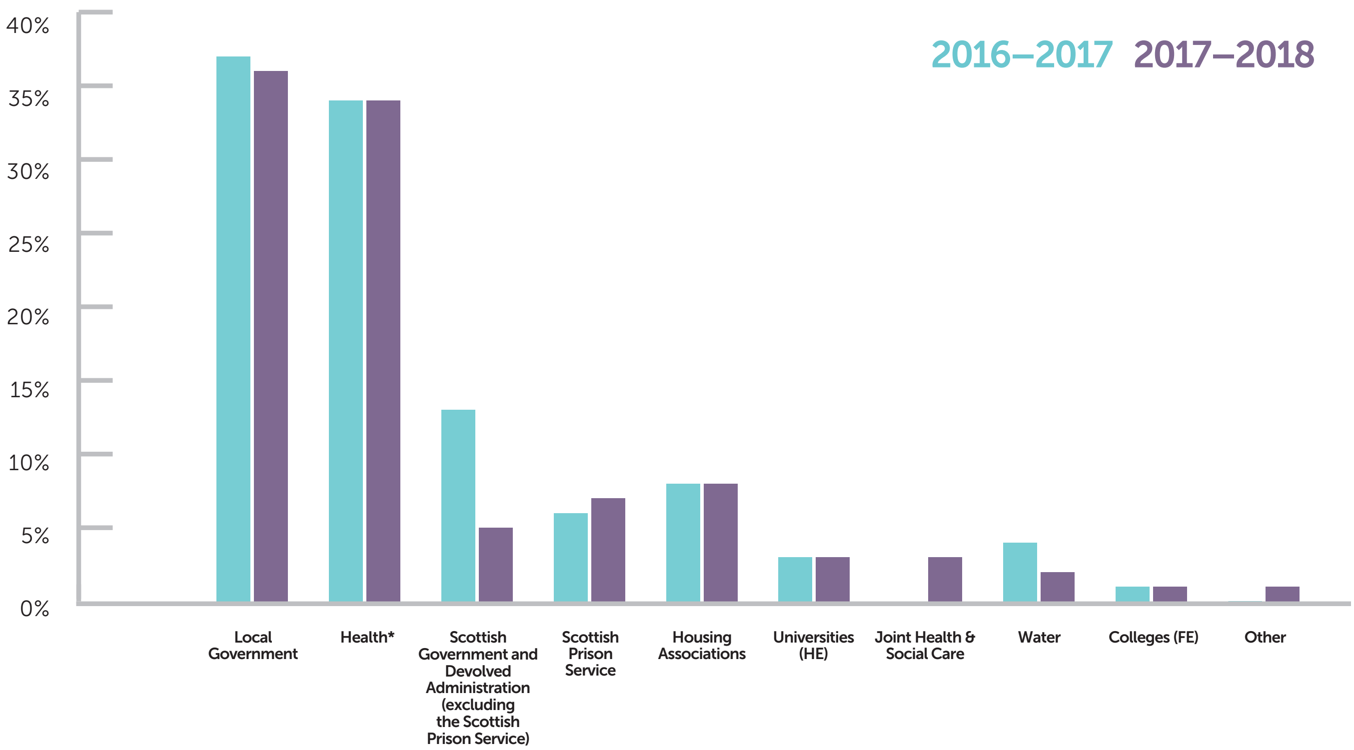
Complaints received

	2017–18	2016–17
Complaints received	4,125	4,182
Carried forward from previous year	702	631
Total caseload	**4,827**	**4,813**

Complaint subjects

The proportion of complaints received about each sector remained broadly the same as the previous two years with complaints about the health and local government sectors being 70% of our overall caseload.

Complaints received by sector in 2017–18 and 2016–17



* includes health complaints made by prisoners

Performance Report

How we handled complaints

Overview of complaints handled

We handled 3% more complaints in 2017–18 than in 2016–17. This was achieved by temporarily diverting resources to casework in a planned effort to address our backlog of unallocated cases, and reduce the amount of time complainants had to wait before their case could be allocated (from 8–10 weeks at its peak down to 2 weeks). It meant we could not do other work we had planned, particularly in the area of communications and stakeholder engagement. For example, we only had minimal resources to raise awareness of the new Ombudsman's appointment and of the excellent report we issued on *Making Complaints Work for Everyone* (more about that on page 36).

Complaints overview

	2017–18	2016–17
Total caseload	**4,827**	**4,813**
Cases brought forward	702	631
Complaints received	4,125	4,182
Total cases closed at assessment	**3,492**	**3,299**
Out of jurisdiction	541	480
Premature	1,017	1,142
Not investigated further	1,934	1,677
Total Cases closed after investigation	**734**	**805**
Upheld in full	196	212
Upheld in part	219	205
Not upheld	291	361
Not duly made, or withdrawn	18	21
Resolved	10	6
Total cases closed	**4,226**	**4,104**
Cases carried forward	598[1]	702

1 The carried forward figure is run from our open figures on the first day of the year and the other figures in this table from our closed year-end figures. Changes happen constantly to our open figures as cases are received and determined every day and this is why the number is marginally different from what a simple calculation would predict (601).

Case outcomes

Assessment

We try to provide answers as soon as we can on what action we can, and will, take on a complaint. We explain whether someone's case can be resolved, whether it is something that we can legally look into, and whether an SPSO investigation is beneficial to them. We call this assessment.

Assessment outcomes 2017–18

Assessment outcome	Number of cases	
Not duly made or withdrawn	900	We cannot investigate something that does not meet the statutory definition of a complaint or is withdrawn.
Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	201	Our governing legislation sets out what we can and cannot accept as a complaint. In some situations (such as a complaint being made late) we have discretion (that means some choice) to accept them anyway, but have decided not to.
Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	340	There are some complaints that the law simply does not allow us to look into.
Outcome not achievable	208	We don't want to raise people's hopes unnecessarily so will not accept complaints where the outcome the complainant wants is not achievable by us.
Premature	1,017	Some cases are 'premature complaints'. These are cases that reach us too early, without having first completed the authority's complaints process. It is important that authorities are given the opportunity to address complaints first as it is to the complainant's advantage, and provides an opportunity for learning.
Proportionality	755	In some cases we conclude that the organisation complained about has already taken appropriate steps to address the problem and we cannot achieve any more for the complainant or the wider public interest. We call this a 'proportionality decision'. It is an approach that we have been developing and building on over the past two years. The aim is to provide a more realistic and efficient service for complainants.
Resolved	71	These are cases we did not investigate further as they were resolved to the satisfaction of both parties without the need for detailed investigation.
Total	**3,492**	

In addition to 1,017 premature cases, we also identified a further 179 cases where someone had originally brought their complaint to us and had to then bring it back again because they did not achieve a satisfactory outcome. This suggests that 1 in 7 people that approach us with a premature complaint are likely to return at a later stage (this is the same ratio as last year).

71 of the cases we did not investigate further were resolved to the satisfaction of both parties without the need for detailed investigation

Investigations

In 2017–18, we completed 734 investigations compared to 804 in 2016–17. 23 of these were full public reports, compared to 21 in the previous year. Typically, public reports cover more serious complaints, often with wider significance to other organisations. They are more complex and more resource intensive. While the change is small, it is an indication that complaints are increasing in complexity and something we will continue to monitor. For cases where we did not publish a full report, we published a decision summary instead to ensure that learning was captured. All of our decisions can be found on our website.[2]

Our investigation findings

When we publish our investigation findings, we report on whether we have upheld complaints we have considered. It is generally thought that a low uphold rate reflects good complaints handling by an authority but we question that.

Of the 734 complaints we investigated, we upheld or partly upheld 58.8% of complaints compared to 54% last year.[3] While we found evidence of complaints handling issues (more information on pages 20–21), we do not think the upheld rate is necessarily the result of poor complaints handling.

It is more likely that the increase in the uphold rate is as a result of our developing approach to considering, as early as possible, whether there is more we can achieve for complainants by investigating in detail. We look for evidence to demonstrate that an authority has handled a complaint appropriately and taken reasonable steps to resolve the matter before we move to investigation. We use independent specialist advisers as early as is practicable to inform our thinking. All of this means that the cases subject to detailed investigation are more likely to be ones upheld.

Independent advice

We use independent professional advisers to inform our decision-making on some of our complaints: specifically in cases relating to health, social work, local authority planning, water services, equalities and environmental health. They provide expert advice on what is reasonable to expect in the particular circumstances of a case.

Cases can be complex, covering a range of specialist areas. This means we have to seek advice from a number of different professionals, with some cases requiring four or more pieces of specialist advice. This year 254 (38%) of cases needed multiple pieces of advice. This was an increase on the 184 last year, reflecting the increasing complexity of the cases progressing to investigation, particularly in relation to health complaints.

What this means in practice is that although the number of investigations fell slightly, the overall caseload is more challenging and requires significant resources.

2 www.spso.org.uk/our-findings – we do not publish our findings in a very small amount of cases where, due to the specific circumstances of the complaint, confidentiality may not be maintained when publishing

3 This year we have calculated the 'uphold rate' using the number of complaints upheld or partly upheld as a percentage of complaints where we made a decision on the complaint, i.e. upheld, some upheld or not upheld. We feel that excluding withdrawn, resolved and otherwise incomplete investigations from this calculation gives a more accurate representation of the performance of organisations and allows them to benchmark more effectively. You will therefore find the figures for uphold rate this year do not directly compare with previous years.

Performance Report

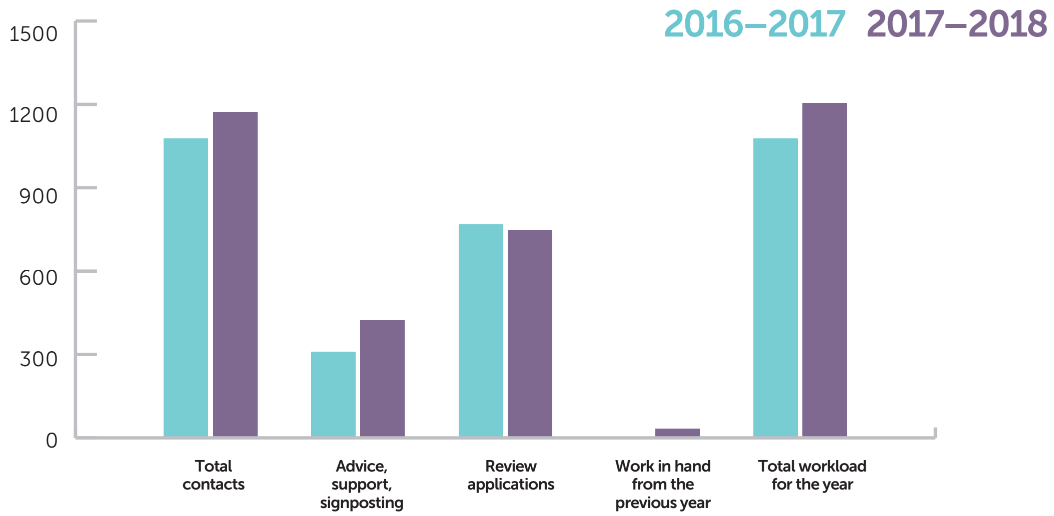
Strategic Objective 2:

To provide a high quality, user-focused independent review service for Scottish Welfare Fund independent review decisions

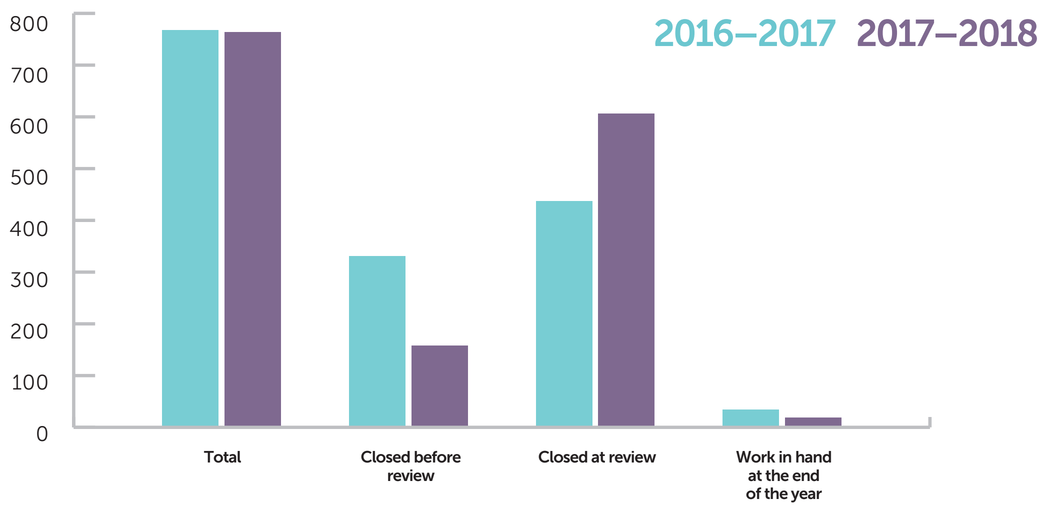
The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) independent review service has been part of SPSO since 2016–17. We carry out independent reviews of decisions councils make on Community Care and Crisis Grant applications. We issue a separate, more detailed annual report, specifically on the SWF independent review service. This is available on our website[4] and contains further information about our approach and findings.

