Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

21 November 2014

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, Livingston** on **Friday 28 November 2014** at **8:30am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1.   Apologies for Absence

2.   Order of Business, including notice of urgent business

3.   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.

4.   Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on Friday 17 October 2014 (herewith)

5.   Performance Report from the Corporate Performance Management System - Report by Depute Chief Executive (herewith)

6.   Welfare Reform: Quarterly Update Report - Report by Head of Finance and Estates (herewith)

7.   Sickness Absence (1 April 2014 - 30 September 2014) - Report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

8.   Scotland Excel - Minute of Meeting - Report by Head of Finance and Estates (herewith)

9.   Analysis of Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Action Plan 2012-2014 - Report by Head of Area Services (herewith)

10.   Consultation On Draft Guidance Relating to Equality and Human Rights Implications for the Marriage and Civic Partnership Act 2014 - Report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)

11.   West Lothian Development Trust Annual Report - Report by Head of Area Services (herewith)

12.   Digital Inclusion - Report by Head of Area Servies (herewith)

13.   Scottish Public Services Ombusdman: Annual Report 2013-2014 - Report by Chief Executive (herewith)

14.   Annual Complaint Performance Report 2013-2014 - Report by Depute Chief Executive (Corporate, Operational and Housing Services) (herewith)

15.   Workplan (herewith)

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

MINUTE of MEETING of the PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL of WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 17 OCTOBER 2014.

Present – Councillors John McGinty (Chair), Cathy Muldoon, Martyn Day, Peter Johnston, Angela Moohan, George Paul.

In Attendance – John Cochrane (Senior People's Forum)

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 5 September 2014. The minute was then signed by the Chair.

3.   CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE - RESULTS OF RECENT CITIZEN LED INSPECTION FOLLOW UP

        A report had been circulated by the Head of Area Services advising the Panel of the results of the follow up Citizens Led Inspection (CLI) into the Customer Service Centre (CSC), and reporting the progress on implementation of the improvement plan that had been developed following the inspection.

        The report advised that in August 2012, the Council had agreed that it would implement a series of citizen led inspections (CLI), following the successful pilots for winter maintenance and pupil placement.   An inspection of the CSC took place during December 2012 and January 2013.

        The report examined the results of the inspection and outlined the areas that had been highlighted for improvement. A detailed action plan had been created by the service to address the areas for improvement.

        The report went on to advise that, as part of the original inspection, the Inspectors had agreed to return for a follow up inspection during 2014. This follow up visit was undertaken at the beginning of July 2014. The Inspectors visited the service and also reviewed the progress made against the improvement plan.   Appendix 1 to the report was the CSC Improvement Plan Update. A number of observations had been made during the visit by the Inspectors and these were summarised in the report.

        The Head of Area Service concluded that the CLI for the CSC had confirmed the high quality service that was provided to customers and

had acknowledged the professionalism with which the staff engaged in their duties. The inspectors had recognised that the move to the Civic Centre and new telephony platform had significantly enhanced the service that was provided. Officers continued to implement the outstanding actions.

The Panel was asked to note:

1. The results of the follow up CLI; and

2. The progress made with the implementation of the improvement plan.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

4.   POLICIES AND PRACTICES EMPLOYED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S NON-OPERATIONAL PROPERTY ASSETS

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Estates outlining proposed additional policies and practices to be employed by the Head of Finance and Estates in the management and letting of the council's non-operational property portfolio.

The report recalled that, at its meeting on 20 May 2008, the Council Executive had approved a paper by the Head of Property Services on the policies and practices employed in the management of the non-operational property portfolio. This report had particular emphasis on the management of the Tenanted Non-Residential Property (TNRP) portfolio.

In the intervening period, a number of specific policies had also been subject to separate consideration by the Council Executive. For example, the Strategy for the Non-Operational Property Portfolio and policy for Community Asset Transfer both contributed to the policy framework for the use and disposal of non-operational property assets.

A review of these policies by officers in PM&D had concluded that these largely remained fit for purpose, and should remain in place. However, it was apparent from the experience of the recession that, in some circumstances, there was a need for greater flexibility to sustain good performance. The Panel was asked to consider the variation of some existing policies, and consideration of some new ones. The proposed changes to policy covered a variety of areas of activity and were presented in detail in the Appendices to the report. The proposals were listed under the following themes:-

- Uses of properties managed within the TNRP portfolio.
- Management of the TNRP and non-operational property assets
- Surplus Property Procedures
- Disposal of property

Subject to approval by the Council Executive, the policies and practices

outlined would be applied with immediate effect.

Finally, the report advised that officers were currently reviewing existing policies and practices in respect of the Council's operational properties – i.e. those held for the purposes of direct service delivery, or which supported functions that were ancillary to that – with a view to a further paper being presented to the Council Executive in due course.

The Head of Finance and Estates concluded that the efficient and effective management of the council's property assets would ensure that the strategic objectives and outcomes for the retention of non-operational assets were achieved.

It was recommended that the Panel:

1. Note the additional policies and practices outlined in the report; and

2. Note the intention to report these to the Council Executive for approval.

Decision

1. To note the additional policies and practices outlined in the report; and

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

5.   PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN WEST LOTHIAN

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Estates updating the Panel on findings of research undertaken on financial inclusion and setting out proposed actions to promote financial inclusion in West Lothian.

The report recalled that in Autumn 2013 the Council Executive had agreed to undertake work in relation to financial inclusion to:-

- Develop a draft financial inclusion plan.

- Identify and scope out possible financial services that could be developed to support those who were financially vulnerable.

- Identify possible ways to facilitate the provision of financial services that could be delivered to those who were financially excluded or at risk of financial exclusion.

- Consider the roles of Credit Unions as part of the financial inclusion plan.

- Incorporate financial inclusion within the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

A report had been presented to Council Executive in April 2014 which outlined the vision to support Credit Unions to enhance their role in financial inclusion.

The current report outlined the remaining actions which would be intended to mitigate the impact of financial exclusion. Through partnership working, the proposals within the report would assist communities to achieve better money management through access to suitable financial products and advice services.

The Panel was informed that an officer project group had been created to investigate financial inclusion and through discussions it had been agreed that financial inclusion could be split into four areas:- Banking, Credit, Advice and Ongoing Support.

The report examined each of the four areas and set out proposals for consideration. The proposals had been discussed with the Advice Shop and had been presented and discussed at the Anti-Poverty Development Group. It had been agreed that the proposals would assist in promoting financial inclusion and that through engaging with service users, would promote advice, skills and the availability of financial products.

The Head of Finance and Estates recommended that the Panel:-

1. Note the approach taken to investigate the impacts of financial exclusion and low incomes on the ability to access financial services and products, financial advice and money management skills;

2. Note the proposal to create a Community Financial Inclusion Partnership where there was an agreed process, monitoring and reporting of activities undertaken to promote financial inclusion;

3. Not the proposal to work with Fife Council to investigate the options for an online referral system for the West Lothian Advice Network;

4. Note the proposal to carry out a detailed Community Development Financial Initiative feasibility study in conjunction with Fife Council and Falkirk Council;

5. Note the proposal to develop a Financial Inclusion Plan, to be incorporated into the Anti-Poverty Action Plan; and

6. Note the intention to present the proposals in the report to Council Executive for approval.

Decision

1. To note the terms of the report; and

2. To agree that the proposals in the report be presented to Council Executive for approval.

6.   AN OVERVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SCOTLAND 2014

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Estates providing the Panel with a report outlining the council's response to the points raised in the checklist included within the Accounts Commission's *Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2014* report as agreed by the Audit and Governance Committee on 3 June 2014.

The Head of Finance and Estates explained that the Accounts Commission's report had two key sections – how councils used resources in 2013 and a checklist and links to other material which was available to support improvement in 2014.

The overview report made a number of key recommendations for councillors in 2014. These were listed in the report under the following categories:-

- Understanding the Changing Context and Crucial Role of Councillors

- Meeting User Demands and the Financial Challenges

- Providing Strong Leadership and Governance to Support Change

In relation to implications for West Lothian Council, it was noted that the challenges had been considered as part of Delivering Better Outcomes process and had helped shape the council's Corporate Plan and the revenue and capital budget strategies. Officers would continue to monitor the challenges and pressures to ensure that resources were targeted towards achieving the council's eight agreed priorities.

The Panel was informed that the Accounts Commission's report included a checklist of actions for elected members to consider. As agreed by the Audit and Governance Committee on 3 June 2014, the Head of Finance and Estates had prepared a detailed response to the issues raised in the report for consideration. The detailed responses to the checklist were provided in Appendix 1.

The Head of Finance and Estates concluded that consideration of the issues within the Audit Commission report and the responses to the checklist would assist in ensuring that the council continued to be well placed to meet the challenges ahead.

It was recommended that the Panel note the findings from the report and the council's responses to the action points within the Accounts Commission checklist.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

7.   OPTIONS APPRAISAL - ARE YOU GETTING IT RIGHT?

A report had been circulated by the Head of Finance and Estates providing the Panel with a high level summary of the Account's Commission *Options Appraisal – Are You Getting It Right?* Report and officer responses to the report checklists as agreed at the Audit and Governance Committee on 3 June 2014.

The Panel was informed that the aim of the Accounts Commission's *Options Appraisal* report was to encourage discussion amongst councillors and officers and to support change and improvement. An important aspect of this was challenging the existing way of doing things. The report supported councillors and officers by offering sources of information and guidance.

The report went on to advise that, at its meeting held in June 2014, the Audit and Governance Committee had agreed that responses to questions for officers should be reported to the Partnership and Resources PDSP for consideration.

A number of key recommendations for councillors and officers were outlined in the report.

A summary of the officers' responses was included in Appendix 1 to the report. The checklist for elected members to consider when undertaking options appraisals was included in Appendix 2.

It was recommended that the Panel:-

1. note the findings from the report;

2. note the checklist elected members could use when undertaking options appraisal, including the officer responses to the checklist.

Decision

To note the terms of the report.

8. WORKPLAN

A copy of the Workplan had been circulated for information.

Decision

To note the Workplan.

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PERFORMANCE REPORT FROM THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

B. RECOMMENDATION

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

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

1

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

D.1   Background

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

D.2   Performance Reporting

The information presented in Appendix 1 outlines all 35 performance indicators which are the responsibility of the Panel.

The 35 performance indicators are categorised as follows:

- 30 green
- 5 amber

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

E.   CONCLUSION

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

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

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

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 - Partnership and Resources PDSP Performance Report

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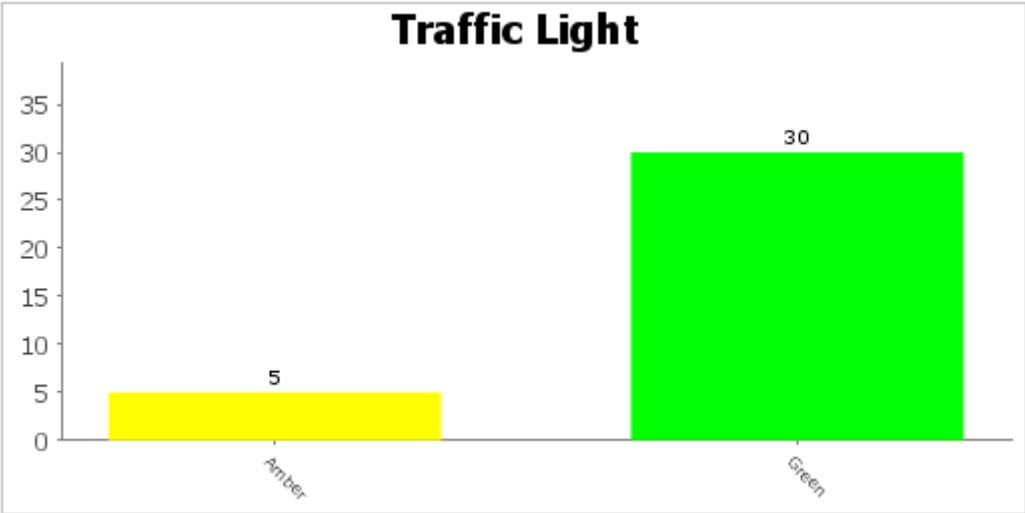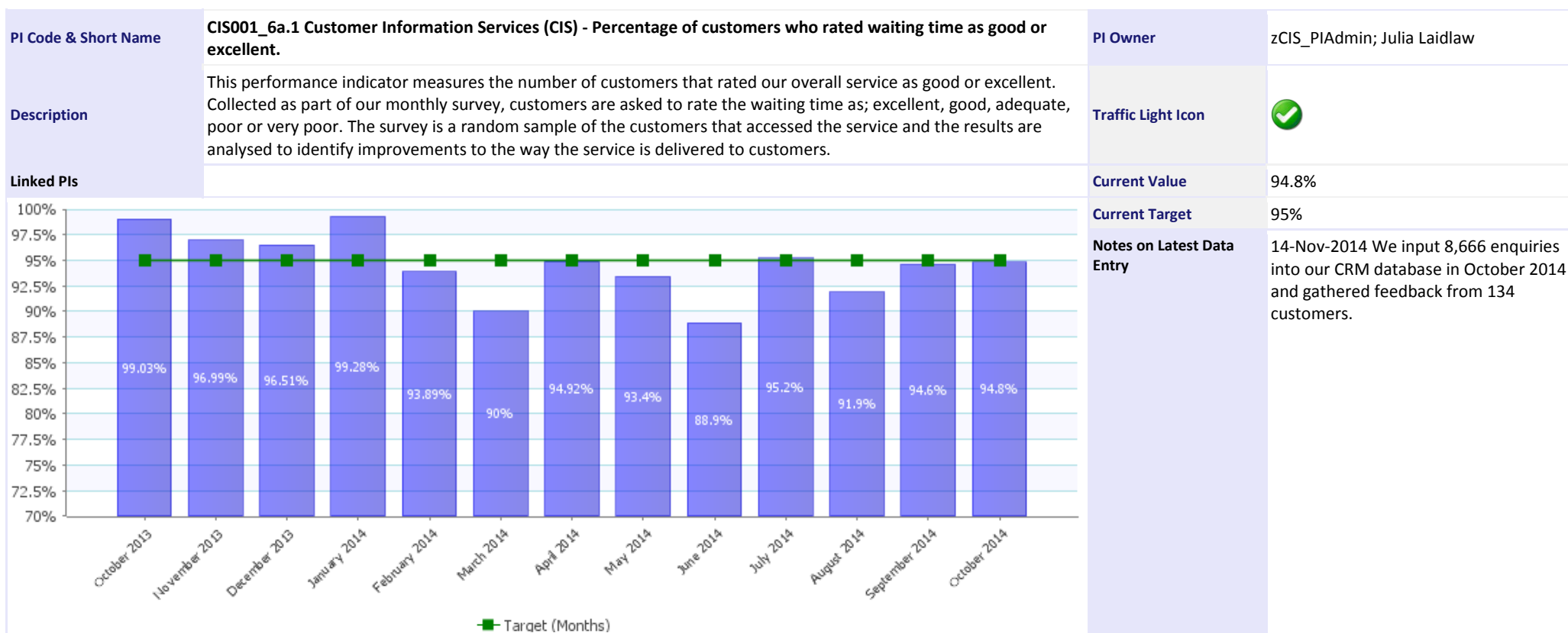Email: rebecca.kelly@westlothian.gov.uk

Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive

Date: 28 November 2014

2

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

(Data source=PDSP P&R scorecard only)
Report Author: Rebecca Kelly
Generated on: 18 November 2014 18:42
Report Layout: .PDSP_PIs_All_For Committee_G

1

PI Code & Short Name	CIS001_6a.1 Customer Information Services (CIS) - Percentage of customers who rated waiting time as good or excellent.	PI Owner	zCIS_PIAdmin; Julia Laidlaw
Description	This performance indicator measures the number of customers that rated our overall service as good or excellent. Collected as part of our monthly survey, customers are asked to rate the waiting time as; excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor. The survey is a random sample of the customers that accessed the service and the results are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	94.8%
		Current Target	95%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	14-Nov-2014 We input 8,666 enquiries into our CRM database in October 2014 and gathered feedback from 134 customers.

Bar chart values by month:
- October 2013: 99.03%
- November 2013: 96.99%
- December 2013: 96.51%
- January 2014: 99.28%
- February 2014: 93.89%
- March 2014: 90%
- April 2014: 94.92%
- May 2014: 93.4%
- June 2014: 88.9%
- July 2014: 95.2%
- August 2014: 91.9%
- September 2014: 94.6%
- October 2014: 94.8%

Legend: —■— Target (Months)

Trend Chart Commentary:

We input 8,666 enquiries into our CRM database in October 2014 and gathered feedback from 134 customers.
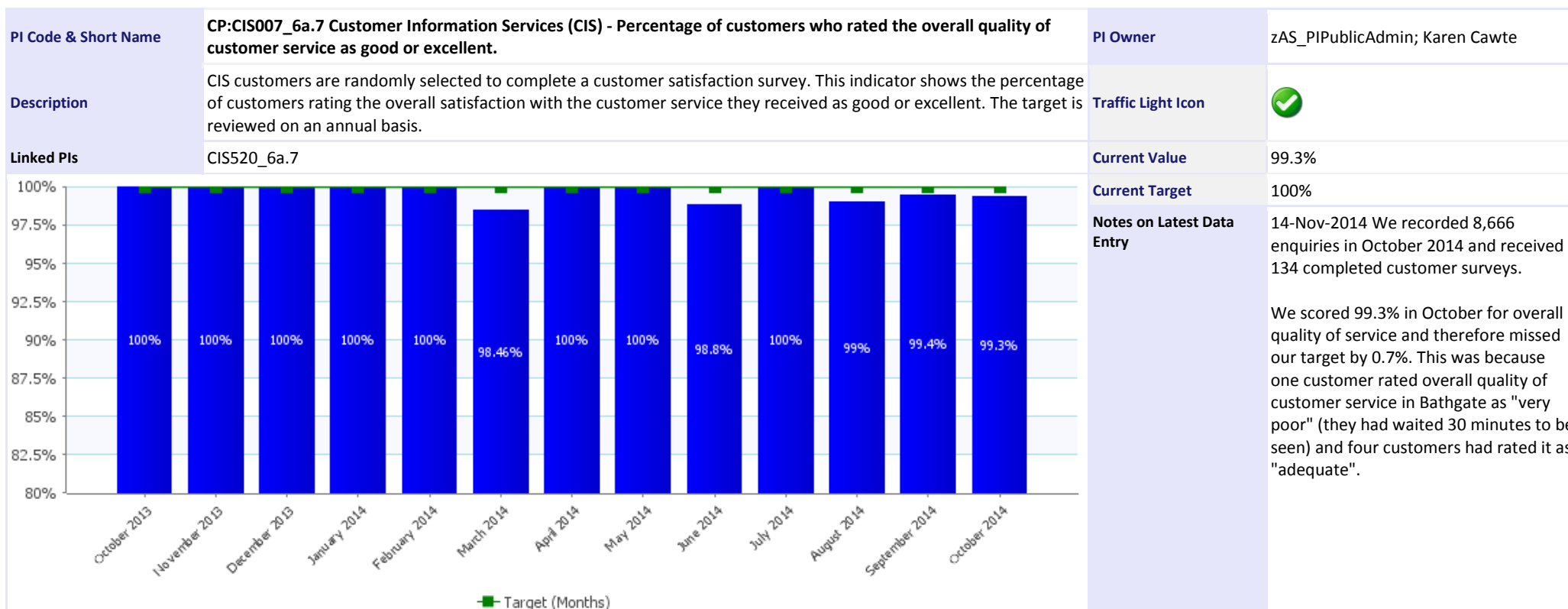
We fell below our target in February, March, May, June, August, September and October 2014 where the majority of customers who rated waiting time as poor or very poor attended West Lothian Connected or Bathgate CIS. We were affected by unplanned staff absences during some of these months and we try to address shortages by moving staff around from other offices but this is not always possible.

There was an increase in satisfaction levels in October 2013 through to January 2014 which is most encouraging, however we had a slight dip in November and December 2013.

Our enquiries have become more complex and lengthy (this is due, in the main, to the implementation of Welfare Reform changes).

If there is to be significant wait for customers, we do make them aware and promote alternative ways in which they can contact the council.

2

The 2014/15 target remains at 95%

3

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:CIS007_6a.7 Customer Information Services (CIS) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of customer service as good or excellent.**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Karen Cawte
Description	CIS 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.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	CIS520_6a.7	Current Value	99.3%

	Current Target	100%
	Notes on Latest Data Entry	14-Nov-2014 We recorded 8,666 enquiries in October 2014 and received 134 completed customer surveys. We scored 99.3% in October for overall quality of service and therefore missed our target by 0.7%. This was because one customer rated overall quality of customer service in Bathgate as "very poor" (they had waited 30 minutes to be seen) and four customers had rated it as "adequate".

Trend Chart Commentary:

We recorded 8,666 enquiries in October 2014 and received 134 completed customer surveys.

We scored 99.3% in October for overall quality of service and therefore missed our target by 0.7%. This was because one customer rated overall quality of customer service in Bathgate as "very poor" (they had waited 30 minutes to be seen) and four customers had rated it as "adequate".   We did not reach our target in June 2014, this was because a customer stated it was "very poor" that they had waited over 40 minutes to be seen in Bathgate Partnership Centre. On investigation this customer attended during an upgrade of IT systems which did have an impact on waiting times and has obviously affected how they viewed their overall experience. We had a dip in performance in March 2014 which was linked to longer than usual waiting times in West Lothian Connected.
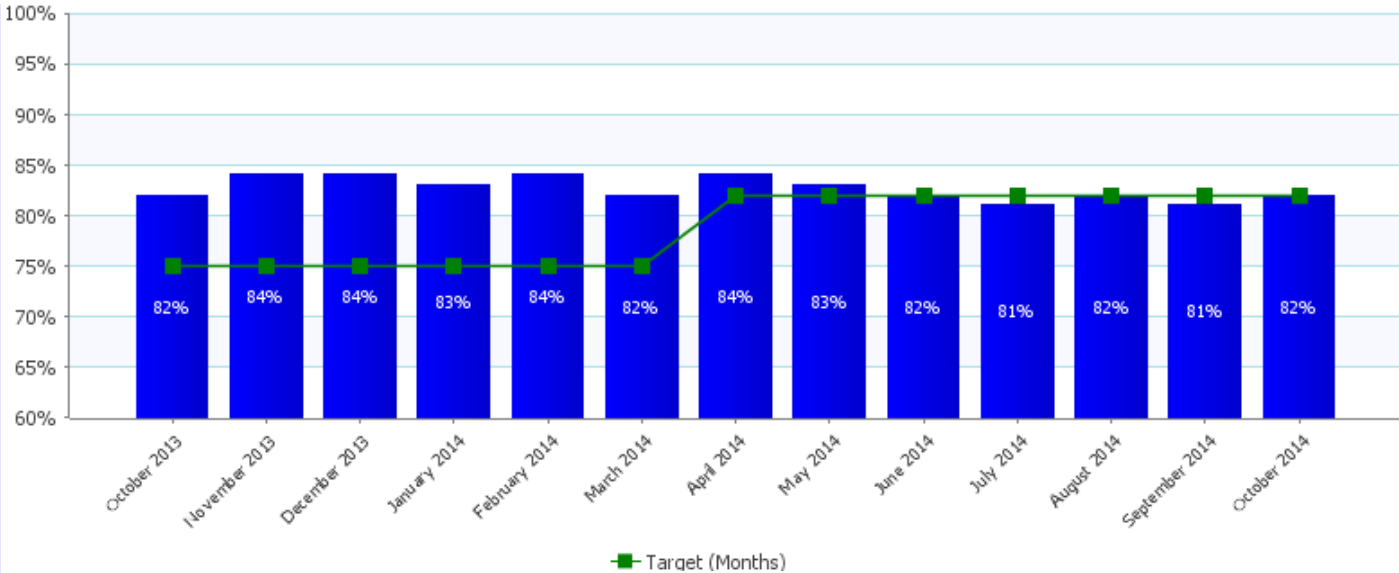
The level of overall customer satisfaction with the Customer Information Service (CIS) is high with a slight variance on satisfaction levels over the year.
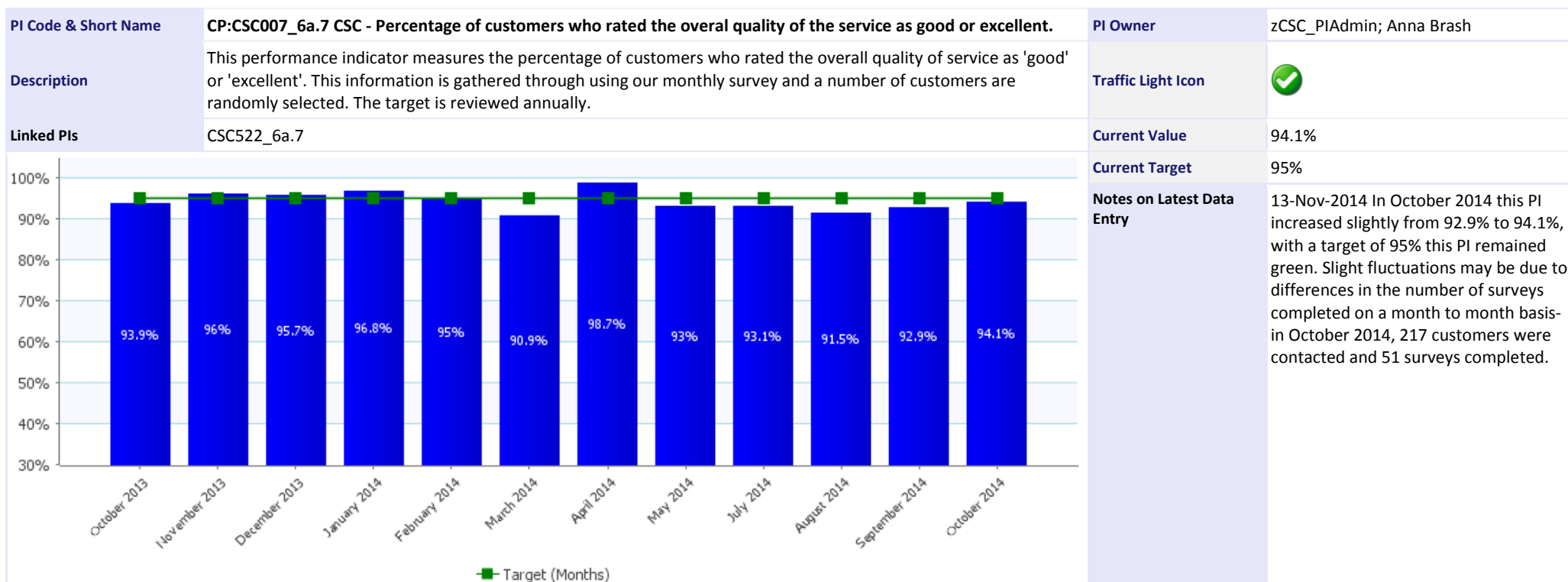
The target for 2014/15 remains at 100%

4

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CIS015_6b.2 Customer Information Service - Percentage of Complaints received which are resolved within 5 working days**	**PI Owner**	zCIS_PIAdmin; Julia Laidlaw
Description	Complaints are received from various sources for example: complaint forms, verbal, letters etc. All complaints received are recorded on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database and it is the corporate standard to resolve complaints within 5 working days.	**Traffic Light Icon**	✅
Linked PIs		**Current Value**	100%
		Current Target	80%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	14-Nov-2014 We handled 25,541 customer transactions in October and received 3 complaints in October and all were handled within the appropriate timescale.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Since October 2013 we have failed to reach our target on 5 occasions - in all instances (November and December 2013 and February, July and September 2014) it was because we had been unable to contact the customer within the 5 working days.

In October 2014 all our complaints were dealt with within the appropriate timescale.

Our target for 2014 /15 remains at 100%.

5

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CIS041_9a.1a Unit cost of each Customer Information Service (CIS) customer enquiry, including cash transactions**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Julia Laidlaw
Description	This indicator shows the cost of each customer enquiry. Enquiries include all cash transactions eg. council tax, rent etc. and other transactions including general enquiries logged on the CRM system. Payment transactions in Bathgate Partnership Centre and at Carmondean Connected are not included in this Key Performance Indicator as these are not taken by Customer Information Service staff. Customer enquiries handled by Blackburn Connected are not included as the office budget is held by Branch Libraries.	**Traffic Light Icon**	✅
Linked PIs		**Current Value**	£3.45
		Current Target	£3.50
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	

Trend Chart Commentary:
In 2013/14 the unit cost was £3.45 which meant there was no change on the previous year. We have therefore achieved our target of £3.50. Both our budget spend and transaction numbers had decreased by approximately 6% from the previous year.

In 2012/13 the unit cost was £3.45 which is an increase of 15p on the previous year. The reason for this is that payment transactions are down by over 8,600, some of which is because customers are now paying by direct debit. To put this in context, SOCITM (Society of Information Technology Management) states that the average face to face transaction in local authorities is approximately £7.00 so we continue to be well below the average.

Since 2009 the cost of each transaction in the Customer Information Service has dropped, with a significant reduction in 2010/11 to £3.71 and again in 2011/12 to £3.30. This was as a result improved efficiencies within the service.
The target for 2014/15 is £3.50.

6

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:CIS051_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Information Service (CIS) enquiries resolved at first point of contact .**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Julia Laidlaw
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of customer enquiries that have been resolved by Customer Information Service (CIS) during the initial customer interaction. This removes the need for the customer to make any further contact with the council to have their enquiry resolved. There is a national target of 75% set by the Customer First initiative.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	CIS521_9b.1a	Current Value	82%
		Current Target	82%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	

Trend Chart Commentary:

In April 2014 the target was increased from 75% to 82%. We have achieved our target in every month apart from July and September 2014 where it was 81% (we therefore missed our target by 1%). .

The target for 2014/15 is set at 82%.

7

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:CSC007_6a.7 CSC - Percentage of customers who rated the overal quality of the service as good or excellent.**	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as 'good' or 'excellent'. This information is gathered through using our monthly survey and a number of customers are randomly selected. The target is reviewed annually.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	CSC522_6a.7	Current Value	94.1%
		Current Target	95%

	Notes on Latest Data Entry	13-Nov-2014 In October 2014 this PI increased slightly from 92.9% to 94.1%, with a target of 95% this PI remained green. Slight fluctuations may be due to differences in the number of surveys completed on a month to month basis- in October 2014, 217 customers were contacted and 51 surveys completed.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Between July and October 2014 this PI dropped slightly below target, ongoing technical issues meant that outbound calling was kept to a minimum which has in turn meant that fewer customers were called to complete the survey which may not be a true reflection on overall quality of service.
These issues appear to have been resolved now however the surveys were completed prior to the resolution and so we are not yet seeing any improvements

In October 2014, 217 customers were contacted and 51 surveys were completed

No surveys were carried out in June 2014 due to a significant increase in call volumes caused by technical problems with the telephony system.