SWF Applications to SPSO

Applications received



Applications handled



The number of cases closed at review increased by 38.7% from last year, and we had less work in hand at the end of the year. This is significant because we issue full decisions in cases closed at review, and these require considerably more resources than cases closed before review.

4 www.spso.org.uk/news-and-media/scottish-welfare-fund-independent-review-service-annual-report-2017-18

Performance Report

Application outcomes

	2017–18	2016–17
Community Care Grants decision changed	164	98
Community Care Grants decision NOT changed	151	132
Crisis Grants decision changed	102	66
Crisis Grants decision NOT changed	186	141
Community Care Grant cases referred back to council to make new decision	3	0

Although we closed 606 review applications, we only count the ones where we made a determination as a 'decision'. In addition to the figures above, in 5 cases (3 CG and 2 CCG) applications were withdrawn by the applicant.

As you can see, over half of CCG decisions were changed, an increase of 9% on the previous year. In contrast, although CG numbers were up by 45, the proportion we changed was relatively stable at 35%.

Community Care grants	2017–18	2016–17
Decision changed	52%	43%
Decision NOT changed	48%	57%

Crisis grants	2017–18	2016–17
Decision changed	35%	32%
Decision NOT changed	65%	68%

Access to our SWF service

We never stop looking for ways to make our service as accessible as possible. We listen to feedback and take active steps to find ways to be more accessible, especially recognising that applicants who come to us are often vulnerable and in crisis situations.

Our diversity information from a 20% sample of SWF casework, showed 57% of people reported a mental or physical disability. This is significantly higher than the Scottish Health Survey (2008–2016) which reported that 33% of adults have long-term limiting health condition or disability.[5]

We take applications in a variety of ways. At 69% of applications, by far the most well used route to making a review request is through our Freephone number. We consider this ability to take applications verbally as critical to the accessibility of our service.

Going forward we will be considering how we make our service accessible to British Sign Language (BSL) users as part of the SPSO's BSL Action Plan.

5 www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid/Disability

Performance Report

SWF Quality Assurance

To ensure that we persistently maintain the quality and continuous improvement in our decision-making and our service delivery, we invest in working with our various stakeholders to gather their views and review any complaints about our work.

SWF Stakeholder engagement

Highlights include:

- We held our first SWF engagement event in February 2018 attended by 61 delegates who have an interest in SWF, including local authority staff and third sector representatives.
- We hosted quarterly sounding boards for members of local authorities and the third sector where we were able to share our findings, discuss complex queries and gather feedback about our service.
- We jointly delivered workshops for decision-makers in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee with the Scottish Government in November 2017 focusing on how councils might ensure that their decision letters contain the necessary information for applicants to understand the reasons for their decision.
- We asked the Scottish Government to make a change to the Statutory Guidance to require that decision letters to applicants have sufficient information. This was implemented in February 2018.

More information is available in our SWF Annual Report.[6]

6 www.spso.org.uk/news-and-media/scottish-welfare-fund-independent-review-service-annual-report-2017-18

Performance Report

Strategic Objective 3:
To simplify the design and operation of the complaints handling system in Scottish public services

A key finding of the 2007 Crerar review[7] was that complaints processes in Scotland's public services were not fit for purpose. They were not always accessible or easy to use and were often complex and far too variable in their content.

The *Fit-for-purpose Complaints System Action Group* (FCSAG) considered how to improve the complaints handling system in Scotland, taking account of the recommendations made in the Crerar review. In its 2008 report to Ministers[8] FCSAG supported the value of simplification both for consumers and for service providers, and a stronger ethos across our public services to view complaints as opportunities for learning which empowers complaints handlers to resolve as many complaints as possible at the first level. The recommendations in this report informed our strategic objective to ***simplify the design and operation of the complaints handling system in Scottish public services***.

Since the introduction of the Complaints Standards Authority (CSA) in 2010, we have worked across the public sector in Scotland to simplify and standardise complaints handling procedures in each sector. This year was significant as, from April 2017, the NHS Scotland model Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) and the Social Work model CHP became operational.

Model complaints handling procedures make it simpler for service users to complain, build staff and user confidence in complaints handling and encourage organisations to identify and make best use of lessons learned from complaints

Developing NHS and Social Work model CHPs

The introduction of these new CHPs brings NHS and social work complaints handling into line with other Scottish public service sectors, enabling a standardised and consistent approach to complaints handling.

The NHS Scotland model CHP applies to all NHS bodies, boards and primary care service providers (including external providers or contractors who deliver NHS services).

The social work model CHP applies to all social work services retained by councils and to social work services delivered by Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) under delegated arrangements (including external contractors who deliver social work services on behalf of a council or HSCP).

Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) must also have a complaints handling procedure which complies with the principles approved by the Scottish Parliament in January 2011. To support IJBs, we developed a model CHP template during 2017–18. When this is adopted in full by IJBs, they will be compliant.

7 Report of the Independent Review of Regulation, Audit, Inspection and Complaints Handling of Public Services in Scotland: www.gov.scot/Publications/2007/09/25120506/0

8 The Fit-for-purpose Complaints System Action Group (FCSAG) report to Ministers: www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180705152547/http:/www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/IndependentReviewofReg/ActionGroups/ReporttoMinisters

Monitoring compliance and giving advice

Having previously worked in partnership with sector stakeholders and others to develop these new model CHPs, the main focus of our CSA activities during 2017–2018 was to ensure compliance with the model procedures, and to provide advice, guidance and support to facilitate successful implementation in each sector.

We carried out 87 compliance checks:

- 30 for Integration Joint Boards
- 35 for Social Work CHPs (HSCPs and councils)
- 22 for NHS health boards (14 territorial, 7 special NHS Boards and 1 public health body)

Our initial compliance checks tested whether each NHS Board, council, HSCP and IJB had properly adopted and implemented the model CHP. This entailed assessing organisations' CHPs against a statement of compliance and a self-assessment. If an organisation was not fully compliant, we worked closely with them to ensure corrective action was taken.

Raising awareness

We also worked closely with the sectors throughout the year to raise awareness and support implementation of the new CHPs. This included:

- attending the social work complaints sub-group and the NHS Complaints Personnel Association Scotland network meetings, where we communicated the requirements of each model and responded to procedural and governance questions in relation to key complaints indicators and complaints handling performance
- supporting HSCPs throughout the year. For example we developed a new training course, aimed specifically at staff in HSCPs. We delivered it for the first time in October 2017. Participants particularly welcomed the case study approach together with the tips and tools for effective complaints investigations, which are key elements of the course. Feedback included:

I felt the facilitators were extremely engaging, informative and interesting and it was evident that they were very experienced in this field of work

It was excellent to learn about the role of the SPSO and it has helped me in my role in dealing with complaints

Really appreciated the practical rather than theoretical approach to the course & the perspective of what you need to do/look out for as a busy operational manager

- facilitating a workshop in May 2017 on the procedure at the Scottish Practice Management Development Network Annual Conference in Edinburgh. This was to publicise the new NHS Scotland CHP
- working with the Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland in December 2017 to deliver a staff awareness session on the new procedure
- attending and presenting on the CHP to joint Patient Advice and Support Service and NHS Complaints Personnel Association Scotland events in Dundee and Glasgow
- delivering NHS complaints workshops in partnership with NHS Education for Scotland at four regional events (Supporting Feedback and Complaints and Duty of Candour incidents across Health and Social Care) in 2018.

What next for CSA?

Scotland has come a long way since the findings of the Crerar review. This has only been achieved through a partnership approach. Collaborative working has delivered the vision of a simplified and standardised complaints procedure which prioritises the early resolution of complaints, and places great emphasis on learning from complaints to drive up standards of service delivery.

The next stage of our work involves reviewing and analysing the effectiveness of the model CHPs to assess how they can improved to deliver even greater consistency and value. Work on this will commence during 2018–2019.

- March and April 2012 we published the first CHPs for the local government and housing sectors
- October 2016 the Scottish Government published the NHS Scotland model CHP (operational from April 2017)
- December 2016 we published the Social Work Model CHP (operational from April 2017)
- There is now a model CHP in place across each of the main public sector organisations in Scotland

Performance Report

Strategic Objective 4:
To improve complaints handling by public service providers

Key to improving complaints handling by public service providers across Scotland is the work we do to support public bodies to identify and share good practice in complaints handling. We perform these duties in a range of different ways, including:

- providing expertise and assistance about complaints procedures and developing a valuing complaints culture
- speaking to staff and management teams in regards to good complaints handling and governance requirements
- supporting sector networks of complaints handlers to share good practice and learn from each other
- developing resources to help organisations manage and learn from complaints.

Learning from SPSO complaints

We are developing a structured approach to gathering and analysing what we learn about public authorities' complaint handling to inform the feedback, training and support we give. We do this in a variety of ways highlighted below.

Monitoring uphold rates

Uphold rates by sector-by-sector 2017–18 and 2016–17

Sector	**2017–18**	2016–17	% difference
Local Government	58%	61%	-3%
Health	60%	53%	+7%
Scottish Government and devolved administration	52%	47%	+5%
Housing associations	57%	41%	+16%
Water	73%	71%	+2%
Further education	58%	60%	-2%
Higher education	45%	41%	+4%

The local government uphold rate fell slightly compared to 2016–17 from 61% to 58%. The uphold rate for health complaints rose from 53% to 60%. We are keen to understand why and so monitor our own complaint information and actively engage with stakeholders.

Performance Report

Complaint Handling Marker

When we investigate complaints, our Complaints Reviewers also look at how the complaint was handled by the body. Where they identify that a complaint was not handled fully in line with the requirements of the model CHP, it is recorded. Through our work on standards, we analyse this data to help bodies improve their complaints handling performance.

During 2017–18 we found that just over 22% of the cases we closed included one or more complaints handling failings. It is worth noting that, in many cases, authorities identified failings themselves, prior to receiving feedback from us.