In May 2014 performance dipped below target due to increase an increase in abandonment of calls, customers were dissatisfied with the length of time waiting to have their enquiry answered. In April 2014 performance exceeded the target at 98.7%. During March 2014 performance dipped below target due to an issue with an increase in abandonment of calls.
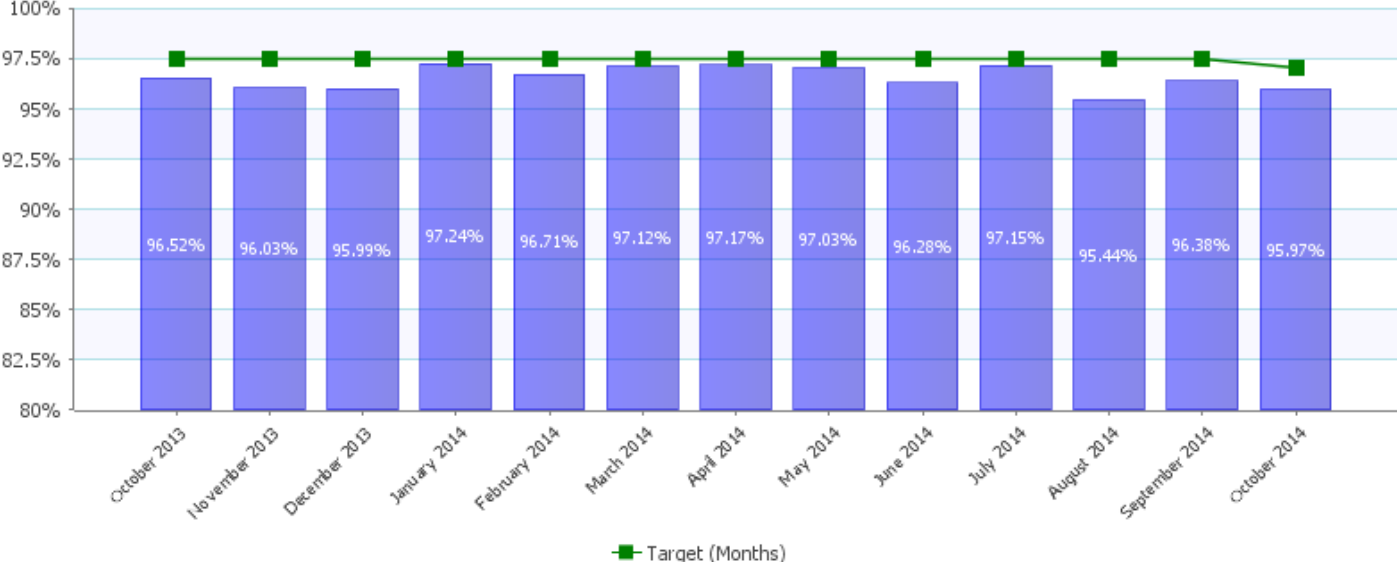
In October 2013 and February 2014 there was a dip due to the low number of customers surveyed.

8

Customer Service Centre strive to deliver a high quality service to our customers which is monitored through call evaluation, training and 1-2-1 feedback.

The target for 2014/15 will remain at 95%

9

PI Code & Short Name	**CSC053_6b.2 Careline - Grade of Service: Percentage of Careline calls answered within 60 seconds.**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of Careline emergency calls answered within 60 seconds. This target ensures a fast response time to emergency calls from customers who have telecare equipment within their homes. This is also used by TSA (Telecare Service Association) who set and monitor performance against the target for audit purposes.	**Traffic Light Icon**	✅
Linked PIs		**Current Value**	95.97%

Bar chart values (October 2013 to October 2014): 96.52%, 96.03%, 95.99%, 97.24%, 96.71%, 97.12%, 97.17%, 97.03%, 96.28%, 97.15%, 95.44%, 96.38%, 95.97%

Legend: ■ Target (Months)

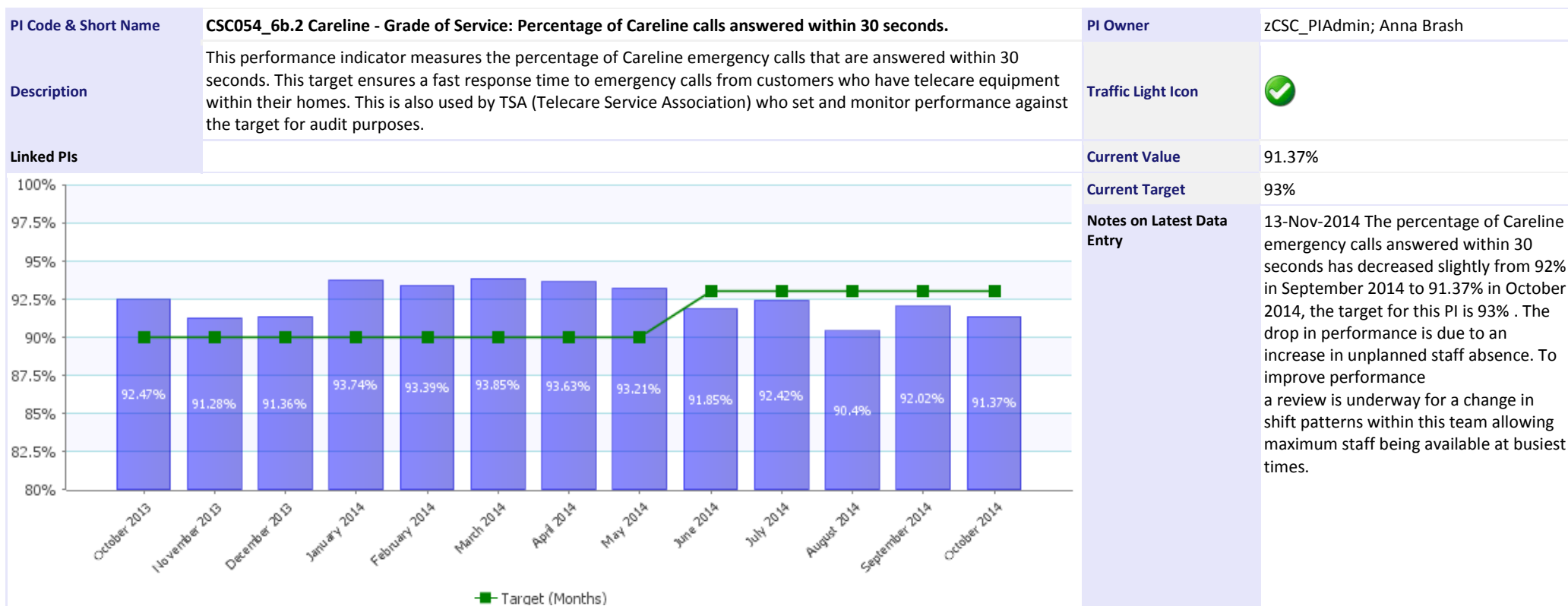|	
Current Target	97%
Notes on Latest Data Entry	13-Nov-2014 The percentage of Careline emergency calls answered within 60 seconds has decreased slightly from 97% in September 2014 to 95.97% in October 2014, the target for this PI is 97% . The drop in performance is due to an increase in unplanned staff absence. To improve performance a review is underway for a change in shift patterns within this team allowing maximum staff being available at busiest times.

Trend Chart Commentary

From November 2013 to October 2014 this target has not been met due to an increase in call volume and staffing levels being less than had been planned for. The Careline service is now based in the Civic Centre and whilst performance has shown some improvement over this period ongoing unplanned staff absence means it is still below target. Periods when performance has shown an improvement are due to a full staff compliment being available at these times. To further improve performance a review is underway for a change in shift patterns allowing maximum staff being available busiest times.

The target for 2014/15 will remain at 97.5%.

The target is set at 97.5% by TSA (Telecare Service Association) who Audit the performance of Community Alarm Services, UK wide, ensuring that a high standard is maintained in timeliness of response to calls.
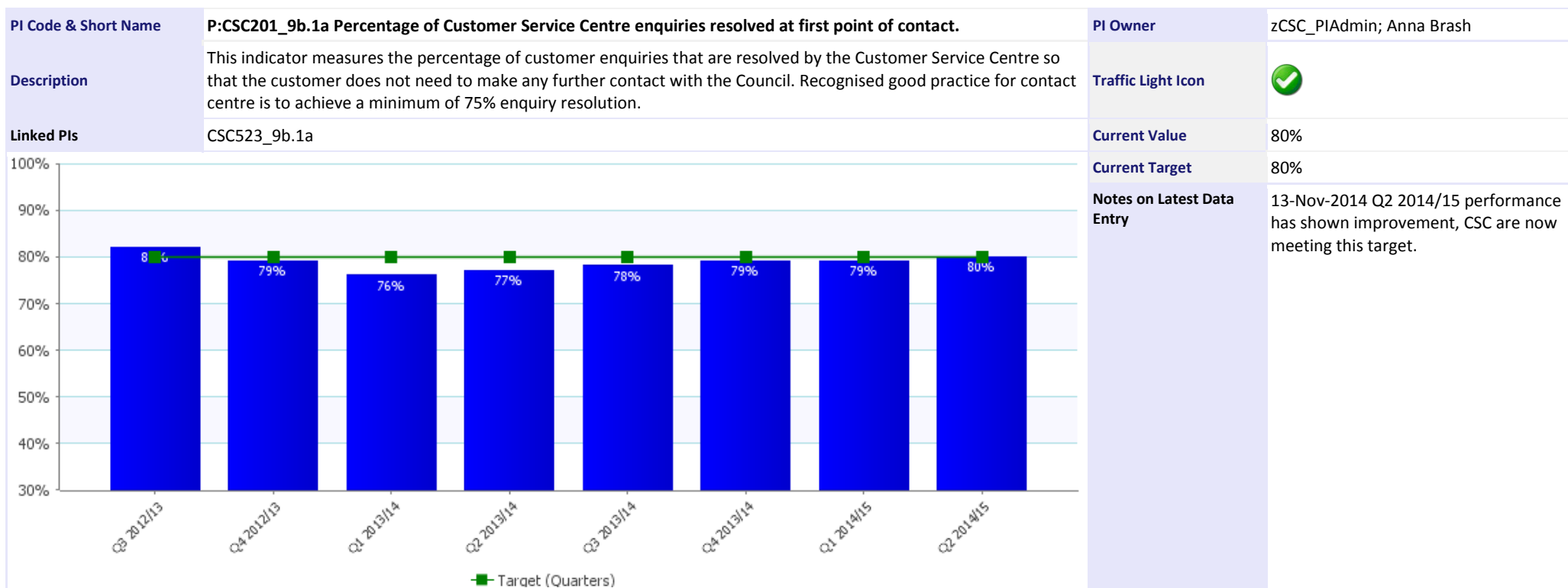
10

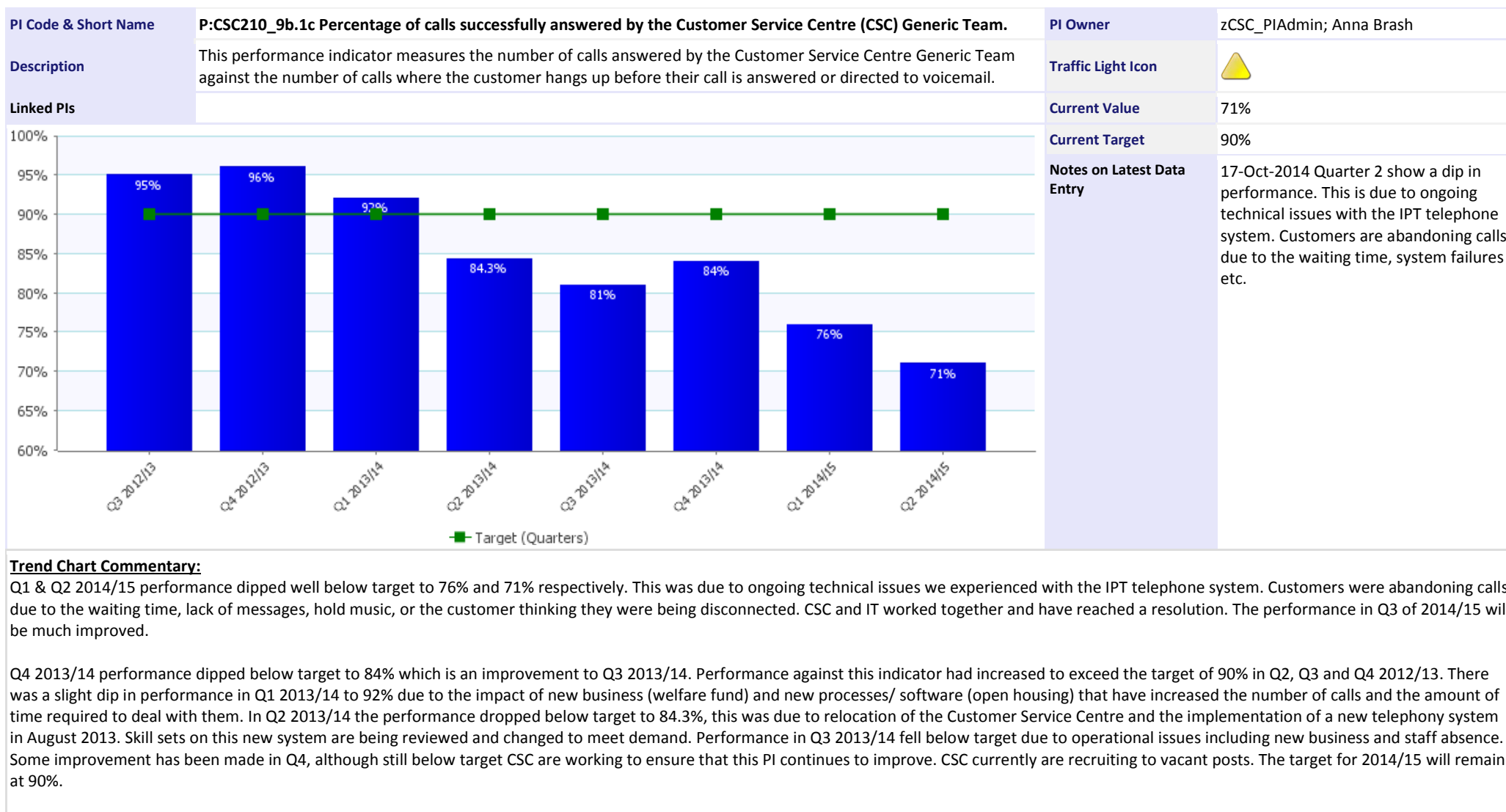| PI Code & Short Name	**CSC054_6b.2 Careline - Grade of Service: Percentage of Careline calls answered within 30 seconds.**	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of Careline emergency calls that are answered within 30 seconds. This target ensures a fast response time to emergency calls from customers who have telecare equipment within their homes. This is also used by TSA (Telecare Service Association) who set and monitor performance against the target for audit purposes.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	91.37%
		Current Target	93%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	13-Nov-2014 The percentage of Careline emergency calls answered within 30 seconds has decreased slightly from 92% in September 2014 to 91.37% in October 2014, the target for this PI is 93% . The drop in performance is due to an increase in unplanned staff absence. To improve performance a review is underway for a change in shift patterns within this team allowing maximum staff being available at busiest times.

Trend Chart Commentary

Between June and October 2014 this PI is below the new target of 93%. This is due to unplanned absences resulting in less experienced staff covering vacant shifts. As staff increase their experience and staff return from unplanned absences it is expected that this PI will show improvement. To further improve performance a review is underway for a change in shift patterns allowing maximum staff being available busiest times.

The target was increased to 93% in June 2014.

Between January and May 2014 performance remained consistently above target at 93.21%.

The target is set high by TSA (Telecare Service Association) who Audit the performance of Community Alarm Services, UK wide, ensuring that a high standard is maintained in timeliness of response to calls.

11

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CSC201_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact.**	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of customer enquiries that are resolved by the Customer Service Centre so that the customer does not need to make any further contact with the Council. Recognised good practice for contact centre is to achieve a minimum of 75% enquiry resolution.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	CSC523_9b.1a	Current Value	80%
		Current Target	80%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	13-Nov-2014 Q2 2014/15 performance has shown improvement, CSC are now meeting this target.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Q2 2014/15 - This PI has improved to 80% from the previous quarter.
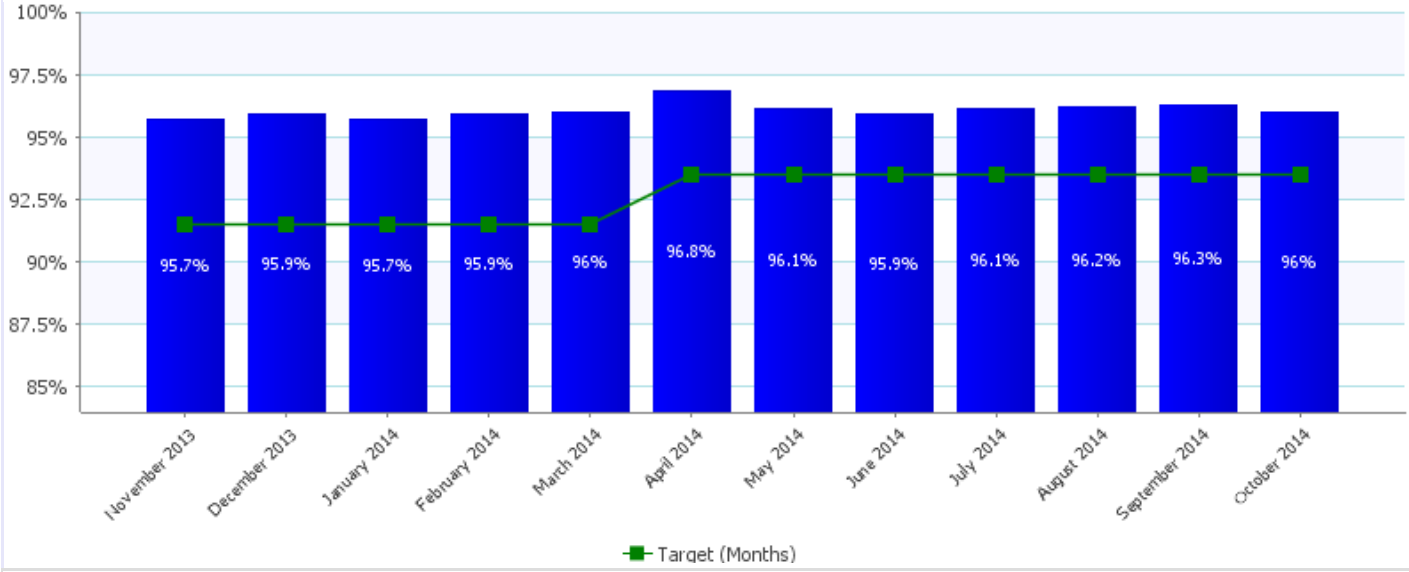
The dip in performance in Q4 2012/13 was because a new housing database was being phased in and the "workaround" solution that was implemented during this time involved advisers sending repair requests to another system rather than dealing with them straight away.

CSC has continued to perform below this target due to a couple of reasons for this: 1) being the introduction of Welfare Fund applications - the service has to request customer callbacks in the majority of cases and this is done by creating a case 2) there has been an increase in Confirm enquiries (eg bulky uplifts).

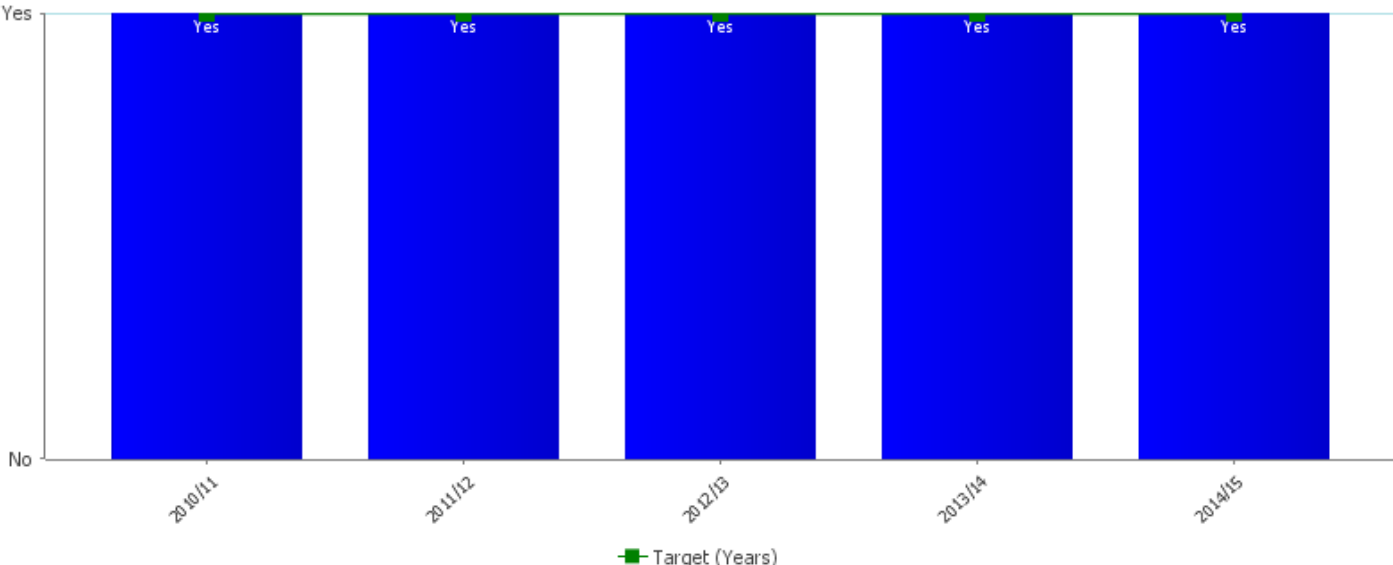From Q2 2013/14 performance has started to improve as staff are becoming more familiar with the new systems. This improvement has continued through to Q2 2014/15.

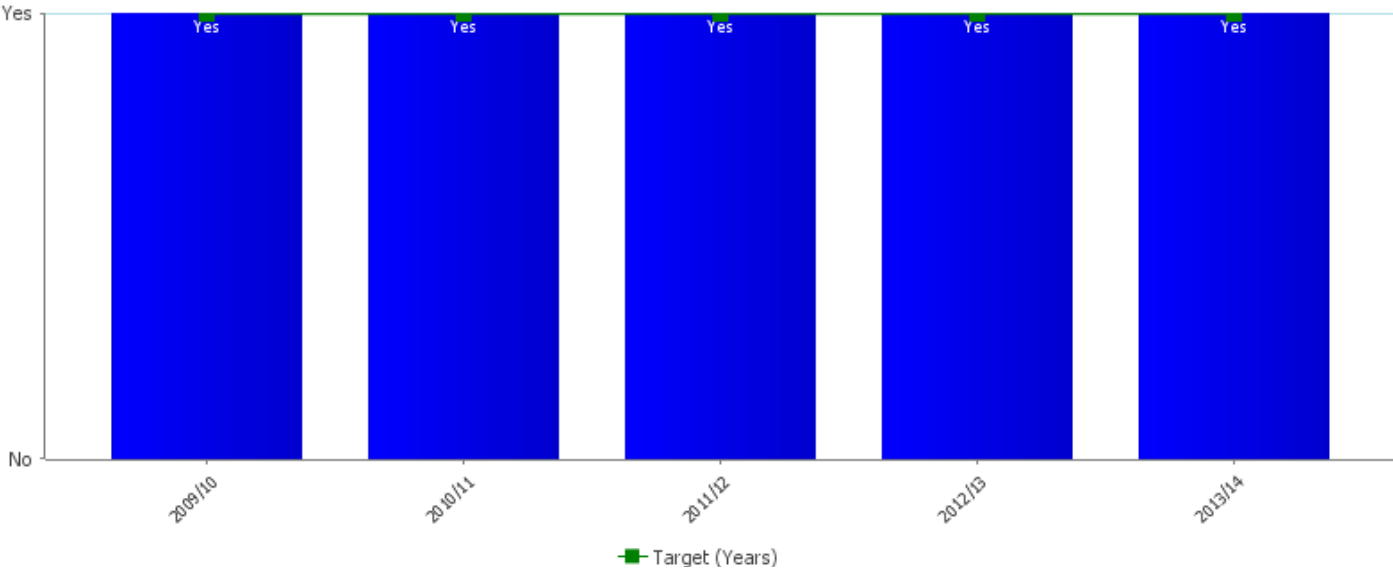This PI target for 2014/15 remains at 80%

12

PI Code & Short Name	P:CSC210_9b.1c Percentage of calls successfully answered by the Customer Service Centre (CSC) Generic Team.	PI Owner	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash
Description	This performance indicator measures the number of calls answered by the Customer Service Centre Generic Team against the number of calls where the customer hangs up before their call is answered or directed to voicemail.	Traffic Light Icon	⚠
Linked PIs		Current Value	71%
		Current Target	90%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	17-Oct-2014 Quarter 2 show a dip in performance. This is due to ongoing technical issues with the IPT telephone system. Customers are abandoning calls due to the waiting time, system failures etc.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Q1 & Q2 2014/15 performance dipped well below target to 76% and 71% respectively. This was due to ongoing technical issues we experienced with the IPT telephone system. Customers were abandoning calls due to the waiting time, lack of messages, hold music, or the customer thinking they were being disconnected. CSC and IT worked together and have reached a resolution. The performance in Q3 of 2014/15 will be much improved.

Q4 2013/14 performance dipped below target to 84% which is an improvement to Q3 2013/14. Performance against this indicator had increased to exceed the target of 90% in Q2, Q3 and Q4 2012/13. There was a slight dip in performance in Q1 2013/14 to 92% due to the impact of new business (welfare fund) and new processes/ software (open housing) that have increased the number of calls and the amount of time required to deal with them. In Q2 2013/14 the performance dropped below target to 84.3%, this was due to relocation of the Customer Service Centre and the implementation of a new telephony system in August 2013. Skill sets on this new system are being reviewed and changed to meet demand. Performance in Q3 2013/14 fell below target due to operational issues including new business and staff absence. Some improvement has been made in Q4, although still below target CSC are working to ensure that this PI continues to improve. CSC currently are recruiting to vacant posts. The target for 2014/15 will remain at 90%.

13

PI Code & Short Name	**FM001_6b.2 Percentage of Suppliers paid within 30 Days of Receipt.**	PI Owner	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of 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 Estates and ensures challenging targets year on year which are always higher than the Scottish average. Note that this performance indicator monitors the performance on a monthly basis and the cumulative figure for the year is reported to Audit Scotland as a statutory performance indicator. The payment of invoices is a key activity for Finance and Estates, ensuring that the council's suppliers are paid on a timely basis.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	96%
		Current Target	93.5%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	11-Nov-2014 The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days to the end of October 14 is 96%.

Trend Chart Commentary:
Financial Management Unit works closely with services to improve invoice processing times. The annual performance is greater than the Scottish Local Authorities average of paying 90.82% (source: Audit Scotland 2012/13) of invoices within 30 days. There has been a steady increase in performance recently, resulting in a cumulative result of 96% for the year ending March 2014 which exceeds the target of 91.5%. Note that the performance indicator records the cumulative performance for the year to date, commencing April. In the first month of 2014/15 the result is 96.8% and it is expected performance will exceed the revised target of 93.5% set for the year.

14

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:FM002_9b.1a Annual General Services Capital Programme Budget approval within set deadlines.**	PI Owner	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance measures the process for approving the Council's annual capital budget. West Lothian Council approved a ten year capital investment and asset management strategy in 2007 that covers the period 2008/2009 to 2017/2018. This will provide for investment in Council properties such as schools, communities, sports and arts facilities, day care centres as well as investment in roads and structures, footpaths, street lighting, open spaces and IT. The general services capital programme is reviewed annually and reported to Council in January each year.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	Yes
		Current Target	Yes
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	09-Jan-2014 Capital budget for 14/15 to 17/18 was approved 19th December 2013.

Trend Chart Commentary:

West Lothian Council has consistently produced and agreed upon a balanced annual general services capital programme budget within the set deadlines. The 2014/15 to 2017/2018 capital budget was approved on 19 December 2013 at the meeting of the Council.

15

PI Code & Short Name	CP:FM003_9b.1a Annual Revenue Budget Approval Within Set Deadlines.	PI Owner	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance measures the process for approving the Council's annual revenue budget. The annual revenue budget covers the day to day running costs incurred in the delivery of the council's services, for example salaries, wages, supplies and services. This ensures expected expenditure is matched by expected funding. Funding sources include council tax and block grants from the Scottish Government. The council approves its revenue budget in January or February for the forthcoming financial year. The Council must approve a budget before 11 March to comply with statutory obligations. However, to initiate collection of instalments in April, it is necessary to set the council tax at least one month before the statutory deadline.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	Yes
		Current Target	Yes
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	09-Jan-2014 The General Fund revenue budget for 14/15 was approved at the meeting of the full council on 19th December 2013.

Trend Chart Commentary:

West Lothian Council has consistently produced and agreed balanced revenue budgets within set deadlines. This is within a context of unprecedented financial pressures and increased public expectations regarding the quality of services provided. The 2014/15 revenue budget was approved on 19 December 2013 at a meeting of the Council.

16

PI Code & Short Name	**FM006_9b.1a Final Accounts - Unqualified Audit Certificate and Reporting Within Agreed Deadlines.**	PI Owner	zFM_PIAdmin; David Maule
Description	This performance indicator measures the receipt of the annual audit certificate in relation to the Council's financial statements. On an annual basis, the Financial Management Unit produce the annual financial statements for West Lothian Council. This work is carried out in April and May each year and thereafter the council's independent external auditors review these financial statements and produce an audit certificate. The audit certificate indicates if the financial statements represent a true and fair view of the financial position of the council, whether they have been prepared in accordance with international financial standards, the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. The Financial Management Unit's aim is to receive an unqualified audit certificate on an annual basis. This is received by 30 September each year and the outcome reported to Council in October each year.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	Yes
		Current Target	Yes
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	07-Nov-2014 2013/2014 Accounts. Audit certificate received and reported to CMT and Council (14 October 2014) within prescribed deadlines. The next update will be for the 2013/14 audit certificate which will be reported to Council in October 2015.

Trend Chart Commentary:
West Lothian Council has consistently received an unqualified audit certificate which demonstrates the effective financial management of the council's resources and assets. The most recent audit certificate and auditors report was presented to Council on 14 October 2014. The next report for 2014/15 accounts will be submitted to Council in October 2015.

17

PI Code & Short Name	**IA007_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by the Audit and Risk Management Unit as good or excellent.**		PI Owner	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent. A questionnaire is issued at the end of each audit and customers are asked to rate the overall quality of the audit service provided as; excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor. All responses ranked as either 'Excellent' or 'Good' are recorded as positive responses. For each year, the cumulative number of positive responses are divided by the total number of responses to determine a percentage. The results of customer feedback are analysed by all Audit and Risk Management Unit staff on a quarterly basis in order to identify areas for improvement.		Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs			Current Value	100%

	Current Target	100%
	Notes on Latest Data Entry	22-Aug-2014 Twelve customer feedback forms were received during 2013/14. All customers rated 'Quality of Service: Overall quality of the audit service' as either good or excellent.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance has been consistently high and the target was raised to 100% in 2011/12. Performance for 2010/11 to 2013/14 has been 100%, with all customers rating overall quality of the service as good or excellent. In 2009/10 one customer from 23 rated the overall service as adequate resulting in performance of 96%.

The numbers of response received are follows: 2009/10(23), 2010/11(14), 2011/12(15), 2012/13(16), 2013/14(12). The Audit and Risk Management Unit will look at ways of increasing the number of responses during 2014/15.

The target for 2014/15 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.

18

PI Code & Short Name	IA018_9a.1a Cost of Internal Audit per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure.	PI Owner	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the cost of Internal Audit per £1 million of West Lothian Council's net expenditure. Our performance is benchmarked against 32 Scottish Local Authorities as part of the annual 'Scottish Directors of Finance Performance Indicators' benchmarking exercise. In line with the benchmarking guidance issued, we calculate our indicator by dividing the total cost of Internal Audit services (excluding risk management services) by West Lothian Council's net expenditure for the financial year and multiplying by one million. The objective of this performance indicator is to compare the level of resources made available by Councils for the provision of Internal Audit services.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	£593.26

	Current Target	£920.00
	Notes on Latest Data Entry	20-Aug-2014 Updated with actual figure of £593.26, submitted with Directors of Finance return in August 2014. The actual figure still remains below the 2013/14 target, which is the previous years Scottish Average.

Trend Chart Commentary:
The cost of Internal Audit increased from 2009/10 to 2010/11. This was due to one off increases in central support costs due to the demolition of council buildings. Central support costs decreased again in 2011/12 which resulted in a corresponding fall in the cost of Internal Audit. The cost of Internal Audit decreased again in 2012/13, and this trend has continued in 2013/14 with a cost of £593.26, compared to £624.73 in 2012/13.

A key contributing factor towards the lower cost in recent years is the change in the role of the unit which from 2011/12 took over responsibility for risk management. From 2011/12 time has been spent on undertaking risk management functions in addition to internal audit functions. This is also reflected in indicator IA0109 Cost of Risk Management per £1 million of West Lothian Council Net Expenditure.

When benchmarked against 32 Scottish Local Authorities, the cost of Internal Audit continues to be lower than the Scottish average each year (the Scottish average is shown as the target on the chart). For

19

2011/12 Internal Audit was the lowest costing Internal Audit Service in Scotland and for 2012/13 was the third lowest. Benchmarking information for 2013/14 will be reported by December 2014 when the results of the Scottish Directors of Finance benchmarking exercise are released.

The ongoing aim is to remain below the Scottish average and also to remain with the top 10 lowest costing services in Scotland. The target for 2013/14 is therefore to remain below a cost of £920. The target for 2014/15 will be reviewed on receipt of the 2013/14 benchmarking information.

20

PI Code & Short Name	**IA022_9b.1a Percentage of risk based audits in the annual audit plan completed for the year.**	PI Owner	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of planned audits in the annual audit plan that have actually been completed each year. The total number of planned audits to be completed between 1 April and 31 March each year are outlined in the annual audit plan which is approved by the Audit and Governance Committee. The number of <u>completed</u> audits is divided by the number of <u>planned</u> audits to determine the percentage completed. Completion of all audits within the annual audit plan helps provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of West Lothian Council's systems of internal control. Consequently, we aim to complete 100% of the systems audits each year.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	100%
		Current Target	100%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	22-Aug-2014 There were 31 risk based audits in the 2013/14 audit plan. All audits in the plan were completed.

Chart – Target (Years):

Year	Value
2009/10	81%
2010/11	100%
2011/12	85%
2012/13	100%
2013/14	100%

Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance is assisted by the internal procedures which cover the key stages of the audit process and ensure the progress of audits is continuously monitored.

Performance for this indicator was below target for 2009/10 (19.5 from 20 audits completed) and 2011/12 (17 from 20 audits completed), when all the audits in the annual audit plan were not complete by 31 March. This was due to the quantity of reactive/unplanned work that was given preference over planned audits.

Performance was on target at 100% for 2011/12 (20 audits) and the target was again met in 2012/13 (25 audits) and 2013/14 (31 audits) when all planned audits were completed. The number of audits included in the plan each year will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the work.

The target will remain at 100% for 2014/15.

21

PI Code & Short Name	**IA023_9b.1c Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports.**	PI Owner	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	This performance indicator measures the average length of time (in weeks) to issue a draft audit report. The total number of audits to be completed between 1 April and 31 March each year are outlined in the annual audit plan which is approved by the Audit and Governance Committee. The date of issue of the draft audit report is subtracted from the date that the audit commenced to show the number of weeks taken. The date of commencement is agreed with our customers and we aim to complete all risk based audit work within 12 weeks of this date. Using the total number of reports issued, a cumulative average of the number of weeks taken to issue a draft report is calculated each quarter. These results are analysed on a quarterly basis throughout the year. The objective of our 12 week target is to ensure that audit reports are issued timeously so that they are current and meaningful to both the service area and any related stakeholders.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	9.7
		Current Target	12
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	20-Oct-2014 There are 36 audits in the 2014/15 Audit Plan. Seven reports were in draft to end Q2. The average time taken to issue the draft reports was 9.7 weeks.

Bar chart showing average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports by quarter, with Target (Quarters) line at 12:
- Q3 2012/13: 11
- Q4 2012/13: 10.4
- Q1 2013/14: 8
- Q2 2013/14: 9.4
- Q3 2013/14: 11.4
- Q4 2013/14: 11.9
- Q1 2014/15: 12
- Q2 2014/15: 9.7

Trend Chart Commentary:

The average length of time to issue draft audit reports fluctuates during the audit plan year and this is monitored on a quarterly basis. Fluctuations are a result of various factors such as the complexity of each individual audit and the level of reactive work which which may be given priority over routine audits.

For 2012/13 all reports were issued in an average of 10.4 weeks, and the target was met. For 2013/14 performance was 11.9 weeks and the target was again met. The target for 2014/15 will remain 12 weeks and was met in Q1, when only one draft report was issued.

The number of draft audit reports (cumulatively) issued in each quarter for 2012/12 and 2013/14 are as follows:

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2012/13 - Q1(3), Q2(9), Q3(14), Q4(27)
2013/14 - Q1(3), Q2(7), Q3(11), Q4(31)

PI Code & Short Name	ITS064_6b.2 Annual Percentage of IT Faults resolved within service standards.	PI Owner	zITS_PIAdmin; Jennifer Milne
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT faults resolved within the service standards in a financial year. The current service standard attached to all Corporate faults is 5 working days. The data for this indicator is provided from the IT Service Management software system.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	90.33%
		Current Target	92%

	Notes on Latest Data Entry
	23-May-2014 Performance in 2013/14 achieved 90.33% of faults completed within their assigned service level. In the year 2013/14 IT Services received 19368 faults and therefore completed 17495 within the assigned service level. The service level attached to all Corporate faults is 5 working days. Performance did not achieve the 92% target as a result of additional resource requirements between September - December 2013 to ensure the council achieved new enhanced Public Sector Network compliance. The target for 2014/15 remains at 92%.
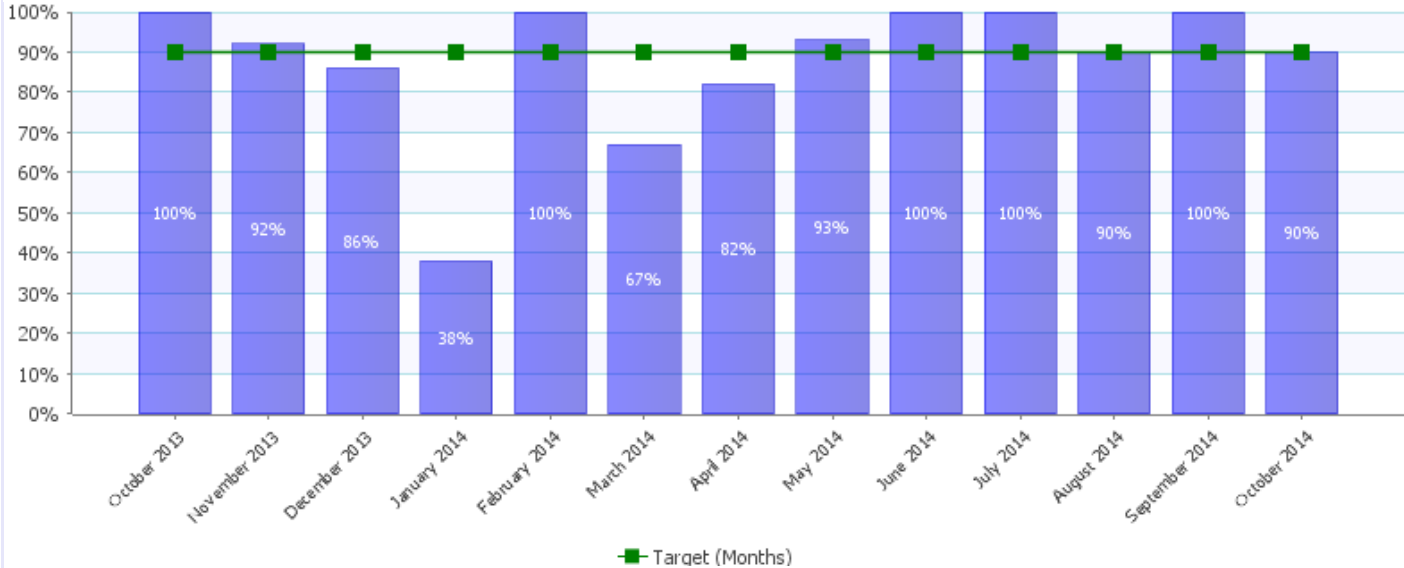
Trend Chart Commentary:
The trend chart demonstrates performance achieves 88% or above over the period.
Performance in 2011/12 reduced as a result of 18.47% increase in demand compared to 2010/11 and balancing IT staff resources due to vacancies.
Performance improved in 2012/13 as a result of a low level of major incidents recruitment successfully filled majority of vacancies.
Performance in 2013/14 reduced as a result of major incidents in September/October 2013 and an increased resource requirement to achieve Public Sector Network compliance in the year. The target for 2014/15 is 92%.

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PI Code & Short Name	**ITS065_6b.2 Annual Percentage of IT Change Requests resolved within service standards.**	PI Owner	zITS_PIAdmin; Jennifer Milne
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT Change requests resolved within the service standards in a financial year. The service standard attached to a Change Request will vary according to the complexity of the Change. The default service level assigned to a Change Request is 10 working days. The data for this indicator is provided from the IT Service Management software system.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	88%

		Current Target	88%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	27-May-2014 Performance in 2013/14 achieved 88.00% of requests completed within their assigned service level. In the year 2013/14 IT Services were presented with 21,470 requests and completed 18893 within their assigned service level. The standard service level attached to a Change Requests is 10 working days, although the standard can be increased if the request is of a more complex nature or require procurement tasks. Performance in 2012/13 achieved the target set at 88%. A revised target was reviewed and and set at 89% for 2014/15.

Trend Chart Commentary:
The trend chart demonstrates performance achieves 79% or above over the period.
Performance in 2011/12 reduced as a result of a 13.3% demand increase and balancing IT staff resources to achieve an increased percentage of faults resolved within service standards in August 2011 and November 2011.
Performance in 2012/13 increased as a result of improved management following IT Re-design and focus on achieving project related work.
Performance in 2013/14 demonstrates a reduction as a result of a time to recruit to a management vacancy and the impact of prioritising resources to recover from a major power outage in the Civic Centre in February 2014.
An increased target of 89% has been set for 2014/15.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:ITS066_9b.1a Annual Percentage of IT Faults resolved at the first point of contact.**	PI Owner	zITS_PIAdmin; Jennifer Milne
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT Faults resolved at the first point of contact in a financial year. From a customer perspective this means that the customers Fault is dealt with and resolved whilst they are on the phone. The data for this indicator is provided from the IT Service Management software system.	Traffic Light Icon	⚠
Linked PIs		Current Value	37.33%
		Current Target	45%

Bar chart: Annual percentage of IT faults resolved at the first point of contact with Target (Years) line.

2009/10: 26.16%
2010/11: 33%
2011/12: 41.25%
2012/13: 42.3%
2013/14: 37.33%

Legend: Target (Years)

		Notes on Latest Data Entry	27-May-2014 Performance in 2013/14 achieved 37.33% of faults resolved at the first point of contact, however did not achieve target. Performance did not a achieve target as a result of the impact of faults that can not be resolved at the IT Service Desk, in 2013/14 these included major wide area network faults that occurred in September 2014, improving staff understanding of new IT Service Management system functionality in October and November 2013 and resource availability due to Public Sector Network compliance work in December 2013. The target for 2014/15 remains as agreed in Corporate Services Management plan at 45%.

Trend Chart Commentary:
The trend chart demonstrates annual percentage of IT faults resolved at the first point of contact improving over the period 2009/10 to 2012/13 as a result of targeted training and cross skilling of front line service desk staff.
Performance in 2013/14 reduced as a result of major faults in September/October 2013 and impact of vacancy and training of new staff in December 2013/January 2014.
Performance is expected to improve is 2014/15 as a result of targeted technical training within the Service Desk as part of the Windows 7 migration - the target for 2014/15 is 45%.

25

PI Code & Short Name	**LS028_6b.2 Percentage of Council House Sale Offers Issued by Legal Services Within 28 Days**	PI Owner	zLS_PIAdmin; Carol Johnston
Description	This indicator measures the percentage of formal offers to sell a Council House to a sitting tenant issued by legal services to the sitting tenant or their solicitor within 28 days. Although there is a statutory period of 182 days within which to complete the entire sale process, legal services has set an internal service standard of 90% of offers issued within 28 days. The time starts once initial checks have been completed on the application to purchase the council house, the District Valuer has responded and plans are available.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	LS071_6b.3	Current Value	90%

		Current Target	90%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	07-Nov-2014 During October, 10 instructions were received in relation to council house sales. 9 offers were issued within timescale. 1 offer was not issued within timescale as a result of issues relating to the property plan.

The trend shows that performance has varied over the period since October 2013. The reductions in performance experienced have arisen primarily as a result of technical legal issues which required to be addressed and which introduced elements of necessary delay. In particular, in August 2013, there was a reduction in performance arising from a request to obtain a second valuation from the District Valuer, in December 2013, the reduction in performance related to issues regarding a deed plan. In January 2014 the reduction in performance arose as a result of prioritisation of other priority business and an issue with calculation of the applicable discount to the sale price of a property. During March 2014, there was a reduction in performance arising from issues relating to boundary plans. In April 2014 the trend shows an improvement in performance when compared to March 2014, however performance was impacted by a boundary plan issue and an issue with works being undertaken which required to be resolved causing performance to remain below target. There was further improvement in performance in May and performance has been in excess of or on target since May 2014.n

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PI Code & Short Name	**LS035_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the Licensing service as good or excellent .**	PI Owner	zLS_PIAdmin; Carol Johnston
Description	Customer satisfaction surveys are issued to all customers by Licensing Services at the end of the Licensing process. The process of determining applications for a license, involve referral to and input from third party agencies. The manner in which those agencies manage their input into the process can affect the progression of the application from the point it is made, to the point it is determined. The Licensing service has no influence over those parts of the process which rely upon third parties either in respect of timescales or outcomes. This can have an impact on overall customer satisfaction levels. This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the whole Licensing service, from application to determination, as good or excellent from a five-point scale (excellent, good, adequate, poor, very poor). The data from surveys is analysed to identify service improvements and the results are reported at the end of the financial year.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	LS030_6a.1; LS031_6a.2; LS033_6a.4; LS034_6a.5; LS038_6a.10; LS041_6b.1	Current Value	95%
		Current Target	95%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	15-May-2014 171 customer survey responses were received in 2013/14. Of those, 163 rated the overall quality of the licensing service as good or excellent.

Trend Chart Commentary:

There have been various attempts over the last few years to obtain sufficient and relevant customer feedback in relation to the licensing processes to allow analysis of the team's performance.

Insufficient response was received to customer satisfaction surveys in 2010/11 to allow meaningful assessment of performance.
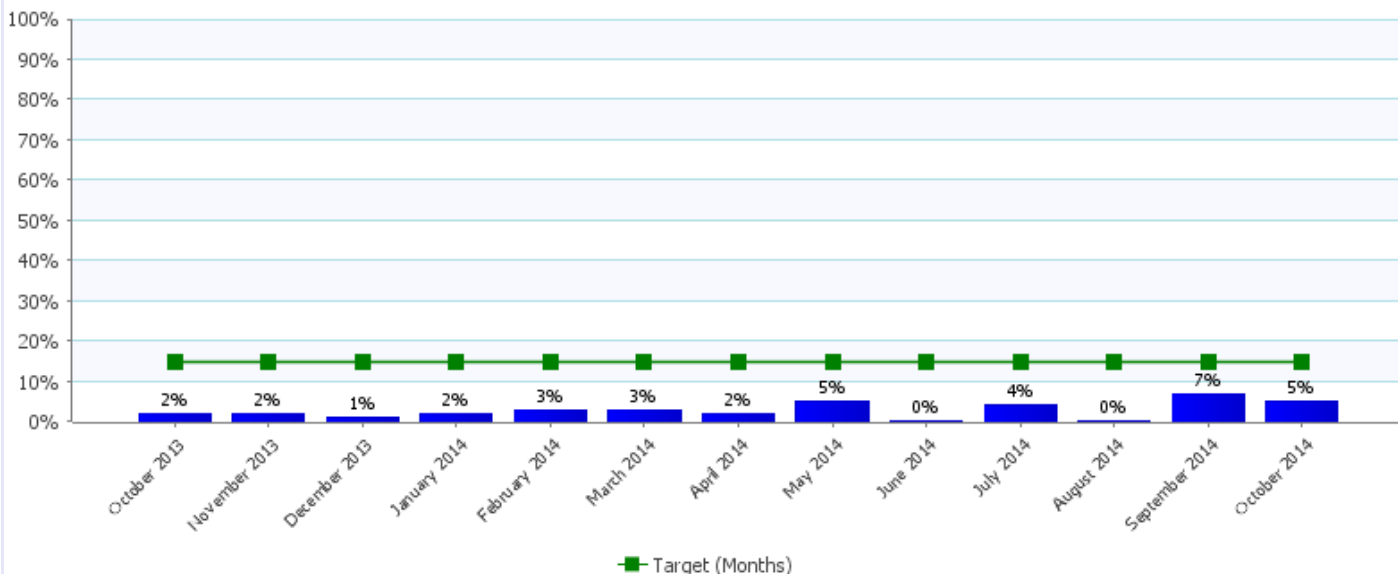
Since 2011 surveys have been issued to all customers when licences are issued at the end of the application process and this resulted in an improved response rate.

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Methods of consultation were reviewed in early 2013 and telephone surveys were trialled but were not found to result in an improved response rate.

Opinion taker surveys have been used since April 2013 and are issued to all customers who have supplied email addresses. Paper surveys are issued to all other customers at the end of their application process. The use of Opinion Taker led to a 61% percentage increase in the number of responses received during 2013/14 when compared to the previous year. The trend shows an increase in performance in 2013/14 when compared to 2012/13. This is likely to be due in part to an increased number of survey returns giving a more representative sample of customer views, in addition to overall improvements in the end to end process.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:LS046_6b.3 Percentage of Taxi/Private Hire Car Applications Not Granted or Refused within 90 Days .**	PI Owner	zLS_PIAdmin; Carol Johnston
Description	The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 provides a statutory deadline of 6 months for an application to be granted or refused. 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.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	LS042_6b.2; LS043_6b.2; LS044_6b.2; LS045_6b.2; LS053_9b.2; LS054_9b.2	Current Value	5%
		Current Target	15%

		Notes on Latest Data Entry	07-Nov-2014 83 applications were granted or refused in October 2014, 79 were granted or refused within the 90 day target. Two of the remaining applications were determined within 120 days. The first of these applications was granted after 93 days after a delay by the applicant in presenting a vehicle for test; the other such application was granted after 98 days after a delay by the applicant in attending for a medical. The two further remaining applications were granted after 122 and 133 days respectively. The application granted after 122 days was delayed due to waiting for the applicant to present a vehicle for test. The final application granted after 133 days was delayed by the applicant requiring to sit the topographical test twice.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Delays in vetting by external bodies can occur during certain busy periods such as holiday periods and affect performance figures a few months after.
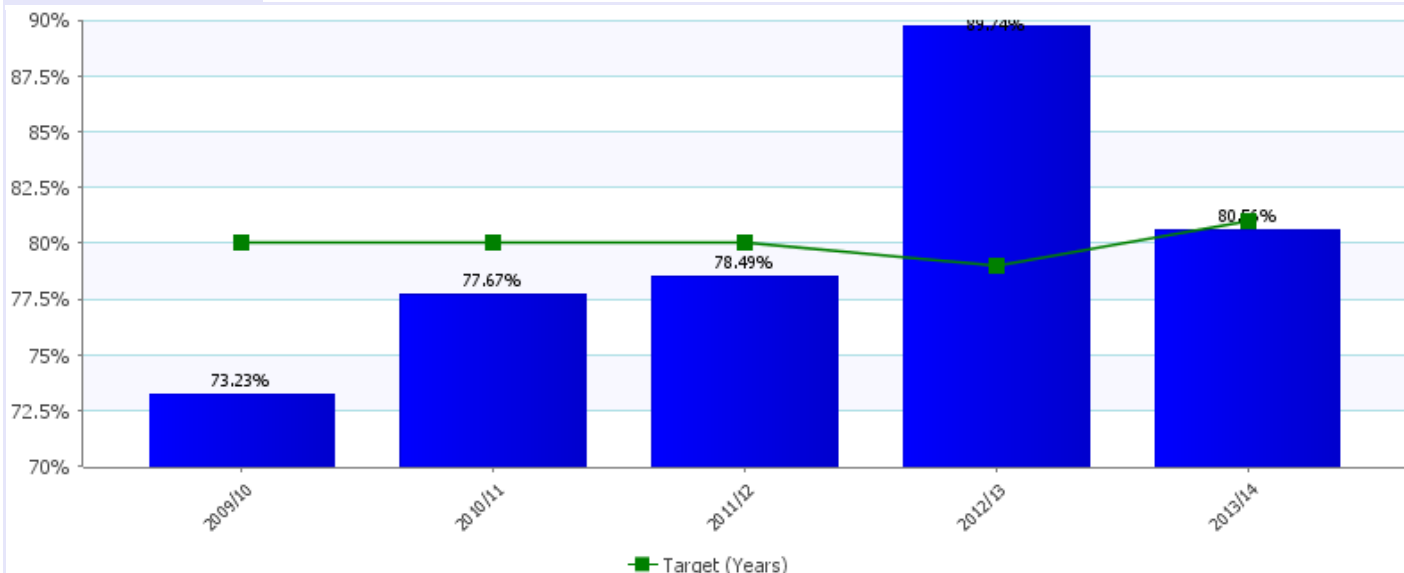
The target was reviewed in 2012 and it was determined appropriate to leave it as 15% of applications decided within 90 days as previous vetting delays were no longer having an impact on performance. The target has been consistently met since.

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From time to time there have been slight increases in the number of applications which were granted or refused outwith the 90 day period. The reasons for these usually related to matters arising from applicants themselves and not the overall licensing process. This is not indicative of a general upward trend.
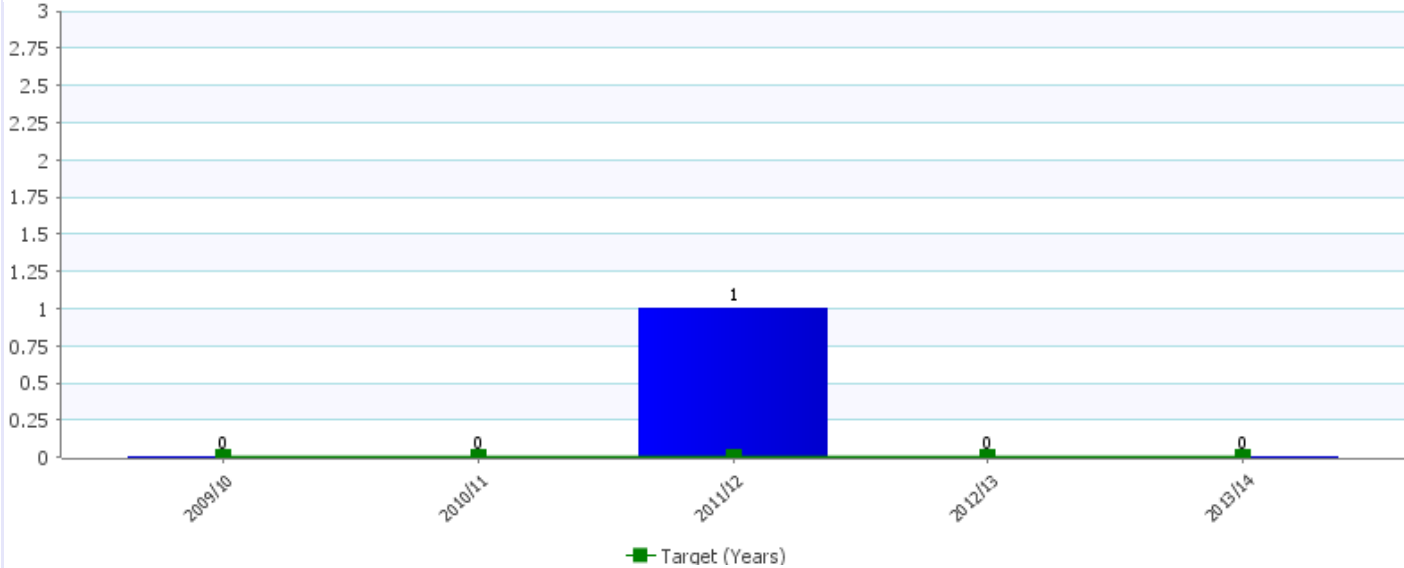
30

PI Code & Short Name	**P:PMD127_6a.7 Property Management and Development - Percentage of Customers rating the service as good or excellent.**	PI Owner	zPMD_PIAdmin; Jack Orr
Description	Property Management and Development issues a standard questionnaire that is available to all customers throughout the year. The question set is based on the 5 Drivers of customer satisfaction and experience. Performance Indicator 6a.7 - is based on a question asking customers to rate their overall satisfaction with the service they received, measuring the percentage of respondents who rated the service delivered as good or excellent. Until 2011/12 results were based on an aggregation of survey results. This included surveys of the tenants of the commercial portfolio and the occupiers of Headquarter buildings, who were consulted in alternate years, in addition to the general survey. Results were also based on a four point scale of response (Excellent, Good, Adequate, Poor). From 2012/13 the performance indicator is based only on the generic customer survey, rather than an aggregation of results. It is also based on responses on Excellent or Good on a five point scale (Excellent, Good, Adequate, Poor, Very Poor.) Progressive targets have been set for all PM&D's Customer satisfaction Performance Indicators (except PMD126, equality, which is fixed at 100%) with the intention of reaching 90% satisfaction by 2016/17.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		**Current Value**	80.56%
		Current Target	81%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	

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Trend Chart Commentary:

Until 2011/12 results were based on an aggregation of survey results, but since 2012/13 the performance indicator is based only on the generic customer survey. A progressive target has been set for each Customer Service PI, to achieve 90% satisfaction by 2016/17. The target for 2013/14 was 81percent, and for 2014/15 is 84 percent.
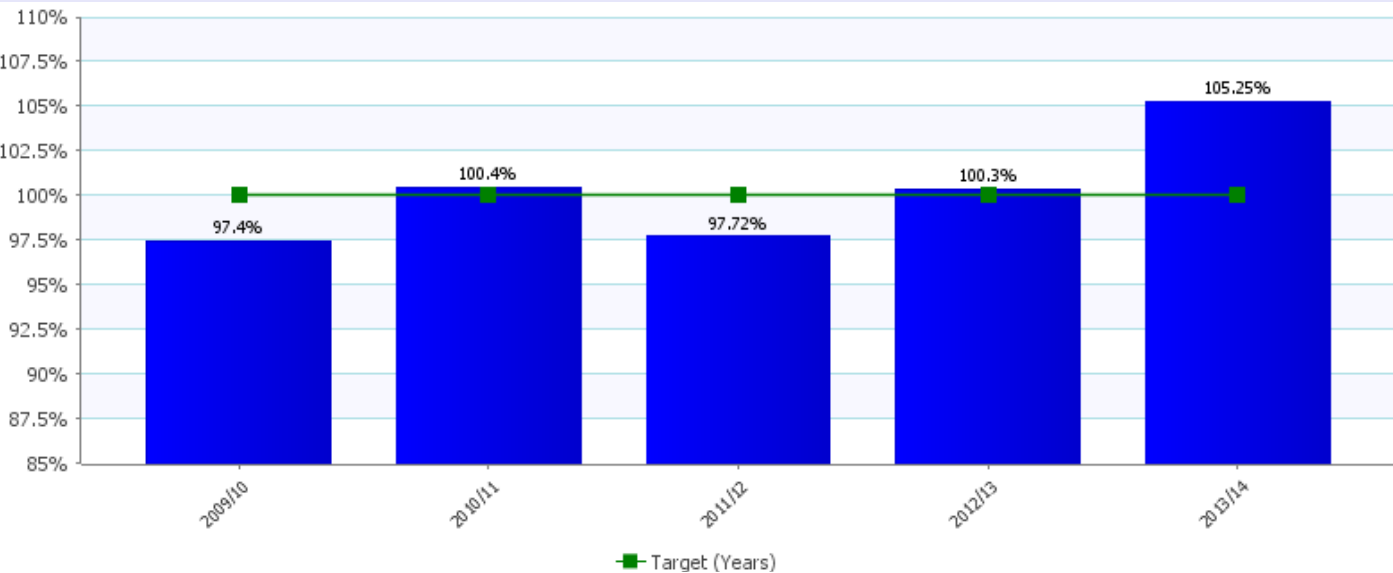
Performance has fallen this year, but is still at a satisfactory level, marginally below our progressive target to reach 90% satisfaction. Given the size of the survey a small change in the number of replies scoring the service as "good" or "excellent" can lead to a high variation in the percentage level of satisfaction.

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

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PI Code & Short Name	**PMD141_6b.1 Property Management and Development - Number of upheld complaints received against service delivery**	PI Owner	zPMD_PIAdmin; Jack Orr
Description	Number of complaints against Property Management and Development's service which have been upheld, i.e. where the service has been at fault	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	0
		Current Target	0

	Notes on Latest Data Entry	26-May-2014 Nine complaints were recorded in 2013/14. One was partially upheld. This complaint had several strands and the part upheld related to the online room booking system in Civic Centre, not specifically the service provided by PM&D.

Trend Chart Commentary:

Property Management & Development records complaints from customers regarding our service to them. This PI shows the number of complaints that were upheld. From 2013/14 complaints are recorded on the corporate system, providing a more robust methodology and assessment than in previous years

No upheld complaints were recorded in 2013/14. One complaint, which had several strands, was partially upheld, although this part did not specifically relate to the service provided by PM&D.