There are three key areas where bodies are likely to fail to meet the requirements of the model CHP. These are:

1. the requirement to identify fully each issue being complained about and to provide an accurate, proportionate and evidence-based decision for each complaint
2. the requirement to communicate clearly with the person making the complaint and to manage their expectations in respect of the complaints process and likely outcomes
3. the requirement in respect of timescales at stage 2 of the model CHP, and to keep the person making the complaint updated where the timescales will not be met.

This information will inform the support we give authorities and future development of the CHP.

Monitoring premature complaints

In 2017–18, the proportion of SPSO's overall complaint caseload that was 'premature' (i.e. the complaint had not completed the public body's complaint handling process) was 24.1%. This was a 4% reduction on the year before and a 6% reduction since 2015–16 when the rate was 31%. As the table below shows, there is still variation between sectors.

Premature complaints per sector 2017–18

Sector	**2017–18**	2016–17	% difference
Colleges (FE)	13.3%	26.5%	-13%
Universities (HE)	10.6%	13.9%	-3%
Health	21.6%	20.7%	1%
Housing Associations	30.6%	34.8%	-4%
Joint Health & Social Care	13.8%	-	-
Local Government	28.1%	35.7%	-8%
Scottish Government and Devolved Administration	19.3%	19.6%	0%
Water	38.9%	40.8%	-2%
Total	**24.1%**	**27.8%**	**-4%**

A low rate of premature cases rate can be an indication of a successful complaints process that is founded on early resolution, and an indicator of successful implementation of the model CHP process. We continue to monitor this.

Performance Report

Monitoring recommendations

We follow up each recommendation, requiring the authority to provide detailed evidence of what they have done to provide redress or make the improvement we asked for. We set a deadline on each recommendation and follow this up. 94% of the recommendations we made were completed within three months of the target date set. Ultimately, it is down to organisations to implement the recommendations on time.

This approach enables us to capture and better understand information about our findings and recommendations, which in turn help us to better understand the impact of our work.

Our recommendations have three main purposes:

- **redress individual injustice**
- **learning and improvement to help prevent the problem from happening again**
- **improve complaints handling**

In 2017–18 we made 1,192 recommendations, a slight reduction from the 1,379 recommendations we made in 2016–17. This reflects a changed approached to making recommendations where we only recommend that an organisation takes action where they had not already planned to do so. Where the organisation has already planned remedial activities, we do not make a recommendation, but we do ask for evidence that the action has been taken. Of the 1,192 recommendations we made:

- 448 recommendations to provide individual remedy for an aggrieved person, of which:
  - 379 required a meaningful apology to be provided
  - 17 required a financial payment to be made
  - 52 were for other forms of remedy
- 635 recommendations were in respect of learning and improvement actions
- 109 recommendations to improve complaints handling performance.

Breakdown of recommendation types

Recommendation type	No.	%
Individual redress	448	38%
Learning and improvement	635	53%
Improve complaints handling	109	9%

Performance Report

Detailed breakdown of recommendations by type and sector

Recommendations 2017–18	Individual remedy – apology	Individual remedy – financial payment	Individual remedy – other	Complaints handling remedy	Learning and Improvement remedy	**Total**
Colleges	6	1	1	7	6	**21**
Health	254	5	8	50	499	**16**
Housing associations	7	2	0	3	7	**19**
Joint Health and Social Care	3	0	0	1	10	**14**
Local Government	80	5	29	30	78	**222**
Scottish Government and Devolved Administration	13	2	4	9	14	**42**
Universities	10	1	6	5	14	**36**
Water	6	1	4	4	7	**22**
Total	**379**	**17**	**52**	**109**	**635**	**1,192**

Feedback to public bodies

In addition to making recommendations, we provide feedback to authorities. This happens where we have identified an issue which may not be specifically in relation to the complaint we have been asked to investigate, or it may not be appropriate to make a recommendation to address the issue. During the year we provided feedback on 348 issues to authorities. This included:

feedback on complaints handling issues: 130

feedback on how the organisation responded to SPSO enquiries during our investigation: 57

feedback on other issues: 161

Feedback on 'other issues' typically draws the authority's attention to relevant comments from one of our independent professional advisers.

Complaints handling guidance

A core activity of our CSA work is to assist public bodies in good complaints handling by providing advice, guidance and support and in responding to ad-hoc requests for help. In 2017–18, we responded to 274 of these requests (370 in 2016–17). The majority of requests we received were from the local government and health sectors, generating 20% and 18% of all contacts respectively. This activity reflects our continued focus of supporting the implementation of the two new CHPs. The requests we received ranged from general enquiries to requests for SPSO tools and resources and input and guidance about complaints handling issues.

The reduction in the volume of requests we received from the previous year was expected. This is a continuing trend which reflects our work to create and participate in knowledge networks across all sectors to identify and share good practice in complaints handling.

Stakeholder engagement

External engagements

One of our main activities this year involved providing support and advice through external engagements. During 2017–18 we participated in 66 meetings or events with external bodies. This activity level is broadly similar to our work in 2016–17, when we were involved in around 70 such events. These activities are wide ranging, from providing the keynote speaker and facilitating a good practice workshop at the *'Improving Complaints Handling: Putting People at the Centre of Services'* conference, to speaking to NHS stakeholders in Wales (supporting the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales), or meeting with individual organisations across Scotland to support the effective management of complaints.

As we did in previous years, we have worked in partnership with NHS Education for Scotland, the Scottish Government, the Scottish Social Services Council, the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland to support complaints handling across health and social care. Through four national conferences for all relevant health and social care staff, including independent contractors and care providers, (*Supporting Feedback and Complaints and Duty of Candour Incidents Across Health and Social Care*) we ran workshops to provide staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to handle and manage complaints.

Networks

Supporting sector complaints networks continues to be an important aspect of our work. These networks are run by each sector with the aim of identifying, evaluating and sharing good practice in complaints handling. As integral members of each network, we value the opportunity this gives us to feedback on complaints issues from an SPSO perspective, and to contribute to the work of each network. Throughout 2017–18 we participated in the local government, housing, NHS, college and university sectors complaints networks. We are also a member of the local government benchmarking sub-group and have attended the Social Work complaints sub-group.

Each network works in its own way. The common objective they all share, however, is to learn from complaints and drive up the standards of complaints handling performance. They achieve this in various ways, for example, by analysing complaints performance information to learn, improve and benchmark performance, or hosting an annual complaints conference or working to develop good practice resources.

To demonstrate her support of the networks and recognition of the value they add, during 2017–18 the Ombudsman attended network events for the college, housing and local government sectors. She intends to follow this up in the next year by attending networks she has not yet had the opportunity to meet.

Training

Our training unit comprises one part-time training co-ordinator with some administration support. We delivered 43 training courses across all sectors, these were:

19 Complaints Investigation Skills courses

19 Good Complaints Handling courses

5 Managing Difficult Behaviour courses

For more information about the training we offer, please visit our website.[9]

Consultation and Parliament

The Ombudsman appeared before three separate Scottish parliamentary committees.

- At the Health and Sport Committee she gave evidence as part of their inquiry into clinical governance emphasising the importance of a culture of learning from and valuing improvement.[10]
- At the Local Government and Communities Committee, she gave evidence about our performance for 16/17. This included a discussion of possible improvements to our legislation.[11]
- At the Social Security Committee, she gave evidence about the role of complaints in relation to the new Social Security agency and a proposed charter.[12]

She also appeared before the Local Government and Communities Committee of the National Assembly for Wales which is considering new legislation for the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.[13]

9 www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk/training/training-courses

10 www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11232
We also submitted written evidence in advance of the meeting which can be found here:
www.spso.org.uk/sites/spso/files/consultations-and-inquiries/2017/SPSO%20Response%20to%20H%26S%20committee%20inquiry%20on%20NHS%20Governance.pdf

11 www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11346. We also submitted written evidence in advance of the meeting which can be found here:
www.spso.org.uk/sites/spso/files/consultations-and-inquiries/2018/180124SPSOwrittensubmission.pdf

12 www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11328

13 www.senedd.assembly.wales/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=447&MID=4406

We responded to consultations including:

- On the Planning (Scotland) Bill we highlighted the frustration that people can feel when they are unable to question professional judgement in relation to planning decisions.[14]
- On the Education (Scotland) Bill we asked for reassurance that any changes were undertaken in a way that did not reduce people's right to complain and asked whether the right to complain to us should be extended to all publicly-funded schools.[15]
- On the Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill we provided a briefing note about our concerns about a possible duplication in complaint provisions.[16]

Thank you for giving evidence to the Committee on 31 January and for contributing to an interesting and informative session. It was helpful for the Committee to hear your views on the future strategic direction of the SPSO which the Committee is supportive of.[17]

The evidence we heard from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman on the complaints handling proposals was compelling. We would like to see the Ombudsman following the model that has been successful in Scotland, ensuring collaborative working and consultation with the sector.[18]

14 www.spso.org.uk/sites/spso/files/consultations-and-inquiries/2018/180202PlanningBillconsultation.pdf

15 www.spso.org.uk/sites/spso/files/consultations-and-inquiries/2018/180129SPSOEducationconsultation%20%282%29.pdf

16 www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20170824SPSO_leter_and_Briefing_note.pdf

17 from Convener of Local Government and Communities Committee: www.parliament.scot/S5_Local_Gov/General%20Documents/20180207_ConvenerToSPSO.pdf

18 from the Stage 1 report on the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11459/cr-ld11459-e.pdf

Performance Report

Strategic Objective 5:
To be an accountable, best value organisation

The SPSO 2017–18 business plan [19] sets out our key performance indicators and performance measures. We track performance throughout the year, reporting performance publicly quarterly. We also actively monitor risk, which is covered in more detail in our Accountability Report.[20]

Strategic and business planning

We laid a new strategic plan before Parliament in February 2018. This set out the revised vision strategic aims we will work to from April 2018.[21]

The strategic plan, “Putting People at the Heart of Public Services” formed the basis of our 2018–19 business plan. The business plan, which was created with input from the whole team, will be updated and re-published quarterly. For the first time, we have captured, by team, both the project work we do, and our business as usual. This demonstrates the scale, range and volume of our work.

As part of this work, we confirmed our values.

SPSO Values

- We will work **independently** and **fairly**
- We are **people-focused** and value **integrity** and **respect**
- We **value learning** and **improvement**

Community, social and human rights

We think it important to contribute to the society and communities in which we live and work.

Not only do we build human rights into our approach, we actively encourage staff to undertake public and voluntary duties (recognising that we must avoid conflicts of interest). Staff are involved in a range of activities which we support either as an office or individually. These range from sitting on the boards of charities – through to gathering women’s clothing to support unemployed women to get into work /back into work – to sponsored events and challenges.

19 www.spso.org.uk/business-plans
20 www.spso.org.uk/finance
21 www.spso.org.uk/strategic-plan

We also organise and participate in office-based events. Highlights were:

- We raised £235 for the STV children's appeal at the delicious big breakfast event organised and prepared by our SWF team.
- We held an event for International Women's Day, where we learned about women's (and men's) challenges in the workplace. We had excellent presentations from our own colleagues, Girlguiding Scotland and Anna Poole QC. Many of us made and tweeted our pledges to press forward and progress gender parity.
- We had great fun at our Christmas lunch, but with a serious edge. During an exceptionally cold December, we gathered and donated 45 coats and two large bags of gilets, hats, scarves and gloves, donated £100 worth of H+M vouchers and raised £360. Guests of honour were representatives of Edinburgh Young Carers (one of our staff sits on their Board).
- We made personal pledges to support climate change week. These were very varied and included, for example: cycling to work, being more thoughtful about what we print, cutting down on packaging waste by using re-usable wraps rather than plastic bags, switching off electrical items and recycling more.