33

PI Code & Short Name	**PMD167_9b.2a Percentage of commercial property revenue income against target..**	PI Owner	zPMD_PIAdmin; Jack Orr
Description	Rental income comes from the council's Tenanted Non-Residential Property (i.e. commercial) portfolio. The commercial portfolio totals almost 700 properties, including shops, offices, industrial units and ground leases. A target rental income is agreed with Finance Services each April, for the coming year. It will reflect the actual income received the previous year, changes to the portfolio, and potential increases from rent reviews and new lettings. As the actual target amount will vary we report on our success in achieving that target as a percentage. Results can therefore be greater than 100% as a consequence of rent reviews being settled at higher than estimated levels and more new lettings occurring than had been expected. The Performance Indicator expresses our final income total for each year as a percentage of the target.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	105.25%
		Current Target	100%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	26-May-2014 TNRP income was 2.91% above target. When Civic Centre is included the total was 5.25% above target.

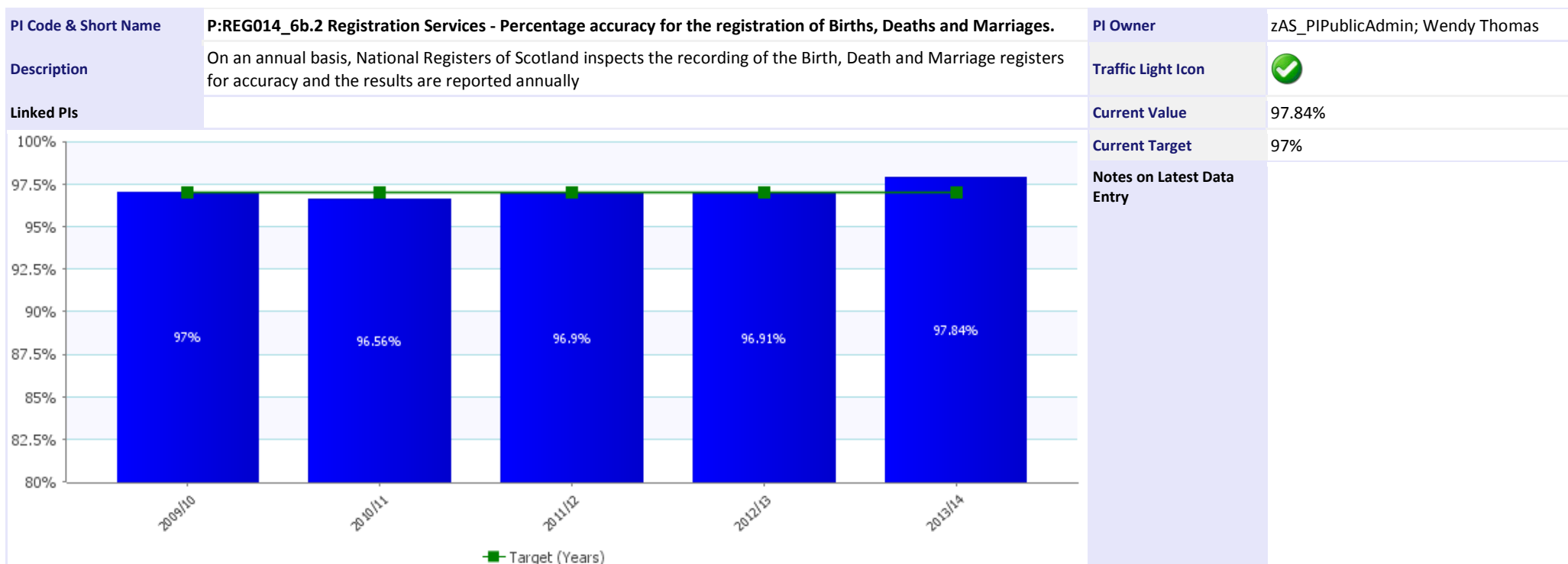**Trend Chart Commentary:**
Our objective is to achieve, and if possible, exceed the target for the year, generating more income for the council. The Performance Indicator demonstrates that we have been consistently close to, or in some years, have exceeded our target income. Prior to the credit crunch, the target was exceeded through successful rent review negotiations and enhanced rentals for new lettings. Following several years when the credit crunch and the ensuing recession made the commercial property market very difficult, the latter part of 2012/13 saw an improvement in occupancy levels. This meant that rental income slightly exceeded our annual budgetary target during 2012/13, and the trend continued during 2013/14.

34

PI Code & Short Name	**CP:REG007_6a.7 Registration Services - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Wendy Thomas
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 our monthly comment cards and analysed on a monthly basis	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs	REG524_6a.7	Current Value	100%
		Current Target	100%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	

Trend Chart Commentary:
The target is set at 100% reflecting the high customer satisfaction rates recorded. Performance since Q1 2012/13 has consistently met the target.

The target for 2014/15 will remain at 100%

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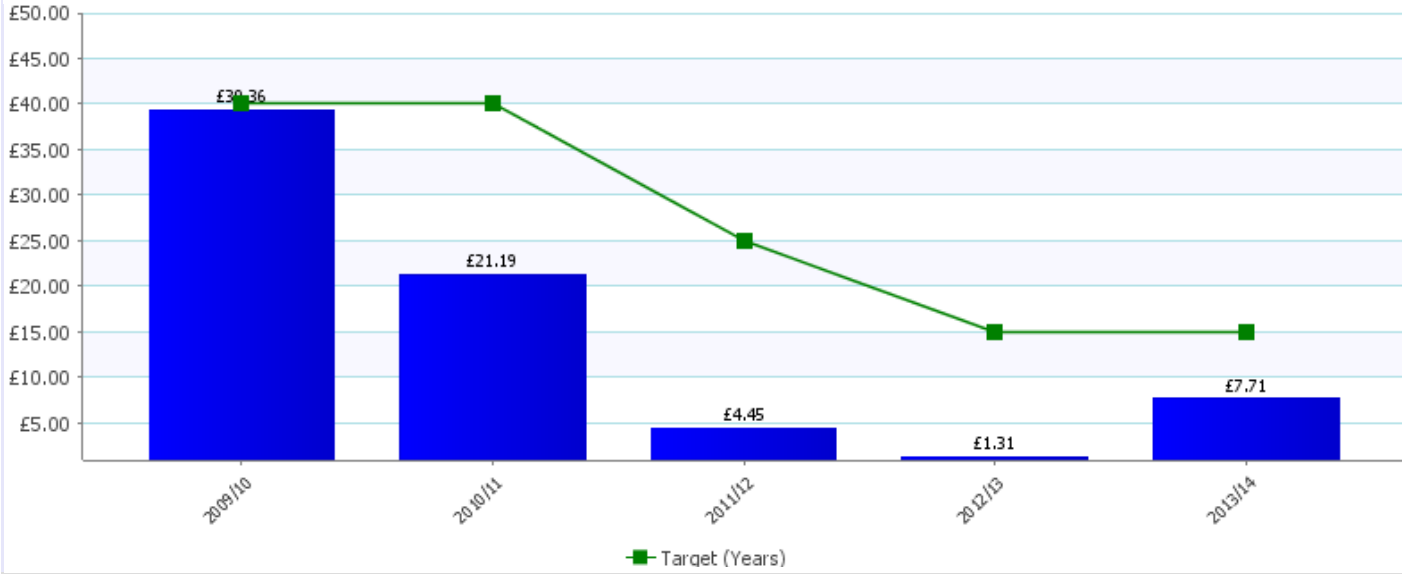| PI Code & Short Name	**P:REG014_6b.2 Registration Services - Percentage accuracy for the registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages.**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Wendy Thomas
Description	On an annual basis, National Registers of Scotland inspects the recording of the Birth, Death and Marriage registers for accuracy and the results are reported annually	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	97.84%
		Current Target	97%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	

Trend Chart Commentary:

When registering births and deaths it is vital that details are recorded accurately and our staff's work is assessed by the (NRS) on an annual basis. The assessment identifies minor errors for example in spelling or translation. The (NRS) national target is set at 97%.
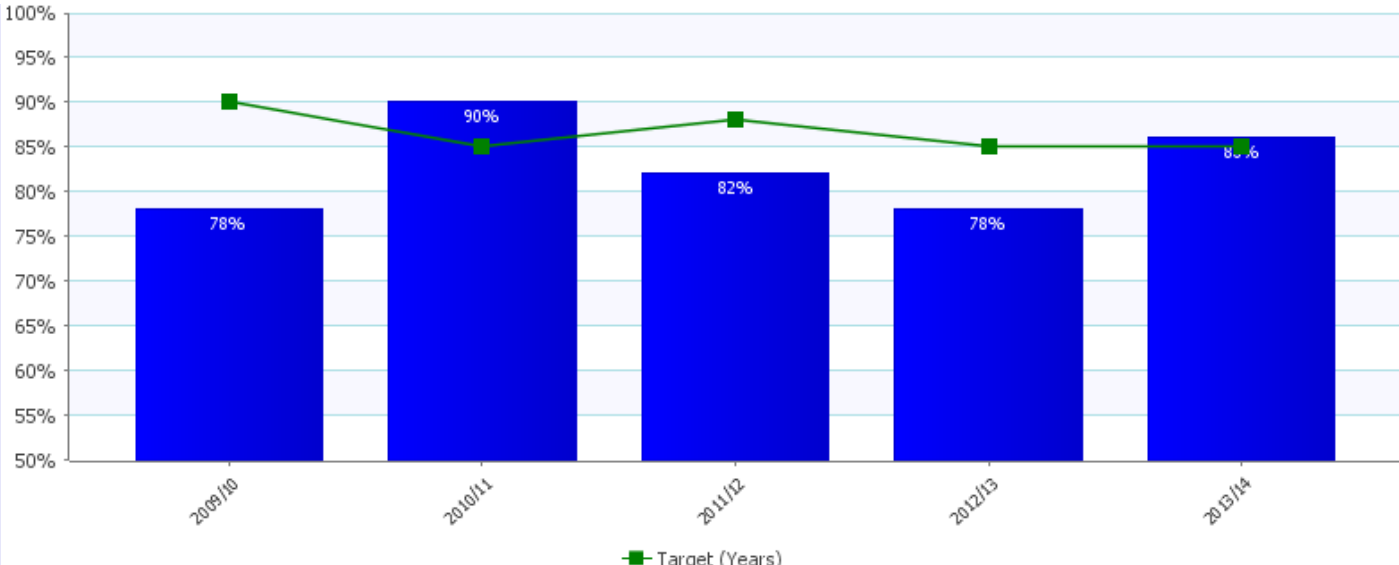
2013/14 - We exceeded the target 97% by achieving a performance of 97.84 during this period.

2012/13 - Slightly below the target of 97%, with performance 96.91%.

2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 - During this period performance ranged from 97% in 2009/10 to 96.56% in 2010/11 before rising again to 96.9% in 2011/12. The slight dip in 2010/11 was due to a number of new staff taking on the role as part of other duties. This means they do not undertake registration tasks as often as full time staff and so errors can occur through lack of practice.

The target for 2014/15 will remain at 97%.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:REG041_9a.1a Unit cost of each registration of a birth, marriage or death. This does not include handling requests for copies of birth, marriage and death certificates.**	PI Owner	zAS_PIPublicAdmin; Wendy Thomas
Description	This indicator shows the cost of each registration event, excluding handling requests for copies of birth, death and marriage certificates is calculated annually and analysed against previous years and other authorities to ensure we deliver best value for money	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	£7.71
		Current Target	£15.00
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	25-Aug-2014

Trend Chart Commentary:

The overall unit cost for registration has increased in 2013/2014 due to an increase in payments made to staff.

The previous performance had seen a reduction of costs over the years as the service moved premises and reduced its overall staffing compliment.

It is expected that performance will return to lower values in subsequent years.

The target is set at £15 to reflect national average unit costs.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV027_6b.2 Percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax correspondence processed within 10 working days of receipt.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator is cumulative across the financial year. Where correspondence is received within the Revenues Unit in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax enquiries, the aim is to process 87 percent within 10 working days of receipt.	Traffic Light Icon	⚠️
Linked PIs		Current Value	82%
		Current Target	87%

| | Notes on Latest Data Entry | 15-Oct-2014 Performance in quarter 2 2014/15 fell to 82% against a target of 87%. 15,984 items of correspondence were processed with 3,416 processed outwith the target.

Performance was impacted due to the large volumes of recovery notices being issued in quarter 2 for Council Tax and the resulting resource required to deal with customer enquiries. In addition we have a number of new staff who continue to undergo training. Performance is expected to improve in quarter 3 of 2014/15. |

Trend Chart Commentary:

We have reviewed the target for 2014/15 and set it at 87 percent. This target has been set taking into account the impact of the new Revenues Unit structure and recruitment of remaining staff vacancies. Performance improved in 2013/14 so achieving this target will allow us to further improve this level of performance in 2014/15.

2014/15: Quarter 2 performance is below target due to a focus to clear work outwith the 10 working day target.

2014/15: Quarter 1 performance is below target due to the large amount of mail received in April following the Council Tax annual billing and the initial Council Tax arrears recovery.

2013/14: Performance for 2013/14 is 86% and is above the target of 85%. Improvement has been made in 2013/14 following the implementation of the new Council Tax and benefit system in the previous year as staff training and familiarisation with the new system has been delivered.

2012/13: Performance for 2012/13 is 78% and is below target due to the impact of the introduction of a new Council Tax and benefit system in July 2012. The implementation of the new system has resulted in

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the need to deliver a full programme of staff retraining. It has taken staff time to become familiar with the new system functionality so processing times took longer.

2011/12: Performance for 2011/12 is 82% and was impacted due to the implementation of a new workflow system (W2) in quarter 2 of the year. Following a period of development and familiarisation with the new system performance has improved significantly from quarter 2.

2010/11: Performance in 2010/11 was 90% against a target of 85%.

2009/10: Performance in 2009/10 was 78% against a target of 90%.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV028_6b.2 Percentage of Council Tax and Business Rates mail dealt with accurately at first time of processing.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator is cumulative across the financial year. Where incoming mail is received within the Revenues Unit in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax enquiries, we will aim to process 94.5 percent of this mail accurately at the time of receiving it	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	95%
		Current Target	94.5%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	23-Oct-2014 Performance at Q2 2014/15 is 95% and has improved from Q1 2014/15. A total of 858 accuracy checks have been carried out with 815 confirmed as accurate.

Trend Chart Commentary:

2014/15: Quarter 2 for 2014/15 is 95% against a target of 94.5%. Accuracy has improved from quarter 1 2014/15.
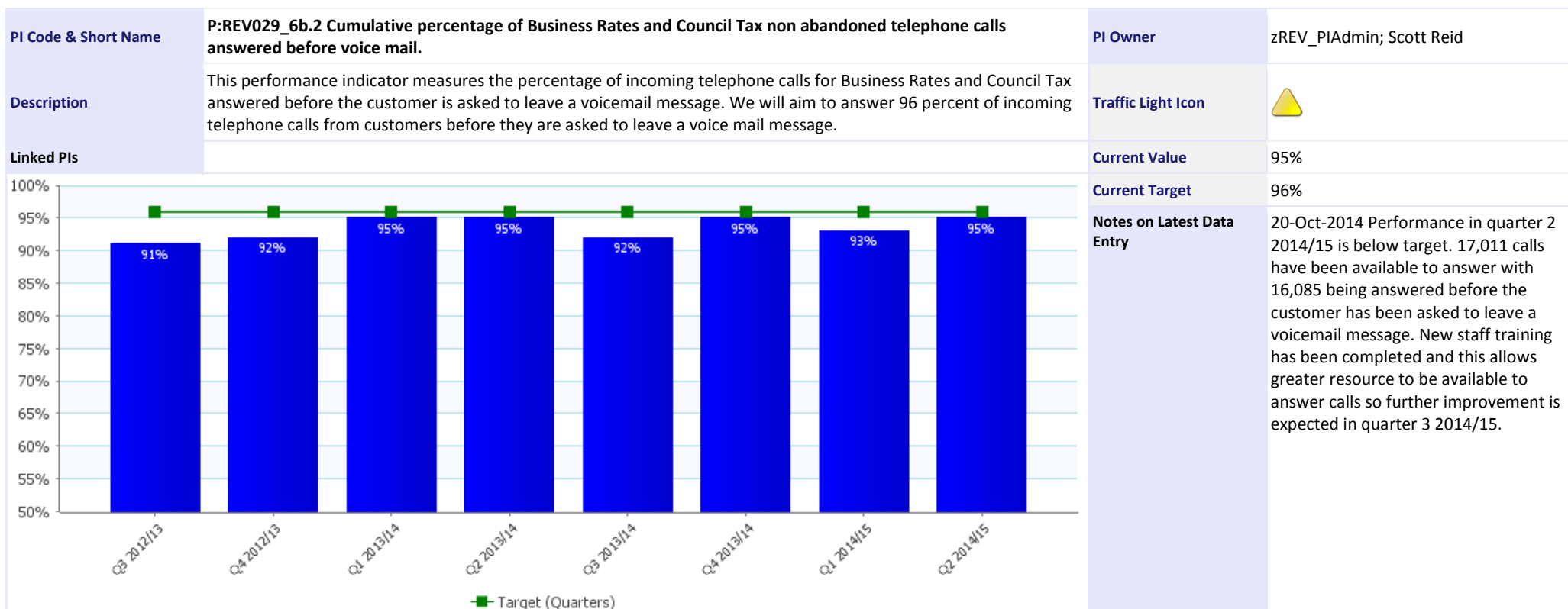
2014/15: Quarter 1 for 2014/15 is 94.7% against a target of 94.5%. Accuracy has dropped slightly but remains above target.

2013/14: Performance for 2013/14 is 94.8% and is above the target of 94%. Improvement has been achieved as staff have become familiar with the practices and processes of the new Council Tax and Business Rates system.

2012/13: Performance for 2012/13 is 94.03% and is above the target of 94%. Improvement has been achieved as staff became more familiar with the new system.

2011/12: Performance for 2011/12 is 93.6% and is marginally below the target of 94%. During this year we introduced a new workflow system and accuracy was impacted as staff had to become familiar with new practices and processes.

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2010/11: Performance in 2010/11 was 94% against a target of 90%.

2009/10: Performance in 2009/10 was 90.3% against a target of 90%.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV029_6b.2 Cumulative percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax non abandoned telephone calls answered before voice mail.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of incoming telephone calls for Business Rates and Council Tax answered before the customer is asked to leave a voicemail message. We will aim to answer 96 percent of incoming telephone calls from customers before they are asked to leave a voice mail message.	Traffic Light Icon	⚠
Linked PIs		Current Value	95%
		Current Target	96%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	20-Oct-2014 Performance in quarter 2 2014/15 is below target. 17,011 calls have been available to answer with 16,085 being answered before the customer has been asked to leave a voicemail message. New staff training has been completed and this allows greater resource to be available to answer calls so further improvement is expected in quarter 3 2014/15.

Trend Chart Commentary:

We have set a cumulative target of 96 percent and will measure our performance against it.

Q2 2014/15: Performance in Q2 2014/15 improved from the previous quarter as new staff training was completed allowing greater resource available to answer customer calls.

Q1 2014/15: Performance in Q1 2014/15 dropped from the previous quarter due to the impact of the Council Tax and Business Rates annual billing and the volume of Council Tax recovery documents issued in the quarter.

Q4 2013/14: Performance in Q4 2013/14 improved from the previous quarter but due to the impact of the increased numbers of Council Tax recovery documents issued in October 2013 overall performance for 2013/14 was 95% and fell just below the target of 96%.

Q3 2013/14: Performance in Q3 dipped as a result of the increased numbers of Council Tax recovery documents issued in October 2013.
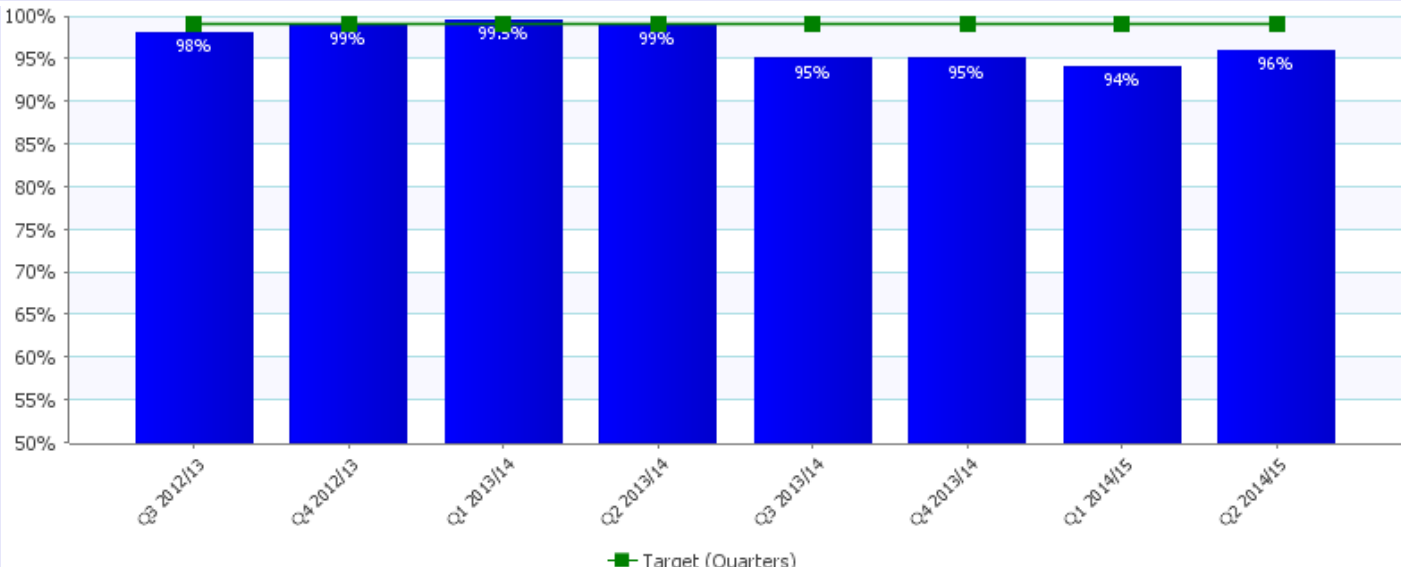
42

Q2 2013/14: Performance in Q2 has remained constant from Q1 2013/14 as significant numbers of Council Tax arrears notices were issued over the period.

Q1 2013/14: Performance in Q1 has improved significantly on Q4 2012/13 despite the issue of large volumes of Council Tax arrears notices over the period.

Q4 2012/13: Performance in Q4 has improved despite large volumes of arrears notices and annual bills being issued over Q3 2012/13.

Q3 2012/13: Performance in Q3 has been maintained in line with Q2 2012/13 despite large volumes of arrears notices being issued. Additional resource is in place so improvement in Q4 2012/13 is expected.

Q2 2012/13: Results have improved from Q1 2012/13 with performance at 95% in July 2012, 99% in August 2012 and 96% in September 2012. This has allowed the year to date figure to improve from 88% at the end of Q1 2012/13 to 91% at the end of this quarter.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV030_6b.2 Percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax customers called back within 2 working days of leaving a voice mail message.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of voicemail messages received from customers in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax telephone calls that are returned within two working days of the voicemail message being left. We aim to return 99 percent of calls within two working days of the voice mail message being left. The customer is advised of this when leaving a message so it is important that this target is met.	Traffic Light Icon	⚠
Linked PIs		Current Value	96%

		Current Target	99%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	14-Oct-2014 Performance in quarter 2 2014/15 improved by 2% from the previous quarter with 950 voicemails being left by customers and 914 being returned within 2 working days. New staff training and development has been completed and will allow for greater resource to answer customer call backs. Performance is expected to improve further quarter 3 2014/15.

Trend Chart Commentary:

We have set a target of 99 percent and will measure our performance against it.

Q2 2014/15: performance as at Q2 2014/15 was 96% against a target of 99%. 950 voicemails were received and 914 were returned within two working days.

Q1 2014/15: performance as at Q1 2014/15 was 94% against a target of 99%. 559 voicemails were received and 523 were returned within two working days.

Q4 2013/14: performance as at Q4 2013/14 was 95% against a target of 99%. Performance in Q4 was impacted by the issue of the Council Tax annual bills in February/March 2014.

Q3 2013/14: performance in Q3 fell as a result of the increase in the issue of Council Tax recovery documents in October leading to a significant increase in the level of voicemails.

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Q2 2013/14: performance in Q2 fell slightly from the Q1 2013/14 but remains on target.

Q1 2013/14: performance in Q1 shows 449 voicemails were received with 447 being returned within two working days. Performance for the quarter is better than the target set.

Q4 2012/13: performance in Q4 shows all of the 539 voicemails received were returned within two working days. This performance has allowed us to meet our target for the year.

Q3 2012/13: performance in Q3 shows that only 7 out of 552 voicemails received were not returned within target however the volumes of voicemails returned within target were not sufficient to improve overall performance for the year. Maintaining high performance in Q4 2012/13 is expected.

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PI Code & Short Name	**P:REV042_6a.7 Percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service delivered by the Revenues Unit as good or excellent.**	PI Owner	zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers that rated our overall service as good or excellent. Collected as part of our ongoing survey, customers are asked to rate the quality of the service provided as; excellent, good, adequate, poor, very poor or not applicable. The survey is a random but representative sample of the customers that accessed the service and the results are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.	Traffic Light Icon	✅
Linked PIs		Current Value	89.4%
		Current Target	80%
		Notes on Latest Data Entry	28-Jul-2014 From the 2,202 surveys issued a total of 345 were returned (15.7%). 340 customers responded to this question with 304 rating the overall quality of customer service delivered as good or excellent.
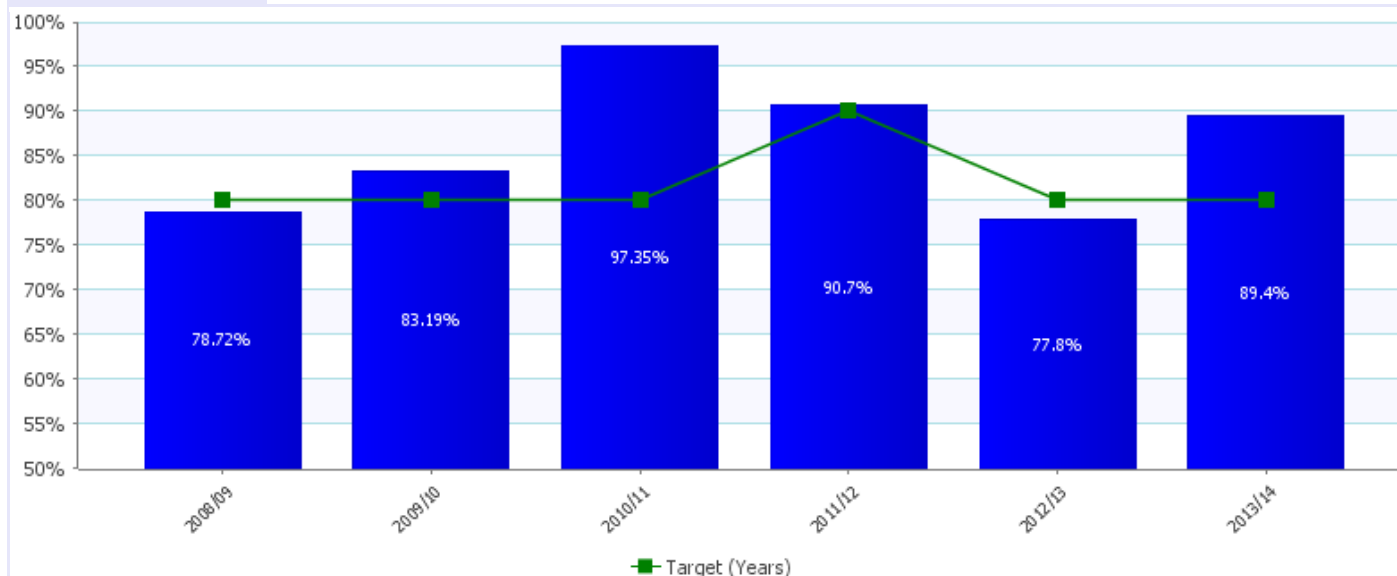
Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2013/14:

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

The target for 2014/15 is 90%

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2012/13:

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

The target for 2013/14 is 80%.

2011/12:

From the 1,758 surveys issued, 255 (14.5%) were returned. Although analysis of these results has shown a reduction in the percentage of respondents who rated the overall quality of service delivered as good, very good and excellent, we have exceeded our target. Future surveys will be assessed on the percentage of respondents who rate the overall quality of service delivered as good or excellent therefore the target for 2012/13 is 80%.

The target for 2014/15 is 85%.

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![West Lothian Council logo]

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WELFARE REFORM: QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND ESTATES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Panel of 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 action which the Council is 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, the introduction of the Council Tax Reduction scheme, the introduction of the Scottish Welfare Fund and the introduction of a Benefit Cap – all administered by local authorities in Scotland. In addition further DWP-led welfare reforms are now being introduced.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Corporate and service performance indicators are being reviewed as implications of the reforms become clear.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Outcome 1 - Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed

Outcome 2 - We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities |

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		Outcome 3 - Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business
		Outcome 4 - We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities
		Outcome 5 - People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances
		Outcome 7 - We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group is continuing to assess the financial implications for the council.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	The initial impacts of Welfare Reform were reported to the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) on 13 May 2012. Regular quarterly updates have been reported since that time.
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 UK Government's Welfare Reform programme is having a significant impact on customers and communities in West Lothian.

In addition to the welfare reforms impacting directly on local authorities other DWP-led reforms are now being implemented. These include: the new Claimant Commitment and Conditionality regime for jobseekers, and the consequent increase in benefit sanctions; the change from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and a subsequent loss of income; and the changes in the administration of the Work Capability Assessment regime, and the potential risk of benefit delays for ill/disabled people.

In addition, other major changes continue to be implemented, including the reforms to incapacity benefit, changes to child benefit, the 1% uprating of working age welfare benefits, all of which, according to the "Report on Local Impact of Welfare Reform", published by the Welfare Reform Committee of the Scottish Parliament on 23 June 2014, will result in an estimated loss of £55 million per annum in West Lothian.

D.2   Report on the Impact of Welfare Reform

As previously reported to the Panel, the Welfare Reform Committee of the Scottish Parliament recently published a report based on commissioned research on the local impact of welfare reform from the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research at Sheffield Hallam University

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The figures in the report cover all the major welfare reforms that have been underway in Scotland since 2010. Some of these reforms are now fully in place, others are currently underway and a small number are a long way from full implementation.

The report notes that the overall scale of the financial loss in Scotland (now estimated to be £460 per adult of working age per year) is more or less on a par with the GB average (£470). Scotland has a larger loss than South East England (£370) but less than Wales (£550), London (£520) or North East England (£560).

The loss in West Lothian is estimated at £470 per adult of working age.

The report also notes that arrangements have been put in place to avoid passing on the DWP's 10% reduction in Council Tax Benefit and to mitigate the impact of the size criteria restrictions in 2014/15. The report notes that the financial impact of these two welfare reforms is being funded by public sector budgets in Scotland rather than by benefit claimants.

The impact on Scotland as a whole

Overall, when the reforms have come into full effect it is estimated that they will take more than £1.6bn a year out of the Scottish economy, or around £460 a year for every adult of working age.

The individual welfare reforms vary greatly in the scale of their impact, in the number of individuals or households affected, and in the degree of financial loss on those affected.

In Scotland, and indeed in the rest of the UK, the biggest financial impact comes from the reform of incapacity benefits – an estimated loss in Scotland of £500m a year.

Changes to Tax Credits and the one per cent up-rating of most working-age benefits from April 2013 also account for substantial sums - £300m and £290m respectively.

Child Benefit changes affect the largest number of households – more than 600,000 in Scotland. This is because the three-year freeze in Child Benefit rates up to April 2014 (instead of up-rating with inflation) impacted on all recipients.

The household benefit cap, by contrast, impacts on relatively few households in Scotland – just 1,900 according to the latest figures – but the average financial loss for each of these households is relatively large.

A key point about the welfare reforms is that they often impact simultaneously on the same individuals and households.

The effect is that many individuals and households face a loss of benefits from more than one source. Estimating how much particular groups will lose *in total* is not easy and this is not an exercise the UK government has so far undertaken.

Details of the types of households most affected by each of the reforms are given in Appendix 1.

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D.3   Discretionary Housing Payment Fund

The DHP Fund can provide additional support to households where a tenant is in receipt of Housing Benefit but where there is a shortfall between their rent and the amount of Housing Benefit paid.

DHP can be paid to alleviate short term hardship, or to assist those most affected by the welfare reforms, particularly those affected by the size criteria restrictions in the social rented sector.

As previously reported, having secured funding to fully mitigate the effects of the "bedroom tax" in West Lothian for 2014/15, the council adopted a new "light touch" simple application process which provides for a prompt award of DHP with the minimum possible burden being placed on each applicant.

As a result of this initiative, as at 3 November 2014, a total of 3,680 awards have been made, with £1,695,000 paid or committed. This represents around 99% of those affected by the bedroom tax in West Lothian.

A further 167 awards totalling £107,500 have been made to households who face a rent shortfall for other reasons, e.g. the restrictions in the Local Housing Allowance for those renting in the private sector, or the effects of the overall benefit cap.

D.4   Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) replaced the DWP's Discretionary Social Fund in April 2013. The scheme is a national one covering the whole of Scotland, but delivered by local authorities who are responsible for administering Community Care Grants and Crisis Grants.

The annual SWF budget for West Lothian in 2014/15 is £1,066,391, the same as the budget for 2013/14.

As previously reported, the council is delivering Community Care Grants and Crisis Grants on target throughout the year. At the end of October 2014 cumulative expenditure stood at £686,390 or 64% of the annual budget.

D.5   Universal Credit

Universal Credit involves the integration of six core benefits and tax credits into a single payment. It is planned that this Universal Credit payment will bring together: income-based (means-tested) Job Seekers' Allowance; income-based Employment Support Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. The plan is to make one single monthly payment to the household.

The housing support element of Universal Credit, replacing Housing Benefit, is to be included in this single payment and will be paid to the claimant not to the landlord.

The claimant will then be responsible for paying their rent and managing their monthly budget in the same way as those in receipt of a salary. The DWP believe that this will help to ease the transition into work. However there will be alternative payment arrangements for those regarded as vulnerable or who fall into a proscribed level of rent arrears.

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Roll out of Universal Credit

As was previously reported to the Panel, the roll out of Universal Credit for new claimants of working age is taking place on a reduced scale and on a more gradual timetable than originally planned.

As of 20 October 2014, there were 63 Jobcentres, mostly in North West England taking claims for Universal Credit. The DWP plan is that there will be 92 by Christmas.

On 29 September 2014, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced that Universal Credit will begin to be rolled out to all Jobcentres and local authorities across the country from early next year.

On the same day the Universal Credit Programme Director wrote to all Local Authority Chief Executives in Great Britain outlining the plans. This marks a significant acceleration of roll-out but will still only be for new claims involving mostly single people and simple cases:

> "National expansion of Universal Credit will commence from February 2015 for single claimants previously eligible for Jobseekers Allowance…This approach is consistent with our *test and learn* commitment to expand the service in a safe, secure and controlled manner".

As the letter states, this will begin *from* February 2015. It will take place in tranches from that date. West Lothian Council is not part of the tranche to commence in February 2015 and has not, at this stage, been provided with a date.

The position of pensioners, who are currently in receipt of Housing Benefit, is not going to change until at least 2017/18.

D.6   The Smith Commission

Following the result of the referendum of 18 September 2014, the Prime Minister announced that Lord Smith of Kelvin had agreed to oversee a process to discuss further devolution commitments, with a timetable for developing proposals by 30 November 2014 and draft legislation to be published by 25 January 2015. The Commission will include consideration of potential devolution of aspects of welfare.

COSLA and others have lobbied the DWP to make the case that, given the uncertainty surrounding the devolution of further powers to the Scottish Parliament, including some welfare powers, Scotland should be excluded from the first tranches of Universal Credit roll-out from February 2015, until the situation is clear. Downing Street has said that there would be no alterations to the Universal Credit timetable. A spokesman said, "Our position is that we don't want to pre-empt the [Smith] commission and until it has reported Government business will continue as planned."

D.7   Universal Support – delivered locally

The DWP has recognised that some people will need help with the new requirements of Universal Credit, such as understanding the new system, being able to access and use the online claim process, and managing a monthly budget

Following consultations with local authorities, social landlords, and third sector organisations, which West Lothian Council has been involved in since February 2013, the DWP has now announced a new support scheme: '*Universal Support –*

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delivered locally' (previously known as the Universal Credit Local Support Services Framework).

Universal Support is a delivery partnership. DWP, local authorities and service providers (such as social landlords and charities) will work together to agree how best to deliver services at a local level. The aim is a joined-up, holistic service, particularly for vulnerable claimants and those with complex needs, helping the claimant move from welfare dependency where possible, and giving support to more vulnerable people.

Details of the funding and timetable for Universal Support have not yet been announced, however council officers are currently working with local Jobcentre managers and others to plan for the future roll-out and to address various issues that this will raise, including digital inclusion, financial inclusion, and identifying and assisting vulnerable tenants.

This work is being co-ordinated by the Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group under the direction of the Anti-Poverty Strategy Board.

E.   CONCLUSION

The ongoing welfare changes present significant challenges to our customers, our communities and to the council itself.

As the changes take effect, officers are assessing the cumulative effects in order to develop and shape work going forward.

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 partners to address issues arising.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 – Households affected by the Welfare Reforms.

Contact Persons:

Ian Alcorn, Welfare Reform and Legislation Advisor
01506 282522
Ian.alcorn@westlothian.gov.uk

Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Estates
28 November 2014

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Appendix 1

Types of households and individuals affected by the welfare reforms

A brief description of each reform is given below, followed by the types of households and individuals most affected by each of the reforms. This draws on information in the UK government's *Impact Assessments* and also on a wider understanding of which groups claim which benefits.

Housing Benefit – Local Housing Allowance

These changes affect those claiming Housing Benefit who rent from private sector landlords. The new rules apply to rent levels, 'excess' payments, property size, age limits for sole occupancy, and indexation for inflation.

Those most affected:

- Low income households, mostly of working age, in the private rented sector
- Under-35s, often single men, in the private rented sector
- Families with large numbers of children in the private rented sector

Non-dependant deductions

Increases in the deductions from Housing Benefit and other income-based benefits to reflect the contribution that non-dependant household members are expected to make towards the household's housing costs

Those most affected:

- Low-income households with grown-up children living at home

Household benefit cap

New ceiling on total payments per household, applying to the sum of a wide range of benefits for working age claimants

Those most affected:

- Large out-of-work families in high rent areas

Disability Living Allowance

Replacement of DLA by Personal Independence Payments (PIP), including more stringent and frequent medical tests, as the basis for financial support to help offset the additional costs faced by individuals with disabilities

Those most affected:

- Less severely disabled of working age, mostly older, mostly out-of-work

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Incapacity benefits

Replacement of Incapacity Benefit and related benefits by Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), with more stringent medical tests, greater conditionality and time-limiting of non-means tested entitlement for all but the most severely ill or disabled

Those most affected:

- Out-of-work, mainly older adults with ill health or disability, except the most severely ill or disabled

Child Benefit

Three-year freeze and withdrawal of benefit from households including a higher earner

Those most affected:

- All households with children (a little)
- Households with higher earners (a lot)

Tax Credits

Reductions in payment rates and eligibility for Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit, paid to lower and middle income households

Those most affected:

- Low-to-middle income families with children, including workless households
- Part-time workers on less than 24hrs a week

One per cent up-rating

Reduction in annual up-rating of value of most working-age benefits

Those most affected:

- Everyone on the main working age benefits (JSA, IB/ESA, IS, HB(LHA), Tax Credits)

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West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2014 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2014)

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report sickness absence rates for the 6 month period from 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014 and to provide an update on the ongoing application of the council's Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel notes the content of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs
		Being honest, open and accountable
		Providing equality of opportunities
		Developing employees
		Making best use of our resources
		Working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The policy seeks to strike a balance between effective management of sickness absence and the promotion of a healthy workforce taking into account the council's obligations under Equality legislation.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The sickness absence SPI for 2014/15 is higher than for 2013/14, 2012/13 and 2011/12 respectively but lower than the previous 3 years.

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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 managed through service budgets.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None
VIII	**Other consultations**	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

The council introduced a revised Policy & Procedure on Sickness Absence Management on 1 May 2010. Further revisions were approved by Council Executive on 13 December 2011 and 13 November 2012. This report provides an update on how the policy has operated over the 6 month period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014.

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 2014 to 30 September 2014 is set out in Appendix 1. The SPI for September 2014 is 4.19%. While the SPI is higher than for the same period in 2013/14, 2012/13 and 2011/12, it is lower than in any of the other previous 3 years.

Disregarded Absences

One of the key changes to the Policy & Procedure on Sickness Absence introduced in December 2011 and further developed in November 2012, relates to the disregarding of periods of absence relating to hospital treatment, industrial injury or bereavement of a family member or dependant when determining whether or not an employee should progress to the relevant stage of the Policy.

In the period from 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014, of all days lost to sickness absences 23.06% were disregarded under this provision; however these days lost still count towards the sickness absence SPI.

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 2014 to 30 September 2014 is set out in Appendix 2.

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Of the eight council service areas, four report sickness absence rates above the council target of 3.6% (Area Services, Housing Construction & Building Services, Operational Services, and Social Policy), however all those services have seen a decrease in absence from the last quarter.

In comparison with the position at 30 September 2013, four of the eight services have reported an increase in absence rates. However Area Services, Housing Construction and Building Services, Planning Economic & Development and Social Policy have all reported a decrease during that period.

Long –Term Absence (1 April 2014 – 30 September 2014)

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

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

- Of the total number of 2646 days lost in Area Services, 1804 (68.18 % of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by 36 employees

- Of the total number of 7785 days lost in CHCP-Social Policy, 5322 (68.36%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by 103 employees

- Of the total number of 4282 days lost in Housing, Construction & Building Services 3120 (72.86%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted by 57 employees

- Of the total number of 11,090 days lost in Operational Services, 8733 (78.75%) of those days were due to long term absence and were accounted for by 150 employees

The average percentage days lost due to long term absence across the four services was 73.55%. The percentage of absence due to long term absence across the council as a whole was 73.64%.

The average length of long term absence during the period (determined by dividing the total of 27574 days lost across council services by the total number of occasions of long-term absence) was 53.54 days.

Analysis of Types of Absence

During the period concerned, the most common reason for all absence across the council falls under the Mental and Behavioural category (10,037 cases) which constitutes (26.37%) of all absences. The most prevalent cause of long term absence is also in the same category (8537 cases) constituting 30.96% of all long term absence.

Of the 27,574 days lost due to long term sickness absence across the authority, 7172 days (27.96 %) were disregarded under the terms of the Policy on Managing Sickness Absence.

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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 2014, compared to the previously reported positions.

Table 1

	Counselling	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Total at 30 September 2014	**551**	**453**	**168**	**1172**
Total at 30 June 2014	509	361	125	995
Total at 31 March 2014	448	301	95	844
Total at 31 December 2013	537	290	103	930
Total at 30 September 2013	514	271	110	895
Total at 30 June 2013	510	239	103	852
Total at 31 March 2013	495	226	114	835
Total at 31 December 2012	447	256	118	821
Total at 30 September 2012	462	346	160	968
Total at 30 June 2012	505	424	186	1115
Total at 31 March 2012	538	562	206	1306
Total at 31 December 2011	624	576	189	1389
Total at 30 September 2011	753	538	132	1423
Total at 31 March 2011	937	348	65	1350

The total number of employees on stages has shown an increase from 995 as at 30 June 2014 to 1172 at 30 September 2014.

It is difficult to say with any certainty why the numbers of employees on stages have increased over the last 6 months other than to suggest it may be a reflection of the general increase in absence rates over the authority.

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A breakdown of live cases as at 30 September 2014 is set out below in Table 2.

Table 2

	Counselling	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Cases on going from 30 June 2014	432	365	142	939*
New cases since 30 June 2014	119	88	26	233
Total	**551**	**453**	**168**	**1172**

*The figure of 939 is the figure at 30 June 2014 less the 56 employees who subsequently came out of monitoring.

Table 3 below shows an analysis of the movement in the 1172 cases that were live as at 30 September 2014. This figure includes 233 new cases added since 30 June 2014. (Figures in bold represent those whose position has not moved since the last quarter).

Table 3

	Stage (as at 30.06.14)			
Stage (as at 30.09.14)	Counselling	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Counselling	**471**	50	6	527
Stage 1	74	**374**	30	478
Stage 2	6	29	**132**	167
Total	**551**	**453**	**168**	**1172**

During the period 1 April 2014 – 30 September 2014, the sickness absence team has also worked closely with managers on 1341 continuous absence cases across the council. As at 30 September 2014, 1006 of these cases had been concluded (976 returns to work, 15 absence related dismissals, and 15 employees who left for other reasons), with 335 live continuous absence cases across the council.

ii)   Sickness Absence Management – Specific Interventions

The HR absence management team will continue to work closely with managers across the council, to reduce absence rates.

Sickness Absence Monitoring and Management of Cases

Specific measures currently in place;

- Monitoring of actions taken under the Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence to ensure all cases are being appropriately managed.

- Working with managers to ensure appropriate interventions are made timeously in cases of long term absence.

- Working with occupational health to ensure provision of high quality occupational health reports which support managers in effectively managing sickness absence.

Exploration of targeted interventions in relation to the two most common causes of absence, i.e. mental health and musculoskeletal conditions.

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<u>Employee Health and Wellbeing Framework</u>

An Employee Health and Wellbeing Framework has been developed, which supports outcome 5 of the Council's People Strategy in ensuring a health and safe workforce.

The framework sets out a process for developing an Employee Health Profile for service areas which is to be refreshed annually. The profiles will be used to inform annual service action plans for each service which take into account other planned actions based on Employee Survey results and relevant health and safety actions.

It is proposed to develop 30 Employee Health Profiles and 8 Service Action Plans by the end of December 2014. The council's Health Working Lives (HWL) Steering Group, which includes trade union representation and representation from the Health Improvement Team, will have a key role in supporting the delivery of the actions set out in those Service Action Plans. In this regard the Healthy Working Lives representatives have been appointed to represent the interests of each service area.

HWL service representatives will work with Human Resources to analyse employee health data including sickness absence trends and causes to ascertain appropriate actions to be recommended to service managers. Service representatives will also work collectively with other members of the HWL Steering Group to deliver a corporate programme of promotional health events. The HWL Steering Group recently helped support the council's reaccreditation of the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award.

E.   CONCLUSION

Following the introduction of the revised Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence in May 2010 the council reported significant reductions in sickness absence rates. During 2014/15 there has been an increase in sickness absence rates.

The council is developing a more targeted strategy for managing absence, tailored to individual services and supported by ongoing robust application of the current Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Policy & Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence

Appendices/Attachments: 2

1.   Sickness Absence SPI% History – Full Council
2.   Sickness Absence SPI% all services – 2014/15

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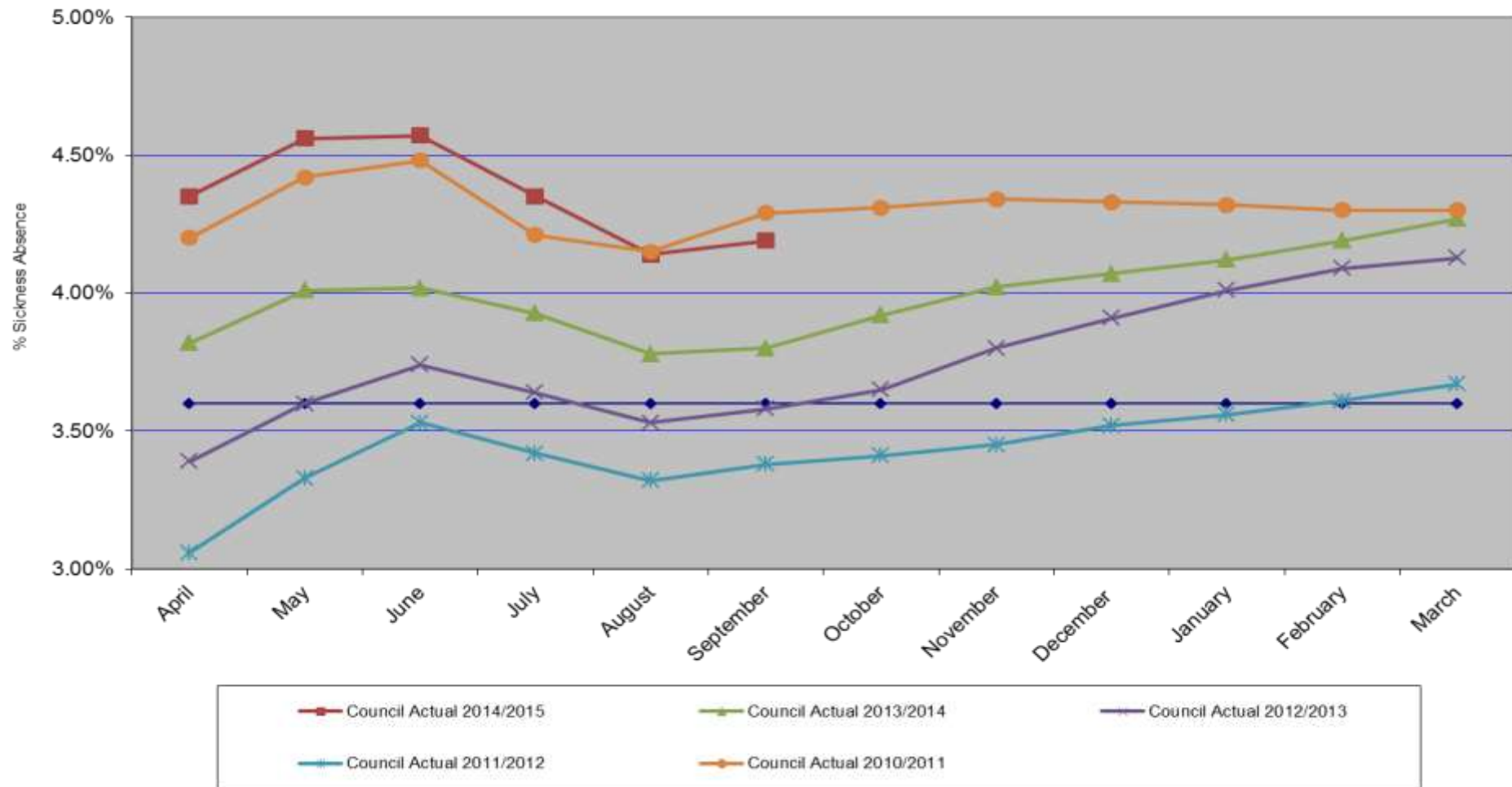
Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Date: 28 November 2014

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Sickness Absence SPI% History Full Council

Legend:
- Council Actual 2014/2015
- Council Actual 2013/2014
- Council Actual 2012/2013
- Council Actual 2011/2012
- Council Actual 2010/2011

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Sickness Absence SPI% all Services - 2014/15
(Education Split)

8

West Lothian Council
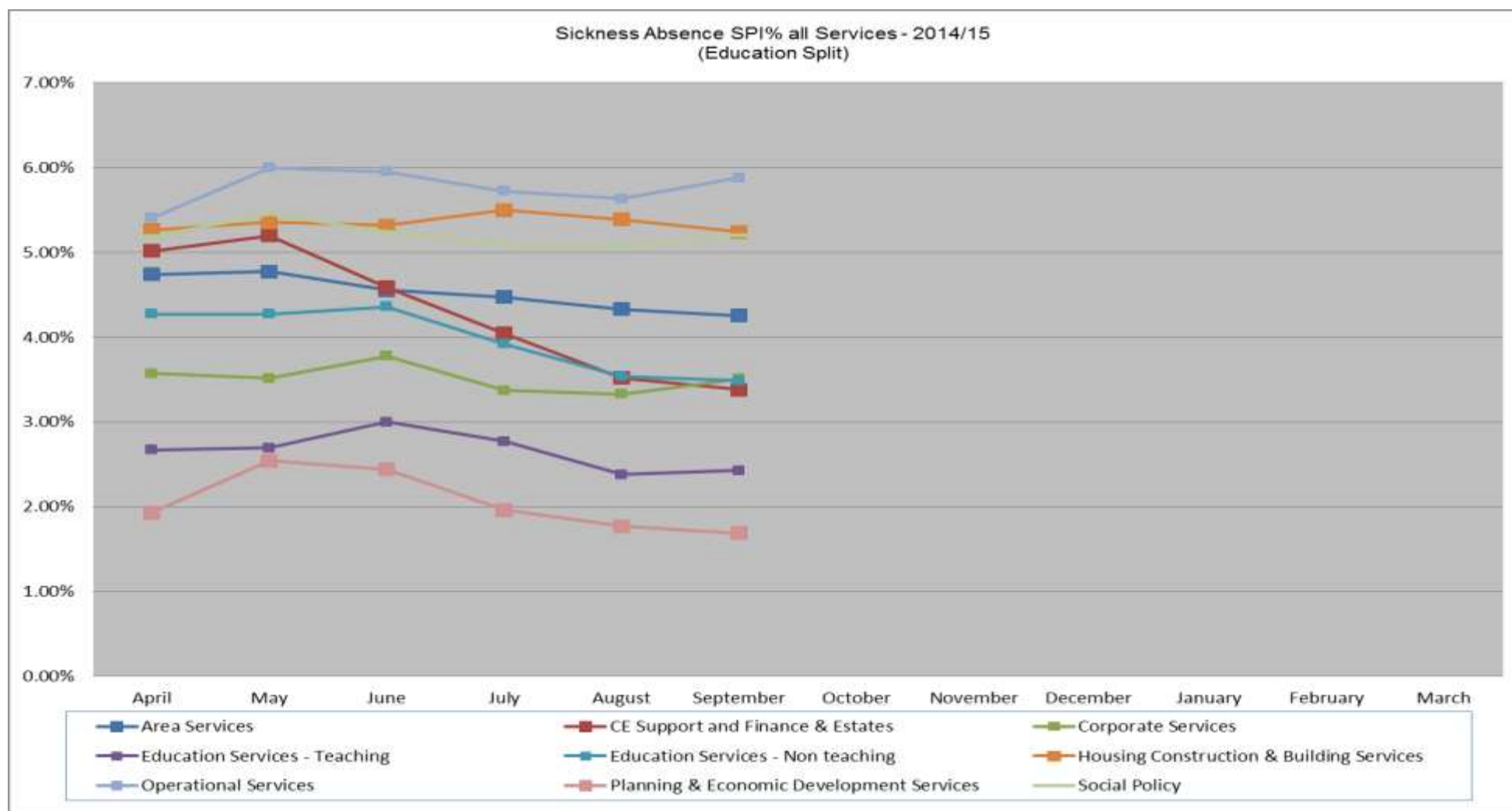
PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

REPORTING OF MINUTES FROM SCOTLAND EXCEL CHIEF OFFICERS MANAGEMENT GROUP

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND ESTATES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the members of the Scotland Excel Chief Officers Management Group meetings held on 8 August 2014.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

To note the minutes of the Scotland Excel Chief Officers Management Group meetings held on 9 August 2014.

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)**	None.
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**	N/A
VIII	**Other consultations**	None.

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

The Scotland Excel Chief Officers Management Group meets on a quarterly basis and involves Chief Officers from an invited selection of Councils.

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E.   CONCLUSION

The minutes of the meetings of the Scotland Excel Chief Officers Management Group are attached to this report for the information of the members of Partnership and Resources PDSP.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

N/A

Appendices/Attachments: Appendix 1 - Minute of Meeting of Scotland Excel Chief Officers Management Group – 8 August 2014.

Contact Person: Christine Leese-Young, Tel No.01506 283259

Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Estates
28 November 2014

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MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCOTLAND EXCEL

CHIEF OFFICERS MANAGEMENT GROUP

HELD ON 8th AUGUST, 2014

PRESENT

G Whitefield (North Lanarkshire Council); and J Forrest (West Lothian Council);

BY VIDEOLINK

C Innes (Aberdeen City Council); S Barron and S Beswick (both Highland Council), D Robertson and S Blacklock (both Scottish Borders Council)

IN ATTENDANCE

D Cowie Director; and B Murray, Procurement Development Manager (both Scotland Excel)

APOLOGIES

S Bruce and N Smith (both City of Edinburgh Council) and D Martin (Renfrewshire Council)

1.**MINUTE**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Management Group held on 9th May 2014.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2.**COMMUNITY BENEFITS REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Scotland Excel providing an update on Scotland Excel's approach to Community Benefits, outlining the progress that had been made in this regard together with an overview of the types of benefits being delivered from the Scotland Excel portfolio.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

3.**GENERAL PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Scotland Excel which provided an update on the development and activities of Scotland Excel since the last meeting in terms of the five strategic aims of Scotland Excel.

DECIDED: That the report be noted

4.**SPEND ACTIVITY AND ESTIMATED FORECAST SAVINGS REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Scotland Excel providing an overview of the spend activity and forecast savings achieved through the Scotland Excel collaborative contacts. The report captured spend data provided by the suppliers over four quarters from 1st April 2013 (Q1 2013/14) to 31st March 2014 (Q4 2013/14). The report covered 59 contracts in quarter 1, 58 contracts in quarter 2, 60 contracts in quarter 3 and 53 contracts in quarter 4. The report provided details of the reported spend and estimated savings for each Council and the estimated savings split by contract.

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DECIDED: That the participation levels and associated benefits forecast be noted.

5. **UPDATE ON THE CONTRACT DELIVERY SCHEDULE**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Scotland Excel providing an update on the Contract Delivery Schedule and Contract Delivery Plan, summarising the progress made to date and delivery against priorities previously defined and focusing on variance commentary.

DECIDED: That the progress to date be noted.

6. **RISK REGISTER UPDATE REPORT**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Scotland Excel providing an update on the Risk Register that was maintained to assess threats/risks that could impact of the delivery of Scotland Excel's organisational objectives and to identify actions that could be taken to mitigate such risks.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

9. **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

There was submitted a Revenue Budget Monitoring report by the Treasurer and the Director of Scotland Excel relative to the revenue budget position for Scotland Excel as at 18th July 2014.

DECIDED:

(a) That the report be noted; and

(b) That future reports made reference to the amount held in Scotland Excel reserve funds.

10. **VALEDICTORY**

The Chairman indicated that this was the last meeting of the Group at which Dorothy Cowie, Director of Scotland Excel would be in attendance. On behalf of the officers involved with Scotland Excel he thanked her for all her hard work and wished her all the best for the future.

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West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

ANALYSIS OF BETTER OFF: WEST LOTHIAN ANTI-POVERTY ACTION PLAN 2012-2014

REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the panel of the work undertaken by the Anti-Poverty Development Group between 2012- 2014 and provide an analysis of progress towards alleviating poverty in West Lothian.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Partnership and Resources PDSP notes the contents of the report and, in particular, that, between 2012 – 2014, partners:

- maximised the disposable income of West Lothian residents by £58m;
- addressed inequalities through targeted income maximisation;
- encouraged 1200 school children to begin saving with local credit unions;
- tackled youth unemployment through the Steps N2 Work programme with 576 opportunities created and filled;
- promoted ongoing learning and skills development with a range of short courses to improve financial skills; and
- engaged with local communities to seek their views and suggestions to tackle poverty.

It is further recommended that the Partnership and Resources PDSP notes the intention to submit the report to the CPP Board for information.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The West Lothian Anti-Poverty Action Plan supports the West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.

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IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The work of the Anti-Poverty Development Group has a positive impact on a range of indicators relating to anti-poverty.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business.
		People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Time limited budget has been allocated to support the work of projects aligned to the anti-poverty strategy.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None.
VIII	**Other consultations**	Consultation has taken place with the anti-poverty development group and the anti-poverty strategy board.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

The Anti-Poverty Development Group has developed a two year action plan which has been reviewed each year since the development of the Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy in 2012.

The action plan is comprised of 15 outcomes relating to seven key priorities which are fully aligned to the Single Outcome Agreement. Actions are delivered by a range of key partners and the plan reflects the work undertaken through both mainstream service delivery and additional anti-poverty initiatives to alleviate poverty in West Lothian. Appendix One: Analysis of Action Plan 2012-14 shows that, of the 70 actions undertaken over the past two years, sixty-one have been achieved, with nine which require additional support in 2014-15 to achieve the targets. The anti-poverty development group has agreed additional measures to support the amber actions. As part of the review, it has been agreed by the Anti-Poverty Strategy Board that the anti-poverty development group and the welfare reform group will merge. This is to utilise the collective expertise and knowledge better to support delivery of the strategy. Key achievements over the two year period are outlined below.

Income Maximisation

The Anti-Poverty Strategy aims to help vulnerable people and those most in need by providing targeted income maximisation services across West Lothian. In the period 2012-2014 vulnerable adults had their disposable income maximised by £58m as a result of advice and assistance from the Advice Shop and West Lothian Citizens Advice Bureau. The activities undertaken as part of the Anti-Poverty Strategy are responsive and adaptive to local need with outreach information and advice sessions available across West Lothian.

The Anti-Poverty Strategy recognises that inequalities exist and must be tackled. Welfare reforms have hit vulnerable groups hardest, including families and disabled people. Targeted work has been undertaken to address the equality gap and improve the situation of significantly impacted West Lothian residents. Disabled people facing changes to their benefits have been informed and supported with advice and assistance to help mitigate the impact of the changes. In the first year of a targeted

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campaign, 527 ill or disabled people have engaged with advisors to become better informed and prepared for changes to their benefits. Large families in West Lothian affected by an overall benefit cap have been visited at home by welfare rights and employability advisors with a view to encouraging a return to work where possible. Of 54 affected households, 44 accepted the offer of a home visit; 29 individuals were referred to Access2Employment and Discretionary Housing Payments were secured to cover the shortfall caused by the cap while they engaged with employability services.