Casework performance

Timescales

We publish performance indicators (PI) for both our complaints handling and our Scottish Welfare Fund review casework.

Complaints handling timescales [22]

	Complaints handling targets	**2017–18**	2016–17
PI-1 Complaints	95% of advice stage complaints were handled **within 10 working days**	**99.5%**	99.5%
PI-2 complaints	95% of early resolution complaints were decided or moved to more complex investigation stage **within 70 working days**	**85.3%**	88.0%
PI-3 Complaints	95% of investigation complaints were decided **within 260 working days**	**97.1%**	96.1%

22 Complaints handling indicators measure the time it takes us to close a case from the point of receipt of the case.

Performance Report

We recognise how important it is to respond to complaints in good time. Making, or being subject to a complaint, can be stressful for everyone concerned. We try to balance the time we take, with ensuring we deliver quality investigations with robust decisions.

As you can see, we exceeded our targets, and matched or improved performance in relation to PI-1 and PI-3 .

We did not achieve our PI-2 target as a consequence of focusing on addressing our backlog of unallocated cases. We recognised that addressing the backlog would impact the PI-2 timescales because we would be deciding cases that were, in some cases, already 10 weeks old before detailed work started on them (they had been triaged to make sure we did not delay on time-critical complaints).

It took a whole office effort to address the backlog, with support and involvement from every part of the office.

Thank you!

- to everyone in my office for clearing our backlog of cases: to those who worked extra hours, took on temporary new duties, took on extra cases and supported colleagues
- to complainants and public bodies for your patience

Rosemary

Scottish Welfare Fund reviews timescales

It is important to make decisions quickly as many applicants are in urgent need. As can be seen, we exceeded all of our targets by a significant margin. More information about our SWF work is available in our Annual Report on the Independent SWF Review service.[23]

Indicator	Target	**Achieved 2017–18**	Achieved 2016–17
PI-1 crisis grant applications determined within within 1 working day	95%	**99.3%**	99.5%
PI-2 community care grant applications responded to within 21 working days	95%	**99.4%**	97.8%
PI-3 cases requested for reconsideration, decision is correct	95%	**99.8%**	94.6%

23 www.spso.org.uk/news-and-media/scottish-welfare-fund-independent-review-service-annual-report-2017-18

Performance Report

We count the working days from the point we have all the information we need to make a robust decision. PI-1 and PI-2 were agreed with the Scottish Government. PI-3 is a voluntary quality indicator we set for ourselves.

In addition to measuring and monitoring SWF reviews performance against targets, we also measure and monitor average case handling times. This includes the time taken for councils to provide us with information and time for enquiries with applicants and other third parties.

Achieved 2017–18	Crisis Grants in 5 working days	100%	3%
	Community Care Grants in 30 working days	88%	11%
Achieved 2016–17	Crisis Grants in 5 working days	97%	
	Community Care Grants in 30 working days	77%	

We allow councils one day to provide us with information about Crisis Grants and four days for Community Gare Grants.

Service standards

Customer service standards

Our customer service standards [24] apply to the service we deliver to both members of the public and public authorities. They are a set of commitments about our communication, our openness and fairness, and our competence and responsibility. We issued a single report [25] which drew on all the feedback we received to give an informed, holistic, overview of our customer service.

We gather information about our service from a variety of sources, highlighted below.

Customer feedback

In 2017–18 we sought feedback from service users in a range of ways, from electronic surveying of service users receiving complaint investigation decisions to telephone surveying of SWF service users. This feedback was used to inform and develop our service and reported in our service standards report.

24 www.spso.org.uk/customer-service-standards
25 www.spso.org.uk/service-standards-reports

Performance Report

Quality Assurance

We are committed to delivering quality in all of our casework. As well as ensuring that all live cases have an appropriate and proportionate level of operational management supervision, we also separately carry out quality assurance checks through the year on our complaints, SWF work and on the professional advice that we receive from our range of advisers. This work is carried out by the corporate services team, a team separate to the case handling teams, through our Quality Assurance (QA) process.

Our published performance indicator for this area of work is the number of complaint decisions that are changed as a result of QA in 2017–18. In the cases QA'd we found:

- decisions were correct in 100% of complaints QA'd
- decisions were correct in 100% of SWF cases reviewed.

We strive for excellence which means we actively look for ways to improve. QA identified a number of areas requiring improvement in a small number of cases. These included reducing unavoidable delays in case handling and improving the quality of the explanation given for our decisions.

We also highlighted examples of good practice. These included effective positive actions taken in identifying and managing accessibility issues for service users.

All QA findings were fed back to individuals, teams and managers to share learning, and improvements were implemented where needed.

Complaint reviews

The Ombudsman normally responds to review requests personally (except if there is a conflict of interest). She is supported in this by Executive Casework Officers, not involved in the original decision.

We received significantly fewer review requests in 2017–18 than in the previous year resulting in us reviewing 10% of our decisions. Although we were close to our target, we revised three more decisions than in the previous year.

None of the cases raised serious or significant concerns, but as with quality assurance learning was taken from them and shared.

Indicator	Target	**Achieved 2017–18**	Achieved 2016–17
PI-5 Complaints	95% of cases requested for review, decision is correct	**94.8%**	97.1%

Performance Report

Requests for reviews of complaints decisions: volumes and outcomes

Review outcome	2017–18	2016–17
Case reopened, original decision revised	12	9
Case reopened in light of new information	7	6
Decision stands	206	261
Request for review is ineligible / withdrawn	5	33
Total number considered	**230**	**309**
% Correct Decision	94.8%	97.1%

126 cases originally decided before detailed investigation

- Of these, 4 were re-opened because we considered we should have exercised our discretion to investigate the complaint

103 cases originally decided following investigation

- Of these, 8 were reopened to change to the original decision

SWF reconsiderations

Councils and applicants can ask us to review and reconsider SWF review decisions. We are not required to do this, but we introduced it as a voluntary stage as a quality measure and we use reconsiderations as an opportunity to learn and improve our service where we can. Someone not involved in the original decision carries out the review.

2017–18

No. requests received	% of all decisions made	Decision changed: *new information received* Number	% of all requests	Decision changed: *reviewer disagreed with original decision* Number	% of all requests	SPSO decision NOT changed Number	% of all requests
21	3.5%	6	28.6%	1	4.8%	14	66.7%

2016–17

No. requests received	% of all decisions made	Decision changed: *new information received* Number	% of all requests	Decision changed: *reviewer disagreed with original decision* Number	% of all requests	SPSO decision NOT changed Number	% of all requests
37	8.5%	2	5.4%	2	5.4%	33	89.2%

As you can see, reconsideration requests fell significantly compared to the previous year. We attribute this largely to how we communicate to manage expectations more effectively. We explain at the outset what our uphold rates are and explain our decisions over the phone. There was an increase in the proportion of cases changed at the reconsideration stage. However, this was due to a rise in the number of cases where new information was received during the reconsideration process which was material to the decision. The proportion of cases where the reviewer disagreed with the original decision remained stable.

Performance Report

Complaints about SPSO

We have a two-stage complaints process based on our customer service standards[26], which adopts the principles and approach of the model complaints handling procedure.

Stage 1: we try to resolve matters

Stage 2: senior management investigate and respond formally

In line with the requirements we place on public bodies, details of all customer service complaints in 2017/18 were recorded and reported on a quarterly basis. A summary of the outcome of complaints received and responded to during the year was published on our web site on a quarterly basis. These reports provide information on our performance in handling customer service complaints in line with SPSO's Customer Service Complaints Handling Procedure.

Summary of complaints outcomes and service failures 2017/18

Breakdown of complaints received and closed

Summary	Received	Closed
Stage 1 – Frontline resolution	42	42
Stage 2 – Investigation	15	16
Escalated complaints (escalated from stage 1 to stage 2)	14	13
Total	**71**	**71**

Breakdown of complaints upheld and not upheld

Summary	Upheld	Not Upheld	Total	% upheld
Stage 1 – Frontline resolution	6	36	42	14%
Stage 2 – Investigation	4	12	16	25%
Escalated complaints	7	6	13	54%
Total	**17**	**54**	**71**	

26 www.spso.org.uk/customer-service-standards

Performance Report

Timescales

The target timescales to close complaints are:

- **5 working days at stage 1**
- **20 working days at stage 2**
- **20 working days for escalated complaints**

Further information about our performance in relation to timescales

Timescales	Met timescale (cases)	Did not meet timescale	Total number of working days	Average time in working days to close
Stage 1 Frontline resolution	29	11	169	4.2
Stage 2 Investigation	12	4	362	22.6
Escalated Complaints	11	2	221	17
Total	**52**	**17**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Key points

- We received 71 service complaints in 2017/18. This is a notable increase from the previous year (2016/17) when we received 49 service complaints.
- We closed 71 service complaints in the year 2017/18. In the previous year (2016/17) we closed 50 service complaints.
- We closed 42 service complaints at Stage 1 (59% of all complaints received) and we closed 29 complaints (including 13 that were escalated from stage 1 to stage 2) at stage 2. This represented 41% of all complaints received.
- We upheld a total of 17 complaints. Six at stage 1 (14% of all stage 1 complaints), four at stage 2 (25% of all stage 2 complaints). Seven complaints were upheld after escalation (54% of escalated complaints).
- During the year the Independent Complaint Resolution Service (ICRS) received 14 referrals and completed 2 full investigations and 2 short reviews. They did not uphold any complaints. We signpost people to the ICRS if they remain dissatisfied with the way we have handled a customer service complaint.
- Average timescales at stage 1 were 4.2 working days (against a target of 5 working days), at stage 2 we took on average 22.6 working days (against a target of 20 working days), and for escalated complaints the average time to issue a decision was 17 working days (against a target of 20 working days).

Performance Report

Learning from complaints

We are committed to improving our service as a result of learning from customer service complaints. In addition to putting things right for our customer, where possible, when our service has not met our service standards, we always seek to learn the lessons from any service failures and address any systemic issues that may be identified. In the course of reviewing customer service complaints, individual instances of service failure are highlighted to the Leadership Team, where necessary, and to the relevant staff and managers involved where appropriate.

The two main areas of poor service provision identified throughout the year related to communications and delays. In each case we apologised for the failing. Staff were reminded of the service standards. We will take account of the findings in respect of communications in a planned update of the SPSO communications strategy.

If someone remains dissatisfied we signpost them to the ICRS. We record and report customer service complaints internally and to our Audit and Advisory Committee. There are more statistics on our website.[27]

Independent Complaint Resolution Service Report

The ICRS provides a final external stage for complaints about the service delivered by SPSO under our customer service standards. It reviews our handling of service complaints and gives a view on whether we have acted in accordance with our service standards. If the ICRS finds any service failures, it makes recommendations for appropriate redress. The ICRS also offers constructive feedback and practical ideas for further improvement. The full annual report from the ICRS is available on our website.[28]

Providing an accessible service

We want to be as accessible as possible to whoever needs to use our services. We work continuously to make our service accessible, regularly undertaking new initiatives to make sure we operate in line with best practice. For example, in 2017/18 we started the work necessary to create our British Sign Language Plan which will be published in 2018/19.

We encourage people to tell us of any adjustments that would make our service more accessible to them. The most common adjustment made in 2017/18 was to alter font size for people with visual impairments. We also had documents translated and made specific adjustments to make it easier for people with mental health difficulties to interact with us. Making such adjustments is now a standard, regular part of the service we provide and we track them to see if we can make improvements that would benefit others.

We ask people to complete a form which helps us monitor if there are groups of people who are under-represented among the people who bring us complaints. This year, our analysis of this data showed that there has been no significant change in the people who come to us over the last few years. They remain broadly representative of the population with the exception of age where we have an older demographic profile than the country's population.