Employability

Tackling unemployment among young people has been a high priority since the initial development of the anti-poverty action plan in 2012. Over the two year period 2012-2014, 576 opportunities have been created and filled by 16-24 year olds in West Lothian through the Steps N2 Work programme. This has included wage subsidy roles, modern apprenticeships and West Lothian Jobs Fund placements. A key focus during 2013/14 was ensuring that university graduates had the relevant skills and experience to secure sustainable employment after earning a degree. In the first year of the graduate work experience programme, 13 placement opportunities were created and filled by young graduates. Of the successful candidates, four have gone on to secure further employment as a result of the experience gained in their graduate role.

Financial Inclusion

A key tenet of the Anti-Poverty Strategy is the promotion of ongoing learning and skills development with a particular focus on improved financial awareness and responsibility. Children and families have been supported to begin saving with local credit unions through a development project delivered in West Lothian schools. In total 1208 school children have opened credit union accounts since the project launch in 2012. The project aims particularly to encourage children likely to be living in poverty to begin saving with a view to teaching children the benefits of saving and improving financial awareness among parents. Over the 2012-2014 period, 245 new accounts were opened by children in receipt of free school meals which equates to 20% of all accounts opened through the schools development project.

Adults in West Lothian are supported and encouraged to develop their skills and confidence in financial matters through a range of short courses delivered by Adult Basic Education. Courses, including Cash Confident, More for Less and Cooking by Numbers, aim to help adults develop the practical skills and confidence required to improve their financial outlook. Between 2012 and 2014, 104 people took part in financial courses with 98% indicating improved confidence upon completion of their course.

In order to raise awareness of both the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the wide range of services offering help and support with financial matters, community participation has been encouraged in many ways. An annual Money Week has been delivered in October each year providing events and advice sessions across West Lothian with 2239 people attending between Money Week 2012 and 2013. Money Week 2014 commences on Monday 6 October and has the theme of 'get involved, get digital'.

Engagement

A community reference group made up of West Lothian residents has been formed to gather thoughts and opinions about poverty by those directly affected. Suggestions and views from the reference group are used to inform the events held during Money Week and play an integral part in the ongoing development of the annual action plan.

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<u>Additional Support</u>

Nine of the actions in the report did not reach their respective targets. Of these, five were new actions for 2014/15 and there have been challenges for the partners in setting up activities, engaging with potential customers and ensuring referring partners were aware of the new activity. The development group has looked at ways in which it can better support partners to reach targets including promotion, co-working and sharing resources. West Lothian Credit Union set up a project to offer jam jar accounts to help mitigate the effects of universal credit. The delay in the roll out of universal credit has meant there has been a significant challenge in engaging potential customers in this new product. Partners are revising targets to better reflect the circumstances in which they are operating and this is reviewed on a regular basis by the anti-poverty board.

E.   CONCLUSION

The analysis of the West Lothian anti-poverty action plan 2012 – 2014 highlights the progress made since the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy towards mitigating the effects of poverty. The outcomes achieved on the wide range of activities undertaken by key partners shows the difference that partnership work and targeted intervention has made to people at risk of or experiencing poverty in West Lothian. Over the period 2014-17, the action plan will continue to be developed to reflect the on-going effects of welfare reform alongside actions which will support individuals and families to be 'better off'.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

West Lothian Community Planning Partnership 'Better Off: Anti-Poverty Strategy 2014-2017'

Appendices/Attachments: One

Appendix 1: Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy Action Plan Analysis 2012-2014

Contact Person: Elaine Nisbet, Welfare Advice and Adult Basic Education Manager (acting) Tel 01506 282936 E mail Elaine.nisbet@westlothian.gov.uk
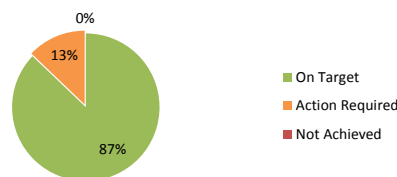
Steve Field
Head of Area Services

28 November 2014

4

Progress Summary

The action plan is comprised of a total of 70 actions. Of these actions:

• 61 were achieved or on target at the end of 2013/14

• 9 require some action in 2014/15 to meet targets

Overall Progress at Year End 2013/14

- On Target
- Action Required
- Not Achieved

0%

13%

87%

Anti Poverty Action Plan Review April 2012 - March 2014

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Economony and Income						
Outcome 1: West Lothian Citizens are less at risk of poverty and financial exclusion as a result of having their disposable income maximised						
1.1 (1)	West Lothian residents will be helped to maximise their disposable income through intervention and support from West Lothian Council Advice Shop and Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian (CABWL)	Percentage of West Lothian adult residents who have their disposable income increased as a result of intervention	WLC Advice Shop, Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian	Annually 4% of the working age population of West Lothian will have their disposable income maximised	On target	15.1% of the working age population of West Lothian (115,000) had disposable income maximised by a total of £58.2 million.
1.1 (2)	West Lothian residents are able to save and borrow money at fair rates of interest	Number of new Credit Union members New collection points opened with assistance from WLC	West Lothian Credit Union	Credit Union membership will increase each year. Baseline - 800 new members per annum	On target	1771 new Credit Union members 900 adult members 871 junior members
1.1 (3)	People affected by welfare reform have access to financial advice and income maximisation checks	Number of people advised/ supported through welfare reform Number of people who retain entitlement to Employment & Support Allowance following intervention	WLC Advice Shop	Between March 2012 - March 2015: 1000 people will receive advice and support with welfare reforms 300 ill/disabled people will retain entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance 200 ill/disabled people will retain entitlement to disability benefits 100 people will retain entitlement to passported benefits	On target	1261 West Lothian residents received advice and support with the impact of welfare reform 113 successful claims/appeals for Employment & Support Allowance worth £620,117 in total. Average award = £105.50 per week 177 successful claims for Disability Living Allowance and it's replacement benefit Personal Independence Payment worth £1,119,882 in total. Average award = £121.67 per week 187 Discretionary Housing Payments secured worth £64,347 in total.
1.1 (4)	The effects of the changes to welfare will be minimised for those vulnerable residents in West Lothian who are ill or disabled by help from CAB West Lothian at dedicated advice surgeries held in General Medical Practices throughout the area	Number of people who receive advice via GP surgery sessions	CAB West Lothian	450 ill/ disabled people will be protected from the effects of welfare changes each year	Action Required	467 clients received advice and support through outreach sessions delivered by Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian. **Further information:** The Outreach project launched in October 2013. The number of people advised through these sessions increased significantly since this date. On target to achieve in 2014/15
1.1 (5)	Regular advice sessions will be held in St Johns Hospital	Number of people advised via hospital session	WLC Advice Shop	Deliver advice sessions once per month at St John's Hospital	On target	Fortnightly advice sessions currently being held on a drop in basis with advisors engaging with 15-20 people per 2 hour session. **Further information:** Service to be extended following the opening of Macmillan Day Centre at St John's Hospital expected in May 2014.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Outcome 2: West Lothian adults are empowered to make responsible financial decisions and be more economically active						
1.2 (1)	West Lothian residents will have access to face to face money advice sessions that will help them budget more effectively and plan for the future	Number of people who receive face to face financial education	CAB West Lothian	300 clients per year will receive face to face financial advice and support	On target	893 West Lothian adults recevied face to face financial advice through the Money Advice Service to help them plan and budget more effectively
1.2 (2)	Business Gateway will encourage and support individuals who operate in the shadow economy into legitimate trading	Number of individuals progressing into formal self-employment	WLC Economic Development Business Gateway	100 people per annum are supported into legitimate trading with support from Business Gateway	On target	Business Gateway supported 264 individuals into legitimate trading
1.2 (3)	Children and families will receive incentives to begin saving through the Credit Union Schools Development Project	Number of primary school children who begin saving with local Credit Unions Number of accounts opened by children entitled to Free School Meals	Credit Unions	625 school children will begin saving with local Credit Unions by the end of 2014/15	On target	**West Lothian Credit Union:** 458 new junior accounts opened through the schools development project 96 accounts opened by children entitled to free school meals (21%) **Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union:** 750 new junior accounts opened through the schools development project 149 accounts opened by children entitled to free school meals (20%) **Total savings = £73,168**
1.2 (4)	West Lothian residents have access to appropriate banking facilities and support to use them	Number of Credit Union 'jamjar' accounts opened	West Lothian Credit Union	JamJar account project launched during 2013/14 and accounts opened	Action Required	No JamJar accounts opened. **Further information:** The project has been affected by the delay in roll-out of Universal Credits as this was the main focus to help people with the impact. There have also been delays with some landlords signing up to this project.
1.2 (5)	People are empowered to use the small claims and supported via a representation service for complex cases	Total value of awards made through successful small claims cases	WLC Advice Shop, CAB West Lothian	Total value of awards made through successful small claims cases is increased each year. Baseline - £15000 per annum	On target	Total value of awards through the small claims project £15,509
1.2 (6)	Exercise to map green provision and activity in the statutory, third and private sectors in West Lothian carried out in 2013/14	Progress of project	WLC Advice Shop	Project complete by end 2013/14	On target	A West Lothian Reuse & Recycle Directory has been produced detailing how and where to save money by adopting 'green' practices. Directory awaiting final approval and plans are in place to make the information accessible online.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Employability and Economic Development						
Outcome 1: West Lothian residents have the ability to secure and sustain employment						
2.1 (1)	Deliver Integrating Employment and Skills service in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus	Number of referrals per month Percentage of referrals who attend appointments	Skills Development Scotland	Maintain or increase average number of referrals Baseline - 10 referrals per month (average) Increase percentage of referrals who attend appointments Baseline - 70% of referrals engage with appointments	Action Required	9 referrals to Skills Development Scotland per month for Integrating Employment and Skills service 61% or referrals engaged with the service Further information: During 2013/14, unemployment figures dropped, and as a consequence referrals reduced. On target to achieve a revised target of 8 referrals per month in 2014/15 in line with lower unemployment figures.
2.1 (2)	Promote My World of Work web service to all	Number of registrations	Skills Development Scotland	6000 registrations in West Lothian per annum	On target	346,000 registrations for My World of Work online portal throughout Scotland **Further information:** Although local authority specific figures were unavailable year by year, 2013/14 mid year figures indicate there have been 9429 registrations in West Lothian since launch
2.1 (3)	Jobcentre Plus vacancies are available to West Lothian residents via Universal Jobmatch and highlighted to partners	Number of active Universal Jobmatch accounts (companies and jobseekers) Number of partners vacancies highlighted to	Jobcentre Plus	Increase the number of claimants actively using Universal Jobmatch Maintain or increase the number of partners vacancies are highlighted to	On target	1807 employers registered on Universal Jobmatch in West Lothian. 189 active accounts There are 15521 jobseekers registered with Universal Jobmatch. 2738 accounts are active jobseekers The Highlighted Vacancies information is e-mailed to 19 separate organisations and to 35 individuals within these organisations
2.1 (4)	Jobcentre Plus advisers will work with customers to identify and provide the help and skills they need to move towards and into the labour market	Number of Jobseekers Allowance claims in West Lothian	Jobcentre Plus	Decrease in number of Jobseekers Allowance claimants in West Lothian	On target	2012/13: average of 4409 jobseekers per quarter 2013/14: average of 3557 jobseekers per quarter 19% reduction in number of jobseekers between 2012 - 2014
2.1 (5)	Access2employment (A2E) delivery outreach employability session in communities of high unemployment	Number of clients who register with Access2Employment per annum Percentage of clients who progress to a positive destination	WLC Access2Employment	750 clients register with Access2Employment per year 50% progress to a positive destination.	On target	2475 clients registered with Access2Employment employability service 1486 progressed to a positive destination (60%)
2.1 (6)	West Lothian Council Business Gateway will target business support actions to attract and support businesses which provide higher paid and better quality job opportunities	Number of jobs safeguarded Number of additional jobs secured	WLC Economic Development Business Gateway	300 jobs supported through Economic Growth Plan	On target	534 jobs safeguarded as a result of assistance provided to target businesses 251 projected additional jobs secured through investment support
2.1 (7)	West Lothian residents are signposted and supported to access employability services	Number of referrals to Access2Employment per month	WLC Advice Shop Access2Employment	15 clients per month are referred from the Advice Shop to Access2Employment services.	On target	346 referrals made from Advice Shop to Access2Employment services
2.1 (8)	Deliver Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) redundancy service in conjunction with partners	Number of companies supported through PACE Number of employees supported through PACE	Skills Development Scotland	100% of companies in West Lothian receive the offer of PACE services	On target	51 employers used PACE redundancy service 1666 employees facing redundancy were provided with careers advice and assistance through PACE
2.1 (9)	Additional opportunities will be created for young people	Number of wage subsidy places created/ filled Number of West Lothian Jobs Fund places created/filled Number of Modern Apprenticeships created/filled	WLC Access2Employment	410 opportunities will be created and filled by end 2014/15	On target	Steps N2 Work programme created: 427 Wage Subsidy places 50 modern apprenticeship opportunities 90 West Lothian Job Fund places for young people in West Lothian 9 voluntary sector wage subsidy opportunities
2.1 (10)	Job opportunities for university graduates will be created through an Access2Employment pilot scheme	Number of graduate opportunities created/ filled	WLC Access2Employment	12 graduate opportunities created and filled each year	On target	13 graduate work experience placements created and filled. 4 graduates secured employment as a result of the programme.
2.1 (11)	Job opportunities are created for West Lothian veterans through the wage subsidy scheme	Number of opportunities for veterans created/filled	WLC Access2Employment	Project launched in 2013/14	On target	Programme was formally launched in September 2013. To date, 3 businesses have expressed an interest and advisors are progressing these enquiries.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Outcome 2: Young people increase their participation in employability programmes and are able to engage effectively in employment and training programmes						
2.2 (1)	Deliver Career Information and Guidance (CIAG) service to unemployed 15-17 year olds (and those 18 year olds at the first point of transition) with emphasis on the use of My World of Work	Number of interventions with unemployed young people	Skills Development Scotland	5,091 CIAG interventions with unemployed young people per year	On target	8395 CIAG interventions provided to unemployed young people **Further information:** Skills Development Scotland continue to provide CIAG services to unemployed young people on a case management basis. 3078 interventions between April - October 2013 . End of year data not available due to changes to performance reporting system. Target number of interventions met for 2013/14 reporting period
2.2 (2)	Deliver CIAG service to school pupils S4 - S6 (senior phase of Curriculum for Excellence)	Number of interventions with pupils (new indicator 2013/14) Percentage follow up of school leavers through School Leaver Destination Report Percentage of school leavers who secure positive destinations	Skills Development Scotland	3800 individual engagements delivered per annum 100% school leavers followed up 87% of school leavers secure positive destinations	On target	3907 individual engagements delivered to pupils during 2013/14 4600 group engagements delivered to school pupils during 2013/14 100% of school leavers followed up through School Leaver Destination Report 2012-2014 - 90% of 2012/13 school leavers confirmed in a positive destination
2.2 (3)	Increase access to universal CIAG service of college students with particular emphasis on My World of Work	Number of customer interventions	Skills Development Scotland	Increase number of interventions per annum Baseline - 700 interventions	On target	702 CIAG interventions with college students
2.2 (4)	West Lothian Council Business Gateway will assist jobless young people into self employment	Number of jobless individuals progressing into self employment	WLC Economic Development Business Gateway	Increase the number of unemployed young people progressing into self employment per year Baseline - 50 per annum	On target	203 unemployed young people were assisted into self employment

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Housing						
Outcome 1: People in West Lothian can find a sustainable place to live and have affordable, quality housing options available to them that are sustainable in the long term						
3.1 (1)	Homelessness is prevented for people in West Lothian	Percentage of unintentional homeless for whom permanent accommodation is secured Number of evictions prevented Number of successful Mortgage to Rent applications Number of people assisted through the Rent Payment Campaign (new indicator 2013/14)	West Lothian Council Housing Needs Advice Shop/ CABWL	67% of homlessness applications secure permanent accommodation 720 evictions prevented per annum 35 successful Mortgage to Rent applications each year	On target	73% of homeless applicants were provided with a secure tenancy during 2012/13 75.6% of homeless applicants were provided with a secure tenancy during 2013/14 3.5% increase in number of homeless applicants securing permanent accommodation 1579 evictions prevented with assistance from the Advice Shop 73 successful Mortgage to Rent applications were made during 2013/14 with support from the Advice Shop and CAB **The Rent Payment Campaign 2013/14:** 96 referrals received. 29 households engaged with campaign (30%) Out of the 29 houssholds who engaged with the campaign; 6 have cleared their rent account balance as a result of campaign intervention 11 have made arrangements to make payment to work towards clearing their arrears 44 benefit claims have been made, 31 of which have been successful so far increasing disposable income by £32075
3.1 (2)	Encourage the provision of quality housing options in the private sector	Number of registered landlords in West Lothian Number of accredited landlords in West Lothian	West Lothian Council Landlord Registration	Annual increase in the number of registered and accredited landlords subject to market conditions.	On target	West Lothian landlords 2012/13: 4447 registered landlords 29 accredited landlords West Lothian landlords 2013/14: 5340 registered landlords (20% increase) 32 accredited landlords (10% increase)
3.1 (3)	West Lothian Council and partners will provide affordable new build housing	Number of new affordable homes built in West Lothian	WLC Housing, Construction & Building Services, Registered Social Landlords	1000 new homes built by 2017	On target	395 West Lothian Council new build homes completed from 2012 - 2014 142 Registered Social Landlord built homes between 2012 - 2014
3.1 (4)	Housing condition in West Lothian is improved in both the social and private sectors	The number and percentage of properties meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard Percentage of private sector properties requiring urgent repair	WLC Housing, Construction & Building Services, Registered Social Landlords, Private Sector Landlords	100% of West Lothian Council housing stock will meet Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015	On target	2011/12 (latest available data) 73.1% of West Lothian Council housing stock met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (9438 of a total 12,906 dwellings) 2012/13 (latest available data) 85.25% of West Lothian Council housing stock met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (11,123 of a total 13,048 dwellings) 16.6% increase in WLC housing stock meeting SHQS

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Outcome 2: West Lothian residents are less at risk of fuel poverty through increased knowledge and understanding of energy issues and support to budget better						
3.2 (1)	People save money on fuel as a result of home visits in relation to heating use advice and help to access grants, better tarriffs and payment options	Amount of money saved as a result of reduced fuel consumption	West Lothian Council Advice Shop	£280,000 per annum saved as a result of energy advice	On target	£827,260 saved through heating use advice and savings associated with energy efficiency measures.
3.2 (2)	Schools continue to provide sustainable education as part of the curriculum and participate in the Eco Schools Scheme	Number of schools registered with Eco Schools Number of schools with Green Flag	WLC Education	Annual increase in the percentage of schools achieving eco status and Green Flag status	On target	94% of West Lothian schools had achieved eco status at end 2013/14 63% of schools achieved Green Flag status
3.2 (3)	All social housing stock will have at least 100mm of loft insulation, lagged hot water tanks/pipes and cavity wall insulation.	Percentage of West Lothian Council housing stock compliant with Scottish Housing Quality Standard	WLC Housing, Construction & Building Services	100% of West Lothian Council housing stock will meet Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015	On target	At end of 2011/12 80.4% of council housing stock met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard under the criteria for energy efficiency (10370 of 12906 dwellings) At end 2012/13 (latest available data) 91.49% of council housing stock met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard under the criteria for energy efficiency (11937 of 13048 dwellings) 13.6% increase in number of dwellings meeting SHQS criteria for energy efficiency
Health						
Outcome 1: People have access to affordable food options						
4.1 (1)	People in need have access to emergency food packages	Number of emergency food packages distributed by the West Lothian Food Bank	Trussell Trust West Lothian Food Bank	Maintain or increase availability of emergency food packages to people in need	On target	Food packages benefitted 3892 West Lothian residents during 2013/14 Most common reason for vouchers being issued; benefit delays, benefit changes and low income Most common family type in need of vouchers; single people followed by single parents Most common area requiring vouchers; Whitburn & Blackburn ward, Livingston South ward, Bathgate ward and Fauldhouse & Breich Valley ward
4.1 (2)	West Lothian Food Bank is supported by West Lothian Council and partners through the development of donation points in partnership centres	Number of donation points set up Frequency of collections	Anti-Poverty Strategy Development Group	3 partnership centres will have donation points set up	On target	Donation points set up in 3 partnership centres; Bathgate Partnership Centre, Strathbrock Partnership Centre and Civic Centre
4.1 (3)	Children in all primary schools regardless of free school meal entitlement and those young people in Secondary schools with entitlement to free school meals are provided with a healthy breakfast.	Percentage overall uptake of free breakfast Percentage uptake of free breakfast among pupils also entitled to free school meals	WLC Education	Annual increase in overall uptake of free breakfast Annual increase in uptake of breakfast by pupils also entitled to free school meals	On target	All primary school children are now entitled to a free healthy breakfast regardless of free school meal entitlement. Uptake measured at 13.1% for 2013/14 (5.3% with free school meals and 7.7% others) All secondary school students who are entitled to free school meals can also access a free healthy breakfast. Uptake measured at 75% for 2013/14
4.1 (4)	Explore the feasibility of using community green space to grow fresh, accessible produce through the Edible and Tasty Spaces Project	Overall usage of demonstration planters Feasability of project expansion	Rural Connect	Feasibility of project expansion is explored during 2013/14	On target	EATS project demonstration planters have been set up at SRUC Oatridge Campus. These are a major focal point to highlight to groups visiting the area. Planters were displayed at the National Gardening Festival 2013 and are planted with a variety of herbs and produce to be harvested at Rural Connect annual open day. Development of allotments and appropriate allotment training has been decided as a more relavant avenue for this type of work.
4.1 (5)	Good quality surplus food is redistributed from wholesalers to agencies who work with homeless and socially excluded people	Number of agencies receiving deliveries in West Lothian Total number of deliveries in West Lothian area	Cyrenians	Annual increase in number of agencies involved with Fare Share Maintain or increase the number of deliveries made in West Lothian per annum Baseline = 300 deliveries	On target	6 unique projects were undertaken in West Lothian during 2013/14 At end of year, 4 agencies receive deliveries in West Lothian 342 deliveries were made in total in West Lothian during 2013/14
4.1 (6)	The Food Poverty Working Group will identify and agree actions to alleviate poverty in West Lothian	Food poverty action plan developed	Cyrenians, WL Credit Union, Food Bank, Food Train, Poverty Alliance, NHS Lothian, CFINE	Actions to tackle food poverty are developed during 2013/14	On target	The Food Poverty working group have identified 2 indicators to take forward into 2014/15: • To investigate the setting up of a Social Supermarket where people on low incomes can access low cost food on a membership basis, as a bridge between food banks and high street shopping • To establish the causes of food poverty in West Lothian from users of food banks and consider how best these can be addressed through partnership working.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Outcome 2: Adults have the confidence and ability to live a healthy lifestyle on a budget for themselves and their children						
4.2 (1)	Cooking by Numbers' designed to improve literacy skills and teach skills for healthy eating on a budget, will be delivered to target populations	Number of courses delivered Number of participants	WLC Adult Basic Education	3 Cooking by Numbers courses delivered each year to 10 participants	On target	6 Cooking by Numbers courses delivered between 2012 - 2014 with 29 participants
4.2 (2)	Smokers in West Lothian will be helped, encouraged and supported to give up smoking	Number of successful outcomes	NHS Smoking Cessation Service	Annual increase in the number of quit attempts successful after 12 weeks	On target	During 2012 NHS Lothian recorded: 4285 quit attempts successful after 4 weeks (40.9% success rate at 4 weeks) 61% of successful outcomes after 4 weeks from 40% most deprived SIMD areas 1251 quit attempts successful after 12 weeks (11.9% success rate at 12 weeks) During 2013 NHS Lothian recorded: 4254 quit attempts successful after 4 weeks (37.7% success rate at 4 weeks) 52% of successful outcomes after 4 weeks from 40% most deprived areas 1312 quit attempts successful after 12 weeks (11.6% success rate)
4.2 (3)	'Get Cooking' and 'Wean the Weans' courses delivered in four locations and ready for delivery in three other locations	Percentage of families aware of healthy lifestyles and nutritious diet and have the means to provide both Number of attendees	WLC Health Improvement Team	10 Get Cooking courses delivered each year 4 Wean the Weans groups delivered each year	On target	35 Get Cooking courses delivered 12 Wean the Wean courses delivered to 50 people Evaluations show that people completing the courses feel more confident, skilled and knowledgable about healthy eating.
4.2 (4)	Financial education and support is offered to users of health related services in West Lothian	Number of services with referral system in place Number of referrals	WLC Advice Shop	Referral system in place by end 2013/14	Action Required	West Lothian Advice Partnership Network has been set up. **Further information:** In order to improve partnership work, the West Lothian Advice Partnership Network is now exploring options for a multi-partner referral system
Outcome 3: People live longer, healthier, more independent and fulfilling lives						
4.3 (1)	Vulnerable older people in West Lothian increase their disposable income	Number of older people with increased income Total value of increased income	WLC Advice Shop	600 older people increase disposable income per year Total value of increased income £2,964,000 per year	On target	7936 people over 60 received advice and assistance to increase their disposable income Total £13,868,388 extra income gained **Further information:** Welfare reform was the main focus of Advice Shop activity during 2013/14. Although provision of advice and assistance for people over 60 remained a priority, targeted campaign work was aimed at people of working age affected by benefit changes. The promotion of the Pensioner Income Maximisation Service has been identified as a priority for 2014/15.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
Education						
Outcome 1: Parents and carers receive the necessary support to ensure their children are ready to start nursery and school						
5.1 (1)	Deliver a range of interventions designed to improve confidence in parenting and improved self-worth	Number of referrals to Sure Start Percentage of referrals who engage with Sure Start Number of parents indicating improved confidence	WLC Sure Start	Maintain or increase engagement levels Increased number of parents who indicate improved confidence	Action Required	Sure Start supported a total of 2799 parents 158 referrals were received for Young Mums 2B 68.7% attended any group at all and 53.2% attended regularly 95 referrals recevied for Positive Steps groups; 77 agreed to start groups and 38 completed. Across all completed groups, improvement was noted in all 4 indicators of wellbeing, particularly anxiety and depression **Further information:** Attendance rates are well above Scottish average of 31% attending any group at all and 22% regular attendance
5.1 (2)	All children will have the opportunity to be appropriately clothed for school	Number of schools with a school clothing store set up Total spend on school clothing stores Number of claims made for school clothing grants Total value of grants	WLC Education	Annual increase in number of schools with a clothing store	On target	2012/13: 50 schools had a clothing store expenditure with total spend of £21,159. 4325 claims made for school clothing grants 2012/13 with total value of £670,875 2013/14: 54 school have clothing store expenditure with total spend of £27,422. Increase of 8% schools offering a clothing store 4373 claims for school clothing grants with total value of £689, 742
Outcome 2: Children and young people make good progress with educational achievements and attainments and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to proceed to adult working life						
5.2 (1)	Schools fully engage in money outcomes contained within the broad general education of the Curriculum for Excellence	Percentage of students successfully experiencing all outcomes and moving through Curricumlum for Excellence	WLC Education		On target	There are a wide range of experiences and outcomes available for students to achieve through the curriculum for excellence. On average, 93% of secondary school pupils successfully met numeracy outcomes at an approprate level in 2013/14 **Further information:** Action to be further developed in 2014/15 to reflect specific acheivements across money related outcomes
5.2 (2)	Long term absence is reduced through the introduction of the Attendance Improvement Management Service	Percentage attendance (average) Percentage authorised absence (average) Percentage unauthorised absence (average) Percentage exclusions (average)	WLC Education	Annual improvement in attendance Annual reduction in absences and exclusions	On target	Absence and exclusions all schools for 2012/13 session (Sept 12 - Feb 13) Average attendance: 94.12% Authorised absence average: 4.29% Unauthorised absence average: 1.53% Exclusions average: 0.04% Absence and exclusions all schools for 2013/14 session (Sept 13 to Feb 14): Average attendance: 94.95% **(0.8% increase)** Authorised absence average: 3.53% **(17.7% reduction)** Unauthorised absence average: 1.48% **(3.2% reduction)** Exclusions average: 0.03% **(25% reduction)**
5.2 (3)	Opportunities are promoted for students to study for and gain accreditation in SQA Personal Finance Award	Number of schools offering this opportunity Number of students achieving this award	WLC Education		Action Required	In 2013/14 out of 11 secondary schools, 4 offered an opportunity to study for SQA Personal Finance Award. 94 pupils achieved this award during 2013/14 **Further information:** Discussion with WLC education around target setting. Awaiting confirmation of target therefore amber until target agreed.
5.2 (4)	Schools participate in Fairtrade Fortnight	Number of schools participating in activities and actively seeking Fairtrade School status	WLC Education		Action Required	49 West Lothian schools and nurseries were registered with the Fairtrade Foundation at the end of 2013/14 22 schools have achieved full Fairtrade status 31 primary schools, 6 secondary schools and 1 additional learning needs school participated in Fairtrade Fortnight in 2013/14 **Further information:** Discussion with WLC education around target setting. Awaiting confirmation of target therefore amber until target agreed.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
5.2 (5)	Develop poverty seminars for secondary school pupils to be rolled out in 2014/15	Seminar developed and ready to be rolled out	WLC Advice Shop, WLC Education	Lesson plan developed by end 2013/14	On target	1 pilot seminar delivered in 2012/13 to 130 S3 pupils as part of Money Week 2012 activity. Advice Shop/ ABE have taken the lead on developing seminars to be delivered to 3 pilot schools during 2014/15
5.2 (6)	Schools and nurseries to participate in a themed "Money Week" to support students understanding of budgeting and money management	Number of schools participating in Money Week	WLC Education	Annual increase in number of schools participating in Money Week Baseline - 60%	On target	Approximately 60% of West Lothian schools participated in Money Week 2013 **Further information:** Majority of schools undertook activity to coincide with official Money Week in October A further 12% of schools held their own Money Week at different times in the school year
Outcome 3: Adult life chances are maximised by improving their educational achievement						
5.3 (1)	Adults improve skills relating to; literacy and numeracy, spoken and written English for speakers of other languages and lipreading and managing deafness. Adults are able to use their improved skills effectively in their work, personal and community lives	Number of students attending Adult Basic Education Percentage of students with access to accredited learning who achieve an initial qualification	WLC Adult Basic Education	450 adults attend ABE each year 20% gain accreditation	On target	1929 learners attended Adult Basic Education 81% of these learners were unemployed 19% gained accreditation during 2012/13 27% of learners achieved accreditation during 2013/14 **(42% increase)** 449 English as a Second or Other Langage (ESOL) students attended ABE 395 achieved or partly achieved their goal (88%) 23 ESOL learners achieved a qualification in Everyday Communication at SCQF level 2
5.3 (2)	Adults improve financial knowledge, skills and understanding through attendance at relevant short courses (Cash Confident, More for Less and Cooking By Numbers)	Number of students attending relevant short courses Percentage of students attending short courses who report increased confidence in practical financial skills	WLC Adult Basic Education	40 adults take part in relevant short courses each year 80% indicate increased confidence	On target	104 people took part in short courses designed to improve financial awareness and skills during 2013/14 98.5% indicated improved confidence as a result
5.3 (3)	Develop a strategy and action to increase take up of Individual Learning Accounts. Existing active programme of adult learning will continue to be developed and targeting of learners improved.	Number of people who apply for an ILA	WLC Adult Basic Education	Annual increase in the number of Individual Learning Accounts opened per year	On target	1954 Individual Learning Accounts opened during 2013/14
Community						
Outcome 1: Information is effectively communicated to West Lothian residents to enable people to manage their financial affairs						
6.1 (1)	West Lothian communities are more easily able to access the advice and assistance they require through sessions delivered in conjunction with key partners	Number of information roadshows undertaken Number of people engaged with through roadshows	WLC Advice Shop	Increased presence of Advice Shop in West Lothian communities	On target	A pilot project was undertaken during 2012/13 in which 6 isolated communities were visited by Area Services staff via the mobile library bus to raise awareness of financial inclusion services. During 2013/14, 3 community engagement 'Money Days' were undertaken in Polbeth, Bathgate and Whitburn - engaged with 303 people 36 awareness raising events/talks/presentatations were undertaken during 2013/14 1224 people engaged with through these events
6.1 (2)	Access to advice is improved in target areas in West Lothian	Regular advice session is set up at West Lothian Connected in Livingston Number of people advised through outreach session	WLC Advice Shop	Annual increase in the availability of outreach advice sessions in West Lothian	On target	West Lothian Connected advice session in place from 3/6/13. Drop in sessions available 3 half days per week and 1 full day set aside for pre-arranged appointments. Session being piloted in Broxburn in partnership with Business Gateway service.