A change to the form in 2016/17 meant this was the first year we could look at trends in responses to an expanded question around disability. We have found that we have a higher proportion of people reporting a disability than the population, and this number has increased since last year. This may reflect that the services we take complaints about can impact disproportionately on those with disabilities when things go wrong and mean they are more likely to raise complaints about them.[29]

27 www.spso.org.uk/customer-service-complaints

28 www.spso.org.uk/customer-service-complaints

29 However, it is important to note that our forms are voluntary and people can choose whether to respond to each question or not, so we do have to exercise caution when trying to identify reasons for trends.

Performance Report

On the complaints side, we saw a continuation in the increase in the number of people making complaints to us via our website. Although we can, and do, offer advice by phone, in most cases we are currently not able to take complaints by phone because of existing provisions in our legislation.

It is different for the SWF, where we take applications by phone. In 2017–18, 69% of contact with the SWF team was by phone.

Contact by phone:

SWF **69%** Complaints **25%**

Why the big difference?

We think it is because complaints must, according to the law, be in writing

Method of contact in 2017–18 as a % of all complaints

2017–18

Complaint Form	582	14%
CP Form (Prisons)	58	1%
Email	146	4%
Fax	5	<1%
Letter	849	21%
SPSO Contact Form	67	2%
Telephone	1,040	25%
Visit	12	<1%
Web Complaint Form	1,366	33%

2016–17

Complaint Form	560	13%
CP Form (Prisons)	102	2%
Email	143	3%
Fax	1	<1%
Letter	750	18%
SPSO Contact Form	107	3%
Telephone	1,296	31%
Visit	10	<1%
Web Complaint Form	1,213	29%

Performance Report

Corporate performance

We say more about corporate performance in our Accountabilty Report.[30]

Summary of financial performance

Our budget for 2017–18 was £4.3 million. Our expenditure was within -1.4% of the approved budget. We also generated modest revenue through our training unit. We publish information on our website on specific expenditure areas, as required under the Public Services Reform Act.[31]

Environmental and sustainable development

We continue to reduce our level of carbon emissions. We are committed to supporting the Scottish Government's policies on Environmental and Sustainable Development and understand our obligations in these areas. Further to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the Government introduced an Order in 2015 requiring all 151 public bodies that appear on the Major Player list to submit an annual climate change report, detailing their compliance with the climate change duties. SPSO is listed, and we published our third annual report in August 2017. Previously, we published a sustainability report. Our climate change and sustainability reports are available on our website.[32]

ICT

Digital technologies are an important tool underpinning our service, and we closely manage this part of our service to ensure we protect the personal data and sensitive information we hold and use. The importance of cyber resilience has never been greater, and in 2017–18 we started implementing the Cyber Resilience Public Sector Action Plan and applying for Cyber Essentials Plus certification.

SPSO utilise SCOTS Connect to host our network services to provide a safe and secure digital environment. SCOTS is the name for the Scottish Government's range of managed IT services and products. Emails are sent over the secure Government Secure Intranet (GSI) network which scans all traffic for inappropriate content, blocking its access to the system. Firewalls ensure that only trusted / secure websites are able to be accessed by staff.

In addition to this work, in 2017–18 we undertook a planned hardware renewal and made initial preparations for moving onto SCOTS X platform, which includes Windows 10 operating system and Office 2016 software. These continuing improvements ensure we operate in an efficient and secure IT environment.

During 2017–18 we were awarded the **Living Wage Accreditation** status

30 www.spso.org.uk/finance

31 www.spso.org.uk/sustainability-reports

32 www.spso.org.uk/finance

Performance Report

Strategic Objective 6:
To support public service improvement in Scotland

To support public services to learn from complaints and improve service delivery, we continued to raise awareness of our wider role. We did so by supporting public service providers to improve outcomes for the public through their learning from SPSO enquiries, decisions and recommendations, and by working in partnership with public service providers, policy makers, scrutiny bodies and regulators to further those improvements.

Thematic report: Making Complaints Work for Everyone

We published our second thematic report: "Making Complaints Work for Everyone".[33] The report, launched at a conference co-organised by SPSO, Queen Margaret University and the University of Glasgow, focuses on the impact of complaints on staff and organisations who have been complained about. The conference was attended by 91 delegates and speakers from the Scottish Government, NHS, local authorities, housing associations, further education, higher education, and other ombudsman services. It brought together academic and practitioner perspectives to explore the effects of complaints on public-service employees and the ways in which organisations could support employees who have been subject to a complaint.

In her opening address at the conference, the Ombudsman, Rosemary Agnew, discussed the main findings of the report. Whilst organisations are increasingly likely to describe themselves as 'learning organisations', research indicates that being subject to a complaint can have an adverse impact on the individual involved and can limit, rather than promote, learning. Staff are likely to perceive complaints negatively, often attributed to lack of organisational support, which is at odds with leadership aspirations to be a learning organisation.

In conclusion, the report proposes that organisations need to actively support their staff through complaints processes and engage employees in positive and purposeful activities to manage and learn from complaints. Getting this right will encourage staff, help drive improvement in services and promote learning.

The report contains information about a range of resources that organisations can draw on, and we encourage the use of these resources to support staff through the complaints process.

Sharing complaints outcomes

Each month the Ombudsman publishes an e-newsletter covering the reports of complaints we investigated and closed together with information about any significant trends and issues identified from the cases we investigated. In 2017–2018 through our investigations we made 734 decisions on complaints.

At the end of our investigation, we publish[34] our findings, conclusions, decision and recommendations in one of two ways.

1. public decision reports which summarise decisions we have made, where we have communicated the outcome by a decision letter to the complainant and to the appropriate organisation.
2. public investigation reports. These are detailed reports of our investigation, often issued where a complainant has suffered significant injustice and/or a case has wider public interest.

33 www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk/spso-thematic-reports

34 We do not publish our findings in a very small amount of cases where, due to the specific circumstances of the complaint, confidentiality may not be maintained when publishing.

Performance Report

All published reports are sent to the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Ministers. We publish them on our website and in other forms of communication, for example the Ombudsman's monthly e-newsletter. Making this information publicly available, helps the public and public authorities to understand what we do and to learn from complaints that we have investigated.

We provide annual letters[35] to all councils, NHS boards, the Scottish Prison Service and water providers. Each letter includes a breakdown of the complaints we investigated by subject and outcome for each organisation. This information helps organisations to use it in conjunction with their own local management information to understand complaints in the widest sense. It helps organisations to promote the development of enhanced customer services, take action to resolve poor quality services, support the redefinition of the way services are delivered using learning from customer complaints and enables the sharing of good practice across organisational and sector boundaries.

Supporting authorities' learning

The focus of our learning and improvement work is on building our capacity to drive improvement through learning from complaints, especially by the authorities that bring us the largest volume of complaints or that exhibit repeat failings or systemic complaints handling issues. We continued this work during this year by improving the way in which we make recommendations and by working closely with bodies to improve their complaints handling performance.

Direct support

We built on work started last year to work closely with two organisations throughout the year to improve complaints handling performance. The support we provided included the development of organisational specific e-learning resources and quality assurance processes for the complaints handling function.

Equality and diversity: using casework to make a difference

Our casework allows us not only to reflect on our service but also to support improvements generally.

Case Study

In one case (201700486[36]) we identified that a policy did not appropriately provide parity between mental and physical health. A GP practice policy appeared to only allow for home visits if there was a physical health problem. In this case, they did not consider the complainant's significant mental health problem meant that he was housebound despite a letter from a psychiatrist confirming this was the case. We have asked the practice to apologise to the individual but also to review their policy to ensure it has due regard to mental as well as physical health which will have wider benefits.

We also look across our casework to identify themes and ensure our commitment to equality is reflected. Findings were reflected in our thematic report on "Making Complaints Work for Everyone" where we included specific support and guidance on equality issues and making reasonable adjustments (taking advice from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

35 www.spso.org.uk/statistics-2017-18
36 www.spso.org.uk/decision-reports/2018/may/decision-report-201700486-201700486

Performance Report

Looking forward

Revised strategic aims

We revised our strategic aims to better reflect our developing role and remit. Our business plan directly incorporates these to show how everything we do contributes to our vision and aims.

Vision

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman contributes actively and positively to Scotland's development and delivery of first class public services: putting people and learning at the heart of what we do by being innovative and world-leading in our approach to complaints, reviews and standards.

Strategic aims

1. be recognised and consulted as a world-leading Ombudsman service of independent accessible experts with a reputation for: being run transparently and efficiently, governed effectively, and leading by example in the delivery of the full range of statutory functions
2. develop organisational capacity to: deliver existing statutory functions efficiently, proportionately and effectively, and develop and adopt new, or enhanced, services and functions
3. drive improvement in Scottish public services by setting and applying high complaints handling and review standards and promoting a culture and practice where learning and improvement from complaints or reviews is embedded in practice, governance and organisational systems
4. enable and support the Scottish public sector to achieve and maintain high standards of policy and practice through a combination of sharing learning from SPSO complaints and reviews, monitoring, advice and guidance, training and appropriate collaboration
5. through active engagement, help people know about their rights to complain or request a review, and help them understand what standards and level of services they can expect and how to access them easily and responsibly

Support and intervention policy

Our learning and improvement, communication and CSA officers work together as part of the new team we created in 2017–18: The Improvement, Standards and Engagement Team.

In addition to business as usual work, a major project for us is the development of a Support and Intervention Policy. It is important to us that we are transparent about what we do and why, and what public bodies and the public can expect from us. This policy will set out how we use the data we collate from complaints, feedback and other information sharing to support, or where necessary take direct intervention action with public bodies: it will cover informal feedback-based support, through to when we would use our statutory powers.

Independent National Whistleblowing Officer (INWO)

In response to The Freedom to Speak Up Review[37], the Scottish Government considered its findings to further support, encourage and promote whistleblowing. Following a public consultation, the Health Secretary announced that legislation would be introduced to Parliament to bring the functions of a new Independent National Whistleblowing Officer (INWO) to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, a UK first!

We anticipate that the INWO will have statutory powers to investigate concerns raised by whistleblowers and to examine health boards' culture and approach to whistleblowing, particularly where a whistleblower claims to have been unfairly treated as a result of raising a concern.

To prepare for this new function, we are working in partnership with stakeholders from the health sector and the Scottish Government to develop National Whistleblowing Standards, including Principles and a Whistleblowing Procedure to ensure the investigation of whistleblowing disclosures are standardised, consistent, properly applied and result in fair outcomes. Crucially, they promote safeguarding of patients, and those raising the concerns. A steering group is overseeing the development process, and a working group has been playing a key role in the development of the draft Standards.

Accommodation

Did you know we are moving offices in late 2018?

The SPSO is moving from Melville Street in Edinburgh, our home since we were first set up, to McDonald Road in Edinburgh.

37 www.freedomtospeakup.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/F2SU_web.pdf

Accountability Report and Financial Statements

Accountability Report
Corporate Governance Report

1. Ombudsman's report

1.1 Background

These accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2018 are presented in accordance with the Accounts Direction given by the Scottish Ministers, in pursuance of paragraph 15 (1) of Schedule 1 of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002.