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
6.1 (3)	Six major financial events, including an annual themed Money Week, will raise financial awareness and deliver financial education to West Lothian residents.	Number of people attending events Feedback from events	WLC Advice Shop	Annual increase in number of Money Week participants (baseline 1000 participants) 90% of attendees rate events as worthwhile attending	On target	2239 people engaged in Money Week over 2 consecutive years 150 people attended the launch of the Welfare Reform Campaign, 98% indicated that they found the event to be 'good' or 'excellent' 104 people attended a Just the Job employability fair which generated 48 referrals to Access2Employment 120 people attended the Better Off: Welfare Reform Conference with 92% stating that the event was 'good' or 'excellent' Better Off: Anti-Poverty Conference held in September 2013 - 114 attendees Health and Poverty Seminar held in December 2013 with approximately 90 attendees 97% agreed the event was worthwhile attending Crime and Poverty Seminar delivered in April 2014 with approximately 70 attendees. 93% agreed the event was worthwhile attending.
6.1 (4)	Review the branding and publicity of the Anti Poverty Action Plan to take into account the proposed revision of the strategy	Anti Poverty Strategy and Action Plan undergoes a substantive review	Anti Poverty Development Group	Review of Better Off: West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy completed by end 2013/14	On target	Following review and consultation on the Anti-Poverty Strategy, welfare reform and digital & financial inclusion have been incorporated into the strategy. An Anti-Poverty Strategy Board has been formed and have commenced meetings.
Outcome 2: Communities are able to do more for themselves						
6.2 (1)	People in smaller communities are able to access local financial advice through voluntary 'financial champions'	Number of volunteer financial champions Number of rural areas with financial champions in place	Financial Inclusion Network	Maintain or increase presence of volunteers financial champions in rural areas of West Lothian	On target	10 volunteer financial champions have been recruited and trained to deliver advice in 8 rural West Lothian communities
6.2 (2)	Residents likely to be affected by welfare reforms are kept updated with relevant information via the Better Off Anti-Poverty Bulletin	Number of bulletins produced and distributed per annum Number of people bulletin distributed to	WLC Advice Shop	Maintain or increase Better Off Bulletin subscription	On target	4 issues of the Better Off newsletter produced and distribted to 188 recipients during 2012/13 Quarterly bulletins produced and distributed throughout 2013/14 to 321 recipients - increase in number of recipients by 70%
6.2 (3)	West Lothian adults are supported to access digital and online services	IT Buddy' project undertaken Number of adults who access IT support	Digital Inclusion Working Group	Maintain or increase recruitment of volunteer IT Buddies	On target	11 IT Buddies have now been recruited. Training was delivered in January 2014 consisting of 6 sessions in conjunction with key partners including Access 2 Employment, Community Learning & Development and the Advice Shop. Buddies have now been allocated placements: 6 within Access 2 Employment Work Clubs 2 within the Bathgate Partnership Centre Employability Hub 1 within the Community Learning & Development Intro to IT drop in class. A second group of 8 volunteers were recruited and trained in March 2014. Of this group, 7 completed and have now been allocated: 3 people based at Business Gateway (from May 2014) 1 person at Boghall Community Wing (from May 2014) 3 people CLD (have started or waiting to start) (from May 2014)
6.2 (4)	Access to IT facilities is improved for West Lothian residents	Usage figures for WLC public access PCs	Digital Inclusion Working Group	Locations of WLC public access computers mapped by end 2013/14	On target	Mapping exercise carried out to take inventory of all West Lothian Council public access PCs. This action has now been incorportated into the Digital Inclusion Action Plan. A single point of contact has been set up for customers and frontline staff to contact and get answers to questions around service availability, have referrals made for extra support and book a PC in the customer's local area.
6.2 (5)	Develop and deliver on feedback and ideas from the Poverty Alliance led Community Reference Group	Feedback from reference group Outcome of Action Hubs	Poverty Alliance, WLC Advice Shop		Action Required	A community reference group was established in 2012/13 with support from the Poverty Alliance. The group worked through the Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan during 2012/13 to provide feedback and suggested actions. **Further information:** Contract for the Poverty Alliance who led the Community Reference Group ended in 2013/14. Attendance at the group has dropped and focus is now on recruitment of a fully representative group

Action Reference	Action	Indicator	Lead	Target	Status	Overall Outcomes April 2012 - March 2014
6.2 (6)	A digital support suite will be set up in Bathgate Partnership Centre and 'floor-walkers' available to provide online support	Number of people receiving assistance from floor walkers	Bathgate Partnership Centre	Digital support suite established by end 2013/14	On target	A digital employability hub has been established at Bathgate Partnership Centre during 2013/14 Public access computers are available at this location - these can only be accessed by customers looking to use the computer for employability purposes eg jobsearch activity An IT Buddy has been assigned to this location to provide support with digital inclusion Access2Employment and Business Gateway services are available within the digital hub **Further information:** This action has been incorporated into the Digital Inclusion action plan. Digital Hubs have been planned for 12 key locations around West Lothian. Each ward will have at least 1 digital hub. Hubs will offer access to PCs plus extra support from relevant services such as Community Learning & Development computer classes and Access2Employment work clubs and one to one support from IT buddies.
6.2 (7)	Self help guides will be developed to help customers access the best information and deals online	Self help guides developed	WLC Advice Shop	Self help guides developed by end 2013/14	On target	Series of 10 self-help guides developed by Community Learning and Development. The first in the series for anyone requiring basic assistance turning on and getting started on the PC has been printed and distributed to locations with public access PCs. The remainder of the series are available on the desktop of all WLC public access computers as PDF files. **Further information:** This action has been incorporated into the Digital Inclusion action plan.
Inequality						
7.1 (1)	People from identifiable equality groups have access to West Lothian Council income maximisation services	Number of people accessing income maximisation services by: age group, disability, ethnicity, gender, pregnancy and maternity.	WLC Advice Shop		Action Required	Action under development for 2014/15. Corporate Working Group on Equalities currently discussing how to report on protected characteristics and developing a corporate standard.
7.1 (2)	Larger families in West Lothian affected by the benefit cap will be supported through a range of services with a view to improving their financial position	Number of households visited in relation to cap Number referred to Access2Employment Number referred for debt/budgeting advice Number and total value of DHP awards secured	WLC Advice Shop, WLC Access2Employment	100% of households affected by benefit cap are contacted and offered advice and support	On target	**Benefit Cap Campaign** 54 affected households identified - 44 engaged, 5 declined support, 5 unsuccessful visits Satisfactory outcome achieved for 18 referrals - either happy to pay shortfall in rent or no longer affected by the cap 29 DHPs requested 29 referred to Access2Employment - continuing engagement from 10, 2 have started work and 1 has become self-employed 17 referred for housing advice 20 referred for debt/budgeting advice
7.1 (3)	People facing severe poverty due to under-occupancy are assisted by Discretionary Housing Payments as a means of support while finding longer term solutions to their housing issues	Number of DHP awards made Total value of DHP awards	WLC Revenues	Improve access to support to mitigate impact of welfare reform for those most in need	On target	1996 Discretionary Housing Payment awards made with total value £765,934 1883 awards to tenants affected by welfare reforms: 1817 to those affected by under-occupancy restrictions (total value £623,228) 33 to those affected by the overall benefit cap (total value £56,249) 33 to those affected by LHA or combination of reforms (total value £17,279) 113 awards made to people not impacted by welfare reform with total value £69,178
7.1 (4)	Disabled people affected by changes to disability benefits are offered assistance to improve their financial position	Number of disabled people engaged with	WLC Advice Shop	Engage with 500 ill/disabled people affected by reforms to Disability Living Allowance and offer advice/support to mitigate the impact of the change	On target	During 2013/14: 1114 customers potentially affected by changes from DLA to PIP contacted 527 of these customers have engaged with campaign officers (47%) The majority of these claimants are happy with their current award of DLA and do not wish to take any action at present. Advice about the potential impact of changes provided to all 527 successful contacts. 23 new claims for PIP have been made through this campaign - 2 have been successful, 21 still awaiting decision. 12 DLA claims/ reviews were made, 7 successful and 4 still awaiting decision.

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES PDSP

CONSULTATION ON DRAFT GUIDANCE RELATING TO EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2014

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the council's consultation response on the draft guidance published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission with regard to the equality and human rights implications of the Marriage and Civil Partnership Act 2014.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel note the contents of the report and approve submission of the comments on the draft guidance to Council Executive for approval.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs and providing equality of opportunities.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The council will be required to comply with the guidance once formally published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
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**	N/A
VIII	**Other consultations**	Opportunity to comment on the draft guidance provided to the Customer Services Development Manager and the Customer and Performance Manager within Education Services.

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D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has invited all public bodies, including the council, to take part in a consultation on their draft guidance relating to the equality and human rights implications of The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 ("the Act").

Five pieces of guidance on the equality and human rights implications have been produced, related to: marriage and the law in Scotland; provision of school education; religious or belief bodies; public authorities and workplace and service delivery.

The purpose of the draft guidance is to help explain the equality and human rights implications of the Act to employers, schools, religion and belief bodies and public authorities as well as individuals more broadly and to make the law in this area more accessible to a wider audience.

The consultation is being conducted to provide organisations the opportunity to consider and comment on whether the guidance is helpful and provides the right amount of explanation.

The consultation closes on 28 November 2014. Due to the Committee cycle the council has been granted an extension in order to allow our draft response to be considered for approval by Council Executive on 2 December.

A link to the five separate pieces of guidance has been provided under the Background References section to this report. The council's response statement is attached at the Appendix.

Council Comment on Draft Guidance

In broad terms the guidance is considered to be reasonable and likely to be of use to organisations or individuals affected by the implementation of the Act. It is important to note that on the basis of this draft guidance officers consider that the practical implications of the Act as it impacts on equality and human rights issues for the council are likely to be very low. Specific practical implications of the Act for Registration Services are not covered by this guidance. With regard to the five pieces of guidance, the brief issues outlined below represent the council's comments:

- Marriage and the law in Scotland – The guidance document does not have any specific implications for the council. The definitions and legislative positions are outlined clearly and highlight how the new Act relates in law to the existing Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

- Provision of school education – The guidance references statutory guidance issued by the Scottish Government in relation to Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education. The guidance does not suggest any deviation from existing guidance to schools.

- Religious or belief bodies – This guidance is not applicable to the functions of the council.

- Public authorities – The key focus is on the council's additional duties in equality law as under the Public Sector Equality Duty, and any implications that might arise around this Duty as a result of the Act. There are no concerns or issues for the council with the clarification provided within the draft guidance on how the Act relates to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

  Workplace and service delivery – The council's existing Policy on Equality: Employment and Service Delivery will remain unaffected by the guidance around the Act. Our existing equality policy provides appropriate protections and support for the implications of the Act in the workplace and with regard to the services the council provides.

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E. CONCLUSION

The draft guidance for the Act is reasonable and in its existing form will be beneficial for those organisations or individuals affected by the Act in relation to equality issues. The specific equality implications for the council as an employer and service provider are likely to be low.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

The draft guidance on the equality and human rights implications of the Act can be found via the link below:

[EHRC Consultation on Draft Guidance Related to Equality and Human Rights Implications of the Marriage and Civil Partnership Act 2014](#)

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix: Council Response Statement to the Equality and Human Rights Commission

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Julie Whitelaw
Head of Corporate Services
Date: 28 November 2014

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WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL RESPONSE TO EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION CONSULTATION ON DRAFT GUIDANCE FOR THE MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (SCOTLAND) ACT 2014

Response Statement to the Equality and Human Rights Commission

West Lothian Council welcomes the opportunity to make comment on the draft guidance produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission with regard to the equality and human rights implications of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014.

Overall, the council considers the draft guidance as it stands to be reasonable and likely to be of use to organisations or individuals affected by the implementation of the Act. While we feel that the guidance is fairly broad and generic in nature, we recognise that guidance requires to be developed in this way given the number of potential organisations to whom it may apply. In addition, the council notes that the guidance cannot at this stage be based on significant detailed experience or case law given that the Marriage and Civil Partnership Act is new this year.

With regard to the five pieces of guidance that have been produced, while we have very few specific comments to make at this stage, the brief issues outlined below represent the council's view on each:

- Marriage and the Law in Scotland

  The definitions and legislative positions are outlined clearly and highlight how the new Act relates in law to the existing Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

- Provision of School Education

  The guidance references statutory guidance issued by the Scottish Government in relation to Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood education. Our understanding of the draft guidance is that the Equality and Human Rights Commission are not suggesting any deviation from existing guidance to schools in terms of teaching and approach. If this is not the case it may be worth making clear any specific implications or changes that would be anticipated in relation to education policy or provision in schools.

- Religious or Belief Bodies

  We do not have any specific comments to make on this guidance. We do not view the guidance as applicable to the functions of the council.

- Public Authorities

  From the council's perspective, our reading of the draft guidance does not raise any concerns or issues for the council. The clarification provided within the draft guidance on how the Act relates to the Public Sector Equality Duty suggests to us that the Equality and Human Rights Commission's approach is in line with the action and approach already taken forward by the council in implementing the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- Workplace and Service Delivery

  Compared against the draft guidance, the council considers that our existing equality policy provides appropriate protections and support for the implications of the Act in the workplace and with regard to the services the council provides. If the Equality and Human Rights Commission considers that public bodies should make additional provisions within equality in employment and service provision policies to take account of the Act, then it may be necessary to make this clear and specific within the final version of the guidance.

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![West Lothian Council logo]

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEST LOTHIAN DEVELOPMENT TRUST ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide an annual update on the activity and performance of West Lothian Development Trust during the financial year 2013-14.

B.   RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the PDSP note that, to date, over £383,000 has been received in community benefits and over £292,000 has been paid out to sixteen local organisations, including eight applications in 2013-14 totalling £81,574.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Developing our economy and working in partnership.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Wind farm community benefit policy as agreed by Council Executive in 2007.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	None
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities. 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)**	Community benefit payments from operational wind farms at Pateshill and Black Law.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Reports previously received at Partnership and Resources PDSP in June 2011, April 2012, December 2012 and December 2013.

Page 1 of 3

D.   TERMS OF REPORT

D1   Introduction

This report provides an update on the activity and performance of West Lothian Development Trust (WLDT) during the financial year 2013-14.

D2   Background

In June 2006, West Lothian Council agreed a framework for engaging with developers on the community benefit potentially associated with wind farms and other developments. The adopted policy required that any community benefit received from wind farms should be distributed within 10km of the development (70% within 5km and the remaining 30% within 10km). It was agreed that a trust would distribute all community benefit payments. The trust representation was to comprise of a third of representatives from the council, a third from the local communities and up to a third from developers.

In December 2007, the Council Executive agreed to the establishment of the West Lothian Development Trust in line with the council's wind farm community benefit policy. Four elected members were appointed onto the trust in line with the policy. Four community representatives were also appointed via an external application process.

D3   Wind Farm Developments

To date there are two operational wind farms in West Lothian - Black Law and Pateshill. The Black Law site is situated to the south of Fauldhouse; two of the forty-seven turbines are situated within West Lothian. Pateshill, a seven turbine wind farm to the south of West Calder, is situated fully within West Lothian. Both sites contribute an annual community benefit payment to WLDT.

Black Law phase two was approved in 2010 and will result in 20 turbines being situated in West Lothian. A community benefit package has been agreed for this development.

In addition, consent has now been granted for future developments at Harburnhead and Pearie Law, and an extension has been granted to the consent already in place for Tormywheel.

D4   Community Benefit

Community benefit payments are currently received by WLDT from the two operational wind farms at Pateshill and Black Law. Applicants can apply to the trust for a small grant of up to £2,000 or to the main grant fund for awards of up to £25,000. A maximum of 70% of project costs can be funded.

Payments were first received in October 2007 and the first grants were awarded by the trust in 2009. As of 31 March 2014, £383,716 in community benefit payments have been received by the trust and a total of £292,130 has been awarded to sixteen separate organisations in this period.

In the financial year 2013-14, eight grants were awarded by the trust to eligible projects. The total value of these grants was £81,574.

Examples of the projects funded by WLDT in 2013-14 include the following:

- West Lothian Food Bank was awarded three years funding of £11,186 to support the operation of a charity shop in Whitburn. All profit generated by the shop is transferred to the food bank and is helping a large number of families throughout West Lothian who are experiencing financial difficulties.
- CFINE West Lothian - £19,026 was awarded to fund the development and set up of additional food co-op outlets in the west of West Lothian.
- West Calder & Harburn Community Development Trust received a grant of £11,897 towards the cost of employing a part time development officer.

A full list of funded projects is detailed in Appendix 1.

E.   CONCLUSION

The West Lothian Development Trust has the potential to make a substantial difference to communities in West Lothian, both now and for the next 25 years.

The West Lothian Development Trust, supported by council officers, will continue to ensure that the maximum benefit is obtained and distributed to support future regeneration opportunities in West Lothian.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Reports have previously been considered by the Partnership and Resources PDSP on the following dates:

10 December 2013
7 December 2012
20 April 2012
17 June 2011

Appendices/Attachments: One
Appendix 1 – West Lothian Development Trust, Grants Awarded 2009 - March 2014

Contact Person: Laura Wilson, Community Regeneration Officer
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Steve Field
Head of Area Services

Date: 28 November 2014

West Lothian Development Trust – Grants Awarded

BLACKLAW	Funding	Date approved
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£20,998.00	Sep-09
Blackburn and Seafield Credit Union	£11,796.00	Sep-09
Central Scotland Forest Trust	£5,000.00	Dec-09
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£2,000.00	Dec-09
West Lothian Retired Miners	£600.00	Dec-09
Fauldhouse Village Cemetery Restoration	£1,972.50	Dec-09
Total 2009-10	**£42,366.50**	

Whitburn Community Development Trust	£4,772.00	Aug-10
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£19,000.00	Dec-10
Total 2010-11	**£23,772.00**	

Central Scotland Forest Trust	£5,000.00	Apr-11
Total 2011-12	**£5,000.00**	
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£12,400	Jul-12
Total 2012-13	**£12,400.00**	
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£22,400	Jul-13
Total 2013-14	**£22,400.00**	

PATESHILL	Funding	Date approved
Answer Project	£8,225.00	Dec-11
Stoneyburn & Bents Future Vision Group	£2,800.00	Dec-11
Stoneyburn & Bents Future Vision Group	£8,000.00	Feb-12
Central Scotland Forest Trust	£17,603.00	Feb-12
Breich Park - Central Scotland Forest Trust	£20,000.00	Feb-12
Harburn Village Hall Association	£1,462.00	Feb-12
Whitburn Community Development Trust	£5,350.00	Feb-12
West Calder and Harburn Community Council	£2,000.00	Feb-12
The Pitstop	£20,000.00	Feb-12
Total 2011-12	**£85440.00**	

Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£10,000.00	Jul-12
Stoneyburn & Bents Future Vision Group	£20,000.00	Jul-12
Central Scotland Forest Trust	£11,578.00	Jan-13
Total 2012-13	**£41,578**	

Fauldhouse Community Development Trust	£10000	May-13
West Lothian Food Bank	£11,186	May-13
Stewart Court Residents Association	£300	May-13
West Calder & Harburn Community Council	£4783	May-13
CFINE	£19,026	Nov-13
West Calder Utd 97s	£2000	Nov-13
West Calder & Harburn CDT	£11,879.20	Mar-14
Total 2013-14	**£59,174.20**	

Total received - £106,516.80
Total grants awarded - £105,938.50

Total received by WLDT - £383,716 .80
Total grants awarded by WLDT- £292,130.70

Total received - £277,200
Total grants awarded - £186,192.20

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DIGITAL INCLUSION

REPORT BY HEAD OF AREA SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the work undertaken by the Digital Inclusion Development Group in supporting West Lothian residents to become digitally included.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Partnership and Resources PDSP notes:

1. that 309 public access machines have been upgraded to Windows 7 and linked to printers;
2. the development of digital hubs in key locations;
3. arrangements to manage public access computers on an external network;
4. the widening of the group to include CPP partners; and
5. the potential additional funding through proposals submitted to external funders.

It is further recommended that the Partnership and Resources PDSP notes the intention to send the report to the CPP Board for information.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership.
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Two performance indicators are being developed as part of the action plan.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities; our economy is diverse and dynamic, West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business; and minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality.

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VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	£30,000 allocated from underspend in Area Services budget in 2013/14 was used to create a separate platform to host all public access machines.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None.
VIII	Other consultations	Information has been gathered from services and partners which are part of the digital inclusion development group. Consultation has taken place with the anti-poverty development group, the anti-poverty strategy board and heads of service.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Scottish Government acknowledges that approximately 20% of the population neither have access to, nor the skills to access, new technology. The Scottish Government's priorities include providing efficient services, designed around the user, which will provide services that are easier, quicker and more convenient for people to use and at a lower cost than other methods allow.

Increased digital participation can improve people's quality of life, boost economic growth and allow more effective delivery of public services. Data from Ofcom shows that the level of broadband uptake in Scotland is 76% of households, just below the UK average of 77%, In West Lothian it is 78%, just above the UK average.
http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/market-data/communications-market-reports/cmr14/scotland/
http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband/broadband-data/

Broadband usage is lowest among older people, those with health difficulties, and those on low incomes. Figures published by Scope and the Royal College of Art and Design show that disabled people are amongst the groups least likely to use the internet, (20% less likely to be online than their peers).
http://www.hhc.rca.ac.uk/CMS/files/1.Enabling%20technology%20report%202013%20digital%20technology%20disabled%20people%20Scope%20Helen%20Hamlyn.pdf

It can be concluded, therefore, that many people who would potentially benefit most from digital participation do not have the inclination, opportunity or skills to use it.

Research shows that the main reasons why people do not go online are:

- lack of interest;
- financial considerations;
- lack of access to a computer; and
- lack of confidence or knowledge.

In West Lothian, the Community Planning Partnership *Better Off: The West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy 2014 – 2017* recognised the need to promote financial and digital inclusion amongst people in and at risk of poverty. The upcoming necessity for many claimants to be able to claim Universal Credit (and other potential entitlements) on line is challenging for those who are digitally excluded. Equally, engaging with people who are digitally excluded also allows the opportunity to increase income and so reduce the poverty premium.

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The council's *Customer Service Strategy 2014-17* outlines the vision to deliver high quality, customer-centred services. It highlights that the internet provides the opportunity to deliver efficient services, designed around the user and at a lower cost. There is recognition that public service users prefer to use the web to interact with councils. The council has moved into a new and challenging era for local government and, financially, there will be a need to move customer contacts and transactions from the more expensive options to online and self-service. Through the Customer Service Strategy, there will be a more joined up approach to supporting customers to utilise the website, keep up-to-date with information about council services, including self-service payment options, and the use of technology to access services such as touch screen computers.

D.2   Digital Inclusion Development

In October 2013, a Digital Inclusion Development Group (DIDG) was formed, initially, from staff within the different service units in Area Services, namely: Adult Basic Education, Advice Shop, Access2employment, CLD Adults Team, Council Information Service, Customer Service Centre, and Libraries, along with IT Services. The aim was to work collectively to support working age adults to become "digitally included". The focus of the group was to help adults to manage their benefits, gain on-line job search skills and to save money. The Digital Inclusion Development Group has developed an action plan which is split into four main areas of activity: access, support and training, marketing and promotion and partnership working.

The DIDG has improved access by undertaking a mapping exercise of all council owned public access machines. Subsequently, all public access computers have been migrated to 'Windows 7' and have access to a printer. Budget was found from Area Services underspend to ensure that all computers are managed through an external platform. This supports the roll out of updated software, quicker resolution to IT faults whilst supporting the council's PSN status and, when operational, will allow public access machines to be part of the computer booking system. The group has removed potential barriers through the availability of free access and printing to all customers who are claiming benefits or job searching.

The DIDG has undertaken an authority wide mapping exercise to identify all public access machines and support/training on offer by the council, voluntary sector and CPP partners. The group is currently undertaking an exercise to identify and map e-learning opportunities further to support digital inclusion.

The DIDG has prioritised the level of support by considering where, when and how the support will be offered. It has developed a triage system which provides:

- one free phone number to access information, advice and support;
- access to computers at a time, place and location suitable to the customer;
- seven self-help guides developed on key topics;
- IT Buddies, recruited, trained and deployed in a range of locations and services;
- IT learning focussed on getting people started; and
- 12 digital hubs identified which ensures a range of provision in one location.

The twelve digital hubs are located in partnership centres in Bathgate, Blackburn, Fauldhouse, Linlithgow (currently Linlithgow library) and Strathbrock along with community centres in Almondbank, Armadale, Boghall, Carmondean, Lanthorn, West Calder and Whitburn. The digital hubs have been chosen to help direct those most in need to a range of support which will include access to IT classes, IT Buddies, Access2employment, Adult Basic Education groups, and on-line support

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through libraries and work clubs.

Over the past nine months, there have been two rounds of recruitment for IT Buddies. Currently, 16 volunteers are deployed in computer classes, libraries, work clubs, short courses and Business Gateway. It is envisaged that there will be a third round of recruitment in January to expand 'drop in' session availability further.

Partners have worked together to offer IT and accessibility training to CIS, libraries and community facilities staff. The training has been developed in response to a need to up skill staff, increase confidence and promote inclusion. At the end of July 2014, 74 staff had undertaken the training provided by CLD Adults Team and 15 staff had accessed additional training provided by West Lothian College.

The DIDG has grown into a Community Planning Partnership group with membership including West Lothian College, Department of Works and Pensions, West Lothian Voluntary Sector Gateway alongside external partners: Wheatley Group, Almond Housing and Whitburn Development Trust. This has expanded the original remit and the group is now looking at how it increases the health and well-being of those who are digitally excluded. The partnership has a number of projects which it is developing and for which it is seeking external funding:

Digital Inclusion Worker
Funding from time limited anti-poverty funds of £85,000 will be used to employ a digital inclusion worker for two years to co-ordinate the work of the partnership, seek external funding and increase the number of residents accessing support.

Increase access to IT classes
Funding has been granted from the Department of Work and Pensions (£46,385) to increase the number of IT opportunities between September and March 2015. The budget will be used to expand the number of IT tutors who will be deployed to offer additional sessions to any working age adult in receipt of a benefit. The sessions will include opportunities to offer evening and weekend classes. There will also be classes aimed at adults for whom English is not their first language.

MacMillan Information and Support Points
In West Lothian, there is currently one MacMillan Information and Support point located at Carmondean Library alongside a benefit advice service provided through the council's Advice Shop. An 'Expression of Interest' has been submitted by West Lothian Council and case of need was submitted on 17 September 2014. Funding to the value of £700,000 has been set aside by MacMillan for this project.

Click and Connect Centres
The Wheatley Group, through the Glasgow Housing Association, has 380 houses for rent in West Lothian. As part of its Digital Inclusion agenda, it supports customers to become connected to the internet by providing free, internet access in their homes. The Wheatley Group also wants to support the community in which its houses are located. The Group is interested in working with West Lothian Council to create up to three 'click and connect' centres in Blackburn, Stoneyburn and West Calder.

Integrated Learning
Adult Basic Education is delivering three short courses which integrate the use of new technology with improving literacies and numeracy skills. 'What's App, Doc', 'More For Less' and 'Cash Confident' have been developed to encourage and support adults to gain and use IT skills.

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Physically Disabled and Housebound Customers

A working group consisting of West Lothian Council, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and Whitburn Development Trust is preparing a funding bid which will focus on those who are physically disabled and/or housebound. The support will be over a three month period aiming at helping individuals not only to access new technology but to be confident in using it to keep in touch with friends, manage long term conditions and access services.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Customers

Social Policy is developing a pan-Lothian initiative which will better support those who are deaf and hard of hearing to access services. One project is to widen access to free batteries for hearing aids. These are now available from libraries. Alongside this, there will be further recruitment of additional IT Buddies to support drop-in activity. This will enable deaf and hard of hearing customers not only to get free batteries but will also give them the opportunity to learn how to go on-line. This will focus on helping them to get onto the "Living It Up" website which includes 'You Tube' clips of how to maintain a hearing aid, change a hearing aid battery and tips on living with deafness.

Get Involved

'Get Involved' is the portal through which the Scottish Government is developing third sector activity. The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations alongside West Lothian Voluntary Sector Gateway is currently updating its database of all voluntary organisations, increasing the number of organisations which have their own website and promoting and marketing what is on offer within West Lothian.

Free Wi-Fi Access

A successful bid for Wi-Fi access to council buildings was submitted to the IT Programme Board on 26 August. This will support and enhance the digital inclusion project. Stage one of the project will focus on Wi-Fi access in the twelve digital hubs. The increased use of tablets and smart phones is a common factor in communicating with customers and services and, at the same time, there has been an increase in the number of individuals who wish help and support to utilise this type of technology.

New Generation Broadband

West Lothian Council is investing £2.5M of capital funding to increase availability of Superfast Broadband (speeds greater than 25Mbps) as part of the Scottish Government's *Step Change* superfast broadband initiative. The funding will ensure Superfast Broadband availability in West Lothian is increased from the 73% of premises delivered by commercial providers to ensure more than 99% of homes and businesses in West Lothian have access to the technology. Deployment by BT will commence in mid 2015 with the full scheme delivered by mid 2017.

Mobile Learning

There has been a successful bid to the IT Projects Board for ten tablets. This will support the administration's 'learning bus' manifesto commitment. The tablets have Wi-Fi access built in and will be used to engage reluctant learners and to support delivery in locations where there is no IT available currently.