1.2 Leadership Team

- Ombudsman
- Director
- Head of Improvement, Standards and Engagement

1.3 Register of Interests

The Ombudsman, Director, and Audit and Advisory Committee (AAC) members publish Declarations of Interest on the SPSO website with their biographies: these are updated annually. Declarations of interest of other staff are held on the relevant case where required in accordance with the SPSO Code of Professional Conduct.[38]

1.4 System of Internal Control

A Scheme of Control [39] and Scheme of Delegation are in place and are periodically reviewed, as required by the Scheme of Control, and amended as necessary to ensure principle risks to the achievement of the organisation's objectives are managed efficiently, effectively and economically. An Internal Control Checklist has been completed for 2017–18 to inform the assessment of the Ombudsman's governance arrangements. The Accountable Officer has undertaken a review of systems of internal control during 2017/18.The review was been informed by the assurance framework established with the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM).

1.5 Provision of information to employees

We have adopted the principles of openness and participation and place a high level of importance on both informing and consulting staff. We do so by providing access to management papers, through oral and written briefings, by regular staff meetings and events. Information is only withheld where this can be shown to be justified or where a duty of confidence is owed to a third party.

1.6 Information management

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) processed 201 requests for information in 2017–18 (176 in 2016–17):

- 115 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- 11 under the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- 75 under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Three out of 23 reviews in 2017–18 were partially upheld. We had not confirmed that some information was not held in one FOI response, and we had not identified all relevant information in another two subject access requests. There were no appeal decisions in 2017–18.

38 Our declarations of interest are published here: www.spso.org.uk/senior-management www.spso.org.uk/audit-and-advisory-committee
39 Our scheme of control can be found in the Governance and Risk handbook here: www.spso.org.uk/spso-policies

We reported two data security incidents to the Information Commissioner.

1. In one case, a misunderstanding between complainants resulted in correspondence being sent to the wrong person.
2. In the other case, correspondence could not be located after being received into the office. It was located attached to other correspondence shortly after notifying the Information Commissioner's office.

The Information Commissioner decided on both occasions that no action was required but recommended we review mail handling procedures and data protection training. Changes are being made to mail handling, and we are updating our data protection training programme as part of GDPR preparations.

We have clear guidelines governing how we handle data. There is a clearly established process for recording and investigation of any potential breaches in data security. All incidents must be logged using an incident recording system and, following an investigation, any identified risks are mitigated as far as possible.[40]

1.7 Internal audit and risk management

The SPSO's Audit and Advisory Committee supports the Ombudsman in relation to responsibilities for risk, control and governance. Each year the chair of the SPSO Audit and Advisory Committee (the AAC) produces an annual report on behalf of the Committee. The purpose of the report is to summarise the Committee's work over the previous financial year and provide the Committee's opinion in relation to our governance. Dr Tom Frawley, Chair of the SPSO Audit and Advisory Committee, provided his detailed report which is published on our website.[41]

The committee met four times and considered each of the internal audit reports. In 2017–18 our internal auditors, the Scottish Legal Aid Board (under a shared services agreement), looked at the areas of payroll, absence, risk management, and IS installation, and provided a consultancy report on our data protection processes in preparation for the introduction of GDPR. The internal audit reports achieved satisfactory or above and the auditors raised no issues of significance.

1.8 Audit

The SPSO's accounts are audited by auditors appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland in accordance with paragraph 15 (2) of Schedule 1 of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002. The Auditor General has appointed Deloitte as the Ombudsman's Auditors for the 5-year period from 2016–17 to 2020–21.

1.9 Disclosure of information to auditors

As Accountable Officer, I am unaware of any relevant audit information of which our auditors are unaware. I have taken all necessary steps to ensure that I am aware of any relevant audit information, and to establish that the auditors are also made aware of this information.

As Accountable Officer, I authorised these financial statements for issue on 7 September 2018.

40 Our Information Governance handbook can be found at www.spso.org.uk/spso-policies

41 Our Audit and Advisory Committee annual reports can be found at www.spso.org.uk/audit-and-advisory-committee

2. Statement of Accountable Officer's responsibilities

Under paragraph 15(1) of Schedule 1 to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002, the Ombudsman is required to prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year in the form as directed by Scottish Ministers. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Ombudsman's affairs at the year-end, and of its net resource outturn, application of resources, changes in taxpayers' equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Ombudsman is required to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by Scottish Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on a "going concern" basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Ombudsman will continue in operation.

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) designated the Ombudsman as the Accountable Officer for the SPSO. The relevant responsibilities as Accountable Officer are set out in the Memorandum to Accountable Officers of Other Public Bodies issued by the Scottish Government and published in the Scottish Public Finance Manual. These include the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is accountable, the keeping of proper records, and safeguarding the SPSO's assets.

As Accountable Officer for the SPSO, I can confirm that:

- as far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Auditors are unaware
- I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information
- the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable
- I take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that they are fair, balanced and understandable.

3. Governance statement

I took up the post of Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and Accountable Officer on 1 May 2017 for an eight-year appointment. As Accountable Officer, the Ombudsman has responsibility for maintaining a sound system of governance and internal control that supports the achievement of organisational policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the organisation's assets for which I am responsible.

I have in place a scheme of control, the key features of which are:

- The Ombudsman holds the role of Accountable Officer.
- The Ombudsman is supported by the Leadership Team (LT), which comprises the Ombudsman, the Director, and the Head of Improvement, Standards and Engagement. Individual members of the LT have delegated authority to make decisions as set out in the Ombudsman's scheme of delegation.

- The Ombudsman chairs formal meetings of the LT to consider finance and audit matters, the annual business plan, the risk register, and the strategic direction of the organisation at least every quarter.
- The LT also meets on a weekly basis to oversee the day-to-day running of the operation.
- The Ombudsman is supported by the Audit and Advisory Committee (AAC), which provides assurance and advice about governance, including management of risk. The AAC meets at least three times a year to consider audit matters and approach to management of risks to the business in relation to strategic direction of the organisation.
- External scrutiny is provided by an internal audit function through a shared services arrangement with the Scottish Legal Aid Board, and external auditors appointed by the Auditor General for Scotland. There is a rolling three-year internal audit programme in place, of which 2017–18 was the third year of the three-year plan for 2015–18.
- Risk is managed actively through a risk management policy which sets out the approach to risk management for the delivery of strategic aims. The risk register, identifies the key risks facing the organisation, is reviewed and updated with the business plan on an annual basis with input from all staff. It is also reviewed by the LT each quarter and the AAC at each meeting.

  The most significant strategic risk to the organisation in 2017–18 remained the adequacy of resources to deliver a quality service that delivers effective complaints handling within an acceptable timescale. The majority of the SPSO's workload is demand-led. As a consequence the number and complexity of complaints, enquiries and Scottish Welfare Fund review applications received is outside our control and fluctuates. The LT monitor this closely.
- The system of internal financial control is based on agreed administrative procedures and the system of delegation and accountability.
- Compliance with generally accepted best practice principles and relevant guidance on corporate governance has been assessed using an internal control checklist. The checklist is based on that provided within the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) and a proportionate approach has been adopted, reflecting the relatively small size and simple structure of the SPSO whilst recognising the wider impact of her duties.

3.1 Fraud, corruption and bribery

Our policies and procedures on fraud, corruption and bribery include the Anti-Fraud policy; Codes of Professional Conduct; the terms and conditions for the supply of goods and services; and the broader financial governance arrangements.

We maintain a gifts register, which is updated regularly.

We declare any fraud, whistleblowing or control failure incidents to the AAC and this forms part of the annual assurance process. In 2017/18 there were no instances of fraud or bribery identified or detected in SPSO.

Accountability Report
Corporate Governance Report

3.2 Review of effectiveness of internal control and risk management

I am satisfied that the current Scheme of Control provides a robust and appropriate framework for good governance and internal control. My office formally complies with the principles of the Scottish Public Finance Manual in line with the Financial Memorandum agreed with the SPCB.

I am assured that throughout 2017–18 the LT have ensured consistent adherence to procedures for internal control, especially in the key business areas of financial management, operational and employee data management and risk management. The system of internal control is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control will continue to evolve to identify the principal risks to the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the nature and extent of those risks and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The preparation of the annual business plan takes account of the Public Service Improvement Framework, Audit Scotland reports and Best Value in Public Services characteristics.

In February 2012, Audit Scotland reviewed the risk register and provided recommendations to management for improvement that were fully adopted. This has formed the basis for each successive register, including the 2017–18 register. The Internal Audit function reviews the process for managing risk on an annual basis. The overall risk profile for 2017-18 was low to moderate. The only significant risks to carry forward into 2018–19 were the risks associated with an increase in cases received with the potential to create a backlog of cases. Control actions for these risks include the application for additional resourcing into 2018–19 and beyond to the SPCB as the funding body.

We have clear guidelines that govern how we handle data. There is a clearly established process for recording and investigation of any potential breaches in data security. All incidents must be logged using an incident recording system and, following an investigation, any identified risks mitigated as far as possible. There were no known or reported serious breaches of data security in the year.

Rosemary Agnew.

Rosemary Agnew
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
7 September 2018

4. Remuneration report

All information disclosed in the tables below and the 'Fair pay disclosure' are subject to external audit. The other sections in the Remuneration and Staff Report are reviewed by the external auditors to ensure they are consistent with the financial statements.

4.1 Audit and Advisory Committee

The Ombudsman's Audit and Advisory Committee has three independent members including the Chair of the committee. The annual remuneration for the independent members of the committee, which is set by the Ombudsman, fell within the band £0 – £5,000 (2016–17 £0 – £5,000). All independent committee member appointments are part-time and are non-pensionable.

4.2 Senior Management

The salaries (including overtime, but excluding employer's superannuation and national insurance contributions), benefits in kind and pension entitlements of the Ombudsman and Director are set out below. Information is presented for the whole year to 31 March 2018.

Remuneration	**2017–18 £'000**			**2016–17 £'000**
Ombudsman	TOTAL	Rosemary Agnew (11 months)	Jim Martin (1 month)	Jim Martin
Salary	80-85	75-80	5-10	85-90
Benefits in kind	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Pension benefits (i)	12	30	-18	33
Total	**70-75**	**105-110**	**-10**	**115-120**
Director				
Salary (FTE)	80-85			80-85
Benefits in kind	Nil			Nil
Pension benefits (i)	12			12
Total	**95-100**			**95-100**

The full-year equivalent for each Ombudsman equates to:

- Jim Martin 85 – 90 £'000, and
- Rosemary Agnew 80 – 85 £'000.

Pension Benefits	Total accrued pension at age 60 as at 31 March 2018 and related lump sum	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60	CETV at 31 March 2018	CETV at 31 March 2017	Value of CETV incresae over year funded by the employer	Employer contribution to private pension account
	£'000	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**	**£'000**
Ombudsman						
Rosemary Agnew	10-15	0-2.5	147	121	17	0
Jim Martin	15-20	0	288	300	-16	0
Director						
Nicola Maclean (ii)	0	0	0	0	0	12

Notes:

(i) The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as the real increase in pension multiplied by 20, plus the real increase in any lump sum less the contributions made by the individual. The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

(ii) The Director's pension is a private scheme and has no bearing on the Ombudsman's accounts.

4.3 The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

4.4 The real increase in the value of the CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the member (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

4.5 Service contracts

The SPCB set the Ombudsman's remuneration. The Ombudsman is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen, following nomination by the Scottish Parliament.

The Director holds an appointment which is open ended until retirement. The terms of employment are set by the Ombudsman and approved by the SPCB, in line with the SPSO Act (2002).

4.6 Severance payments

No severance payments were made during the year.

4.7 Staff salary profile as at 31 March 2018

	£'000	%
Permanent	2,202	93.9%
Other	142	6.1%

4.8 Fair Pay Disclosure

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce. Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The SPSO staff remuneration ranged from £21,056 – £82,182 (2016–17 £20,656 – £80,562). The highest paid member of the senior management was the Ombudsman. The banded remuneration of the Ombudsman was £80-85k (2016–17 £85-90k). This was 2.29 times (2016–17 2.27) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £36,805 (2016–17 £38,516). The change in ratio is due to employee turnover and staffing changes; including the number of new appointments at the starting point of the pay grade, or higher if the required competencies were exceeded, in line with our Pay and Pay Arrangements policy.

During the 2017–18 accounting period, the SPSO was awarded the Living Wage Accreditation status.

5. Staff report

5.1 Staff numbers

	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Full time	18	25%	38	54%	56
Part time	1	1%	14	20%	15
Total	**19**	**26%**	**52**	**74%**	**71**
FTE *	17	29%	42	71%	59

** The average number of full time equivalent (FTE) persons employed by the SPSO during the period*

5.2 Staff salaries

Pay band[42]	Male	%	Female	%
1	0	0%	4	6%
2	2	3%	13	18%
3	15	21%	30	42%
4	1	1%	1	1%
5	1	1%	3	4%
6	0	0%	1	1%
Total	**19**	**27%**	**52**	**73%**

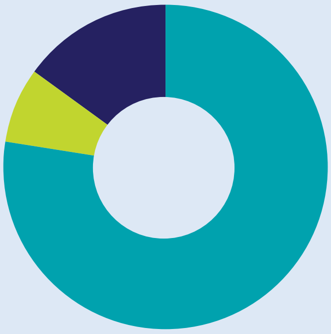
5.3 Staff composition

	Male	%	Female	%
Director			1	100%
Employees	19	27%	51	73%
Total	**19**	**27%**	**52**	**73%**

42 We publish our pay bands here: www.spso.org.uk/class-5-how-we-manage-our-human-physical-and-information-resources

Accountability Report
Remuneration and Staff Report

5.4 Breakdown of staff costs



	£0'000
Salaries / Wages	2,560
Social Security Costs	249
Pension Costs	485

5.5 Staff sickness absence

Absence is monitored and reported to management on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. At 31 March 2018, the office of the Ombudsman recorded a total of 335.5 days' absence for the year for 72 staff compared against last year's figure of 279.5 days for 67 staff. The average number of days per employee was 4.7 compared to 4.4 in 2016/17 and 3.5 in 2015/16. In 2017/18 52.8% of staff had a period of absence compared to 64% in 2016/17.

The overall figure of 4.7 days per employee (including long-term absence) is below the average figure of 6.6 days reported for public sector employees in 2018 *(Chartered Institute of Personnel Health and Wellbeing at Work 2018: Public Sector Summary' Published May 2018).*

Sickness absence is divided into short and long term; long-term absence is defined as any period of/or over 10 consecutive days. Therefore, excluding long-term absence, 232.5 days were recorded with an average number of 3.2 days per employee, compared to 3.3 in 2017/18 and 1.0 day in 2015/16.

5.6 Employee turnover and staffing changes

In 2017–18 five members of staff retired or resigned, including one member of staff from the management team. In response to this, SPSO recruited people into each of these roles. Four vacancies were created as a result of internal promotions. We had three members of staff on maternity leave during 2017–18 for which we recruited maternity cover.

5.7 Staff policies for disabled persons

The SPSO is committed to providing a fair and inclusive workplace free from discrimination, that promotes equality of opportunity for all. As part of standard recruitment practice, applications are encouraged from those with disabilities who meet the essential selection criteria.

Staff with management responsibilities receive HR advice and support in relation to working with individual team members to ensure all staff are well supported in their roles; adjustments are made and monitored as individual circumstances change over time and in line with the relevant HR policies.

6. Other employee matters

6.1 Equality and diversity

The Ombudsman supports the principle of equal opportunities in carrying out operational functions and employment practices. The SPSO is committed to pursuing positive action through the organisation's policies and practices to ensure that no individual is discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, unlawfully or unjustifiably because of their personal status in relation to race, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, gender, disability and sexual or marital status.

6.2 Employee participation

SPSO achieved gold accreditation in Investors in People, valid from 2016–17 to 2020. Investors in People carried out its annual review in February 2017, the outcome being the SPSO retain their accreditation.

This level of accreditation recognises organisations which strive for the best possible standards in people and management, the nurturing of talent, and which encourage personal development. IIP is an internationally recognised accreditation held by 14,000 organisations across the world, and gold accreditation is only awarded to the top 2% of organisations assessed.

We carried out our staff survey in November 2017. The results of the survey were very positive, indicating high levels of job satisfaction, engagement and dedication from SPSO staff. Staff indicated a strong sense of commitment to the organisation, despite the challenges of demanding workloads. Our staff survey reports are published annually on our website [43].

6.3 Learning and development

SPSO runs a comprehensive annual performance review process, where individuals are encouraged and supported to plan for their own development needs and career plans. In addition, we review our own learning and development requirements and deliver training programmes and development opportunities on a rolling basis.

Group training sessions are delivered by a mix of internal and external experts. In 2017–18 this included areas such as realistic medicine, sharing good practice, making clear recommendations, altruism in organisations, influencing skills, challenging conversations, unconscious bias and decision-making, social care, equal opportunities and diversity awareness, legal matters and issues, initiatives to promote positive mental health, Home Energy Scotland, and internal knowledge-sharing sessions.

We ran a number of induction sessions for colleagues new to the organisation, including telephone training and a ten-week Complaints Handling Induction Programme.

43 www.spso.org.uk/research-and-surveys

6.4 Health, safety and wellbeing

The SPSO is committed to promoting the health and safety and wellbeing of all staff, and to ensuring that our working environment supports this. Our systematic approach to health and safety ensures we comply with all legislative obligations. It also ensures we all know what is expected of us and what we can expect of colleagues, by setting out the correct way of carrying out our duties. Perhaps most importantly, it provides a foundation for continually improving health and safety management within the SPSO. Health and safety continues to be an integral part of the overall management culture and we seek to develop a positive attitude to health and safety amongst staff.

Further detail on our approach to health and safety is published on our website.[44] In addition to our qualified first aiders, in 2017 SPSO established a Staff Wellbeing Group, consisting of staff members with an interest and training in mental health first aid.

6.5 Trades union relations

We recognise the value and importance of good industrial relations, and effective communication with our staff. In addition to the activities related to staff consultation and participation described above, the management team meet regularly with staff representatives of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) with regards to pay and other related matters.

Rosemary Agnew

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

7 September 2018

44 www.spso.org.uk/spso-policies

Independent Auditor's Report
to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Scottish Parliament

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements in the annual report and accounts of Scottish Public Services Ombudsman for the year ended 31 March 2018 under the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002. The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union, and as interpreted and adapted by the 2017/18 Government Financial Reporting Manual (the 2017/18 FReM).

In our opinion the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers of the state of the body's affairs as at 31 March 2018 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2017/18 FReM; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Basis of opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the body in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern basis of accounting

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the body has not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about its ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Responsibilities of the Accountable Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Accountable Officer Responsibilities, the Accountable Officer is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for such internal control as the Accountable Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Accountable Officer is responsible for assessing the body's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless deemed inappropriate.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to achieve reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website[45]. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

The committee met four times and considered each of the internal audit reports. In 2017–18 our internal auditors, the Scottish Legal Aid Board (under a shared services agreement), looked at the areas of payroll, absence, risk management, and IS installation, and provided a consultancy report on our data protection processes in preparation for the introduction of GDPR. The internal audit reports achieved satisfactory or above and the auditors raised no issues of significance.

Other information in the annual report and accounts

The Accountable Officer is responsible for the other information in the annual report and accounts. The other information comprises the information other than the financial statements, the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Report, and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon except on matters prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland to the extent explicitly stated later in this report.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read all the other information in the annual report and accounts and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Report on regularity of expenditure and income

Opinion on regularity

In our opinion in all material respects the expenditure and income in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

45 www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities

Independent Auditor's Report

Responsibilities for regularity

The Accountable Officer is responsible for ensuring the regularity of expenditure and income. We are responsible for expressing an opinion on the regularity of expenditure and income in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

Report on other requirements

Opinions on matters prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland

In our opinion, the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Report has been properly prepared in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit

- the information given in the Performance Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers; and
- the information given in the Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We are required by the Auditor General for Scotland to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Reportare not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 120 of the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Auditor General for Scotland, we do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

P. Kenny

Pat Kenny, CPFA (for and on behalf of Deloitte LLP)
110 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3BX

7 September 2018

Financial Statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year Ended 31 March 2018

		2017–18	2016–17
	Notes	£'000	£'000
Administrative Costs			
Staff Costs	4, 5	3,414	3,070
Other Administration Costs	6	949	926
Depreciation	7	45	42
Other Operating Income	3	(79)	(698)
Net Administration Costs		**4,329**	**3,340**
Net Operating Costs and total comprehensive net expenditure for the year		**4,329**	**3,340**

All amounts relate to continuing activities. There have been no gains or losses.

The accompanying notes on pages 59 – 66 form an integral part of these accounts.

Financial Statements

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2018

	Notes	2017–18 £'000	2016–17 £'000
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment	7	64	80
Intangible Assets	8	–	–
Total Non-Current Assets		**64**	**80**
Current Assets			
Trade and Other Receivables	9	132	114
Cash and Cash Equivalents	10	153	94
Total Current Assets		**285**	**208**
Total Assets		**349**	**288**
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	11	(190)	(168)
Total Current Liabilities		**(190)**	**(168)**
Non Current Assets Plus Net Current Assets		**159**	**120**
Non-Current Liabilities		**–**	**–**
Assets Less Liabilities		**159**	**120**
Taxpayers' Equity			
General Fund		159	120
Total Taxpayers' Equity		***159***	***120***

The accompanying notes on pages 59 – 66 form an integral part of these accounts.

Rosemary Agnew

Rosemary Agnew
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
7 September 2018

Financial Statements

Statement of Cash Flows for Year Ended 31 March 2018

	2017–18	2016–17
	£'000	£'000
Cash Flows From Operating Activities		
Net Operating Cost	(4,329)	(3,340)
Adjustment for Non Cash Transactions		
Depreciation	45	42
Movements in Working Capital		
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and Other Receivables	(18)	14
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade and Other Payables	22	10
Net Cash Outflow From Operating Activities	**(4,280)**	**(3,274)**
Cash Flows From Investing Activities		
Purchase of Property, Plant and Equipment	(29)	(32)
Purchase of Intangible Assets	–	
Net Cash Outflow From Investing Activities	**(29)**	**(32)**
Cash Flows From Financing Activities		
Financing from the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body	4,368	3,360
Net Cash Inflow From Financing Activities	**4,368**	**3,360**
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash and Cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	**94**	**40**
Cash Flow in Year	**59**	**54**
Cash and Cash equivalents at the end of the period	**153**	**94**

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for Year Ended 31 March 2018

		General Fund £'000
Balance at 31 March 2017		120
Net Operating Costs and Total Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the Year		(4,329)
Funding From SPCB		4,368
Balance at 31 March 2018		**159**

Financial Statements
Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) in compliance with the accounts direction issued by Scottish Ministers. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of Ombudsman for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Ombudsman are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

1.2 Property, plant and equipment

1.2.1 **Capitalisation**

Capital purchases for a value exceeding £500 inclusive of irrecoverable VAT are treated as capital. However, the threshold for land and buildings is set at £10,000 and the IT equipment threshold is where the Group value exceeds £500.

1.2.2 Software licences are capitalised as intangible fixed assets and amortised on a straight-line basis over the expected life of the asset (2 or 3 years).

1.2.3 **Valuation**

As appropriate, non-current assets are valued at their value to the organisation by reference to current costs.