The DIDG is a working group which feeds back to the anti–poverty development group. A number of actions have been included in the 2014-15 anti-poverty action plan and two performance indicators have been developed:

- West Lothian adults are supported to access digital and on-line resources
- Access to IT facilities is improved for West Lothian residents

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The group has agreed to use 2014/15 figures to create a base-line against which to monitor progress. The group will monitor demand by utilising the new on-line booking service alongside a customer survey. The initial survey will be conducted in the spring of 2015.

E.   **CONCLUSION**

The DIDG is making good progress in increasing access to, offering help and targeting support to those who would most benefit from becoming digitally included. Further activity to help support the council's channel shift programme will be incorporated into the project in planned stages.

F.   **BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Appendices/Attachments: one

Appendix One – Digital Inclusion leaflet

Contact Person: Elaine Nisbet, Advice Shop and Adult Basic Education Manager (Acting), Tel: 01506 282936 e-mail: Elaine.nisbet@westlothian.gov.uk

Steve Field
Head of Area Services

Date: 28 November 2014

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Across West Lothian there are lots of computers that you can use.

If you phone **0800 731 1831** we will:

- Tell you where your nearest computers are
- Let you know when the computers are available
- Book a computer for you
- Help you to access other services
- Provide you with information on classes and support:
  - How to use a computer
  - Help enable you to fill in forms and write letters online
  - Short courses to help you get the most out of your computer i.e. to save money
  - How to use the internet to find out things that are of interest to you.

Better off
West Lothian

If you visit one of our hubs this is what you can expect:

- Someone who can show you how to turn on the computer
- Someone who will show you where the self-help guides are
- Someone who can show you how to print out information
- Help to sign up for classes, Work Clubs and Taster Sessions
- Information about the different types of help and support that is on offer.

Free help and support to use a computer

FREEPHONE
0800 731 1831

GET INVOLVED GET ONLINE!

West Lothian Council

Phone **0800 731 1831** to find out when a computer is available at a location near you.

Locations of public access computers in West Lothian

1. **Armadale Community Centre and Library**, North Street, Armadale EH48 3QB

2. **Blackburn Connected**, Mill Centre, Blackburn EH47 7LG

3. **Linlithgow CIS and Library**, High Street, Linlithgow EH49 7EX

4. **Bathgate Partnership Centre**, South Bridge Street, Bathgate EH48 1TS

5. **Whitburn Community Education Centre**, Manse Road, Whitburn EH47 8EZ

6. **Carmondean Connected**, Carmondean, Livingston EH54 8PT

7. **Strathbrock Partnership Centre**, 189a West Main Street, Broxburn EH52 5LH

8. **Almondbank Centre**, Shiel Walk, Craigshill, Livingston EH54 5EH

9. **Fauldhouse Partnership Centre**, Main Street, Fauldhouse EH47 9JZ

10. **West Calder CIS and Library**, Main Street, West Calder EH55 8BQ

11. **Boghall Community Wing**, Marina Road, Bathgate EH48 1SR

12. **Lanthorn Community Centre and Library**, Kenilworth Rise, Dedridge, Livingston EH54 6NY

Call **0800 731 1831** if you would like to book a computer

Better off
West Lothian

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN: ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Panel on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's annual report 2013-2014

B. RECOMMENDATION

1. The Panel is asked to note the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) annual report 2013-2014, 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.

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 1 November 2013.
VIII	**Other consultations**	None.

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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 report that for 2013-14 the number of complaints received regarding local government has increased by 16% compared with the previous year. The SPSO Complaints Report 2013-14 notes that this is the first full year in which councils operated the new two-stage model Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) and therefore suggests that this increase may be attributed to people moving more quickly through councils' complaints processes before bringing their complaint to the SPSO, as well as reflecting a greater awareness of complaints as an avenue for dissatisfaction.

The percentage of premature complaints about local government has fallen from 50% to 40%, yet the rate of premature complaints about local government remains higher than other sectors.

This year, the number of upheld complaints for local government rose from 47% in 2012-13 to 49%. The SPSO highlights that the top areas complained about remain the same as previous years, with the greatest number of complaints being received about Housing, Social Work and Planning, which account for 51% of all local government complaints. Within the broad areas of local government complaints, the top subjects of complaints were policy/administration, housing repairs and maintenance, and planning – handling of application.

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 A. Appendix B 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 2012-13 and 2013-14.

Appendix B highlights that the total number of complaints received about West Lothian Council is 70, which is the same figure as 2012-13. As detailed in Appendix B, the greatest number of complaints about West Lothian Council were regarding Education, which differs from the sector as a whole where more complaints were regarding Housing than any other subject.

48 of the complaints about West Lothian Council were dealt with at the advice stage as they were not suitable for the SPSO, whilst a further 17 were considered to have an early resolution. The percentage of premature complaints has decreased to 43% from 57% the previous year. Out of the total number of complaints received by the SPSO relating to West Lothian Council, two complaints were partly upheld. No complaints were fully upheld.

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D4 **Improving Complaints Standards**

As highlighted, 2013-14 was the first full year of operation of the new model CHP. The SPSO report notes that compliance with CHPs should be built into the existing regulatory framework where possible. Arrangements have been set up with Audit Scotland to ensure that compliance with the model 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.

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 Housing, Construction and Building 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.

The SPSO's report notes that 2013-14 will be the first year for which all councils issue clear, transparent and consistent complaints information. The CHP 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.

A local authority complaints handlers network was established in 2012-13 and has over 60 members including the SPSO. In 2013-14 the network met four times and representatives from all local authorities have been involved in its work including consideration of feedback on the operation of the model CHP, performance reporting and indicators. In September 2013, the network produced a 'Performance Management Framework for Complaints Handling' which sets out the network's approach to managing complaints handling performance by outlining the various components of the CHP and how each contributes to the overall process and ultimate aim of improving service delivery.

E. **CONCLUSION**

The SPSO has published its annual report along with its annual letters to local authorities.

The SPSO reports that complaints about West Lothian Council have decreased in 2012-13 and that the number of upheld complaints remains low as the majority of complaints are made prematurely, not duly made or withdrawn, or are considered to be out of their jurisdiction.

The model CHP has now been in operation across all local authorities for a full year. Performance indicators have been established by the complaints handlers network, and local authorities are required to report against these indicators on a yearly basis.

F. **BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Annual Report 2012-2013
- Partnership and Resources PDSP, 1 November 2013

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Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix A: Letter to West Lothian Council from Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Appendix B: Tables of statistics to illustrate West Lothian Council complaints received by subject area and complaints determined by outcome for 2012-13 and 2013-14

Contact Person: Morgan Callachan, Project Officer, 01506 281080
Morgan.callachan@westlothian.gov.uk

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Date of meeting: 28 November 2014

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SPSO

Scottish
Public
Services
Ombudsman

4 Melville Street
Edinburgh
EH3 7NS

Tel   **0800 377 7330**
Fax   **0800 377 7331**
Web **www.spso.org.uk**

Mr Graham Hope
Chief Executive
West Lothian Council
West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
Livingston
WEST LOTHIAN
EH54 6FF

8 October 2014

Dear Mr Hope

Complaints report and statistics for 2013-14

I am pleased to send you our annual local government complaints report, along with statistics about complaints to SPSO about your authority in 2013-14.
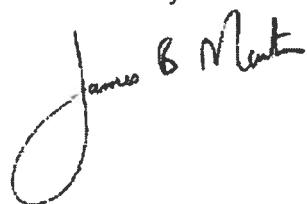
This was the first full year of operation of the standardised model complaints handling procedure that was introduced for the local government sector in 2012-13. As you will know, each authority is now required to report and publicise complaints information on a quarterly and annual basis, including annual reporting on how they perform against the agreed performance indicators. The enclosed complaints statistics are part of the detailed complaints picture that your authority is responsible for gathering and publishing and using to benchmark through the local authority complaints handlers network.

As my report shows, 2013-14 saw a 16% rise in complaints about local government compared with the previous year. The issues people brought us were similar to those for previous years, with housing, social work and planning topping the list. One of these areas – social work – is of particular concern to me, because of the length of time it is taking to bring about change. Related to this is the lack of clarity about complaints processes under the integrated health and social care programme. One further policy matter that I would draw to your attention is the Scottish Government's proposal that SPSO may take on a future role as the review body for Scottish Welfare Fund decisions.

I have been pleased to strengthen our engagement with local authorities over the past year through our complaints standards work and also through a new sounding board. The local authority sounding board was set up by joint invitation from the chair of SOLACE and myself. Current members include representatives of SOLAR, ADES, ADSW, Heads of Planning, CIPFA, the Improvement Service and the chair of the local authority complaints handlers' network. It has allowed for frank, two-way discussions about the challenges in local government, and about our role and effectiveness.

This report outlines this and other initiatives we are undertaking as we continue to support the local government sector to improve the quality of their complaints handling, and ensure that the learning from complaints leads to improvements in the delivery of services.

Yours sincerely

Jim Martin
Ombudsman

Table 1
Complaints Received by Subject 2013-14

Subject Group	West Lothian Council	Rank	Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Rank	Complaints as % of total
Education	18	1	25.7%	171	5	9.8%
Housing	14	2	20.0%	446	1	25.5%
Social Work	12	3	17.1%	229	2	13.1%
Planning	7	4	10.0%	223	3	12.7%
Finance	5	5=	7.1%	173	4	9.9%
Environmental Health & Cleansing	5	5=	7.1%	98	7	5.6%
Legal & Admin	4	7	5.7%	75	8	4.3%
Roads & Transport	2	8=	2.9%	119	6	6.8%
Land & Property	2	8=	2.9%	28	11	1.6%
Building Control	0	-	0.0%	62	9	3.5%
Recreation & Leisure	0	-	0.0%	30	10	1.7%
Welfare Fund - Community Care Grants	0	-	0.0%	10	12=	0.6%
Valuation Joint Boards	0	-	0.0%	10	12=	0.6%
Other	0	-	0.0%	9	14	0.5%
Consumer Protection	0	-	0.0%	8	15	0.5%
Personnel	0	-	0.0%	7	16	0.4%
Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	0	-	0.0%	6	17	0.3%
Economic Development	0	-	0.0%	3	18=	0.2%
Fire & Police Boards	0	-	0.0%	3	18=	0.2%
National Park Authorities	0	-	0.0%	2	20	0.1%
Subject Unknown or Out Of Jurisdiction	1	-	1.4%	38	-	2.2%
Total	**70**	**-**	**100.0%**	**1,750**	**-**	**100.0%**

Complaints as % of Sector   4.0%   100.0%

Complaints Received by Subject 2012-13

Subject Group	West Lothian Council	Rank	Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Rank	Complaints as % of total
Housing	27	1	39%	361	1	24%
Education	8	2	11%	76	5	5%
Planning	4	3=	6%	197	2	13%
Social Work	4	3=	6%	183	3	12%
Finance	4	3=	6%	85	4	6%
Roads & Transport	3	6=	4%	73	6	5%
Legal & Admin	3	6=	4%	48	8	3%
Environmental Health & Cleansing	2	8	3%	60	7	4%
Land & Property	1	9=	1%	28	9	2%
Recreation & Leisure	1	9=	1%	20	11	1%
Building Control	0	-	0%	26	10	2%
Other	0	-	0%	10	12	1%
Consumer Protection	0	-	0%	9	13	1%
Personnel	0	-	0%	7	14	0%
Valuation Joint Boards	0	-	0%	6	15	0%
Fire & Police Boards	0	-	0%	2	16	0%
Economic Development	0	-	0%	1	17	0%
Out Of Jurisdiction	1	-	1%	20	-	1%
Subject Unknown	12	-	17%	293	-	19%
Total	**70**		**100%**	**1,505**		**100%**

Complaints as % of Sector   4.7%   100%

TABLE 2

Complaints Determined by Outcome 2013-14

Stage	Outcome Group	West Lothian Council	Sector Total
Advice	Not duly made or withdrawn	8	328
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	4	56
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	2	42
	Outcome not achievable	6	129
	Premature	28	659
	Resolved	0	6
	Total	**48**	**1,220**
Early Resolution 1	Not duly made or withdrawn	2	36
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	3	57
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	2	110
	Outcome not achievable	1	40
	Premature	1	33
	Resolved	0	18
	Total	**9**	**294**
Early Resolution 2	Fully upheld	3	31
	Some upheld	3	25
	Not upheld	2	50
	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	1
	Resolved	0	4
	Total	**8**	**111**
Investigation 1	Fully upheld	0	20
	Some upheld	2	39
	Not upheld	1	60
	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	2
	Resolved	0	1
	Total	**3**	**122**
Investigation 2	Fully upheld	0	0
	Some upheld	0	0
	Not upheld	0	0
	Total	**0**	**0**
Total Complaints		**68**	**1,747**

1.

Total Premature Complaints		29	692
Premature Rate		42.6%	39.6%

Fit for SPSO Total (ER2, Inv1 & Inv2)		11	233
Total Cases Upheld / Some Upheld		8	115
Uphold Rate (total upheld / total fit for SPSO)		72.7%	49.4%

Complaints Determined by Outcome 2012-13

Stage	Outcome Group	West Lothian Council	Sector Total
Advice	Matter out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	0	19
	Matter out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	2	40
	No decision reached	6	239
	Outcome not achievable	2	13
	Premature	41	704
	Total	**51**	**1,015**
Early Resolution 1	Matter out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	3	40
	Matter out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	8	99
	No decision reached	0	38
	Outcome not achievable	0	26
	Premature	1	46
	Total	**12**	**249**
Early Resolution 2	Fully upheld	0	10
	Partly upheld	1	19
	Not upheld	3	48
	No decision reached	0	4
	Total	**4**	**81**
Investigation 1	Fully upheld	0	16
	Partly upheld	3	63
	Not upheld	4	75
	No decision reached	0	2
	Total	**7**	**156**
Investigation 2	Fully upheld	0	3
	Partly upheld	0	3
	Total	**0**	**6**
Total Complaints		**74**	**1,507**

Total Premature Complaints		42	750
Premature Rate		56.8%	49.8%

Fit for SPSO Total (ER2, Inv1 & Inv2)		11	243
Total Cases Upheld / Partly Upheld		4	114
Uphold Rate (total upheld / total fit for SPSO)		36.4%	46.9%

NOTE : 'No decision reached' includes complaints not duly made, withdrawn and resolved

1. Note that the figure for 'total complaints' differs between Table 1 and Table 2. This is because Table 1 describes the subjects the SPSO received complaints about whilst Table 2 describes the outcomes of the complaints handled. The figures are unlikely to tally as not all complaints are determined within the same business year they were received.

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL ANNUAL COMPLAINT PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013 – 2014

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report to the Panel the council's annual Complaint Performance Report 2013-2014.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the council's annual Complaint Performance Report 2013-2014
2. Notes the council's performance in relation to the number of complaints received by the council.

C.   SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I.	Council Values	Focusing on customers' needs
		Being honest, open and accountable
II.	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010
III.	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV.	Impact on performance and performance indicators	Will provide a robust approach to monitoring complaints performance information covering all council services
V.	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Outcome 15 - Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs
VI.	Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)	From existing resources
VII.	Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII.	Details of consultations	None

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D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) developed and published a model Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) in 28 March 2012. The model CHP was to ensure a standardised approach in dealing with customer complaints across the local authority sector.

All local authorities were required to adopt the model CHP by 31 March 2013. SPSO expect that local authorities will make the best use of complaint information to inform service improvement activity.

The SPSO outlined four elements of the model CHP that that should not be amended to ensure a standardised approach across all local authorities. These are:

- The definition of a complaint
- The number of stages
- Timescales at each stage
- The requirement to record, report and publicise complaints information

Appendix A: WLC Annual Complaint Performance Report 13-14 outlines performance information on complaints received by the council between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014. The performance is based on 8 key performance indicators devised by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in conjunction with all 32 Scottish councils.

D.2 Corporate Complaints Performance

Table 1 breaks down the annual complaints by complaint category over a 4 year period.

Table 1 Quarters 1-4 complaint category covering period 10/11 – 13/14

	Q1-Q4 10/11	Q1-Q4 11/12	Q1-Q4 12/13	Q1-Q4 13/14
Employee Attitude	331	283	324	299
Missed Appointments	11	19	34	13
Policy Related	204	188	275	272
Poor Communication	219	257	264	242
Standard of Service	1,752	1,340	1,088	1,065
Waiting Time	215	236	181	142
Not Categorised	0	0	0	3
Total Complaints	2,732	2,323	2,166	2,036

All complaints received by the council are categories into 6 categories. This categorisation allows the service to group complaints by theme and helps the service to identify areas that require improvement actions.

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D.3   Complaints received by service

Table 2 provides a breakdown of complaints received by service for 2013/14.

Table 2: Complaints received by service

Service	2013/14
Housing, Construction & Building Services	725
Operational Services	614
Area Services	224
Finance and Estates/ Executive Office	210
Education Service	201
Planning and Economic Development	48
Corporate Services	8
Social Policy	6
Total	**2,036**

The current service level complaint performance varies across the council and is linked to the complexity and quantity of complaints received. Housing, Construction and Building Services and Operational Services are the main complaint generators by service, accounting for 65.7% (1339) of all recorded complaints (2036) in 2013/14.

To support the CHP, 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. This is chaired by a Depute Chief Executive 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.

Appendix A in the report also includes an overview of improvements identified by analysing service specific complaints received across the council.

E.   CONCLUSION

The level of complaints received in 2013/14 shows a year on year reduction over the past four years. This reduction in complaints is a positive result and services will continue to analysis complaints to identify improvement actions.

F.   BACKGROUND REFERENCES

SPSO publishes the Model Complaints Handling Procedure (CHP) for the local government sector in Scotland.

1. [The Local Authority Employees Guide to the Complaints Handling Procedure](#)
2. [SPSO performance indicators for the Local Authority Model Complaints Handling Procedure](#)

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3.   WLC Complaints Handling Procedure

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix A: WLC Annual Complaint Performance Report 13-14

Contact Person: Joe Murray
E mail: joe.murray@westlothian.gov.uk Phone 01506 281893

Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive
28 November 2014

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West Lothian Council
Annual Complaint Performance Report 2013/14

Contents

Data Label: Public

1. Overview

1.1. Introduction

This is the council's annual complaints performance report which provides information on customer complaints received between 1 April 2013 and 21 March 2014.

The council always aims to provide the highest possible quality of service to our community, but recognise that there are times when things go wrong and fail to meet the expectations of our customer. A new complaints procedure was introduced in February 2013 to provide our customers with a clear and structured way to provide feedback on their dissatisfaction with council services in a range of easily accessible ways. The council welcomes feedback and it provides information that helps services learn from complaints and to modify and improve the way services are delivered. The indicators covered in this report were created to provide a useful tool that the council and the public can use to judge objectively how well complaints are being handled and how it informs service improvement activity.

1.2. Corporate Complaints Procedure

There are many factors that affect the number and complexity of complaints received by the council such as the standard of service that is being delivered, the attitude of our employees, the service response time to customer requests, missed appointments and poor communication.

The council's complaint procedure has 2 stages in its process which are outlined below:

- Stage 1 complaints could mean immediate action to resolve the problem or complaints which are resolved in no more than five working days.
- Stage 2 deals with two types of complaints: those that have not been resolved at Stage 1 and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.
- After the council has fully investigated the complaint, and if the customer is still not satisfied with the decision or the way the council dealt with the complaint, then it can be referred onto the SPSO.

The statistics gathered are based on 8 key performance indicators devised by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) in conjunction with all 32 Scottish councils.

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. This is chaired by a Depute Chief Executive 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.

The Corporate Complaints Procedure applies to all complaints against the council, with the exception of those which are described as Social Care statutory complaints.

2.   Complaint Performance Statistics

This report details the performance of complaint handling and outcomes covering the period between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2014.

Complaints are recorded and tracked using the council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System which enables the production of the complaints performance information.

The number of complaints the council received has shown a year on year reduction in complaints over the past four years. The council will continue to analysis complaints to help inform service improvement, identify training opportunities for our staff and help priorities our activities to meet the changing needs of our community.

2.1. Indicator 1: Complaints received per 1,000 population

This indicator records the total number of complaints received by the council. This is the sum of the number of complaints received at stage one, (frontline resolution) and the number of complaints received directly at stage two

(investigation). To allow for a fair comparison across all 32 councils in Scotland, the figure of complaints per 1000 of population is used. Table 1 provides the council's total complaints reviewed per 1,000 population over the past 4 years. Performance shows that there has been a year on year decrease in the number of complaints received by the council over this period.

Table 1: Complaints received per 1,000 population

Measure	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
West Lothian Population[1]	173,040	174,090	175,300	175,990
Total number complaints received	2,732	2,323	2,166	2,036
Number complaints received per 1,000	15.8	13.3	12.4	11.5

Table 2 provides a breakdown of complaints received by service for 2013/14

Table 2: Complaints received by service

Service	2013/14
Housing, Construction & Building Services	725
Operational Services	614
Area Services	224
Finance and Estates/ Executive Office	210
Education Service	201
Planning and Economic Development	48
Corporate Services	8
Social Policy	6
Total	**2,036**

All complaints received by the council are categories into 6 categories. This categorisation allows the service to group complaints by theme and helps the service to identify areas that require improvement actions.

Table 3 breaks down all complaints received by the council by complaint category from 2010/11 to 2013/14.

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[1] Previous years published mid-year estimate used

Table 3: Complaints received by category

Category	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Employee Attitude	331	283	324	299
Missed appointment	11	19	34	213
Policy related	204	188	275	272
Poor Communication	219	257	264	242
Standard of Service	1,752	1,370	1,088	1,065
Waiting Time	215	236	181	142
Not Categorised	0	0	0	3
Total	2,732	2,323	2,166	2,036

2.2. Indicator 2: Closed complaints

This indicator provides information on the number of complaints closed at stage one and stage two as a percentage of all complaints closed. Table 4 provides the performance information for this indicator.

The term "closed" refers to a complaint that has had a response sent to the customer and at the time no further action is required (regardless at which stage it is processed and whether any further escalation takes place).

Table 4: Closed complaints

Closed complaints	2013/14
Number complaints closed at stage one as % of all complaints	69%
Number complaints closed at stage two as % of all complaints	24%
Number complaints closed at stage two after escalation as % of all complaints	7%

2.3. Indicator 3: Complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld

The council reviews all complaints and each customer is contacted to explain whether their complaint has been upheld, partially upheld or not upheld or and why.

This indicator measures the number and percentage of complaints which were upheld, partially upheld or not upheld recorded at each stage. The results can be seen in Tables 5, 6 and 7.

Table 5: Upheld complaints

Complaints upheld	2013/14
Number of complaints upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one	32%
Number complaints upheld at stage two as % of complaints closed at stage two	23.2%
Number escalated complaints upheld at stage two as % of escalated complaints closed at stage two	20.5%

Table 6: Partially upheld complaints

Complaints partially upheld	2013/14
Number of complaints partially upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one	18.2%
Number complaints partially upheld at stage two as % of complaints closed at stage two	23.6%
Number escalated complaints partially upheld at stage two as % of escalated complaints closed at stage two	17.1%

Table 7: Not upheld complaints

Complaints not upheld	2013/14
Number of complaints not upheld at stage one as % of all complaints closed at stage one	33.5%
Number complaints not upheld at stage two as % of complaints closed at stage two	48.3%
Number escalated complaints not upheld at stage two as % of escalated complaints closed at stage two	38.4%

Variances in the total for these indicators can be attributed to fields which have not been populated in the CRM system. This has been addressed through

improved monitoring arrangement and officer training in complaint handling and use of the CRM system.

2.4. Indicator 4: Average times

Indicator 4 represents the average time in working days to close complaints at stage one and complaints stage two of the council's Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP). Indicator 4 performance can be seen in Table 8

Table 8: Average times

Average times	2013/14
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one	7.9
Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two	15.1
Average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	11.2

2.5. Indicator 5: Performance against timescales

The council's Complaint Handling Procedure requires complaints to be closed within 5 working days at stage one and 20 working days at stage two. This indicator measures the number and percentage of complaints at each stage which were closed in full within the set timescales of 5 and 20 working days. Indicator 5 performance can be seen in Table 9

Table 9: Performance against timescales

Performance against timescales	2013/14
Number complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as % of stage one complaints	71.9%
Number complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as % of stage two complaints	82.6%
Number escalated complaints closed within 20 working days as % of escalated stage two complaints	73.3%

2.6. Indicator 6: Number of cases where an extension is authorised

The council always aims to respond to complaints as quickly as possible. There are, however, times when a complaint is particularly complex and it is not feasible to fully investigate the issues within the prescribed timescales. In these

situations the council can agree with a complainant to extend the timescale for closing the complaint.

This indicator provides is the number and percentage of complaints at each stage where an extension to the 5 or 20 working day timeline has been authorised. Indicator 6 performance can be seen in Table 10

Table 10: Number of cases where an extension is authorised

Number of cases where an extension is authorised	2013/14
% of complaints at stage one where extension was authorised	7%
% of complaints at stage two where extension was authorised	1.9%

2.7. Indicator 7: Customer satisfaction

This indicator provides information on the levels of customer satisfaction with the complaint handling procedure and process. Indicator 7 performance can be seen in table 11. A sample of complainants are contacted by the council's Customer Service Centre on a monthly basis to gather this satisfaction information.

Table 11: Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction	2013/14
Percentage of customers who agreed that they were satisfied with the length of time it took to deal with their complaint.	64.2%
Percentage of customers who agreed that they were satisfied with the outcome of their upheld complaint.	72.3%
Percentage of customers who agreed that they were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled.	67.9%
Percentage of customers who agreed that they found it easy to complain to the council.	83%

2.8. Indicator 8: Learning from complaints

The council has a clear commitment to listen to our customers and act on their feedback. Learning from complaints is a continuous process that helps the council to resolve common complaints and further improve the services that are provided. Some examples of actions that have been taken are highlighted below.

	Complaint Area/ Complaint Theme	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
1.	Housing, Construction and Building Services: Standard of Service	There were two linked themes that emerged in relation to the repairs. These were the quality of work and lack of follow up to complete repairs.	Local Repairs Teams have been introduced with specific ward responsibility. A post inspection process has also been introduced which includes a number of weekly quality checks. When the materials are in stock Works Planners contact customers and arrange a suitable date for works to be completed
2.	Housing, Construction and Building Services: Poor Communication	A number of complaints in this theme were in relation to lack of notices on display that work had been carried out.	Staff instructed that notices must be put up to warn people about painting operations. Additionally notices to be updated on each common stair to show last date stair was cleaned.
3.	Housing, Construction and Building Services: Poor Communication	Taking account of customers contact preferences where there are specific needs identified.	Vulnerability indicators now created in our housing management software system to take account of customers contact preferences.

	Complaint Area/ Complaint Theme	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
4.	Operational Services: Standard of Service	Complaints were received relating to excess littering in local communities.	Geographical analysis of complaints and requests for service is carried out to identify any particular littering hotspots. This has led to changes in a number of the beats and squads to ensure that we are tackling the right areas at the right time of the day/week/month. For example we have changed a number of the beats and timings around Secondary Schools to tackle the problem of litter after lunchtime.
5.	Operational Services: Standard of Service	The condition of roads and footpaths was highlighted as an issue although there were no themes to locations of these complaints.	Footpath condition surveys are being undertaken by staff from the service and these will help highlight the footpaths in the greatest need of repair. Road condition surveys are undertaken each year and the main priorities are then identified and programmed for investment.
6.	Operational Services: Standard of Service	Customer complaints relating to missed bins and bulky uplift appointments not being met.	Route optimisation and assessment was undertaken to improve routing of vehicles to avoid known areas of access issue/congestion dependant on the time of collection. Customers with an e-mail address now get an additional e-mail confirming their actual uplift date within 1 working day of uplift being logged. This resolves the issue of online customers not knowing their collection date.
7.	Operational Services: Standard of Service	During winter 2013/14, complaints were received relating to the standard of the winter maintenance service.	The service will provide customers with more real time information on the winter maintenance programme, including information on the priority gritting routes, how the council will deal with residential areas and the resources that will be available.

	Complaint Area/ Complaint Theme	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
8.	Education Services: Policy related	Complaints were linked to the access to community courses to home educated children. The council caused unnecessary confusion to in that communication about community courses has been unclear and inconsistent	Amendments to Educating Children and Young People at Home policy, containing clear written guidance on the access to Community High Schools by children and young people educated at home, approved by Education Executive 1 October 2013.
9.	Education Services: Standard of Service	Educational Psychology Service did not provide a reasonable service in relation to the Early Years Assessment process.	Actions considered and implemented on 4 October 2013 as a result of an internal review of the processes in relation to case. There is now a standard letter that is issued with all copies of reports to parents to explain the purpose of the report. It is also now standard practice for Educational Psychologists to record all attempts to contact a family even when unsuccessful.
10.	Area Services: Waiting time	Customers unhappy with time to wait in Queue to speak to CSC.	Implementation of new telephony system following relocation of CSC from Lomond House to Civic Centre. Staff Skillsets on new system have been reviewed and adjusted to maximise efficiency.
11.	Finance and Estates: Standards of service	Delay in processing benefit claim documentation not linked to the case incorrect advice given to customers, and documents received not being scanned to the case papers timeously.	Under the new structure of the Unit a training and development team leader and section leader have been appointed and are undertaking a programme of training/ refresher training with front line staff to improve understanding of the processes and customer service.

	Complaint Area/ Complaint Theme	Complaints Analysis	Service Improvement Action(s)
13.	Corporate Services: Standards of service	Complaints related to late handling of mail from a partner agency through the central mail room.	After discussions with Royal Mail, delivery times were modified after Royal Mail agreed to adjust their collection route.
14.	Social Policy	Social Policy complaint improvement actions are linked to their statutory complaints process and are not covered in this report.	

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORKPLAN TO 23 JANUARY 2015

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
1.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board annual report	Chief Executive	Annually 23 January 2015
2.	Quarterly Performance Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Quarterly 20 February 2015 5 June 2015 Date TBC Date TBC
3.	Quarterly Welfare Reform update	Head of Finance and Estates	Quarterly 20 February 2015 5 June 2015 Date TBC Date TBC
4.	Quarterly Sickness Absence Update	Head of Corporate Services	Quarterly 20 February 2015 5 June 2015 Date TBC Date TBC
5.	Minutes of Scotland Excel Meetings	Head of Finance and Estates	As available
6.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board minutes	Chief Executive	As available
7.	Community Council Scheme Review	Community Council Scheme Review	23 January 2015
8.	Customer Services Strategy	Head of Area Services	23 January 2015
9.	ICT Strategy	Head of Area Services	23 January 2015
10.	Information Strategy	Head of Corporate Services	23 January 2015
11.	People Strategy	Head of Corporate Services	20 February 2015
12.	Withdrawal from COSLA	Head of Finance and Estates	Date TBC
13.	Budgetary Issues 2015/16	Head of Finance and Estates	Date TBC
14.	Progress Report – Investment in schemes to create employment opportunities	Head of Area Services	Date TBC
15.	Disposal of Land by Local Authorities (Scotland) Regulations	Head of Finance and Estates	Date TBC

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
2010		

Graham Hope
Chief Executive