1.2.4 **Depreciation**

Depreciation is provided on all non-current assets at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation in equal instalments over the remaining estimated useful life of the asset. These are as follows:

Leasehold improvements	Over the period of the lease
Equipment	5 years
Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	5 years
IT Hardware and Systems	2 or 3 years

1.2.5 There are no assets held for resale.

Financial Statements
Notes to the Accounts

1.3 Funding receivable

Funding received through the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) is credited directly to the General Fund in the period to which it relates.

1.4 Operating income

Operating income relates directly to the activities of SPSO. It comprises fees for training events charged on a cost recovery basis, and leasing surplus office car park spaces. Income is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure in the year to which they relate.

1.5 Leases

Operating income relates directly to the activities of SPSO. It comprises fees for training events charged on a cost recovery basis, and leasing surplus office car park spaces. Income is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure in the year to which they relate.

1.6 Pension costs

The Ombudsman and office staff are members of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme with benefits underwritten by the Government. As a result, the SPSO is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities and, therefore, it is accounted for as a defined contribution scheme and no liability is shown in the Statement of Financial Position. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2012. The PCSPS is financed by payments from the employer and from those current employees who are members of the PCSPS, who pay contributions at different rates which depend on their salaries and the section of the pension scheme of which they are a member. The rate of employer contributions is typically set following an actuarial valuation. The previous valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2007 and this recommended an employer contribution rate of 18.9% of pensionable pay. Government Actuary's Department has been appointed as the PCSPS actuary. Further details can be found in the separate scheme statement of the PCSPS Actuarial valuation.[46]

1.7 Value Added Tax

The office of the Ombudsman is not registered for VAT, as such all amounts are recorded inclusive of VAT.

1.8 Financial instruments

Financial instruments are classified and accounted for, according to the substance of the contractual agreement, as either financial assets or financial liabilities.

The office of the Ombudsman has classified its financial instruments as follows:

Financial Assets

Cash and cash equivalents, trade debtors, accrued income and amounts receivable are reported in the 'Current Assets' category.

Financial Liabilities

Trade payables, accruals and creditors are classified as 'Current Liabilities'.

46 www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/media/94676/pcsps-2012-valuation-final-report-final-22072014.pdf

1.9 Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

In applying the accounting policies set out in these Notes, the Ombudsman has had to make judgements about financial transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgement made in the Financial Statements is that the organisation will continue as a going concern and will be appropriately funded by the SPCB.

1.10 Critical accounting estimates

The Financial Statements contain estimated figures that are based on assumptions about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. These estimates relate to the value of tangible and intangible assets. Estimates are made taking account of historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors but cannot be determined with certainty. Actual results could be different from the assumptions and estimates, but are unlikely to be material.

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. The Civil Service pension arrangements are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes in which the Ombudsman's office is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities.

1.11 Standards issued not effective

- IFRS 9 Financial Instruments was issued in July 2014, effective for periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018. This was EU endorsed in November 2016. HM Treasury is working towards implementing the standard in the FReM from 2018–19.
- IFRS 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers was issued in May 2014, effective for periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018. It is not yet endorsed by the EU but is expected to be in 2017. HM Treasury is working towards implementing the standard in the FReM from 2018–19.
- IFRS 16 Leases was issued in January 2016, effective for periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019. It is not yet endorsed by the EU but is expected to be in late 2017. The introduction of IFRS 16 is subject to analysis and review by HM Treasury and the other Relevant Authorities. HM Treasury will issue an Exposure Draft on IFRS 16 in advance of the effective date.
- IAS 7 Statement of Cash Flows disclosure initiative issued in January 2016, effective for periods beginning on or after 1 January 2017. It is not yet endorsed by the EU but is expected to be in 2017. HM Treasury is working towards implementing the standard in the FReM from 2018–19.
- The Ombudsman does not expect that the adoption of the Standards and Interpretations detailed above for IFRS 9, IFRS 15 and IAS 7 will have a material impact on the financial statements of the Ombudsman in future periods.
- IFRS 16 Leases was published by the International Accounting Standards Board in January 2016 and is applicable for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019. This means that for Ombudsman, the standard will be effective for the year ending 31 March 2020. IFRS 16 will require leases to be recognised on the Statement of Financial Position as an asset which reflects the right to use the underlying asset, and a liability which represents the obligation to make lease payments. At the date of authorisation of these financial statements, IFRS 16 has not been adopted for use in the public sector, and has not been included in the FReM. As such it is not yet possible to quantify the impact of IFRS 16 accurately.

Financial Statements
Notes to the Accounts

2. Prior year adjustment
No prior year adjustment has been made.

3. Income from all sources

	2017–18 £'000	2016–17 £'000
Income[47]	–	634
Gross Income from Training[48]	72	58
Other Operating Income	7	6
	79	**698**

4. Staff numbers and costs
4.1 Average staff employed (full time equivalent)
The average number of full time equivalent (FTE) persons employed in the office of the Ombudsman during the period was as follows:

	2017–18 FTE	2016–17 FTE
Ombudsman	1	1
Staff	59	58
	60	**59**

4.2 Breakdown of staff costs

	Ombudsman £'000	Staff £'000	Total £'000
Administrative Costs			
Salaries / Wages	88	2,560	2,648
Social Security Costs	11	249	260
Pension Costs	21	485	506
	120	**3,294**	**3,414**
Comparative for Year Ended 31 March 2017 Administrative Costs			
Salaries / Wages	86	2,277	2,363
Social Security Costs	11	228	239
Pension Costs	21	447	468
	118	**2,952**	**3,070**

Staff costs rose in 2017–18 due to annual increments and recruitment of staff numbers for the new jurisdiction of social work complaints.

47 We received this funding directly from the Scottish Government for the SPSO to fulfil new statutory duties in relation to the Scottish Welfare Fund and Social Work complaints.
48 £20,045 (2016-17 £30,058) of Staff Costs and Other Administration Costs (notes 4 and 6) have been identified as being directly attributable to the Training Unit.

5. Pension costs

For 2017–18, employer's contributions of £441,000 were payable to the PCSPS at one of four rates in the range 20.0% to 24.5% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme. There were no outstanding scheme contributions at 31 March 2018 (2017 £0).

On death, pensions are payable to the surviving spouse at the rate of half of the member's pension. On death in service, the scheme pays a lump sum benefit of at least twice pensionable pay, depending on the scheme joined within PCSPS, and also provides a service enhancement on computing the spouse's pension. The enhancement depends on the length of service and cannot exceed ten years. Medical retirement is possible in the event of serious ill health. In this case, pensions are brought into payment immediately without actuarial reduction and with service enhanced as for widow(er) pensions.

11 employees have opted for a partnership pension account with a private sector pension scheme into which the SPSO made an employer contribution to the value of £42,000 in 2017–18. Employer contributions include a matching contribution up to 3% and are age-related and ranging from 8% to 13.5% of pensionable pay.

6. Other administrative costs

	2017–18 £'000	2016–17 £'000
Property Costs	304	296
Professional Advisers[49]	257	248
Professional Services	61	64
General office Running Costs	194	209
Staff Training	26	29
Travel and Expenses	16	22
Printing and Publications	39	14
Telephones and Postage	37	26
External Communications and Training Unit Costs	15	18
	949	**926**

The above total includes £17,520 (2016–17 £17,260) for external auditor's remuneration. The external auditor received no fees in relation to non-audit work. Included within General Office Running Costs are £1,479 (2016–17 £6,207) of equipment rental costs in association with operating leases.

49 Professional adviser costs were previously included in staff costs.

7. Property, plant and equipment

	Leasehold Improvements £'000	Equipment £'000	Furniture Fixtures & Fittings £'000	IT Hardware & Systems £'000	Total £'000
Cost					
At 1 April 2017	493	22	186	213	914
Additions	–	–	–	29	29
At 31 March 2018	493	22	186	242	943
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2017	445	21	186	182	834
Charge for Year	33	–	–	12	45
At 31 March 2018	478	21	186	194	879
Net Book Value at					
31 March 2018	**15**	**1**	**–**	**48**	**64**
31 March 2017	**48**	**1**	**–**	**31**	**80**

8. Intangible assets

	£'000
Cost	
At 1 April 2017	270
Disposals	–
Additions	–
At 31 March 2018	**270**
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2017	270
On disposals	–
Charge for Year	–
At 31 March 2018	**270**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2018	**–**
Net Book Value at 31 March 2017	**–**

Financial Statements
Notes to the Accounts

9. Trade receivables and other current assets

	2017–18 £'000	2016–17 £'000
Prepayments	129	102
Other Debtors	3	12
	132	**114**

10. Cash and cash equivalents

	2017–18 £'000	2016–17 £'000
Balance at 1 April	94	40
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	59	54
Balance at 31 March	153	94
Cash held at commercial banks	153	94

11. Trade payables and other current liabilities – amounts falling due within one year

	2017–18 £'000	2016–17 £'000
Trade Payables	25	7
Accruals – HMRC	75	72
Accruals – non-government bodies	90	89
	190	**168**

12. Operating leases

	Buildings £'000	Totals £'000
The total of future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:		
Within One Year of the Balance Sheet Date	71	71
Within Two to Five Years of the Balance Sheet Date	–	–
Over Five Years of the Balance Sheet Date	–	–
	71	**71**
Comparative for Year Ended 31 March 2017		
Within One Year of the Balance Sheet Date	163	163
Within Two to Five Years of the Balance Sheet Date	71	71
Over Five Years of the Balance Sheet Date	–	–
	234	**234**

13. Related party transactions

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman was constituted by the Scottish Parliament which provides funding for the Ombudsman. The SPCB is regarded as a related body. Neither the Ombudsman nor the Ombudsman's staff have undertaken material transactions with the SPCB nor with the Ombudsman's office during the year.

14. Post balance sheet events

No event has occurred since the date of the balance sheet which materially affects the financial statements.

15. Financial instruments

Financial assets are carried in the balance sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that will take place over the remaining period of the instrument, using the assumption that the fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

Credit risk – The Ombudsman receives funding on a monthly basis and restricts cash holdings to a minimum.

Liquidity risk – The Ombudsman does not have any external borrowings.

Market risk – Changes in market interest rates influence the interest on borrowings and on interest receivable on surplus funds invested. The Ombudsman does not rely on interest receivable as its key source of income.

Appendix 1: Direction by the Scottish Ministers

The Scottish Ministers, in pursuance of paragraph 15 (1) of Schedule 1 of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Act 2002, hereby give the following direction.

The statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2006, and subsequent years, shall comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the edition of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) which is in force for the year for which the statement of accounts are prepared.

The accounts shall be prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.

This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the statement of accounts. The direction given on 1 December 2004 is hereby revoked.

Signed by the authority of the Scottish Ministers

Dated **6 November 2006**

SPSO Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

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PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORKPLAN TO 1 FEBRUARY

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
1.	Code of Conduct Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually January 2019
2.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually 5 April 2019
3.	West Lothian Development Trust Annual Report	Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration	Annually 5 April 2019
4.	Annual Complaints Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Annually August 2019
5.	Quarterly Performance Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 October 2019 December 2019
6.	Quarterly Welfare Reform update	Head of Finance and Property Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 August 2019 December 2019
7.	Quarterly Sickness Absence Update	Head of Corporate Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 August 2019 December 2019
8.	Horizon Scan Report	Head of Finance and Property Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 August 2019 December 2019
9.	Commercial Property Performance and Rent Strategy	Head of Finance and Property Services	1 February 2019
10.	Update on First Year of Conduit Scotland	Head of Finance and Property Services	1 February 2019
11.	Review of Decision-Making Arrangements	Governance Manager	1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
12.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board minutes	Chief Executive	As available

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC