DATA LABEL: Public

Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

25 January 2019

A meeting of the **Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel** of West Lothian Council will be held within the **Council Chambers, West Lothian Civic Centre** on **Friday 1 February 2019** at **9:30am**.

For Chief Executive

BUSINESS

Public Session

1. Apologies for Absence.

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

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

4. Confirm Draft Minute of Meeting of the Panel held on 7 December 2018 (herewith).

5. Quarterly Performance Report - Quarter 3 of 2018/19 - report by Depute Chief Executive (herewith).

6. Sickness Absence (1 April 2018 - 31 December 2018) - report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith).

7. Corporate Procurement Strategy 2019/20 to 2022/23 - report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith).

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

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

10. Affordable Credit Update - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).

11. Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief Scheme - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).

12. Loans Fund Review - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).

13. Proposed Car Park Charging - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).

14. The Keep Safe Initiative - report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith).

15. Review of Decision-Making Arrangements - report by Governance Manager (herewith).

16. Consultation on Prisoner Voting - report by Chief Executive (herewith).

17. Workplan (herewith).

NOTE **For further information please contact Val Johnston on 01506 281604 or e-mail val.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk**

MINUTE of MEETING of the PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, on 7 DECEMBER 2018.

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

Apologies – Councillors Chris Horne, Peter Johnston and George Paul

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

2. MINUTES

1) The Panel approved the Minute of its meeting held on 5 October 2018; and

2) The Panel approved the Minute of its meeting held on 13 November 2018.

Both Minutes were thereafter signed by the Chair.

3. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 2 OF 2018/19

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Depute Chief Executive reporting the current level of performance for all indicators that supported the council's Corporate Plan and were the responsibility of the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

A summary position of the status of the 65 performance indicators on the P&R PDSP scorecard was contained in Appendix 1 attached to the report, with a more detailed commentary provided in Appendix 2 attached to the report. The 65 performance indicators were categorised as follows :-

- Green – 42
- Amber - 8
- Red – 9
- Unknown - 9

The RAG status was against the performance target which had been set by the services in consultation with the relevant stakeholder. In Appendix 2 a trend chart provided an explanation on the current performance levels for each indicator.

The report also provided further details on those performance indicators that were deemed to be red.

It was recommended that the Panel note the performance information and determine if further action or enquiry was necessary for any of the performance indicators in the report.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

4. SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2018 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2018)

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services providing details of the management of sickness absence in the council for the period 1 April to 30 September 2018, together with a brief commentary on the early application of the new Policy and Procedure in Supporting Attendance at Work.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Council Executive had on 26 June 2018 approved a Policy and Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work which had replaced the former Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence with effect from 1 September 2018. Therefore the report covered the 5 month period from 1 April to 31 August 2018 when the former policy was in operation and the month of September when the new policy became effective.

The report then provided an overview of the sickness absence rates for the council overall and for each of the services noting that of the seven services four services reported sickness absence rates above the council target of 3.6%. The report also provided an overview of long-term continuous absence rates, disregarded absences and the reasons for absence for the five month period 1 April to 31 August 2018.

The Head of Corporate Services continued by providing details of sickness absence case management and explaining the support initiatives that the council had in place to support those absent from work and which included the employee assistance programme and the healthy working lives programme.

The Head of Corporate Services concluded the report by providing a brief overview of the introduction of the new policy for Supporting Attendance at Work noting the training provided to managers and meetings with the trade unions on the implementation of the policy. The application of the policy would continue to be monitored over the coming months with progress being reported back to the Panel on a monthly basis in accordance with the usual reporting pattern.

It was recommended that the Panel note the content of the report.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and

2. To request that the Head of Corporate Services provide all Panel Members with further information on the usage by staff of the telephone support line since its launch on 1 November 2018.

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

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services presenting a draft British Sign Language (BSL) Local Plan 2018-2024 for West Lothian Council.

The report recalled that the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 22 October 2015. This legislation set out ambitious plans to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit.

The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 required that all “listed Authorities” in Scotland must produce on Authority Plan (local plan) demonstrating how they would work towards implementing the national plan and improving services for BSL users throughout the area.

The council as a listed authority was required to have a local BSL plan in place by the end of 2018.

In February 2018 West Lothian Council participated in a pan-Lothian consultation event involving other local authorities, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue, NHS Lothian and other interested organisations and groups. This was then followed up with a specific West Lothian Council consultation event and included West Lothian residents, persons who used BSL and persons who represented users of BSL.

Based on the consultation events held and the feedback received a draft plan was produced and published for consultation on the council’s web site from 3 to 21 September 2018, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.The format of the plan followed that of the National Plan and sets out an ambitious suite of actions which would improve the way BSL users find out about and access council services.

The report concluded that the council recognised the need to deliver services that meets the needs of the diverse communities of West Lothian whilst ensuring legislative compliance.

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

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and

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

6. SEVERE WEATHER POLICY (REVISED)

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services presenting a revised Severe Weather Policy, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1

The report recalled that during the early part of 2018, the country experienced exceptionally severe weather causing considerable disruption to businesses, workers and the public in general and prompting a Red Weather Warning to be issued. While the council had in place arrangements for dealing with disruption caused by severe weather, the unprecedented harshness of the weather conditions on this occasion exposed some weaknesses in the current policy.

Following consideration of a motion at Full Council on 30 March 2018 the Chief Executive was instructed to undertake a thorough review of communication procedures between managers and staff, and to engage with the recognised Trade Unions to establish clean lines of communication for adverse weather conditions. Additionally the Chief Executive was asked to undertake a review of the existing Severe Weather Policy.

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

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

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

It had also been agreed that a list of post types deemed as “essential works” would be discussed with the recognised trade unions.

A further key change proposed was for the Chief Executive, in the exceptional event of a Red Weather Warning, to have discretion to over-ride the normal policy provisions which may include authorising the general application of special leave or crediting essential workers who

attended work within their normal hours/pay during the period that the warning was in force.

It was recommended that the Panel :-

a. Considers the revised draft Severe Weather Policy appended to the report with a view to submission to the Council Executive for approval;

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

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

d. Notes that the revised policy provided discretion to the Chief Executive to over-ride the normal provisions of the policy during periods when a Red Weather Warning was issued.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and

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

7. AVOIDANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES PROCEDURE

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services presenting a revised draft Procedure for Avoidance of Industrial Disputes in respect of non-teaching staff.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that while the council was fully committed to maintaining a constructive and positive working relationship with the recognised trade unions it was also accepted that situations could arise from time to time where proposed changes to working practices and conditions of employment resulted in a failure to agree. It was therefore important in these circumstances that there was a recognised protocol available for helping to resolve such matters before they escalated into damaging industrial disputes.

Following representations from the non-teaching trade unions through the council's Joint Consultative Group, the former Lothian Regional Council procedure which the council had adopted back in 1996 had been modified and updated.

The revisions were relatively minor in nature and included the removal of out of date references to the National Joint Council (NJC) which became obsolete following the introduction of the Single Status Agreement in 1997. The revised procedure also retained the option for parties to agree to third party assistance through the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration

Service (ACAS) in the event of failure to agree a resolution at the Avoidance of Dispute Committee.

A copy of the revised draft was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

It was recommended that the Panel considers the revised draft Avoidance of Disputes Procedure with a view to its submission to the Council Executive for approval.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and

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

8. WELFARE REFORM: QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services advising of recent development and the continuing implications of, the ongoing programme of welfare changes.

The report recalled that major changes that had been introduced under the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The Act had also provided for major DWP-led reforms to the welfare system, most notably the introduction of Universal Credit to replace six current working age benefits/credits, which had gone live in West Lothian on 16 May 2018.

The Panel noted that the Scotland Act 2016 devolved certain aspects of welfare in Scotland to the Holyrood Parliament. Consultation had been undertaken and the Scottish Government had now announced draft timetables and arrangements to implement the devolved welfare powers over the course of the current Parliament. The Social Security (Scotland) Bill had been introduced in the Scottish Parliament on 20 June 2017 and received royal assent on 1 June 2018.

The report went on to provide an overview of the following subject matters :-

- Discretionary Housing Payment Fund
- Scottish Welfare Fund
- Universal Credit
- Universal Support Provision
- The Scotland Act 2016 and Devolution of Welfare
- Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018
- Further welfare changes

With regards to Universal Support Provision on 1 October 2018 the DWP announced a new partnership with Citizen's Advice and Citizen's Advice Scotland to deliver Universal Support. This new partnership would be effective from 1 April 2019 and from this date local authorities would no

longer be asked to deliver this support.

The Head of Finance and Property Services concluded by advising that as further changes took effect, officers would assess the cumulative effects of these challenges in order to develop and shape work going forward.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and

2. To request that the Head of Finance and Property Services engage with colleagues at Citizen's Advice Scotland to try and ensure that their service provision would be easily and readily accessible throughout the whole of West Lothian.

9. HORIZON SCAN

The Panel considered a joint report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services and the Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration providing a summary of the latest UK economic indicators, including details on the UK leaving the European Union and an update on the estimated revenue budget position facing the council as a result of ongoing unavoidable spending pressures.

The report went on to provide the Panel with a Horizon Scan for the UK covering areas as the UK leaving the EU, debt and borrowing, economic growth, exports and inward investment, inflation, interest rates unemployment and house prices and consumer sentiment. A similar Horizon Scan was also provided for in the report specifically relating to Scotland and to West Lothian Council.

With regards to budget planning and changes to the budget model work was currently underway to review and update the budget model in advance of the 2019/20 annual revenue budget setting process. This exercise was focused on re-evaluating the assumptions underlying the approval model, especially where additional information or update forecasts could impact on the original financial values.

In summary the main high risk areas being reviewed were pay award; teachers pensions; school demographics; revenue consequences of capital programme; recurring service budget pressures; inflation and indexation; council tax income; and local government finance settlement.

The Head of Finance and Property Services continued to explain that the nature of forecasting meant that it was challenging to identify with any certainty expenditure pressures and income. Therefore in general the following risks and uncertainties would also be monitored :-

- Economic growth being less than forecast, resulting in further public spending reduction;

- Funding not provided to fully cover costs of introducing new

legislation;

- Policy changes by the UK or Scottish Government which restricted the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally;

- Ring fencing of grant funding, constraining how local authorities allocated resources; and

- Changes to local government remits with uncertainty for service provision and funding.

The report concluded that the report provided a high level overview of the latest economic indicators and other announcements likely to have an impact on the council and that based on forecasts and commentary the outlook would suggest that in the short, medium and long term public finances would continue to be constrained.

It was recommended that the Panel notes :-

1. The latest economic and financial position and the potential financial implications for West Lothian and the council's future financial planning;

2. That whilst the council's estimated budget gap for the five years 2018/19 to 2022/23 continued to be £65.3 million, this would change as a result of the finance settlement in December and a detailed review of the budget model currently being undertaken;

3. The specific risks which could have an adverse impact on the overall financial plan and the detailed revenue budget agreed for 2019/20; and

4. The potential risks and uncertainties in the five year revenue budget strategy.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

10. PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT - PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on the performance of Property Asset Management for 2017/18.

The council owned and managed property assets to support the delivery of services, which included schools, community, operational, administrative and commercial property. The estate extended to 242 properties comprising of 431,318m$^{2.}$

The Property Asset Management Plan for 2013/14 to 2017/18 which set out the activity themes for the management of property assets highlighted a number of performance indicators for each of the corporate measures.

These were outlined in Appendix 1 attached to the report together with respective results. Two of the indicators were reported as part of the Scottish Specified Performance Indicators Framework, which were Condition and Suitability. Further information on these two indicators was contained in the report.

The Panel continued to be advised that over the past year a number of significant projects and planning improvements had been undertaken and these included the new West Calder High School; Whitehill Service Centre; Blackburn Partnership Centre; East Calder Partnership Centre; and nursery extensions at Boghall and Torphichen.

A new Property Asset Management Plan had now been devised and would cover the period 2018/19 to 2027/28; this was being presented to the Panel in a separate report. The new plan would build upon previous successes and emphasise the council's effective and efficient management of its property assets.

In terms of the coming years the report summarised those projects that would be undertaken by officers. These significant investments reflected the council's commitment to investing in property assets to support the modernisation of service delivery; improving the built environment of our communities and working partnership.

It was recommended that the Panel notes :-

1. The overall condition of Property Assets for 2017/18;

2. The overall suitability of Property Assets for 2017/18;

3. The overall performance of Property Assets for 2017/18 against the performance measures outlined in the report; and

4. The projects delivered that had contributed to delivery of the council's property asset management priorities

Decision

To note the contents of the report

11. PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (2018/19 TO 2027/28)

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing the proposed Property Asset Management Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28.

The proposed Property Asset Management Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28, attached to the report at Appendix 1 had at its core the overall aim to manage the council's property assets efficiently and effectively whilst continuing to improve performance. The plan was for a ten year period and progress would be reported annually. The plan would also be formally reviewed and recalibrated in 2022/23.

The plan set out the council's approach to the management of its property assets and would support the council's priorities by :-

- Establishing a corporate framework for the management of the council's property assets;
- Highlighting corporate outcomes and priorities and how they would be supported through the effective and efficient management of property assets;
- Presenting an overview of the extensive property assets owned by the council;
- Identifying the internal and external influencing factors and challenges affecting property;
- Identifying a number of activity themes to improve the performance of property asset management; and
- Outlining the investment the council would make in its property assets over the next ten years.

The Head of Finance and Property Services continued by providing information on corporate asset management performance measures, governance arrangements, performance improvement activity themes and capital investment.

The report concluded that the proposed Property Asset Management Plan had been prepared to reflect and support the priorities in the Corporate Plan and Corporate Asset Management Strategy. It sets out a framework and resource requirement for the next ten years to ensure that the council managed its property assets effectively and efficiently.

The Panel was asked to note the proposed Property Asset Management for 2018/19 to 2027/28 and the intention to report the plan to Council Executive for approval.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To agree that the report be submitted to the Council Executive for approval.

12. 2018/19 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - MONTH 6 MONITORING REPORT

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing an update on the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources portfolio.

A table within the report summarised the position in relation to service and

capital expenditure and provided an update on the forecast position. The forecast revenue position was an underspend of £1.476 million for the Partnership and Resources portfolio. There was also net slippage of £1.678 million in the capital programme. As part of the monitoring exercise, a number of key risks and service pressures had been identified and these were noted in the narrative for the relevant service area.

The report also provided a summary of the main issues in service expenditure budgets and impact on performance for both general fund revenue and general services capital.

In relation to future budget issues West Lothian Council had approved savings of £41.281 million for the three year period 2018/19 to 2020/21 as part of a five year budget strategy on 13 February 2018. For 2018/19 there remained risks around deliverability of budget reductions. In addition recurring pressures of £3.894 million would have an impact on how the council could contain overall spending within the approved budget. It was therefore essential that mitigating actions, which had been agreed, were progressed to ensure these pressures were managed on a recurring basis.

It was recommended that the Panel :-

1. Notes the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources portfolio as at month 6;

2. Notes that the Partnership and Resources position at month 6 was part of the overall council budget position which was reported to Council Executive on 13 November 2018; and

3. Notes any actions required to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

Decision

To note the contents of the report

13. COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT - ANNUAL REVIEW 2017/18

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Governance Manager advising of significant issues in 2017/18 in relation to the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

Table 1 in the appendix attached to the report summarised the complaints received by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards for Public Life in Scotland (CES) during the year. Table 2 was the summary of the cases in which the CES found a breach and referred a case onto the Standards Commission for Scotland (SCS) for determination.

The highlights from the CES's year and from the complaint figures were as follows :-

- There was again a reduction in the total number of complaints;

- The largest category of complaints was of misconduct in dealing with individual applications, mainly planning cases;
- The largest category of cases referred on to the SCS was disrespect;
- The number of complaints from officers reduced again, down now for two consecutive years;
- Complaints were being processed more quickly but the reduction in numbers of complaints had helped that; and
- Only three complaints were made against members of devolved public bodies.

The SCS's year was also summarised in the report with further information contained in Appendix 3 on the hearing cases for the year.

Looking forward the SCS had identified the following areas of activity :-

- ❖ Issuing advice for councillors on distinguishing between policy-making and operational management
- ❖ Holding a workshop for IJB members and Standards Officers
- ❖ Holding more roadshows for councillors in 2018/19
- ❖ Amending Codes of Conduct to make more explicit that bullying and harassment would not be tolerated and would be a breach of the Code
- ❖ Working with the Scottish Ministers to revise more extensively the Codes of Conduct for councillors and public body members

With regards to training for the council's elected members on the code of conduct this was concentrated in the post-election induction programme with a series of short sessions provided on the different components of the Code. Other more targeted sessions were provided during the year.

The council's updated history of involvement with the CES and the SCS and of its internal procedures was shown in Tables 4, 5 and 6 of the appendix.

Six complaints were made and determined through the council's internal complaints procedure. Two of the six complaints related to the same circumstances with the other five cases summarised in the report.

It was noted that no complaints against West Lothian councillors were made to the CES during the year.

In conclusion the number of complaints against West Lothian Council in 2017/18 was higher than in recent years with the most significant aspect being the use of social media. Further awareness of issues relating to the

Code of Conduct would help members in applying the Code to their council work and would assist officers in their dealings with members and their working relationships.

The Panel was asked to consider the following recommendation which were to be made to Council Executive :-

1. To note the summary of the issues arising in relation to the Councillors' Code of Conduct in 2017/18

2. To note that the annual presentation to members would now take place on 22 January 2019; and

3. To note in particular the continuing interest in "respect" cases and the related issues of enhanced Article 10 rights to freedom of expression in political matters and inappropriate involvement of members in operational matters.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and

2. To agree that the report along with the recommendations be forwarded to Council Executive.

14. SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN: ANNUAL REPORT 2017 - 2018

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Chief Executive updating members on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Annual Report 2017/18.

The report recalled that the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) handled complaints at the final stage for public services in Scotland, including local authorities, the National Health Service, housing associations, prisons, most water and sewage providers, the Scottish Government and its agencies and most Scottish Public Authorities. The SPSO investigated complaints when the complainer had exhausted the formal complaints procedure of the relevant authority.

The SPSO reported that the number of complaints received regarding local government had increased by just less than 1% to 1542 for 2017/18 from 1528 the previous year.

The SPSO provided each council with information specific to that local authority to consider. The SPSO's Annual Letter was attached to the report at Appendix 1. Appendix 2 provided a table of statistics about complaints to the SPSO regarding West Lothian Council in the past two years. Appendix 2 also highlighted that the number of complaints received about West Lothian Council was 71, which had decreased from 73 complaints received in 2016/17. The greatest number of complaints related to Housing which was in line with the sector as a whole.

There were 28 complaints about West Lothian Council which were dealt with at the advice stage as they were not suitable for the SPSO, whilst a further 34 were considered to have had an early resolution. There were 12 complaints regarding West Lothian Council which were fully investigated, four were fully upheld, one was partly upheld and six were not upheld. One complaint was resolved. This was in comparison to 2016/17 when no complaints were fully upheld.

Compliance with the model Complaints Handling Process (CHP) was monitored in line with the Shared Risk Assessment and annual audit arrangements. Local authorities were also expected to have appropriate self-assessment arrangements in place to ensure that their CHP was operating in accordance with the model CHP, which required councils to publish annual complaints statistics and learning against performance indicators.

The council had put in place clear governance arrangements for complaints and these were outlined in the report.

The SPSO's Annual Letter for 2017/18 noted the continued focus by the SPSO on helping authorities improve public services through learning from complaints. One of the ways this was progressed was through the recommendations made by the SPSO to local authorities. The SPSO had changed its approach to making recommendations with more of a shift towards an outcome in relation to services and remedying justice to individuals.

Appendix 3 set out the SPSO recommendations and service improvement actions for complaints closed by the Ombudsman in 2017/18.

1. The Panel was asked to note the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) Annual Report 2017/18 and recommend that it be submitted to the Council Executive for information;

2. The Panel was asked to note West Lothian Council's performance in relation to the number of complaints received by the SPSO and the outcome; and

3. The Panel was asked to note the learning from SPSO complaints which was appended to the report for information.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and

2. To agree that the report be submitted to the Council Executive for information.

15. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan was circulated for information.

Decision

To note the workplan.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 3 OF 2018/19

REPORT BY DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose is to report the current level of performance for all indicators that support the council's Corporate Plan and are the responsibility of the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel.

B. RECOMMENDATION

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

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

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

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

D.2 Quarterly Performance Report

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

A summary position of the status of the 64 performance indicators in the PR PDSP scorecard is contained in Appendix 1, with a more detailed commentary provided in Appendix 2 of this report.

The 64 performance indicators are categorised as follows:

Summary of Performance Indicator status (RAG)	
Status (against target)	Number of PIs
Green	41
Amber	8
Red	10
Unknown	5

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

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

D.3 Red Performance Indicators

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

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

Current performance: 66%
Target: 75%

The trend chart shows performance dipped in Quarter 3 in 2018/19 compared to Quarters 1 and 2 and also in comparison to the same period in 2017/18. The CSC is reporting that it is receiving a higher proportion of calls that are more complex and cannot be resolved fully at first point of contact by the CSC Advisers. Simultaneously, the council is also seeing an increasing number of customers shifting towards completing transactional activities online, using improved functionality on the council's website to request services and make

payments.

FEADS061_Total quarterly amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers

Current performance: £5,684,001
Target: £6,750,000

The trend chart shows performance dipped in Quarter 3 in 2018/19 compared to £7,086,453 in Quarter 2 and also in comparison to performance of £7,059,359 in the same period in 2017/18. The service report that this dip is due to the impact of Universal Credit. Customer enquiries have become more complex and now take longer to resolve. The service expects performance to improve in quarter 4 as benefit decisions are made and that the quarterly target will be achieved.

P:HRS104_Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter

Current performance: 14
Target: 9

The trend chart shows that the number of reportable incidents to the HSE increased to 14 in Quarter 3 in 2018/19 compared to 6 incidents in Quarter 2 and also increased in comparison to 8 reportable incidents during the same period in 2017/18. All reportable incidents are investigated to ensure that corrective and preventative measures are implemented to prevent a recurrence of a similar type of incident as far as reasonably practicable. Incident statistics are also examined to identify required actions in the annual health and safety action plans for services and the corporate health and safety work plan.

There are four red performance indicators that relate to the cumulative percentage of sickness absence:

- CSg301_ Percentage of Sickness Absence in Construction Services
- FEADS028_Percentage of Sickness Absence in the Advice Shop
- FM048_Percentage of Sickness Absence in Financial Management Unit
- HRS525_Percentage of Sickness Absence in HR Services

There are three red performance indicators that relate to complaints received:

- CuCS010q_Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services
- HRS554_Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter
- P:PMD145_Percentage of complaints received by Property Management and Development that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full

D.4 Unknown Performance Indicators

- There are 5 performance indicators with an Unknown status that relates to the percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld. This is due to services not receiving complaints within the time period presented and therefore the indicators show blank data.

E. CONCLUSION

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

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

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

Contact Person: Rebecca Kelly
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Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive
1 February 2019

APPENDIX 1

Partnership & Resources Scorecard Report

Generated on: 22 January 2019

West Lothian Council

Traffic Light Red

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	P:CSC100_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact.	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	66%	75%
	CSg301_7b.1 Construction Services - Cumulative Percentage of Sick Days	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2.39%	2%
	CuCS010q_6b.3 Customer and Communities - Total number of complaints received by Customer and Community services	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	16	12
	FEADS028_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Advice Shop	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	6.34%	3.6%
	P:FEADS061_9b.1a Total quarterly amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	£5,684,001	£6,750,000
	FM048_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Financial Management Unit - Cumulative	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	3.34%	1.5%
	P:HRS104_9b.2 Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	14	9
	HRS525_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in HR Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	4.99%	3.6%
	HRS554_6b.4 Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	100%	25%
	P:PMD145_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Property Management and Development that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	100%	33%

Traffic Light Amber

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CC081_9b.1a Percentage of new social media followers on the West Lothian Council sites per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1%	2%
	CSg600_9b.1c Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Construction Services.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	72%	75%
	P:CuCS026q_9b.1a Percentage of customer enquiries recorded on the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) which are resolved at the first point of contact	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	70.2%	75.0%
	FM001_6b.5 Percentage of Suppliers paid within 30 Days of Receipt.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	95.9%	96%

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	ITS003_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in IT Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	4.48%	3.6%
	ITS004_9b.1c Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	34%	40%
	PIS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	2	1
	P:REV027_6b Percentage of Business Rates and Council Tax correspondence processed within 10 working days of receipt.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	89.6%	91%

Traffic Light Green

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CC014_6b.3 Total number of complaints received per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	CC031_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Communications	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.04%	3.6%
	CPU017a_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Procurement Unit	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	3.32%	3.6%
	CPU019b_9b.1a Percentage of relevant compliant council expenditure per quarter.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	94%	92%
	CPU047c_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit on a Quarterly basis	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	CPU047d_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0%	0%
	P:CSC007mq_6a.7 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	94.5%	97.0%
	CSC062m_6b.3 Total Number of Complaints against Customer Service Centre (CSC).	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	5	7
	CSC063m_6b.4 Percentage of Complaints Upheld and part upheld against Customer Service Centre	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	16.67%	55%
	CSg112_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Construction Services	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0	3
	P:CuCS007q_6a.7 Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	99.3%	98.0%
	P:CuCS011q_6b.4 Customer and Communities - The percentage of complaints received by Customer and Communities Service that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full.	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	56.3%	60.0%
	CuCS021_7b.1 Customer and Communities - Percentage of Sickness absence	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	3.61%	3.6%
	P:FEADS007_6a.7 Advice Shop - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	99.6%	99%

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	P:FEADS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Advice Shop	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	5	4
	FEADS012_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Advice Shop that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	40%	50%
	FM037_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Financial Management Unit	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0	3
	HRS550_6b.3 Number of complaints received by HR Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1	1
	P:IA008_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by internal audit as good or excellent.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	100%	100%
	P:IA015_9b.1a Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	8.9	10
	IA051_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0.72%	1.5%
	IA066_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0	0
	ITS012_6a.7 Percentage of IT Services Customers Rating the Overall Quality as Good or Excellent.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	99%	98%
	ITS030_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	LS007_7b.1 Percentage Sickness Absence Levels in Legal Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.86%	3.6%
	P:LS046_6b.5 Percentage of Taxi/Private Hire Car Applications Not Granted or Refused within 90 Days .	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	6%	6%
	LS087_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Legal Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	2
	PIS013_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed by the Performance and Improvement Service that were upheld / partially upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0%	25%
	PIS023_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Performance and Improvement Service	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.49%	3.6%
	PIS514_6b.5 Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days		98.2%	97%
	PMD111b_7b.1 Cumulative Percentage Sickness/Absence levels - Property Management & Development	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1.68%	1.5%
	PMD144_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Property Management and Development	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1	3
	P:PMD161_9b.1a Industrial Portfolio - Percentage of Total Units Let.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	92.88%	90%
	P:PMD163_9b.1a Office Portfolio - Percentage of Office Units Let.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	89.19%	90%
	P:PMD164_9b.1c Percentage of rent outstanding for commercial property, (Current debt).	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	4.26%	4%
	REV002_9b Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) received in the year.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	80.97%	79.7%
	REV047_9b.1a Percentage of income collected in the current year from Council Tax.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	80.21%	80.23%

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	REV048a_7b.1 Monthly Sickness Absence Levels	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1.65%	2.5%
	REV099_9b Housing Benefit monthly new claims	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	11.35	17
	REV122_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Revenues Unit	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	21	22
	REV123_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Revenues Unit that were upheld or partially upheld	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	19%	25%

Traffic Light Unknown

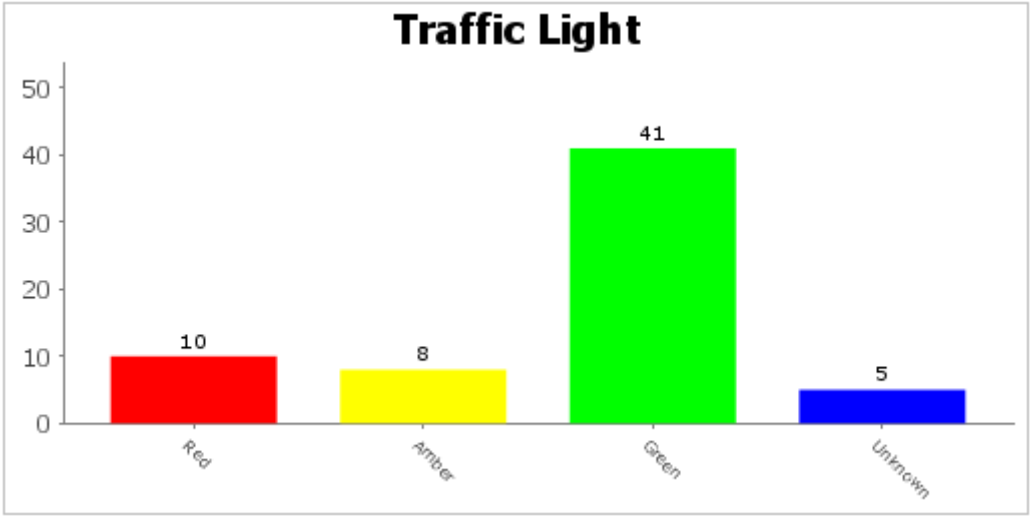
Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	CC016_6b.4 The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)		
	CSg113_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Construction Services that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	N/A	50%
	IA067_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud that were upheld or partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	N/A	42%
	ITS031_6b.4 Percentage of complaints received that were upheld/partially upheld	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0
	LS027_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0%

APPENDIX 2

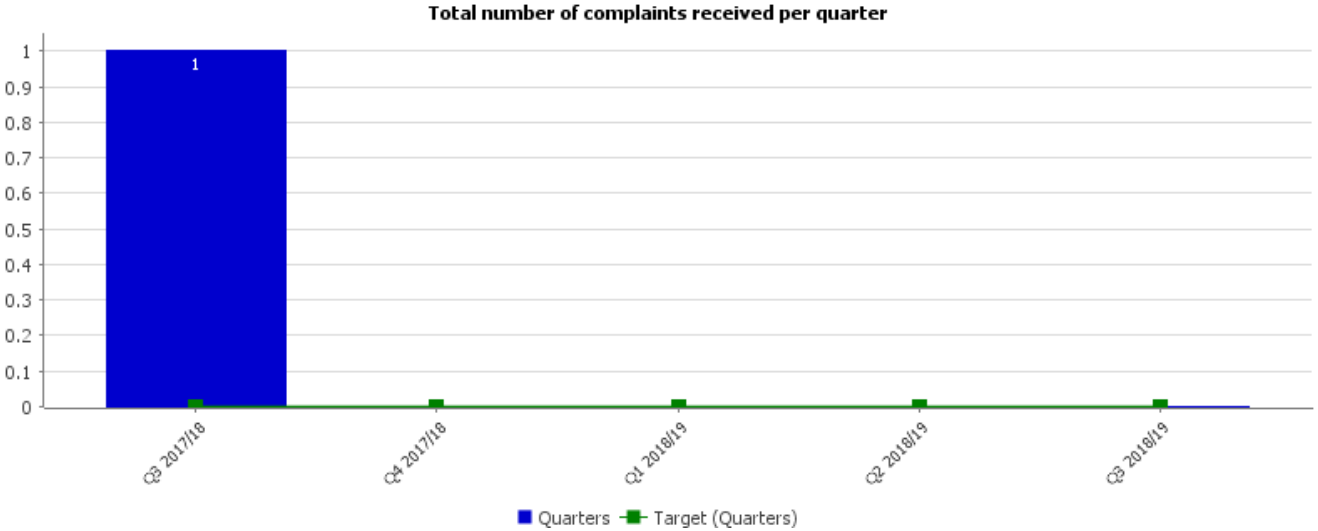
09 PDSP – Partnership and Resources PIs

Data Label : OFFICIAL

Generated on: 22 January 2019 17:24



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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	0
Amber Threshold:	0
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

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

2018/19
Q1 2018/19 - the service received no complaints
Q2 2018/19 - the service received no complaints
Q3 2018/19 - the service received no complaints

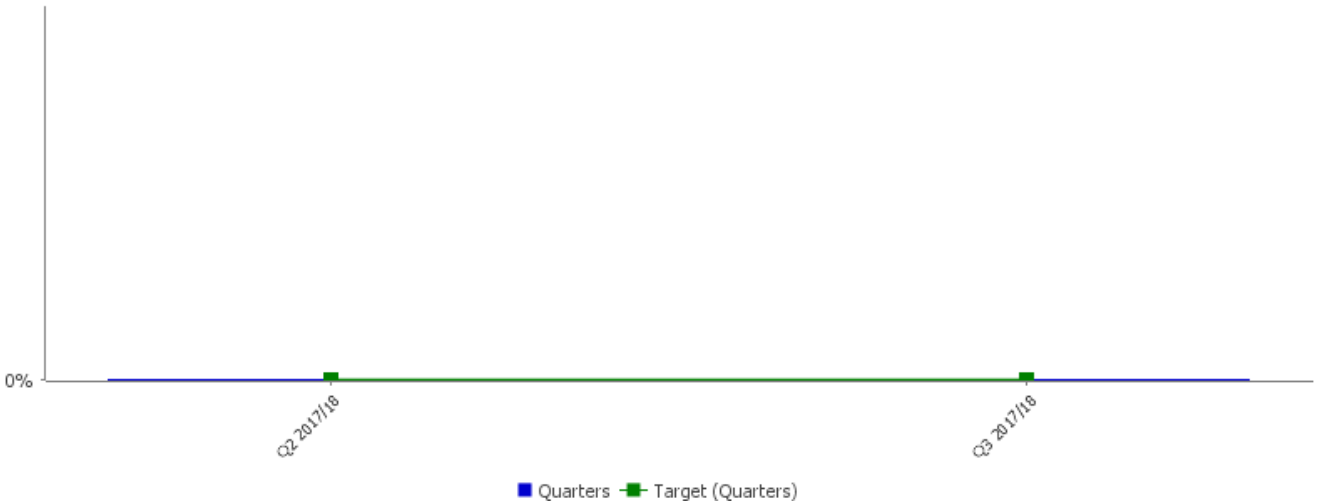
2017/18
Q1 2017/18 - the service received no complaints
Q2 2017/18 - the service received 1 complaint relating to social media content
Q3 2017/18 - the service received 1 complaint relating to content in Bulletin
Q4 2017/18 - the service received no complaints

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

The target for 2019/20 performance will remain at 0 per quarter, this is to reflect the small number of complaints the service received in 2018/19. Targets are reviewed annually.

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

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



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

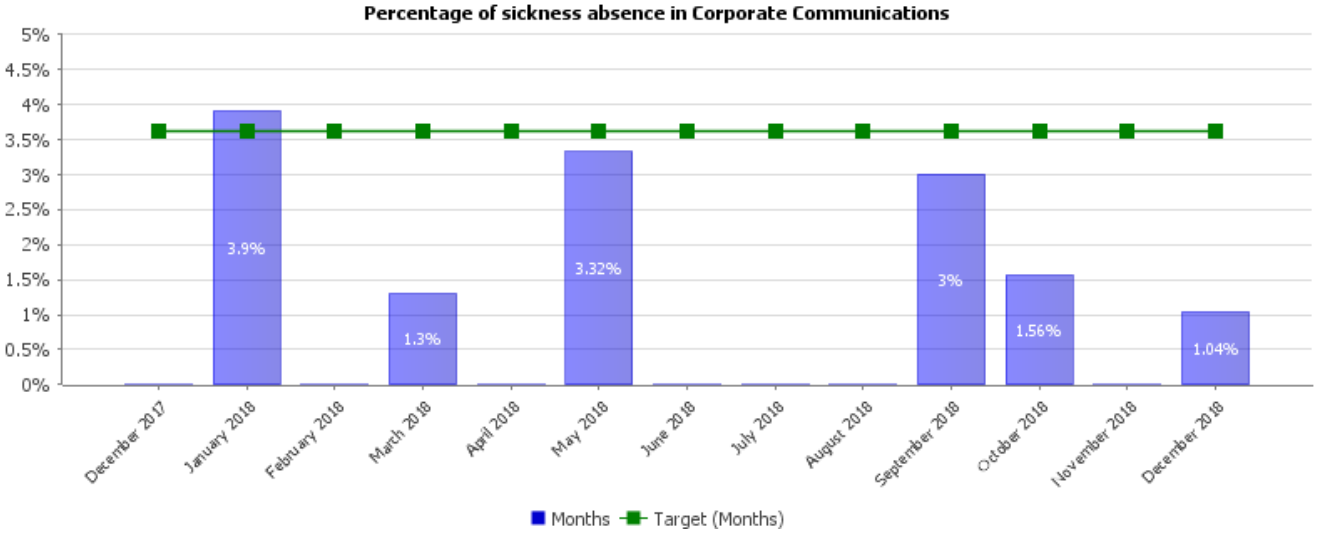
Trend Chart Commentary:
Q4 2018/19 2 complaints were received but 0 were upheld.
Q3 2018/19 no complaints were received.
Q2 2018/19 no complaints were received.
Q1 2018/19 no complaints were received.

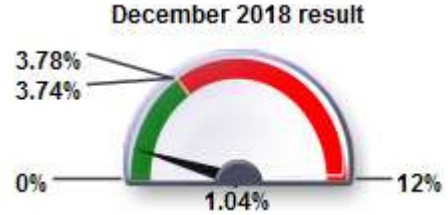
Q4 2017/18 no complaints were received.
Q3 2017/18 1 complaint was received relating to Bulletin content which was not upheld
Q2 2017/18 1 complaint was received relating to social media content which was not upheld
Q1 2017/18 no complaints were received.

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

The target for 2019/20 will remain at 0%.

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	1.04%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	3.78%
Amber Threshold:	3.74%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

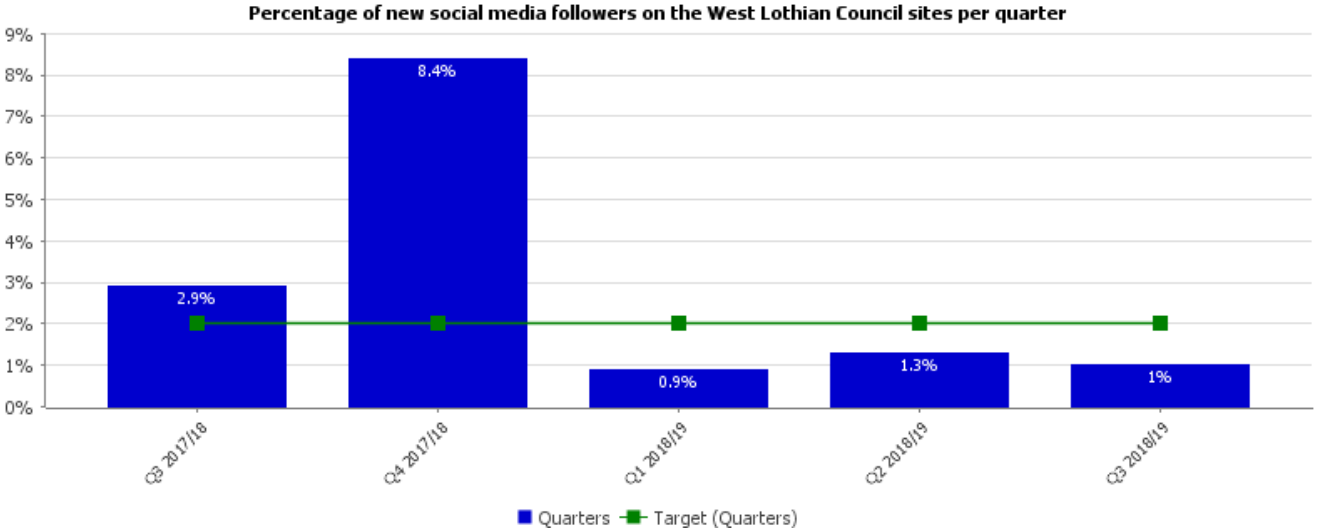
Trend Chart Commentary:

In December 2017 the percentage was nil. In January 2018 sickness absence increased to 3.9% due to several short term absences within the team. The percentage decreased to 0% again in February and remained low throughout 2018 with the exception of May due to two members of staff being absent. From June to August, there has been no absence in Corporate Communications. One member of staff absent for 4 days during the month of September 2018. One member of staff was absent for 2 days in October and nil in November. The trend increased to over 15 in December due to one member of staff being off for a short period of time.

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

The corporate target is 3.6%.

PI Code & Short Name	**CC081_9b.1a Percentage of new social media followers on the West Lothian Council sites per quarter**		
Description	This Performance indicator measures the percentage increase or decrease of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram followers on the main council sites. The data is obtained from the social media platforms and is calculated by comparing the change in numbers and calculating what the percentage change. This indicator allows the corporate communications team to monitor and measure the usage of key social media channels allowing us to evaluate staffing resources and determine the appropriate content required to attract new service users to this communications channel.	**PI Owner(s):**	zCC_PIAdmin; Garry Heron

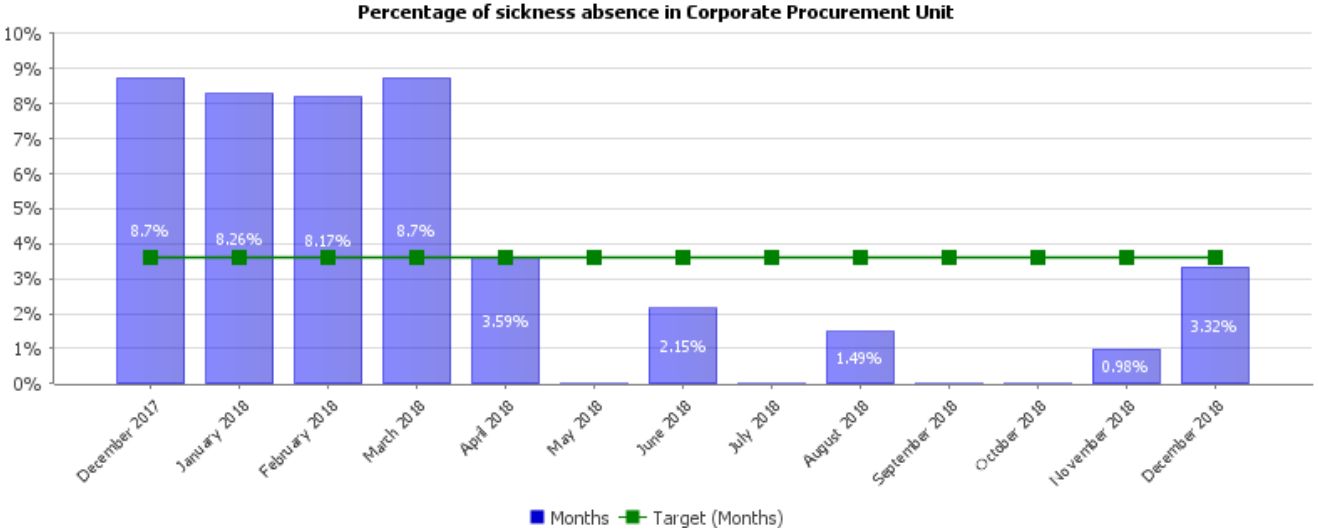


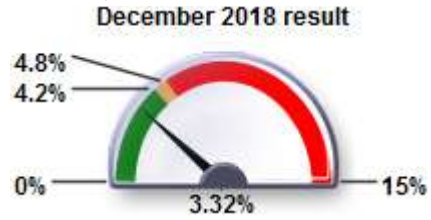
Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	1%
Current Target:	2%
Red Threshold:	0.5%
Amber Threshold:	1.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The quarterly chart for number of social media likes generally shows a steady increase of around 1% to 3% for each period. This reflects the growing numbers of residents using social media and choosing to follow our channels. Severe weather during Q4 2017/18 led to a substantial increase in followers during this period of over 8%. Growth has slowed to a steady increase of approximately 1% through all three quarters of 2018/19 as the majority of local residents with social media follow at least one of our channels.

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	3.32%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	4.8%
Amber Threshold:	4.2%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

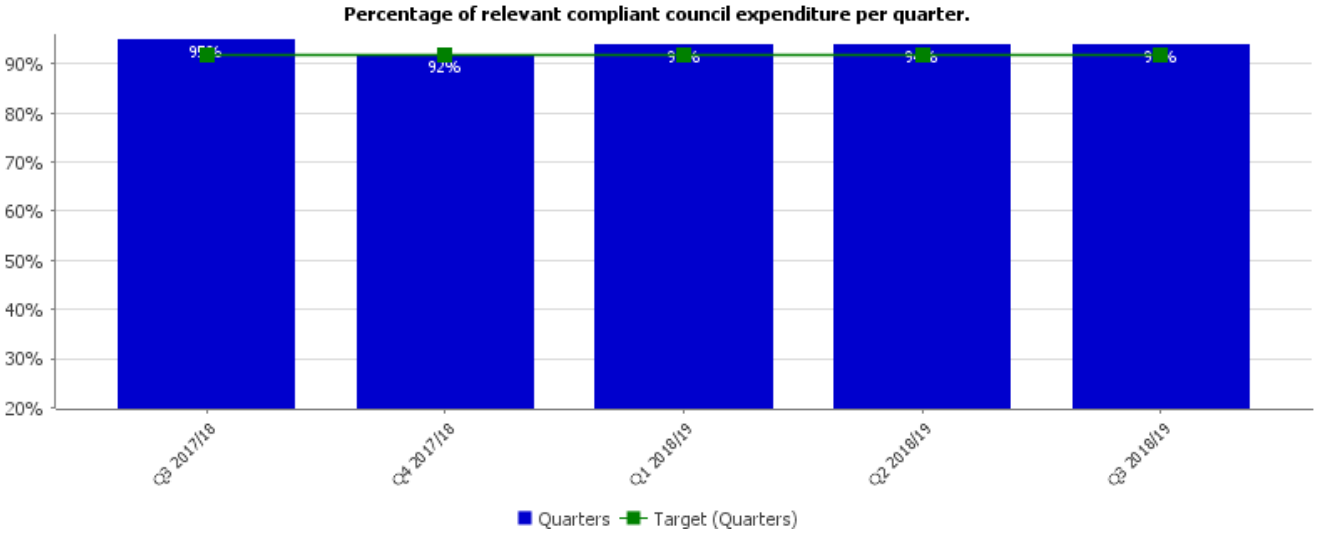
Sickness absence from December 2017 to present have been extremely varied. From December 2017, recorded performance exceeded the target of 3.6% consistently until March 2018. From April 2018, to December 2018 performance was recorded below target, with 4 months being recorded at 0% sickness absence.

All absences are managed in accordance with the Council's sickness absence policy and procedure.

Target performance will continue to be set at the Corporate Services standard of 3.6%, with CPU will continuing to monitor performance in this area throughout 2018/19.

PI Code & Short Name	**CPU019b_9b.1a Percentage of relevant compliant council expenditure per quarter.**
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of relevant Supplies, Services and Works expenditure covered by contracts awarded in line with standing orders. Relevant Spend is identified as being spend which is influenceable by the Corporate Procurement Unit, Non influenceable spend is identified and removed from the overall spend to allow for a more accurate calculation. Calculated on a quarterly basis, the service identifies the council's contracted suppliers from the Corporate Contract Management System (CCMS) and measures their spend against the total council spend within the council's purchase to pay systems. Levels of spend with non-contracted suppliers is monitored by the service on a quarterly basis to ensure that the year-end target performance is achieved. This performance indicator is related to ensuring that the target savings agreed for the next five years can be achieved through effective procurement activity.

PI Owner(s): zCPU_PIAdmin; Angela Salmons



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	94%
Current Target:	92%
Red Threshold:	82.8%
Amber Threshold:	87.4%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

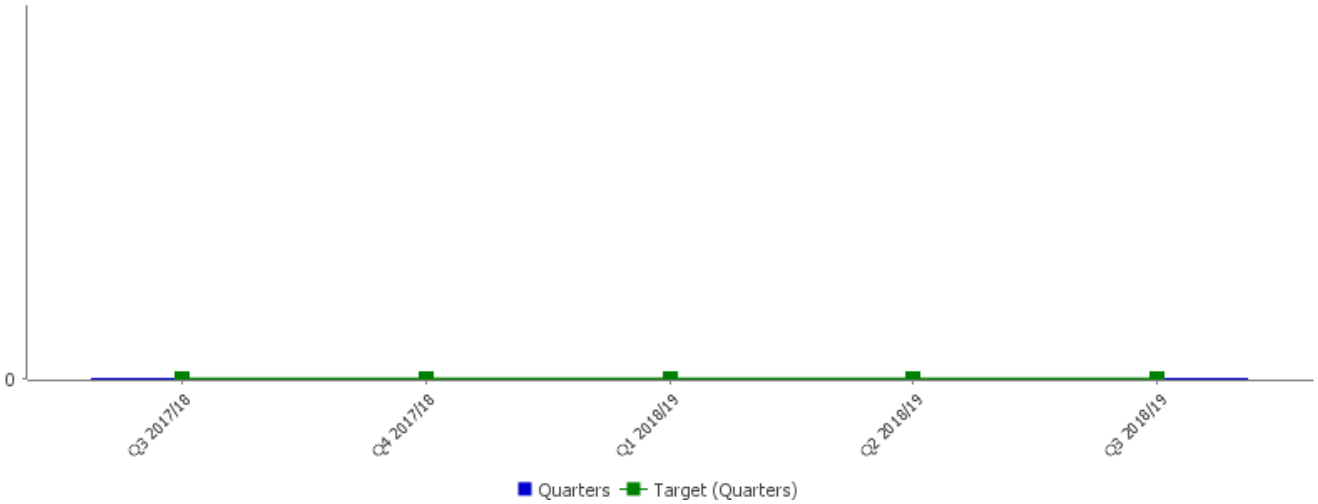
Trend Chart Commentary

Performance in this indicator has consistently met or exceeded target since Q3 of 2017/18, with 2018/19 consistently exceeding the target of 92% at a figure of 94%

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

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

Total number of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit on a Quarterly basis



Q3 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

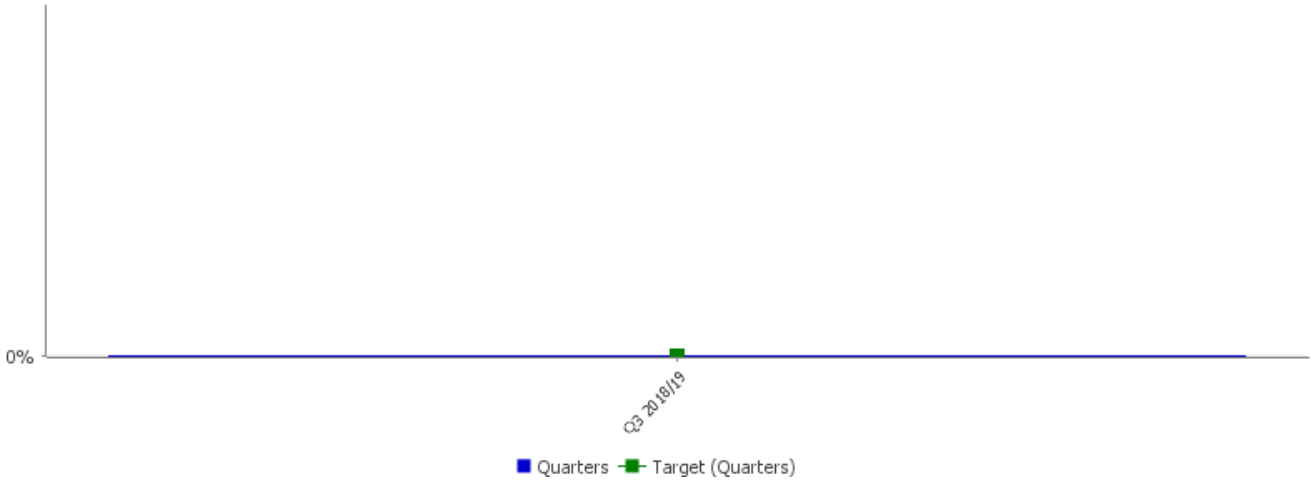
The target for 2017/18 was set at 1, but was reduced to 0 (nil) during review in August 2017. No complaints have been received during 2017/18 to date.

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

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

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

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



Q3 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0%
Current Target:	0%
Red Threshold:	80%
Amber Threshold:	77%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

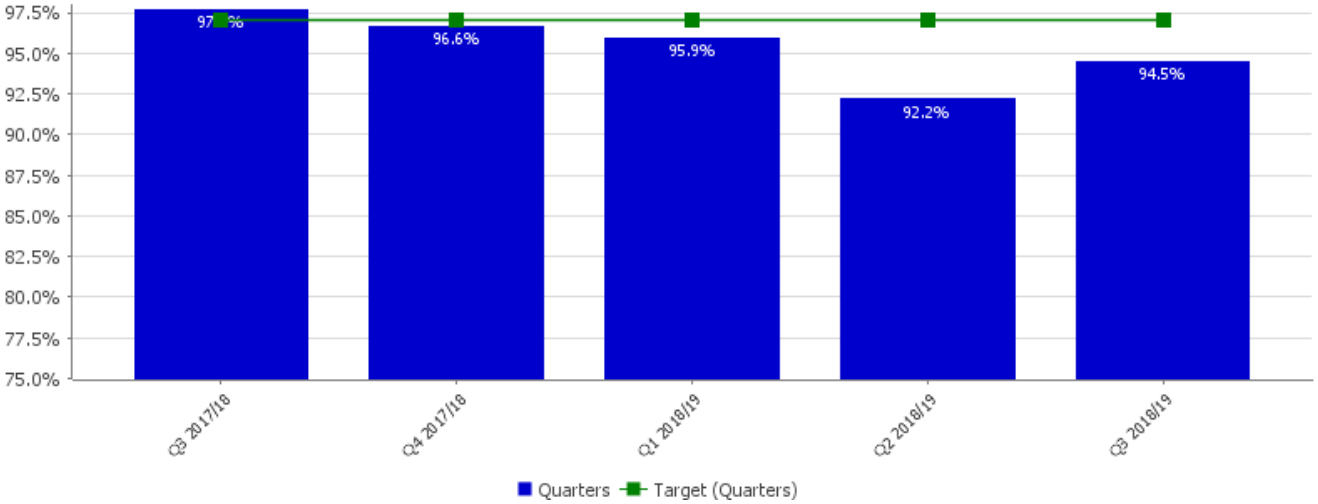
No complaints have been received by the Corporate Procurement Unit in Q1 and Q2 2018/19.

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

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

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CSC007mq_6a.7 Customer Service Centre (CSC) - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service as good or excellent.**		
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as 'good' or 'excellent'. This information is gathered through using our monthly survey and a number of customers are randomly selected. The target is reviewed annually. The data from surveys is analysed to identify service improvements.	**PI Owner(s):**	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash

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



Cumulative result for Q3 2018/19 as of December 2018

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	94.5%
Current Target:	97.0%
Red Threshold:	87.0%
Amber Threshold:	92.0%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The chart shows that CSC quarterly performance has fluctuated throughout from 92.2% to 97.7%. Fluctuations are due to higher levels of unplanned absences within CSC, priority was given to inbound calls, this meant that fewer outbound call surveys were completed. From customers' comments, there is no clear reason for the changes in performance.

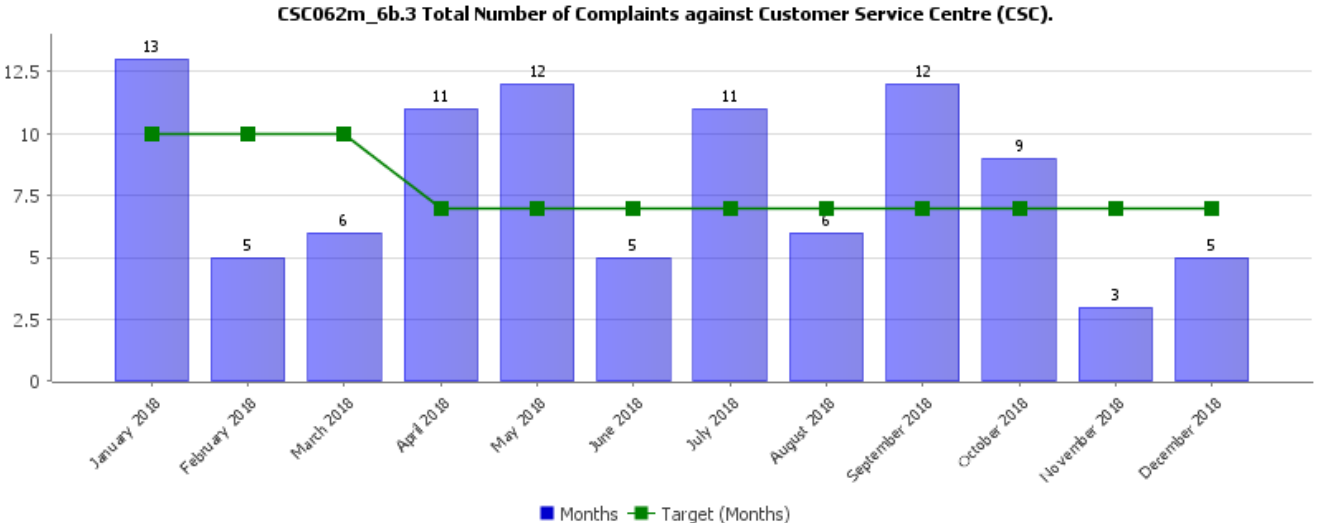
2018/19
Quarter 3- 489 customers contacted and 462 customer responses.
Quarter 2 - 587 customers contacted and 541 customer responses.
Quarter 1 - 710 customers contacted and 681 customer responses.

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

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

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

PI Owner(s): zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	5
Current Target:	7
Red Threshold:	12
Amber Threshold:	10
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trent Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

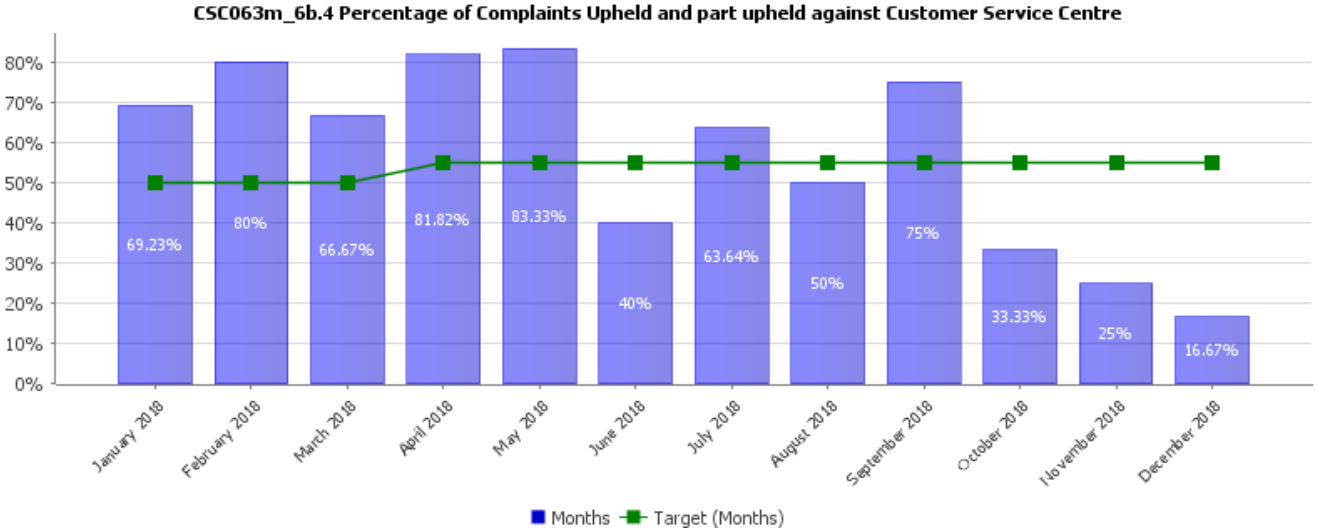
December 2018- 5 complaints received
November 2018- 3 complaints received
October 2018 - 9 complaints received.
September 2018 - 12 complaints received.
August 2018 - 6 complaints received.
July 2018 - 11 complaints received.
June 2018 - 5 complaints received.
May 2018 - 12 complaints received.
April 2018 - 11 complaints received.

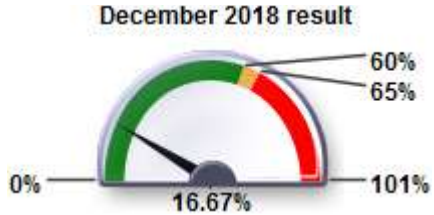
2017/18

March 2018 - 6 complaints received.
February 2018 - 5 complaints received.
January 2018 - 14 complaints received

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

PI Code & Short Name	**CSC063m_6b.4 Percentage of Complaints Upheld and part upheld against Customer Service Centre**
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of Customer Service Centre complaints that have been investigated and upheld or part upheld during each month. For each month the total number of complaints responded to within relevant time-scale is divided by total number of stage 1 complaints received to determine a percentage. The data for this indicator is extracted from the customer relationship management system (CRM). The complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.
PI Owner(s):	zCSC_PIAdmin; Anna Brash





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	16.67%
Current Target:	55%
Red Threshold:	65%
Amber Threshold:	60%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

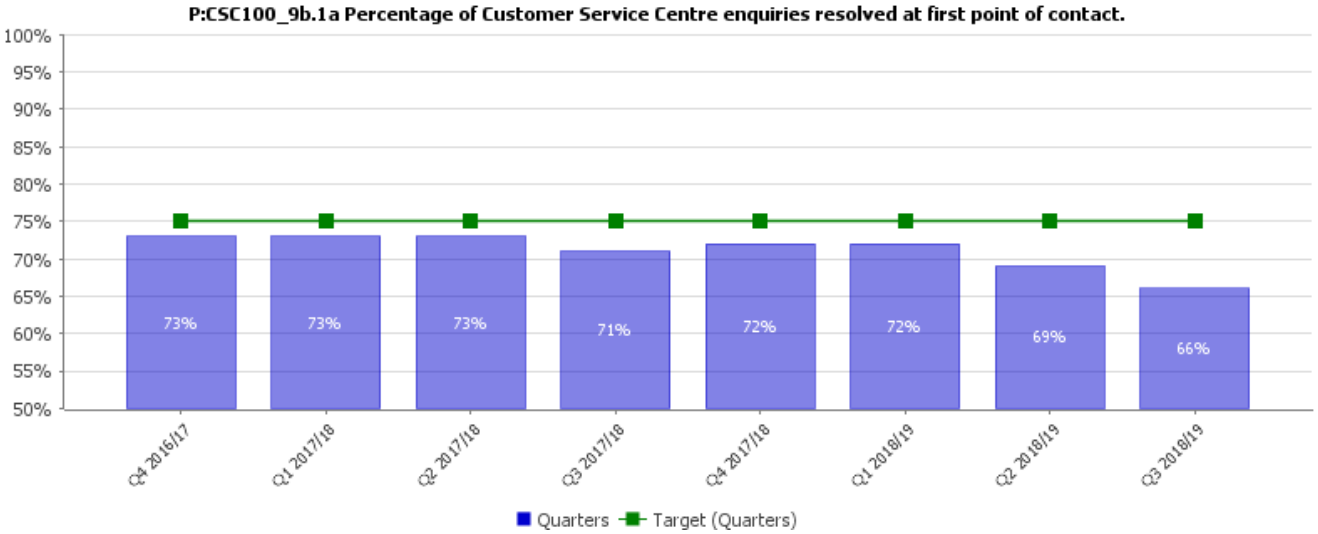
2018/19
December 2018 - 6 complaints received, 1 upheld.
November 2018 - 4 complaints received, 1 part upheld
October 2018 - 9 complaints received, 3 upheld and 6 not upheld.
September 2018 - 12 complaints received, 7 upheld, 2 part upheld and 3 not upheld.
August 2018 - 6 complaints received, 3 upheld and 3 not upheld.
July 2018 - 11 complaints received, 6 upheld, 1 part upheld and 3 not upheld.
June 2018 - 5 complaints received, 2 part upheld, 3 not upheld.
May 2018 - 12 complaints upheld, 5 upheld , 5 part upheld, 2 not upheld
April 2018 - 11 complaints received, 7 upheld, 2 part upheld, 2 not upheld

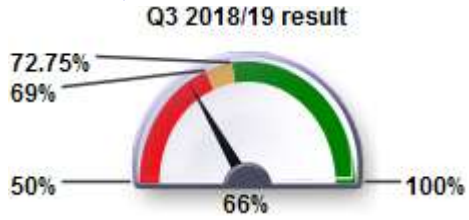
2017/18
March 2018 - 6 complaints received, 3 upheld, 2 part upheld.

February 2018 - 5 complaints received, 4 upheld
January 2018 - 14 complaints received, 6 upheld, 4 part upheld, 3 not upheld and 1 stage 2 not upheld.

The target for 2018/19 has increased to 55% to reflect the recent trend in this performance indicator.

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





Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	66%
Current Target:	75%
Red Threshold:	69%
Amber Threshold:	72.75%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

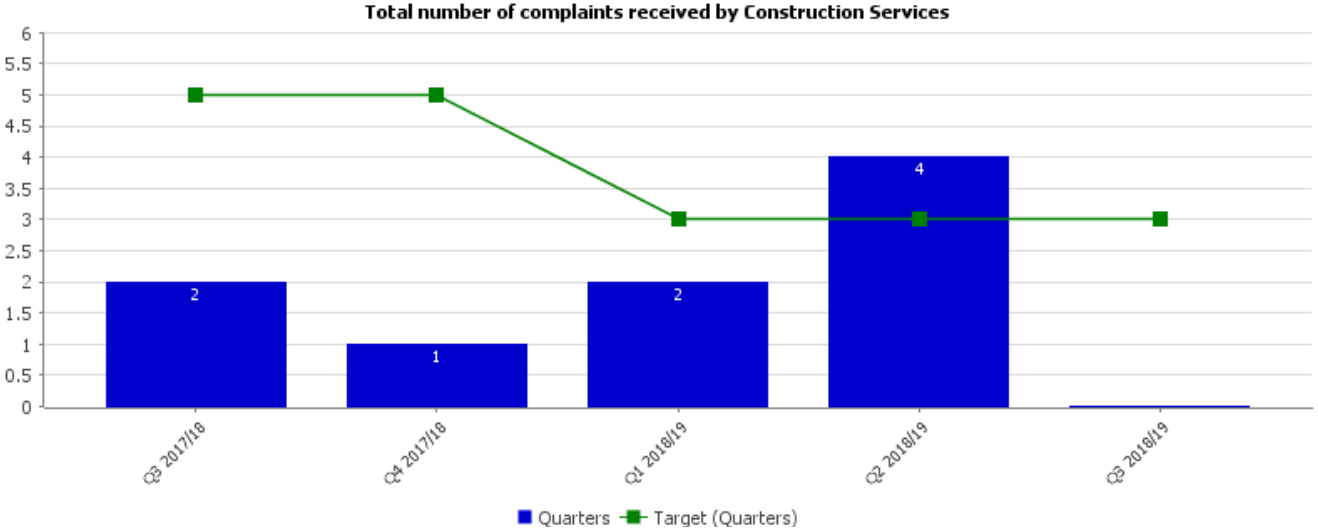
2018/19
Quarter 3- 66% first point resolution.
Quarter 2 - 69% first point resolution
Quarter 1 - 72% first point resolution

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

The target for 2018/19 remains at 75% which is the national target to recognise the increase in the number of self service options for customers and a recognition that the calls being dealt with are becoming more complex and often need support from other services

CSC currently working with Link Housing Association to benchmark results for 1st point resolution.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	3
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

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

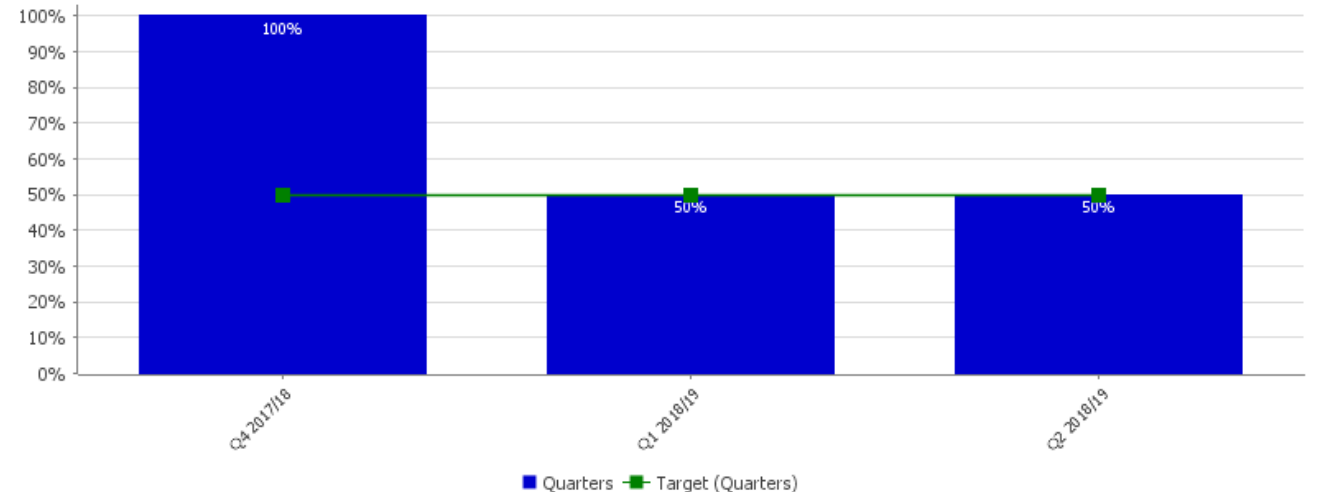
We aim to provide the best service possible and where this falls below customers expectations we have a corporate policy for dealing with any complaints in as efficient and effective manner as possible.

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

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

PI Owner(s): zCSg_PIAdmin; Marjory Mackie

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



Q3 2018/19 result

N/A

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	?
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	50%
Red Threshold:	55%
Amber Threshold:	53.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

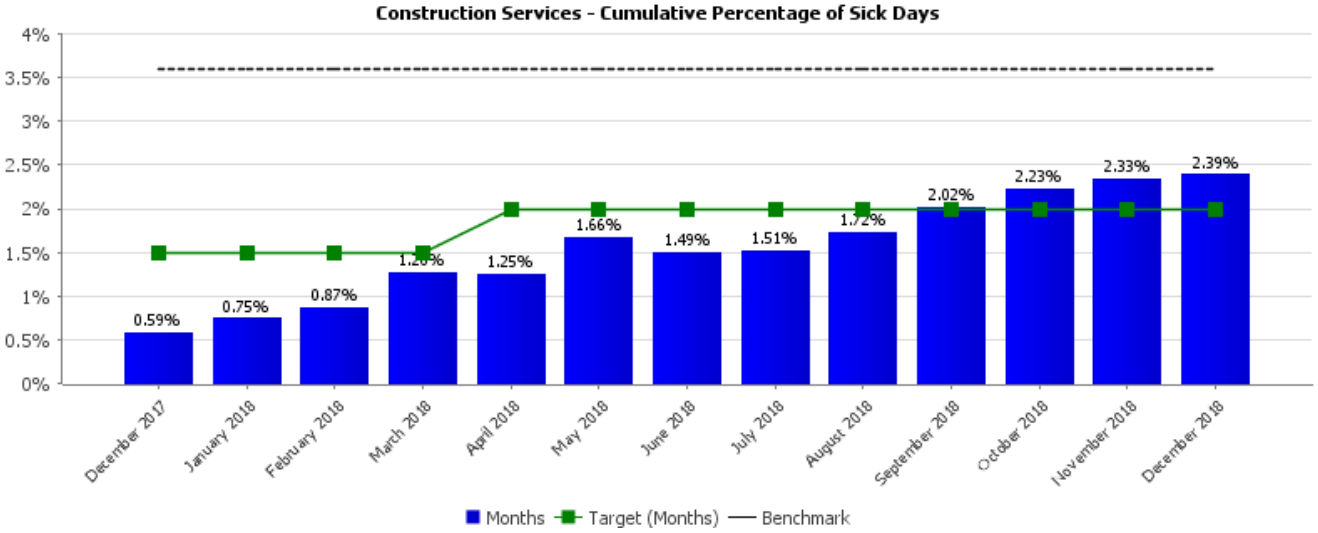
Trend Chart Commentary:

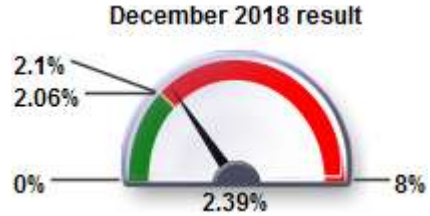
This quarterly PI was introduced in Q1 2014/15. The number of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints which are upheld appears to be high and analysis of the type of complaint is undertaken following the investigation to identify any areas for improvement in service delivery. Due to the low number of external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

Where there are missing periods on the graph (Q1 and Q3 in 2017/18 and Q3 in 2018/19) this reflects a Quarter when no stage 1 or stage 2 complaints were received.
We aim to provide the best service possible and where this falls below customers' expectations we have a corporate policy for dealing with any complaints in as efficient and effective manner as possible.

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

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





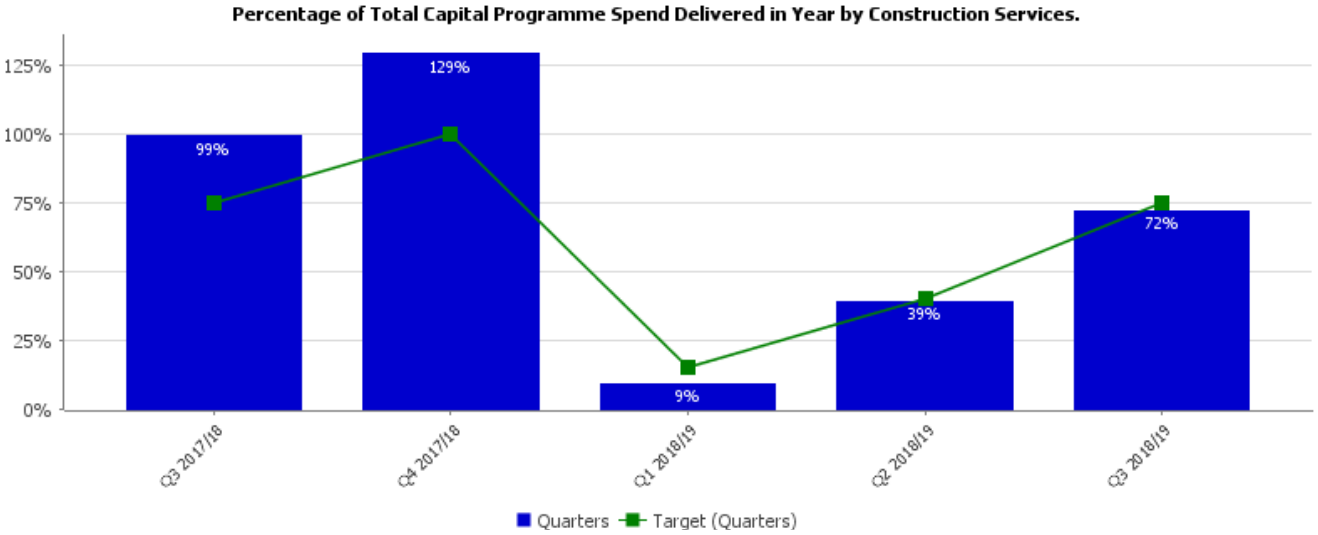
Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	2.39%
Current Target:	2%
Red Threshold:	2.1%
Amber Threshold:	2.06%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

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

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	72%
Current Target:	75%
Red Threshold:	71.25%
Amber Threshold:	72.75%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

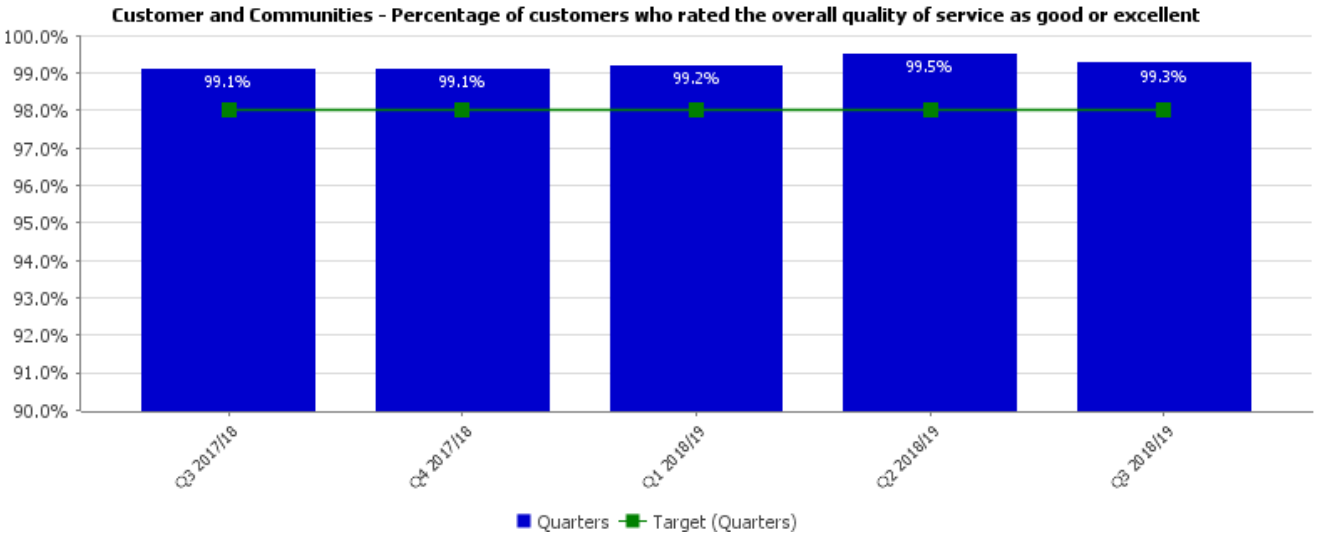
This indicator shows the cumulative percentage of capital programme spend against budget achieved by Construction Services within each quarter.

In Q3 2018/19 the capital expenditure was just short of the target at 72%. It is anticipated that the capital expenditure will meet the targets as work progresses in the new capital investment programme. The trend shows consistently good performance overall in the percentage of capital budget spent over the previous quarters. Following completion of the five year investment programme at the end of 2017/18 a review has been undertaken focussing on areas of higher spend to ensure provision is sufficient in the new programme and improved project governance arrangements are also now in place to monitor progress and spend going forward.

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

The Q4 target for 2018/19 is 100%.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CuCS007q_6a.7 Customer and Communities - Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent**
Description	Service customers are randomly selected to complete a customer satisfaction survey. This indicator shows the percentage of customers rating the overall satisfaction with the customer service they received as good or excellent. The target is reviewed on an annual basis. This information is representative of Bathgate Partnership Centre, Community Facilities, Customer Information Service, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre, Library Services and Registration Services. This performance indicator is part of the performance scorecard for the council's Customer Services Strategy 2018/23 and will contribute to outcome 1 which is that services are designed to meet the needs and preferences of customers.
PI Owner(s):	.CuCS Service Manager; zCuCS_Admin



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	99.3%
Current Target:	98.0%
Red Threshold:	94.1%
Amber Threshold:	96.0%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

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

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

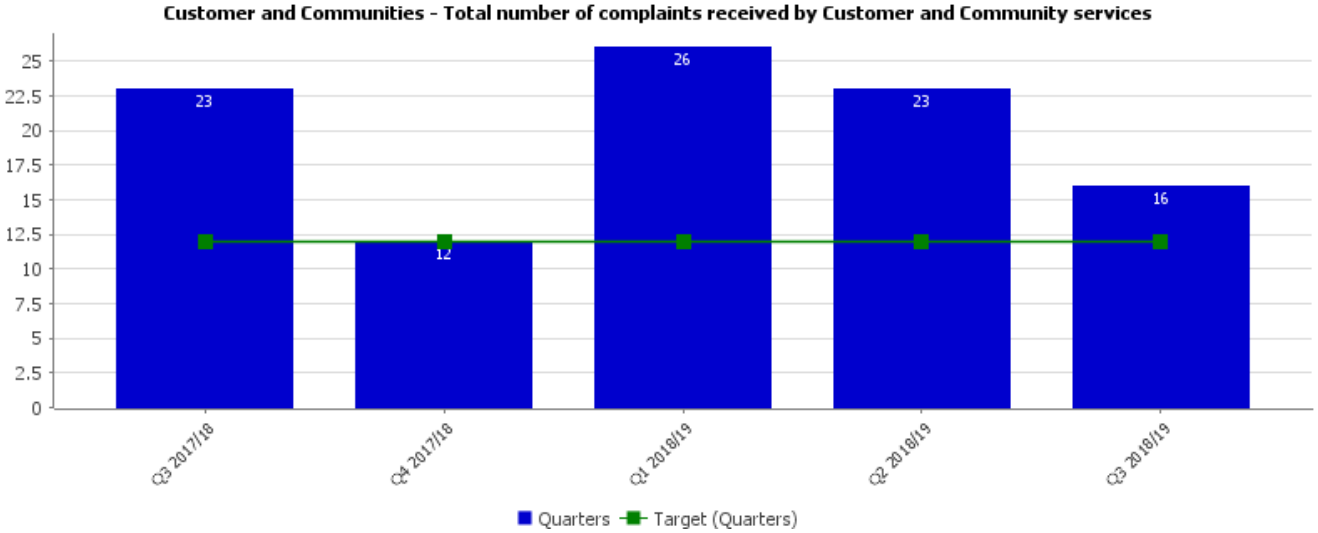
2017/18

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

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

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

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	16
Current Target:	12
Red Threshold:	14.4
Amber Threshold:	12.6
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

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

Quarter 3 - 16 complaints were received, 1 for Bathgate Partnership, 2 for Community Facilities, 10 for Customer Information Services and 3 for Library Services
Quarter 2 - 23 complaints were received. Community Facilities received 2. Customer Information Services received 13, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre Centre received 1, Library Services received 6 and Registration Services received 1. There was an increase in Customer Information Services complaints due to the ongoing issues with the payment kiosks. CSC received 29
Quarter 1 - 26 complaints were received. CSC received 28.

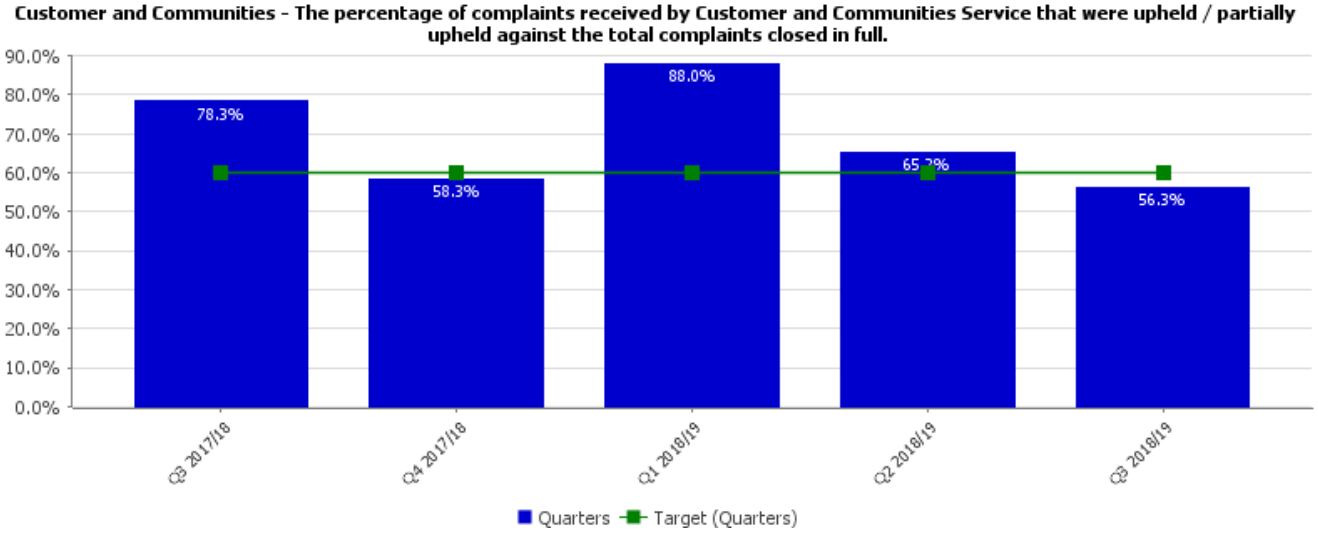
2017/18

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

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

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CuCS011q_6b.4 Customer and Communities - The percentage of complaints received by Customer and Communities Service that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full.**
Description	This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Customer and Communities Service which were upheld or partially upheld, as a percentage of all complaints received. This information is representative of Bathgate Partnership Centre, Community Facilities, Customer Information Service, Fauldhouse Partnership Centre, Library Services and Registration Services.

PI Owner(s): zCuCS_Admin; Ralph Bell



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	56.3%
Current Target:	60.0%
Red Threshold:	66.0%
Amber Threshold:	63.0%
Categories:	PDSP_Culture & Leisure; PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

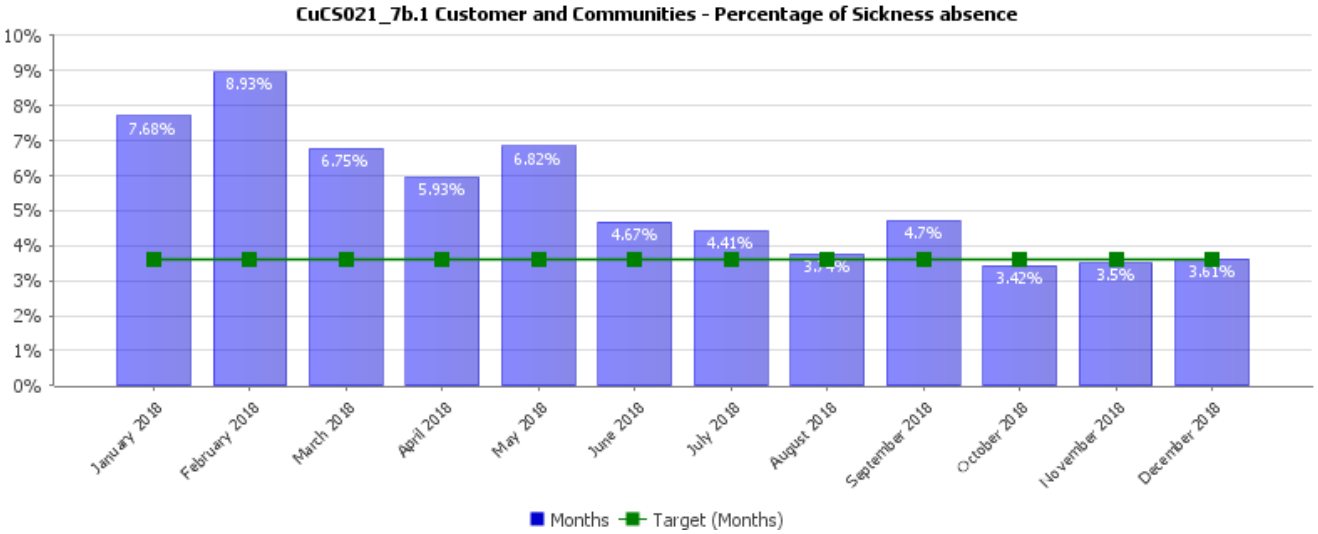
2018/19
The target for this year is 60%.

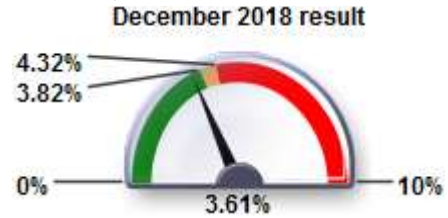
Quarter 3 - 9 out of 16 complaints were upheld or part upheld
Quarter 2 - 15 out of 23 complaints were upheld or part upheld. There were a number of complaints specifically around technical issues with the cash kiosk introduced at Whitburn Library. This software issue has now been resolved by our systems support provider.
Quarter 1 - 22 out of 25 complaints were upheld or part upheld.

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

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	3.61%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	4.32%
Amber Threshold:	3.82%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

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

2018/19

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

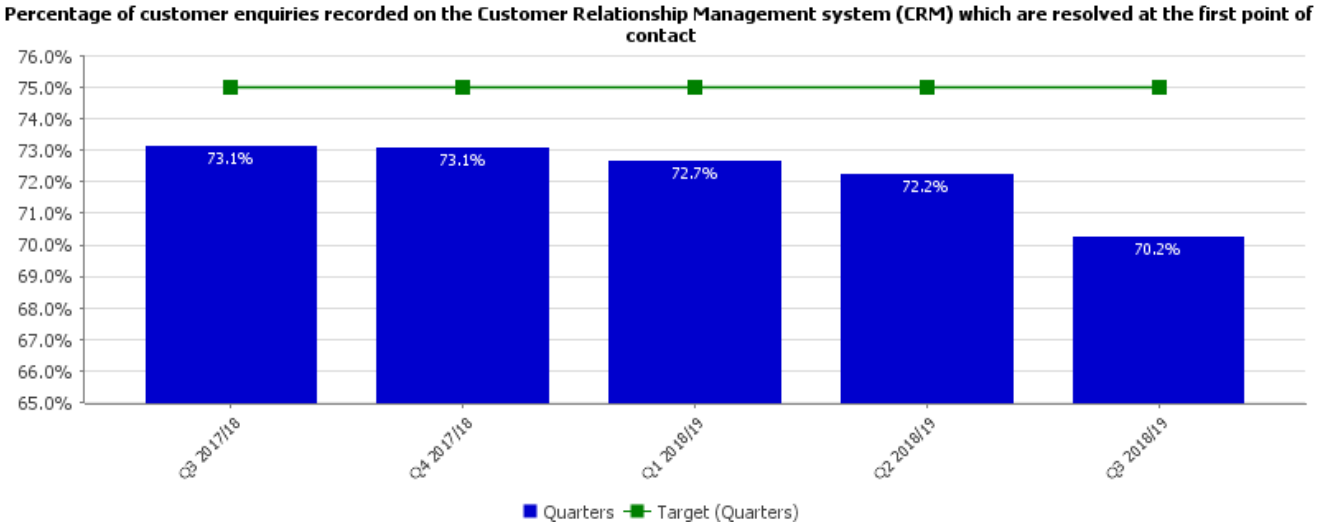
December - absence recorded was 3.61%
November 2018 - absence was recorded as 3.50%
October 2018 - absence recorded at 3.42%, our lowest percentage since April 2016 when the restructure of the service took place.
September 2018 - absence recorded at 4.7%.
August 2018 - absence recorded at 3.74%.
July 2018 - absence recorded at 4.41%.
June 2018 - absence recorded at 4.67%.
May 2018 - absence recorded at 6.82%.
April 2018 - absence recorded at 5.93%.

2017/18

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

March 2018 - absence recorded at 6.75%.
February 2018 - absence recorded at 8.93%.
January 2018 - absence recorded at 7.68%.

PI Code & Short Name	**P:CuCS026q_9b.1a Percentage of customer enquiries recorded on the Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) which are resolved at the first point of contact**
Description	This annual indicator measures the percentage of customer enquiries that have been resolved at the first point of contact by staff within the 4 Customer and Community Service neighbourhoods during the initial customer interaction. This removes the need for the customer to make any further contact with the council to have their enquiry resolved. There is a national target of 75% set by the Customer First initiative (COSLA).
PI Owner(s):	zCuCS_Admin; Julia Laidlaw



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	70.2%
Current Target:	75.0%
Red Threshold:	69.8%
Amber Threshold:	72.8%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The target for 2018/19 has been set at 75% and this matches the national target set by COSLA through the Customer First Initiative.

In 2016/17 the target was set at 81%, however this was changed to 79% in January 2017 and again to 75% in September 2017 in recognition that there was a clear reduction in the amount of enquiries which are being dealt with at the first point of contact.

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

2018/19

Quarter 3: 12,552 of a total 17,870 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 70.2% and is a reduction of 2.9% on the same period in 2017/18. This is due to the number of case forms our staff are obliged to create and send to service areas. In the main these are linked to arrears, debt issues and claims for emergency funds.

Quarter 2: 15,900 of a total of 22,011enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 72.2%. This is 3.5% down on the same period in 2017/18 and is linked with an increase in the number of case forms advisers are passing to other services relating, in the main, to housing and council tax arrears/debt.

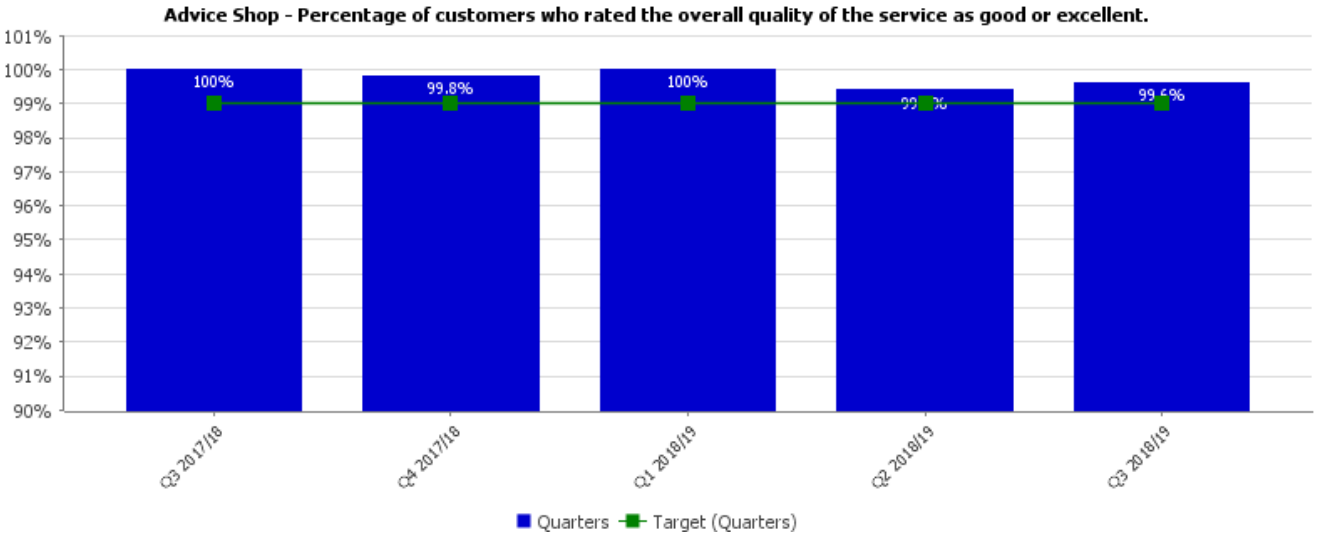
Quarter 1 - 11,223 of a total of 15,446 enquiries were resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 72.7%. This is 2.1% down on the same period in 2017/18 and is linked with an increase in the number of case forms advisers are passing to colleagues in other services relating, in the main,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

2017/18

Quarter 4 - the service dealt with 22,406 enquiries in this quarter with 16,370 resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 73.1% and is below our target of 75%. This is due, in the main, to the number of cases our staff have to create where the process requires them to pass an increased amount of information to other departments (mainly Revenues and Housing).

Quarter 3 - the service dealt with 19,277 enquiries in this quarter with 14,100 of them resolved at the first point of contact. This equates to 73.1% and is below our target and below the national target of 75%.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	99.6%
Current Target:	99%
Red Threshold:	97.52%
Amber Threshold:	98.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary

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

Benchmarking:

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

2018/19

Quarter 3 - In this quarter 99.6% of 527 respondents rated the overall quality of service good or excellent. Two respondents rated this as adequate. There has been a slight increase in the number of responses compared to quarter 2 and we would expect the response rated to continue at this level.

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

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

2017/18

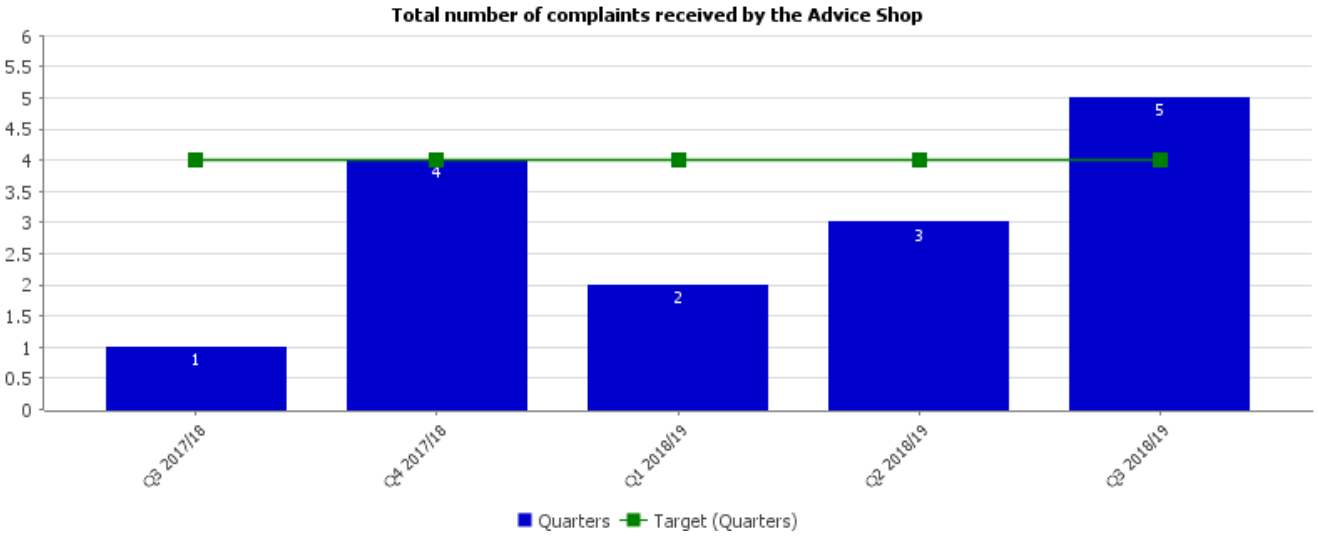
Quarter 4 - In this quarter 99.8% of 375 respondents rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent. 1 customer rated this as very poor. Following investigation procedural changes have been introduced to improve in this area.

The service has been working to increase the number of respondents and continue to monitor and try to improve the number of responses received.

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

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

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	5
Current Target:	4
Red Threshold:	7
Amber Threshold:	6
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PDSP_Social Policy; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

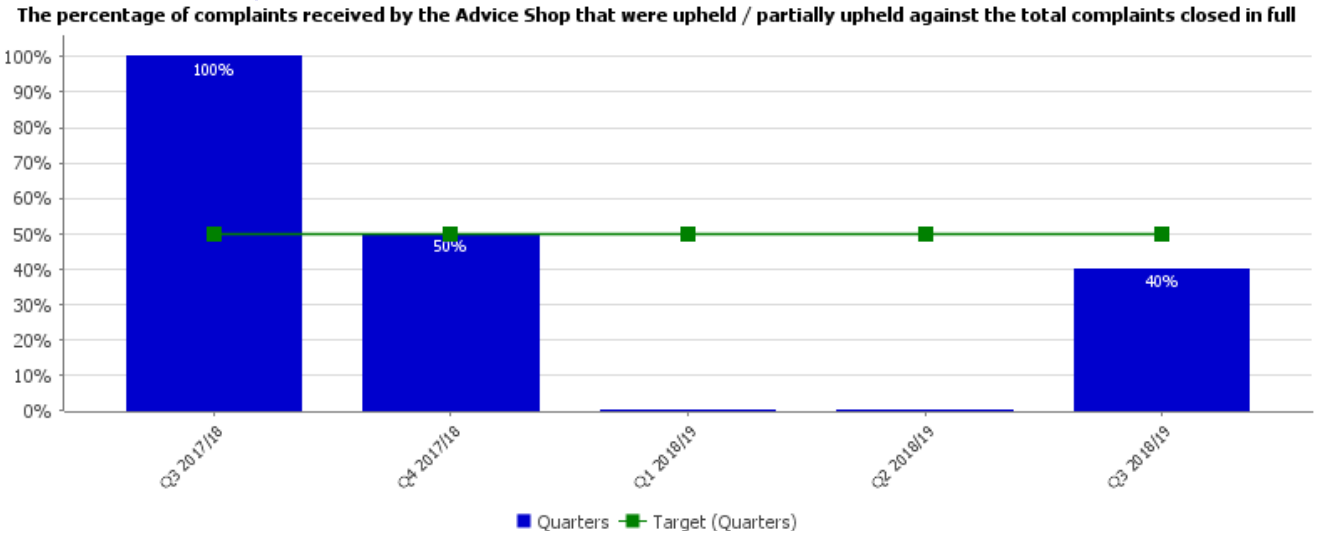
The Advice Shop investigates and manages all complaints by following corporate procedure. We closely monitor and analyse complaints to identify any trends and to make improvements in our service.

Quarter 3 2018/19 - 5 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Two were for standard of service, one for employee attitude, one for poor communication and one for waiting time. Three complaints were not upheld, one was part upheld and one was upheld.
Quarter 2 2018/19 - 3 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Two were for standard of service and one for employee attitude. All complaints were not upheld.
Quarter 1 2018/19 - 2 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. One was for standard of service and one for employee attitude. Both complaints were not upheld.

Quarter 4 2017/18 - 4 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Three of the complaints were for standard of service and one for employee attitude. 2 complaints were not upheld and 2 were upheld.
Quarter 3 2017/18 - 1complaint was received in this quarter against a target of 4. The complaint was regarding employee attitude and it was part upheld.

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

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	40%
Current Target:	50%
Red Threshold:	55%
Amber Threshold:	52.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

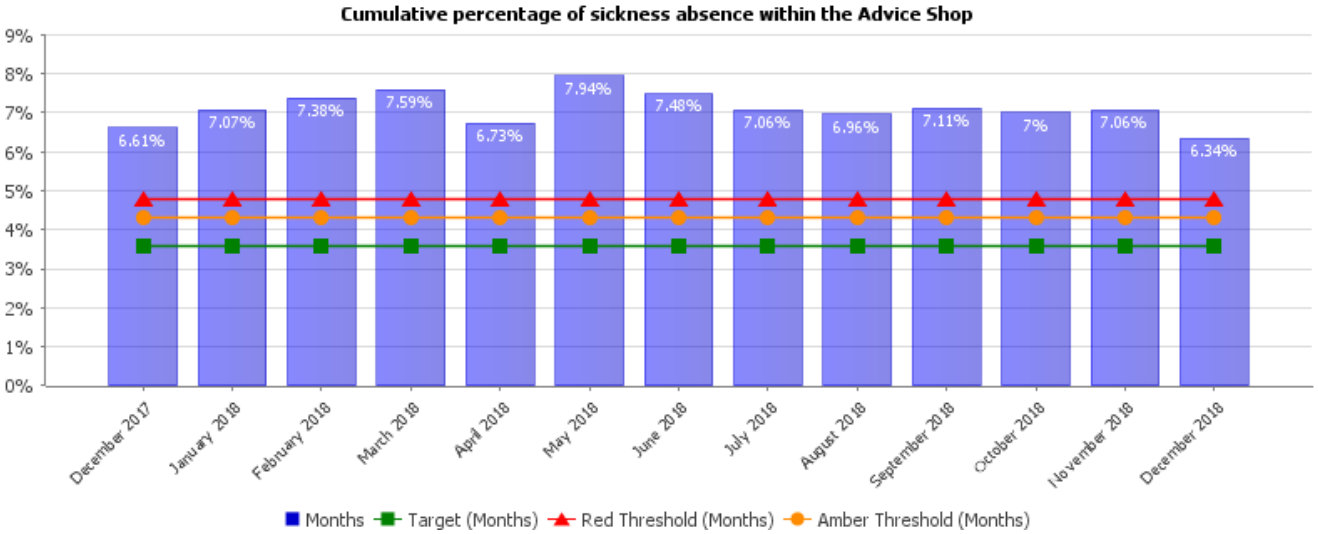
The Advice Shop investigates and manages all complaints by following corporate procedure We closely monitor and analyse complaints to identify any trends and to make improvements in our service.

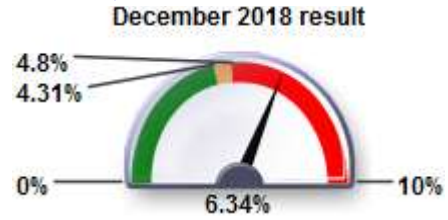
Quarter 3 2018/19 - 5 complaints were received in this quarter against a target of 4. Two were for standard of service, one for employee attitude, one for poor communication and one for waiting time. Three complaints were not upheld, one was part upheld and one was upheld. One upheld and one part upheld equates to 40% of the total number of complaints closed in the period.
Quarter 2 2018/19 - In this quarter 3 complaints were received. 2 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. All complaints were investigated and all were not upheld. This equates to 0% of upheld or partially upheld against the total number of complaints received.
Quarter 1 2018/19 - In this quarter 2 complaints were received. 1 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. Both complaints were investigated and both were not upheld. This equates to 0% of upheld or partially upheld against the total number of complaints received.

Quarter 4 2017/18 - In this quarter 4 complaints were received. 3 for standard of service and 1 for employee attitude. All complaints were investigated and the outcome was that 2 complaints were upheld and 2 not upheld. This equates to 50.0% of complaints were upheld against the total number of complaints received.
Quarter 3 2017/18 - In this quarter 1 complaint was received for employee attitude. The complaint was investigated and the outcome was part upheld. This equates to 100% of complaints were upheld or part upheld against the total number of complaints received.

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	6.34%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	4.8%
Amber Threshold:	4.31%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

This is a new KPI introduced for the Advice Shop in 2016-17. In previous years it was combined with Adult Basic Education service.

2018/19

December - Cumulative sickness absence for April to December '18 is 6.34%.This is down from the previous month reflecting a significant decrease in sickness absence in December '18.
November - Cumulative sickness absence for April to November '18 is 7.06%. This is up from the previous month reflecting a slight increase in sickness absence in November '18.
October - Cumulative sickness absence for April to October '18 is 7.00%. This is slightly down from the previous month reflecting a decrease in sickness absence in October '18.
September - Cumulative sickness absence for April to September '18 has increased to 7.11% from 6.96% in August. This has been caused by the increase of September's sickness absence rate.
August - Cumulative sickness absence for April to August has decreased slightly to 6.96%. The monthly sickness absence has increased in August from July so the decrease in the cumulative may be due to a late return for July being recalculated.
July - Cumulative sickness absence for April to July '18 has decreased to 7.06% from 7.48% in June due to the decrease in the number of short term absences.
June - Cumulative sickness absence for April to June '18 has decreased to 7.48% from 7.94% in May due to the decrease in long term absence from 4 people to 1.
May - Cumulative sickness absence for April to May '18 has increased to 7.94% from 6.73% in April due to the increase in long term absence from 3 to 4 people.
April - This is the first month of the new financial year and therefore the sickness absence is the same as the month of April 6.73% against a target of 3.6% which is a decrease on the previous month due to 1 member of staff on long term sick returning and a reduction of short term absences to 22 days. Long term absence is for 3 people and amounts to 65% of the total absence.

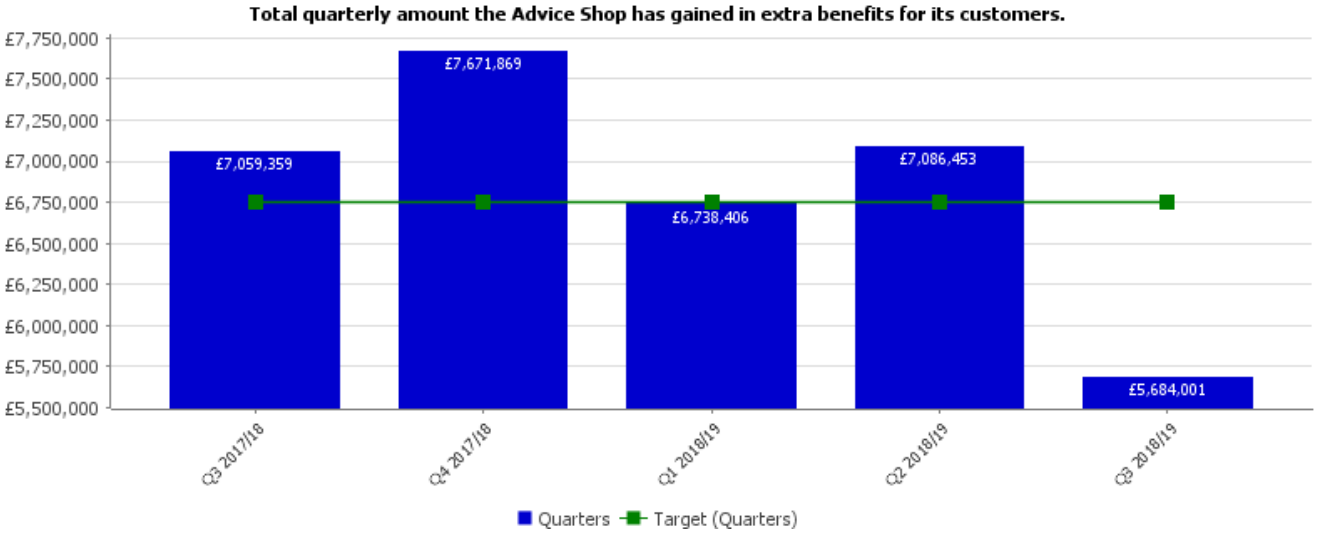
2017/18

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

September - The cumulative sickness absence to September '17 increased by 0.01% on last month to 5.05% due to an increase in Septembers sickness absence caused by two members of staff on long term sickness and 10 days absence by 4 members of staff.

August - The cumulative sickness absence of 5.04% reflects the sickness absence of 3.77% in August.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	£5,684,001
Current Target:	£6,750,000
Red Threshold:	£6,480,000
Amber Threshold:	£6,648,750
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary

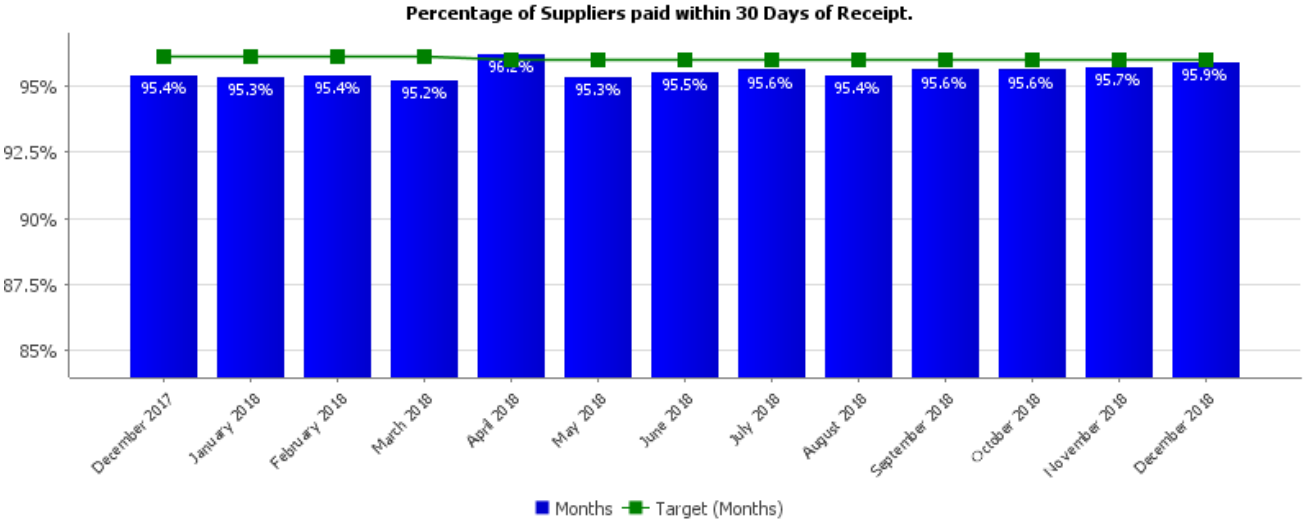
In seven of the last eight quarters we have managed to exceed our target of £6,750,000. We closely monitor our target on a daily basis and have established partnerships which allow us to target those most in need.

Quarter 3 2018/19 - This performance indicator has changed from green to red as we did not meet our target of £6,750,000 during this period. The main reason for this is due to the impact of Universal Credit. Customer enquiries have become more complex and are taken longer to be resolved. The service is expecting that our target will be reached in quarter 4 as benefit decisions are made.
Quarter 2 2018/19 - In this quarter we exceeded our target reaching £7,086,453. This is an increase on the previous quarter and is due to increased processing of outstanding benefit claims. There has also been an increase in the number of Personal Independence Payment awards which has been contributory factor in reaching this target.
Quarter 1 2018/19 - In this quarter we were just below our set target reaching £6,738,406. Following the introduction of full service Universal Credit on the 16th May in West Lothian, the service had to best manage resources to meet customer demand. We would expect to exceed our target in the next quarter.

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

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

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



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	95.9%
Current Target:	96%
Red Threshold:	91.2%
Amber Threshold:	96%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance for December 2018 was 95.9 percent which is below the target of 96 percent. Performance for the year ending 2017/18 was 95.2 percent of invoices were paid within 30 days against a target of 96.1 percent.

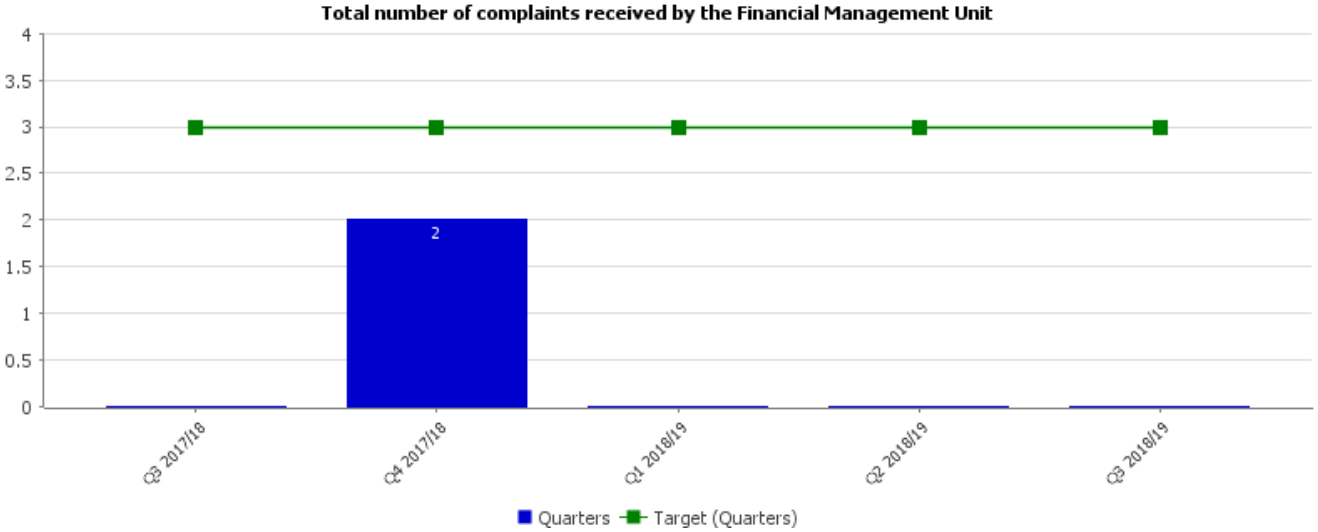
For the year ending March 2017, performance was 96.1 percent. At the beginning of the financial year 2017/18, performance in this area started higher than the target with cumulative performance being 96.5 percent up to July 2017. Since July 2017, performance has fallen below the target of 96.1 percent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

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

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

For 2018/19 target for percentage of suppliers paid within 30 days of receipt is 96 percent. The performance to date is showing improvement from the previous year and at December 2018 is showing that 95.9 percent of invoices have been paid within 30 days.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	3
Red Threshold:	6
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

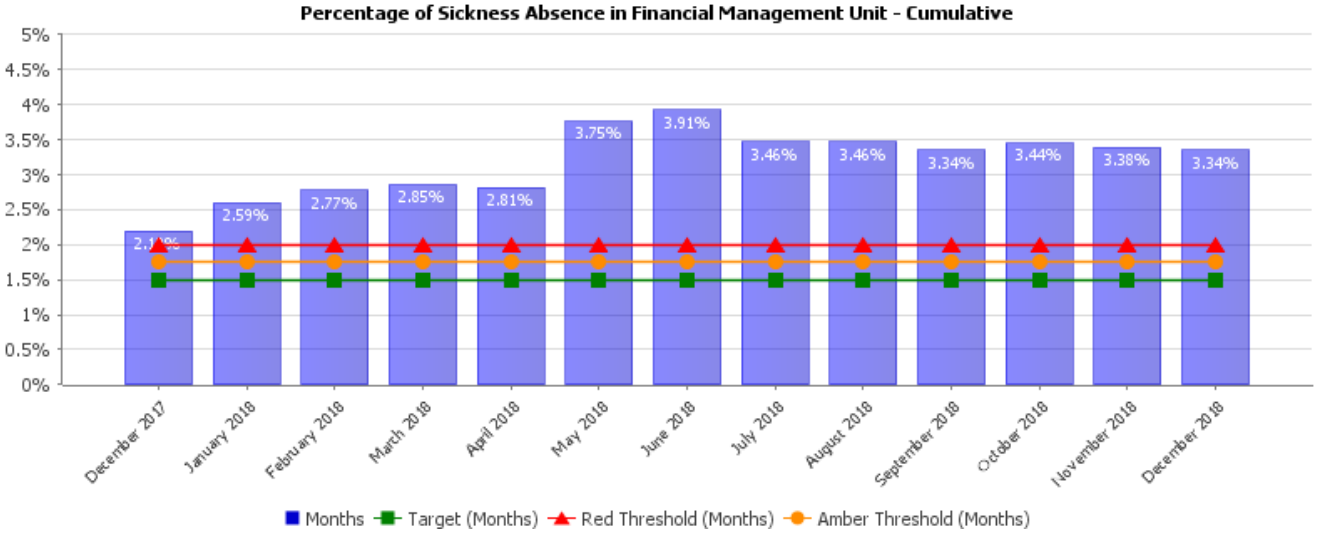
This core indicator monitors complaints received by the Corporate Finance Manager and measures the combined level of stage 1 & 2 complaints received.

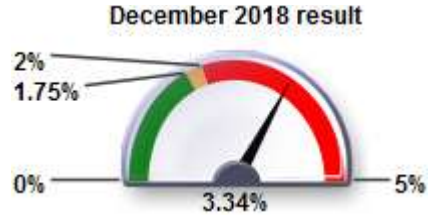
Since quarter 2 2014/15, the Financial Management Unit has received 9 complaints, 1 in 2014/15 (Quarter 2), 1 in 2015/16 (Quarter 4), 5 in 2016/17 (1 in Quarter 2 and 4 in Quarter 4) and 2 in 2017/18 (Quarter 4). Of the two complaints received in Quarter 4 2017/18, one was unrelated to the unit and was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

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

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

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





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

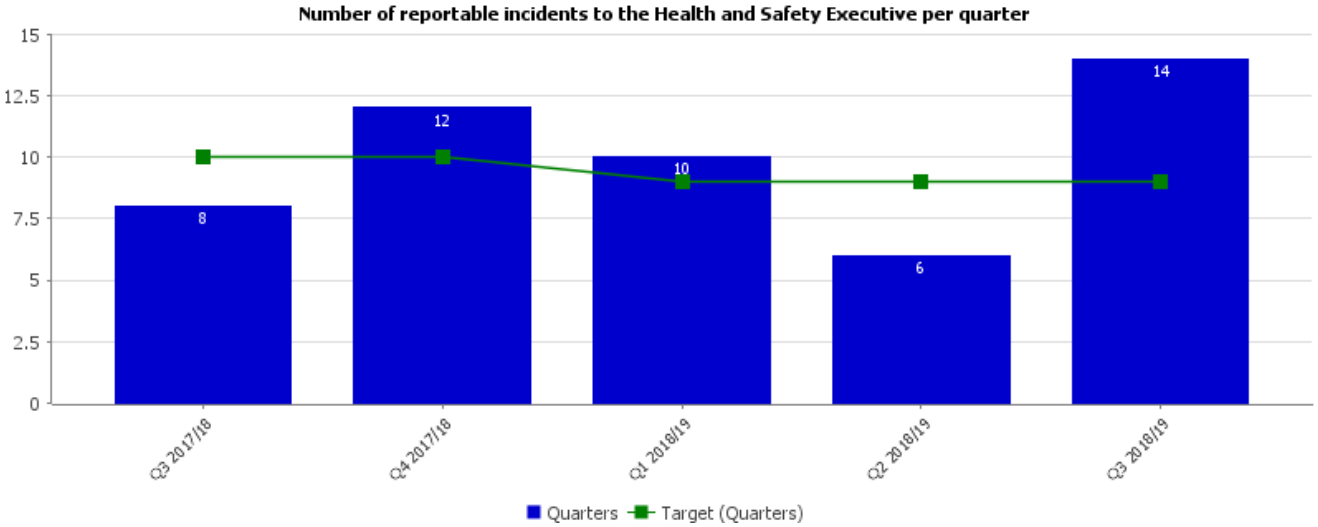
Trend Chart Commentary:

Sickness absence has been above the target of 1.5 percent during 2018/19. For the period April 18 to December 18, cumulative sickness was 3.34 percent.

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

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

PI Code & Short Name	**P:HRS104_9b.2 Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter**
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive on a quarterly basis. Reportable incidents are occurrences which must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the legislative requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. When an incident meets the criteria outlined in the regulations, a formal notification report must be submitted by the authority to the Health and Safety Executive within timescales stipulated in the regulations.
PI Owner(s):	zHRS_PIAdmin; Kim Hardie



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	14
Current Target:	9
Red Threshold:	10.08
Amber Threshold:	9.54
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend shows an overall decrease of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive over the period. Reportable incidents are occurrences which must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the legislative requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. When an incident meets the criteria outlined in the regulations, a formal notification report must be submitted by the authority to the Health and Safety Executive within timescales stipulated in the regulations. This records the total number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive.

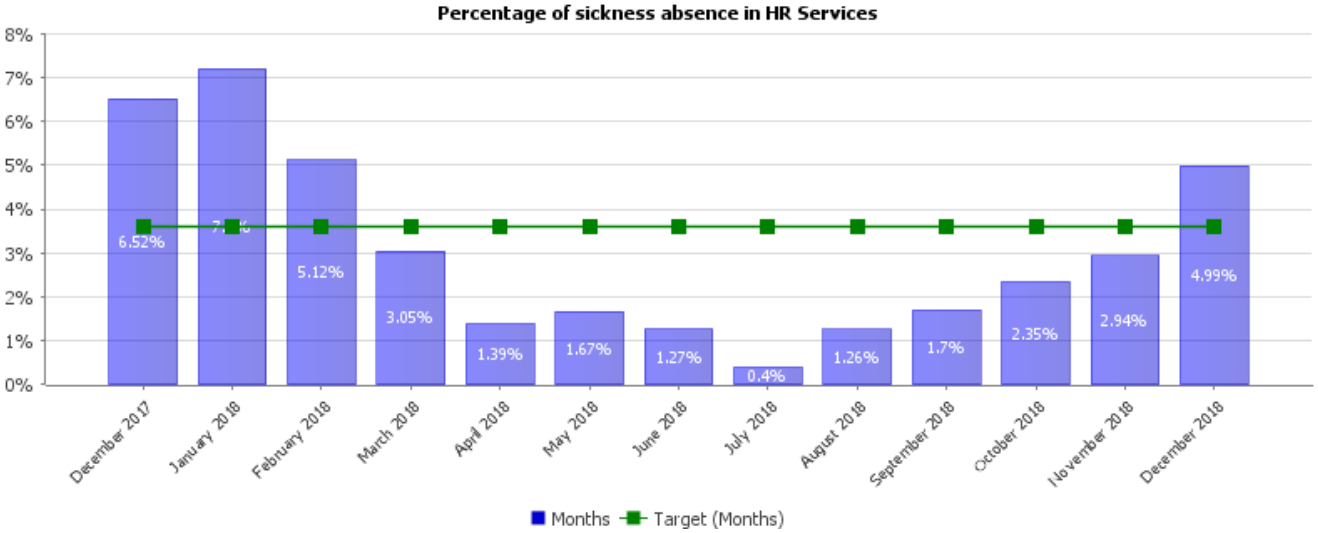
The overall reduction is in part attributable to amended regulations which came into force in 2013. One change was only to report specific incidents after an absence of seven days replacing the previous three day threshold, meaning there is a longer time period from the point of an incident occurring and any resulting absence before triggering the need to report criteria. Additional guidance was also produced regarding the criteria for reporting incidents which occurred in schools to pupils. These will only now be reported where there has been a failure identified in the way the activity was managed rather than being automatically reported because a pupil has been taken to hospital from the scene of an incident. Both changes have resulted in a reduction in the number of injuries reported to the HSE.

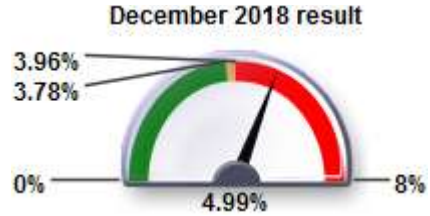
All RIDDOR reportable incidents are investigated to ensure that corrective and preventative measures are implemented to prevent a recurrence of a similar type of incident as far as reasonably practicable.

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

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	4.99%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	3.96%
Amber Threshold:	3.78%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

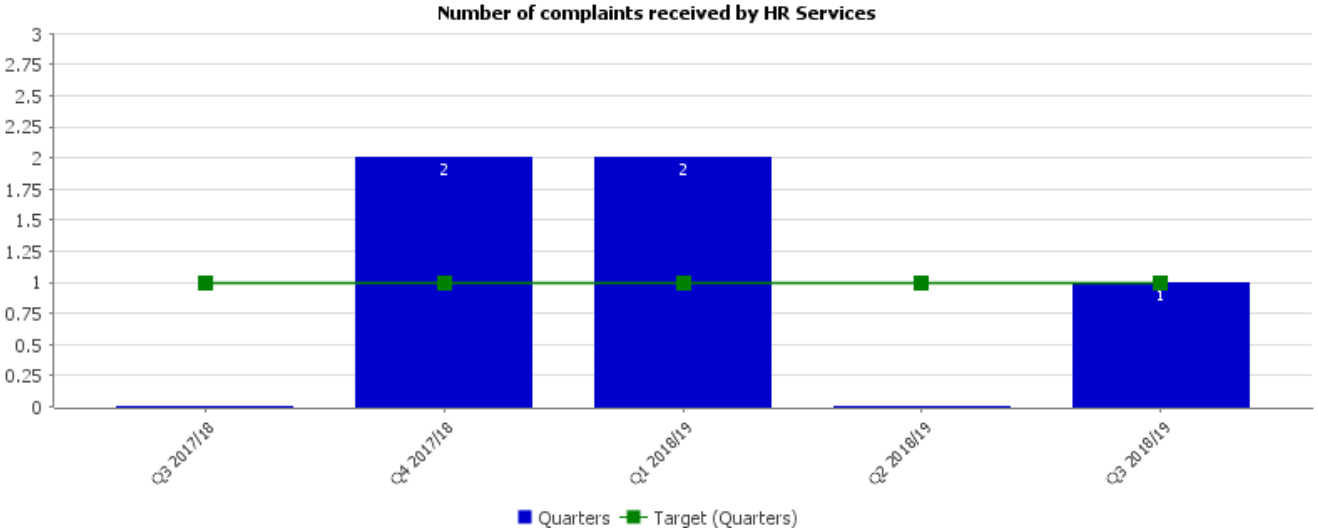
Since March 2018 to November 2018 the service have remained consistently below the corporate target of 3.6%, reaching the lowest in July 2018 at 0.40%, however December 2018 reports the service to be at 4.99% the highest since February 2018 and well above the 3.6%.

Absences generally do increase in the winter months across the council, this particular spike was attributed to a large volume of long term absences that pushed the trend figures higher.

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

The target remains at the council target of 3.6%

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	1
Current Target:	1
Red Threshold:	3
Amber Threshold:	2
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

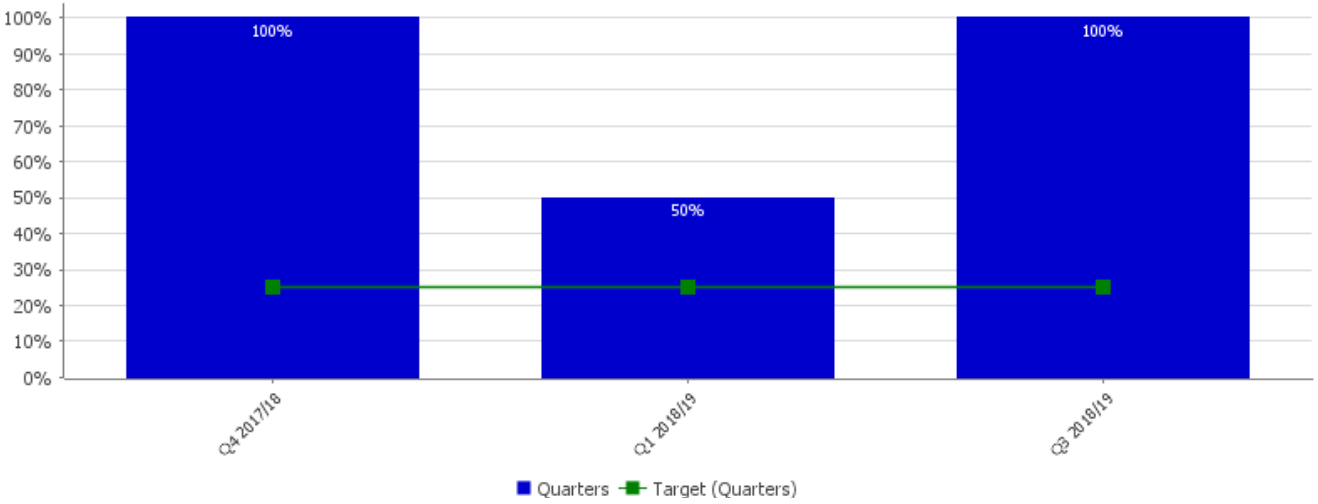
Although the number of complaints into HR and Support Services is low, it has been above the target in 4 of the reporting periods.

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

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

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

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



Q3 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	100%
Current Target:	25%
Red Threshold:	27.5%
Amber Threshold:	26.25%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

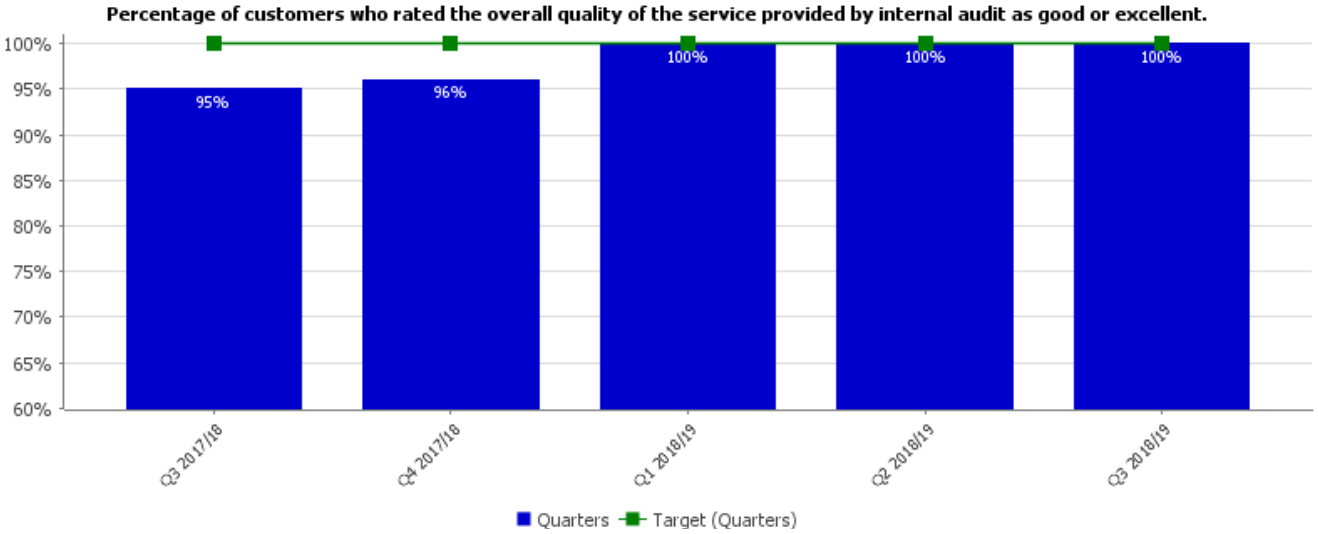
Trend Chart Commentary:
As a result of the low complaint numbers, an upheld complaint has a significant impact on the percentage of upheld complaints.

2018/19
Quarter 3 - the service received 1 complaint which was upheld.
Quarter 2 - the service did not receive any complaints.
Quarter 1 - the service received 2 complaints, 1 was upheld and 1 not upheld.

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

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

PI Code & Short Name	**P:IA008_6a.7 Percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of the service provided by internal audit as good or excellent.**		
Description	This performance indicator measures the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of internal audit as good or excellent. A questionnaire is issued at the end of each audit and customers are asked to rate the overall quality of the audit service provided as; excellent, good, adequate, poor or very poor. All responses ranked as either 'Excellent' or 'Good' are recorded as positive responses. The performance indicator reports on the cumulative number of positive responses received to the end of each quarter in the financial year. It is calculated by dividing the cumulative number of positive responses received for the year to date (at the quarter end) by the total responses, and the results are analysed and used to identify areas for improvement.	**PI Owner(s):**	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	100%
Current Target:	100%
Red Threshold:	85%
Amber Threshold:	90%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

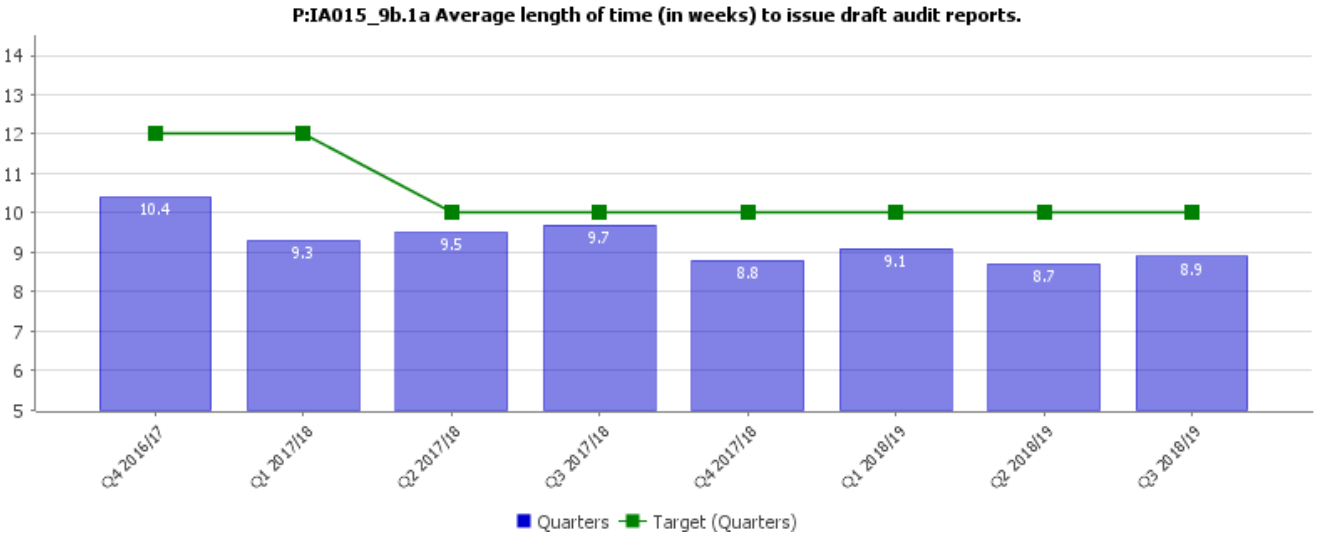
Performance to Q3 2018/19 was 100% and 17 customer questionnaires were received.

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

The target for 2018/19 will remain at 100%.

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

PI Code & Short Name	**P:IA015_9b.1a Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports.**
Description	This performance indicator is part of the performance scorecard for the council's Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Strategy 2018/23 and will contribute to outcome 1 the deployment of an internal audit service. This indicator measures the average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports. The date of issue of the draft audit report is subtracted from the date that the audit commenced to show the number of weeks taken. The date of commencement is agreed with our customers and we aim to complete all risk based audit work within 10 weeks of this date. This indicator is reported on quarterly and a rolling 12 month average is calculated for each quarter. The objective of our 10 week target is to ensure that audit reports are issued timeously so that they are current and meaningful to both the service area and any related stakeholders.
PI Owner(s):	zIA_PIAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	8.9
Current Target:	10
Red Threshold:	11
Amber Threshold:	10.5
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

Performance to Quarter 3 2018/19 was 8.9 weeks. Performance to Quarter 4 2017/18 was 8.8 weeks and has been below the revised target of 10 weeks since Quarter 1 2017/18.

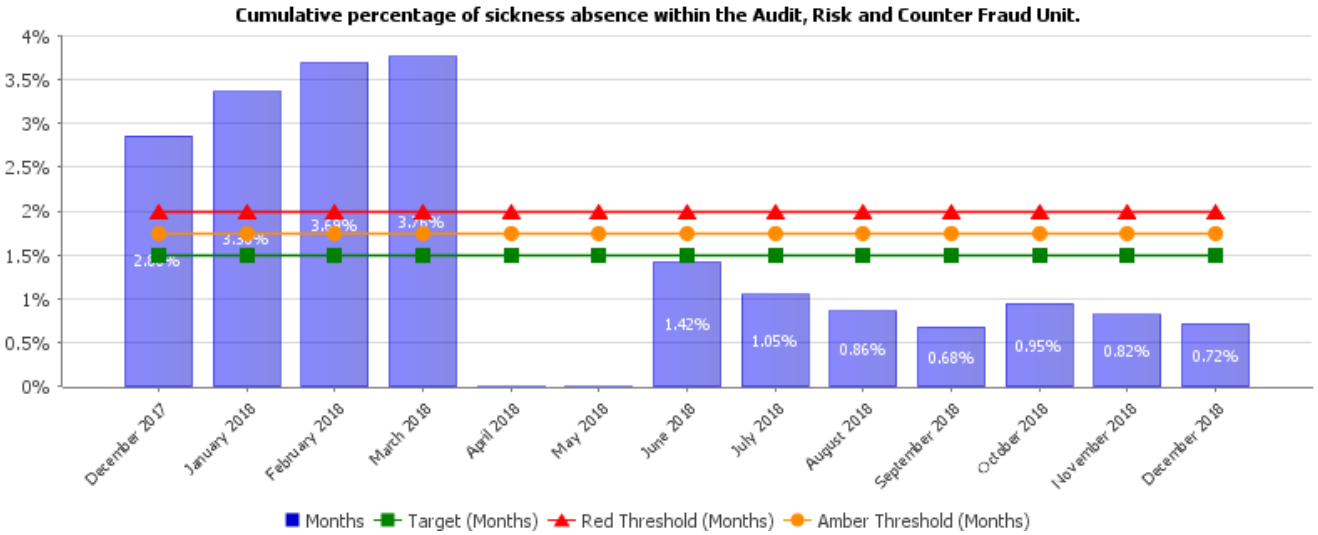
The 10 week target and the appropriateness of the timescales achieved is substantiated by reference to Indicator IA001: Percentage of customers who rated internal audit's timeliness as good or excellent, for which high performance is also reported and shows that customers are satisfied with the timescales being achieved.

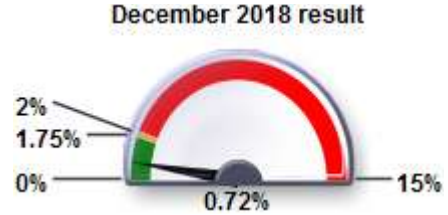
The average length of time to issue draft audit reports can be subject to ongoing fluctuation as a result of factors such as the complexity of individual audits and the level of reactive work which may be given priority over routine audits.

The number of draft audit reports issued for each rolling 12 month period reported was 2016/17 - Quarter 4 (35), 2017/18 - Quarter 1 (36), Quarter 2 (38), Quarter 3 (34), Quarter 4 (33), 2018/19 Quarter 1 (30), Quarter 2(30), Quarter 3(29).

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	0.72%
Current Target:	1.5%
Red Threshold:	2%
Amber Threshold:	1.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

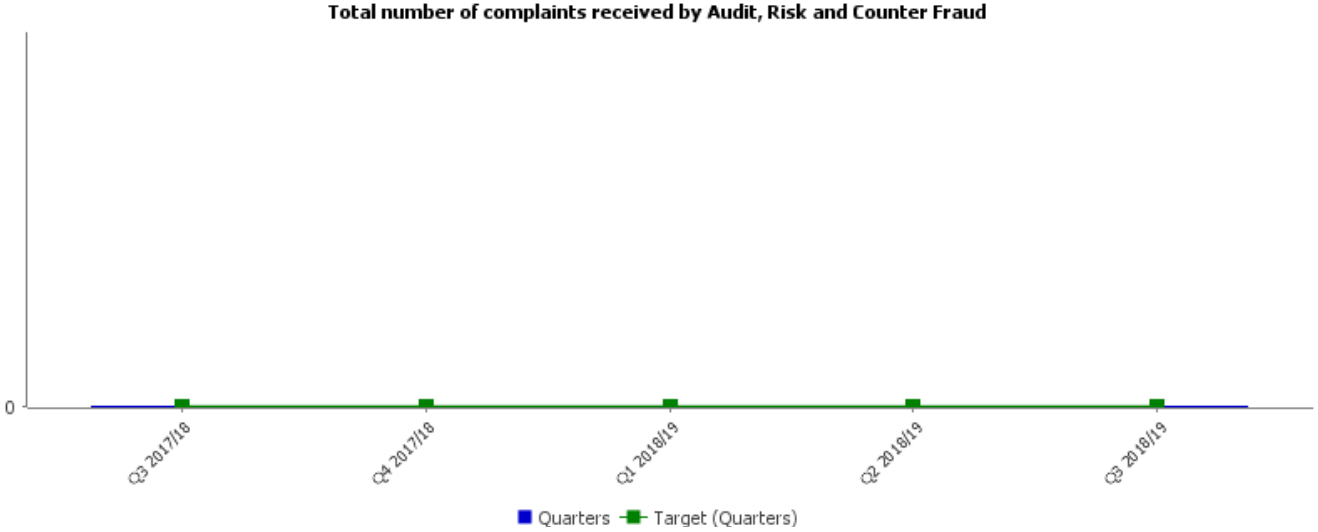
Trend Chart Commentary

Performance to December 2018 was 0.72% (8 days) and is below the 1.5% target.

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

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

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	8
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

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

Target per quarter is set at 0 complaints.

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

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

Quarters Target (Quarters)

Q3 2018/19 result	N/A
Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	?
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	42%
Red Threshold:	46.2%
Amber Threshold:	42.84%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

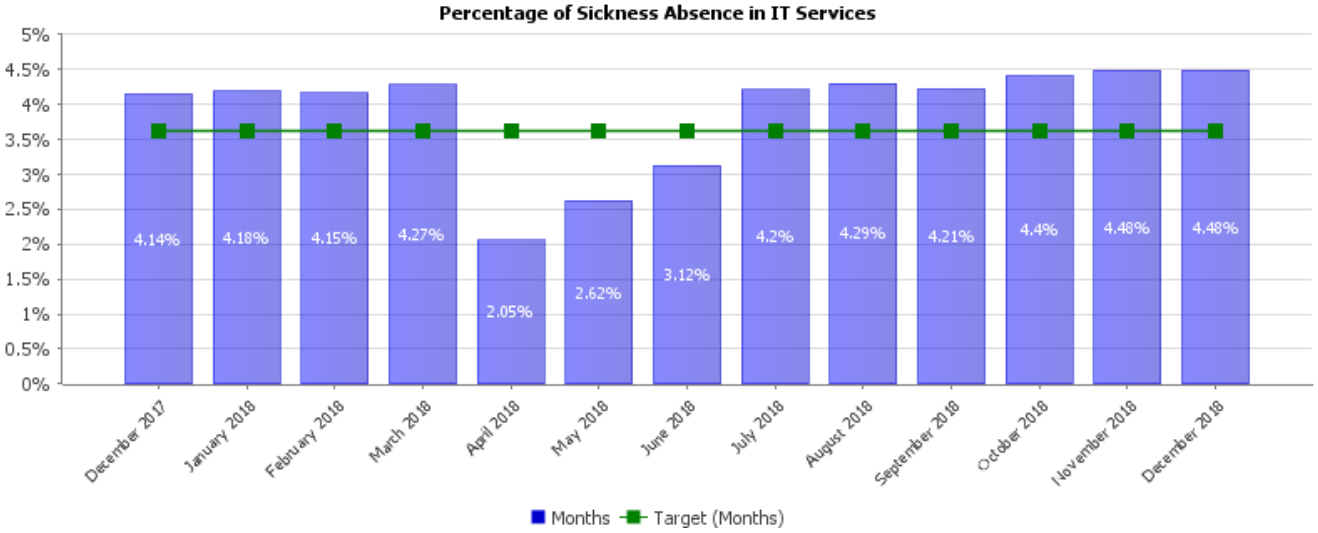
Trend Chart Commentary:

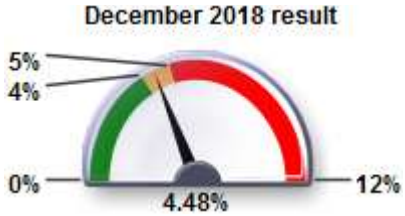
The number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud has been historically low. No complaints were received in 2017/18. No complaints have been received in Q1, Q2 or Q3 2018/19.

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

The corporate target for 2018/19 is 42%.

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	4.48%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	5%
Amber Threshold:	4%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

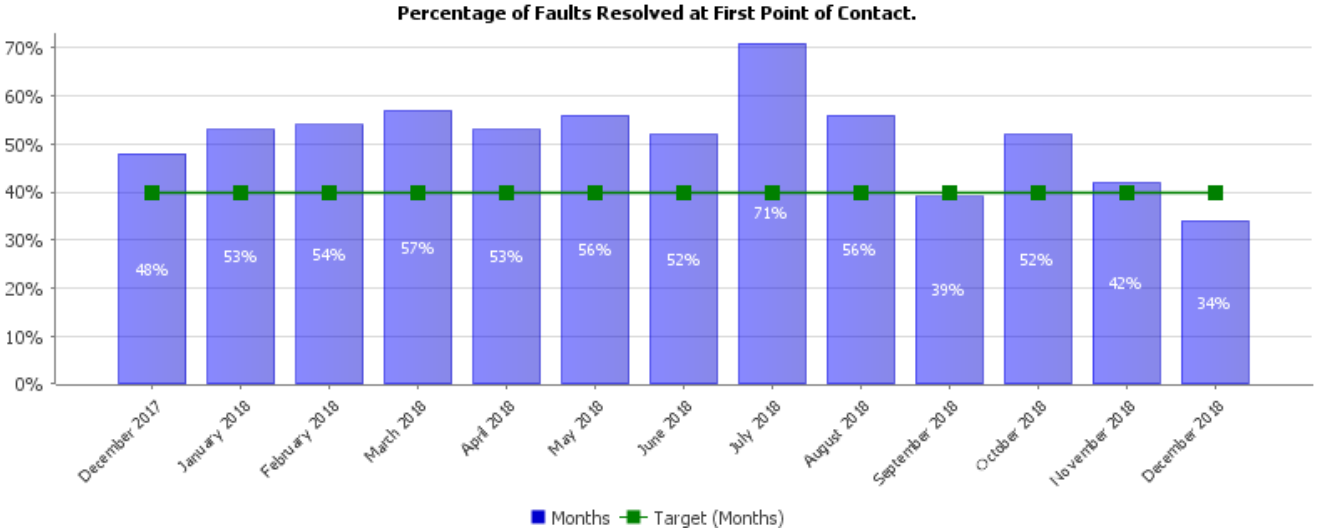
The trend chart illustrates sickness absence levels in IT Services. All sickness absence is managed in accordance to the Sickness Absence Policy and procedures.

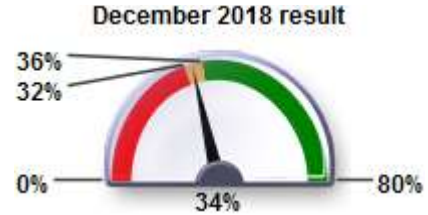
January 2018 to March 2018 - there was marginal movement with a decline of performance due to short term absences, hospitalisation and bereavements.
April 2018 - performance improved to below the corporate target, all absences were short term across 2 staff accounting for the 21 days. 1 absence was discounted (19 days).
May 2018 to August 2018 - performance declined due to 3 long term absences and various short term absences.
September 2018 - performance improved slightly due to the return of 1 long term absence.
October 2018 to December 2018 - performance declined as a result of bereavement and an increase in short term absences 1 long term absence returned to work towards the end of October and this led to an improving position towards the ned of the quarter.

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

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

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

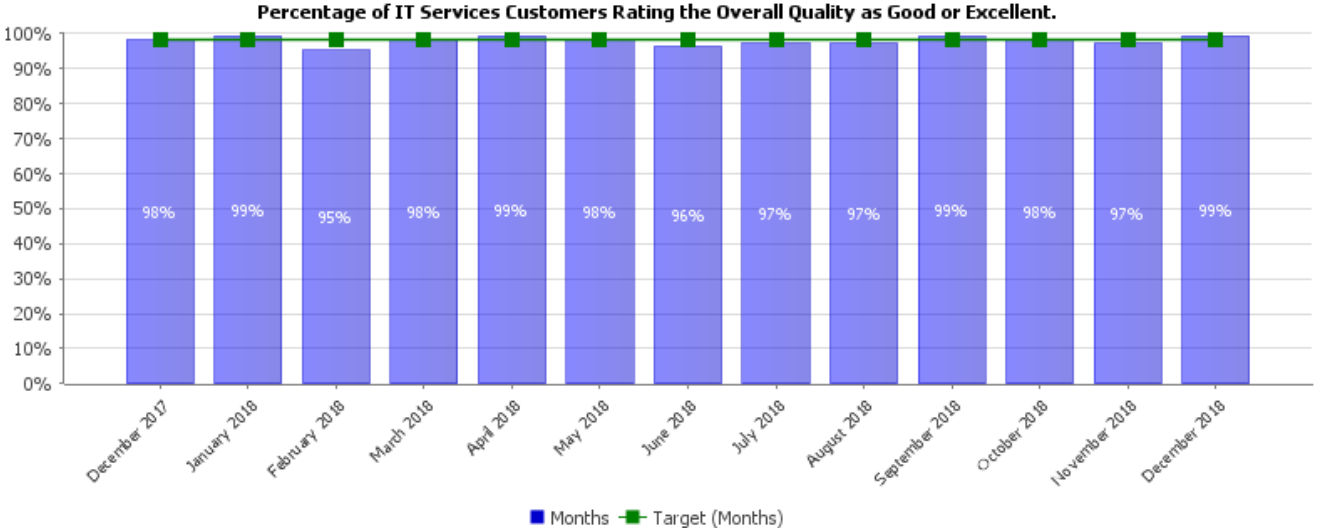




Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	34%
Current Target:	40%
Red Threshold:	32%
Amber Threshold:	36%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary: The trend chart demonstrates performance is inconsistent.
Performance in May 2018 achieved 56% against a target of 40% This positive increase in performance of 3% from last month can be contributed mainly to the increase in calls logged and resolved by the Service Desk in comparison to the previous month.
Performance in June 2018 achieved 52% against a target of 40%. This decrease in performance of 4% from last month can be contributed mainly to the 5 major incidents in the month relating to email issues, slow network, no access to Seemis, pc authentication issues, and multiple issues with CRM that the service desk had to deal with. The performance continues to remain above target by 16%.
Performance in July 2018 achieved 71%. Performance was extremely positive and remained above seasonal target. This is a typical trend when education customers are on summer holiday.
Performance in August 2017 achieved 69% against a non seasonal target of 50% as Education customers have returned from holiday.
Performance in August 2018 achieved 56% against a non seasonal target of 40% as Education customers returned from holiday. Performance was extremely positive in light of two major incidents that the Service Desk could not resolve. These major incidents related to Intermittent Network Issues on 06/08/2018 and problems accessing objective on 07/08/2018
Performance in September 2018 achieved 39% against a target of 40% The decrease in performance from August 2018 was due to the schools returning from holiday and the logging of 614 Education calls compared to 481 corporate calls that received a first line resolve. The Education calls do not allow first line remote resolutions by the IT Service Desk.
Performance in October 2018 achieved 52% against a non seasonal target of 40%. The increase in performance from September 2018 was due to the schools having the October break resulting in the logging of only 495 Education calls compared to 673 corporate calls that receive a first line resolve. The Education calls do not allow first line remote resolutions by the IT Service Desk.
Performance in November 2018 achieved 42% and remains above target by 2% however we are seeing an overall drop of 10% from October 2018. This can be contributed to the Service Desk FTE reducing to 4 staff in November 18 with the departure of the Trainee Service Analyst (resignation). This post will not be replaced due to the pending IT Services restructure. The resignation in conjunction with planned absence within the Service Desk resulted in there being only 3 FTE staff covering the IT Services Desk on 14 of the 22 working days. This reduction in the Service Desk resource availability resulted in more calls being passed over to 2nd line support to resolve, a increase of 7% in the abandonment rate ITS093_9b.1a, and a fall of 12% in the Grade of Service ITS_016_6b5. Performance on this KPI will be monitored.
Performance in December 2018 achieved 34% against a target of 40% The decrease in performance from November 2018 was due to 4 major incidents that the Service Desk could not resolve. These major incidents related to problems accessing Open Housing on 17/12/2018, no access to CRM on 07/12/2018, no access to Chris 21 on 27/12/2018 and no access to Objective on 27/12/2018.
Performance in December 2018 achieved 34% against a target of 40% The decrease in performance from November 2018 was due to the high number of calls logged for snap protect (822) which go straight to 2nd line and 4 major incidents that the Service Desk could not resolve. These major incidents related to problems accessing Open Housing on 17/12/2018, no access to CRM on 07/12/2018, no access to Chris 21 on 27/12/2018 and no access to Objective on 27/12/2018.

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



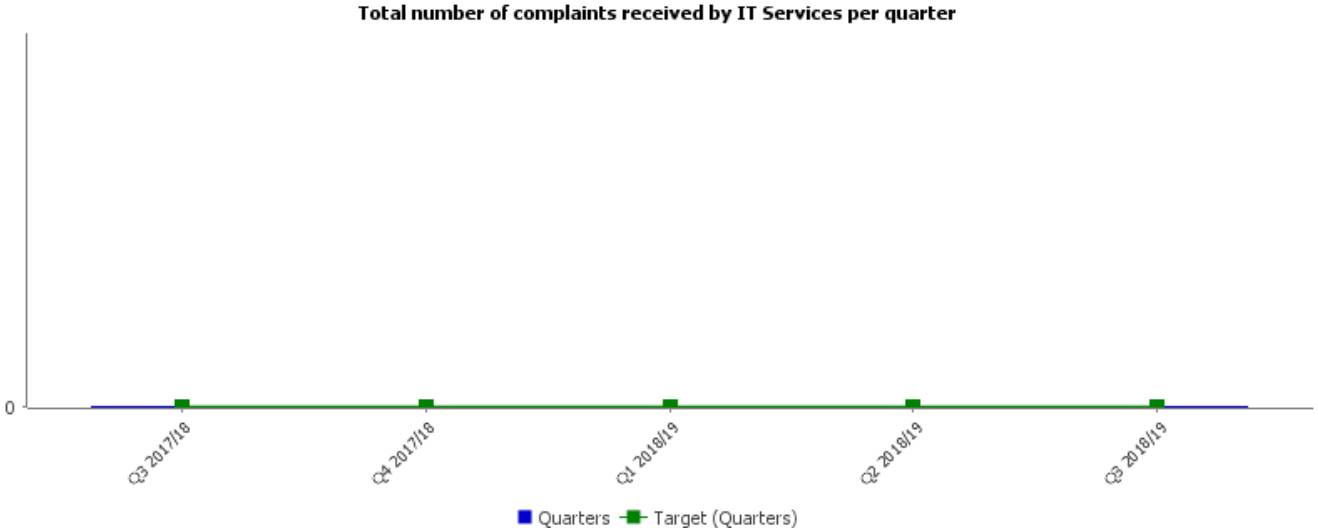
Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	99%
Current Target:	98%
Red Threshold:	91%
Amber Threshold:	94%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend chart demonstrates performance achieves 96 - 99%. The service set a target of 98% for 2018/19.

Performance decreased from May 2018 to June 2018 by 2%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance increased from June 2018 to July 2018 by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance from July 2018 to August 2018 remained the same at 1% below target. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance increased from August 2018 to September 2018 by 2% and exceeded target by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance decreased from September 2018 to October 2018 by 1% but still matched target. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance decreased from October 2018 to November 2018 by 1% and failed to meet target by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.
Performance increased from November 2018 to December 2018 by 2% and exceeded target by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	0
Amber Threshold:	0
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

There were no complaints received by IT Services in Quarters 1, 2 or 3 of 2018/19.

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

The target for 2018/19 will remain as 0.

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

Percentage of complaints received that were upheld/partially upheld

Quarters Target (Quarters)

Q3 2018/19 result	N/A
Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	?
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	0
Red Threshold:	0
Amber Threshold:	0
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

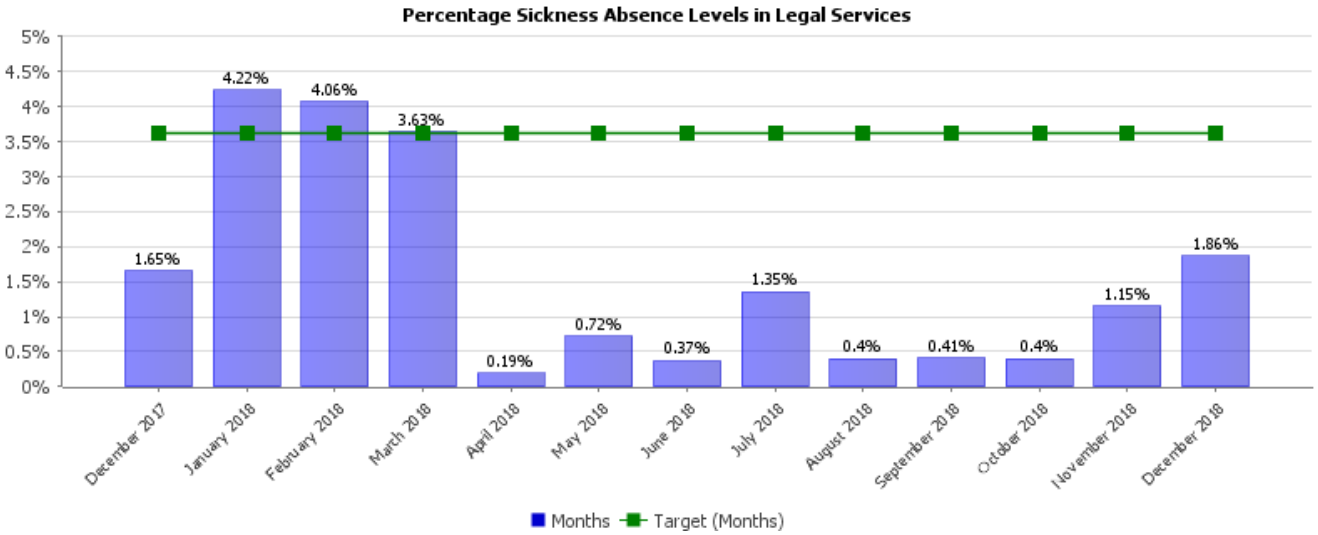
Trend Chart Commentary:

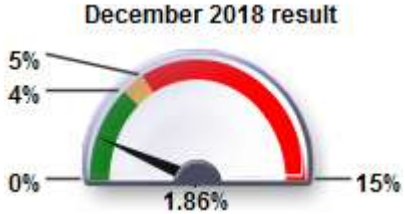
There were no complaints received by IT Services in Quarters 1, 2 or 3 of 2018/19.

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

The target for 2018/19 will remain as 0.

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	1.86%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	5%
Amber Threshold:	4%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

During January, February and March 2018 the target was not met. This was attributable to periods of short term sickness absence of a limited number of staff. During the remainder of the reported periods, there have been fluctuations in sickness absence levels due to short term absences but levels have been below the corporate target. During months where there was no sickness absence the chart is blank.

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

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

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

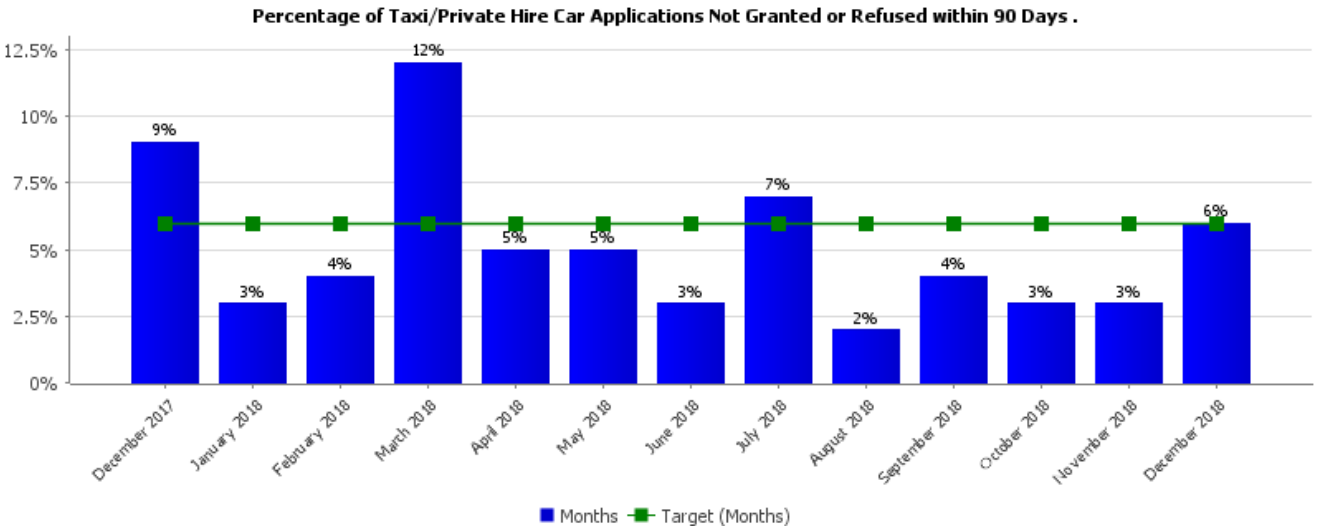
Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld

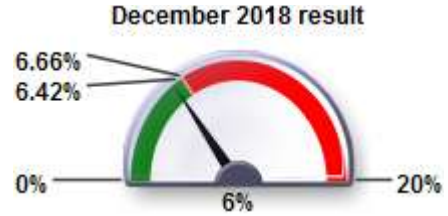
Quarters Target (Quarters)

Q3 2018/19 result	N/A
Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	?
Current Value:	N/A
Current Target:	0%
Red Threshold:	75%
Amber Threshold:	50%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary: The trend shows that Legal Services have had no upheld complaint during the reporting period. In periods where no complaints were received the chart will show as a blank. Following review of historical performance, the target for 2018/19 is 0%

PI Code & Short Name	**P:LS046_6b.5 Percentage of Taxi/Private Hire Car Applications Not Granted or Refused within 90 Days .**
Description	The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 originally set a statutory deadline of 6 months for an application to be granted or refused. That deadline was extended to 9 months for applications received after 1 May 2017. The Licensing Team has set a local target of 90 days for applications to be granted or refused. The process of determining applications for a licence involve referral to and input from third party agencies. The manner in which those agencies manage their input into the process can affect the progression of the application from the point it is made, to the point it is determined. The Licensing Team has no influence over those parts of the process which rely upon third parties either in respect of timescales or outcomes. This can have an impact on overall customer satisfaction levels. From 2018/19 it was proposed that no further reporting would take place in relation to this public performance indicator. A new indicator is to be created to report on the determination of new hire car applications and will not include reporting in relation to renewal applications. This will provide information in relation to the timescale within which a new licence is granted and is considered to be of more relevance to potential applicants than the existing indicator. Reporting will continue until the new indicator is created.
PI Owner(s):	zLS_PIAdmin; Audrey Watson





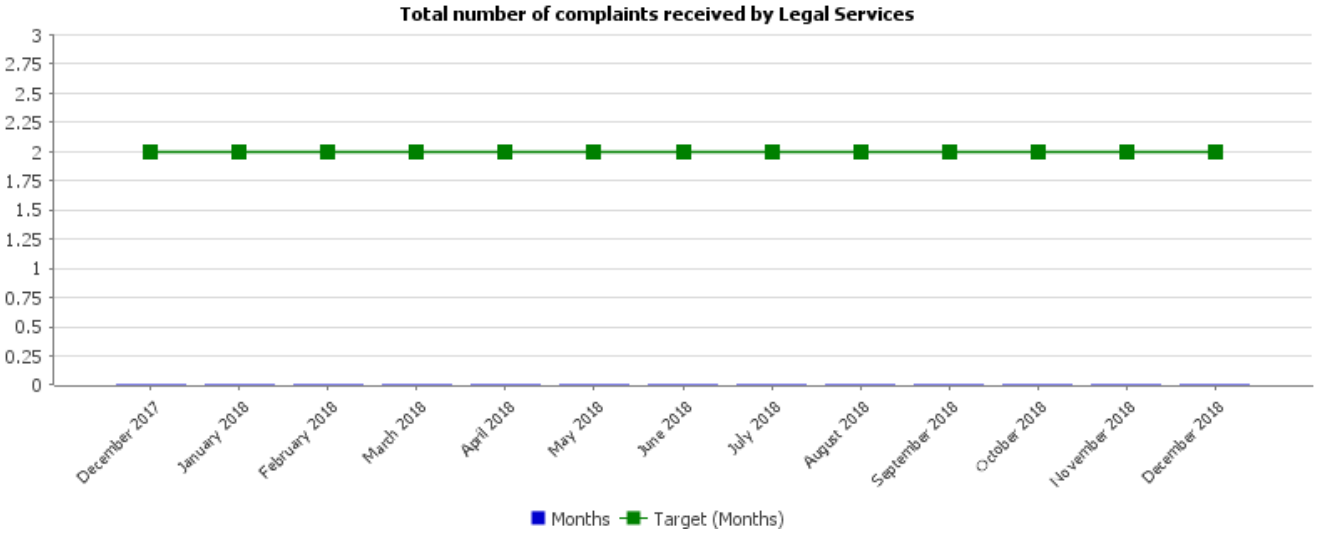
Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	6%
Current Target:	6%
Red Threshold:	6.66%
Amber Threshold:	6.42%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

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

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



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

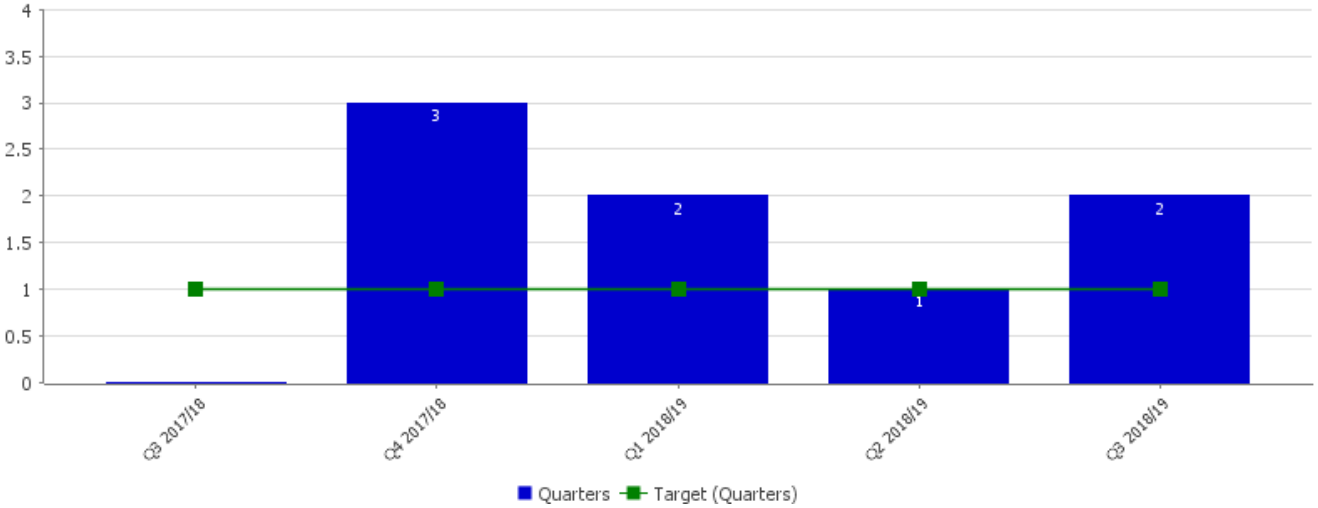
Trend Chart Commentary:

No complaints have been received during the reporting period.

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

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

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



Q3 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	2
Current Target:	1
Red Threshold:	3
Amber Threshold:	2
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The service received a total of two complaints in Q4 2018/19 and both were related to the council's Blue Badge Scheme. The two complaints were raised by the same complainant. The first complaint was about the service's request for the customer to attend an Independent Mobility Assessment. The customer did not feel that he should have to attend the assessment. This complaint was investigated at stage 2 of the council's complaint procedure and was not upheld. The complainant raised a second complaint about a further complaint being investigate at stage 2 of the council's complaint procedure. This was investigated at stage one of the council's complaints procedure and was not upheld.

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

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

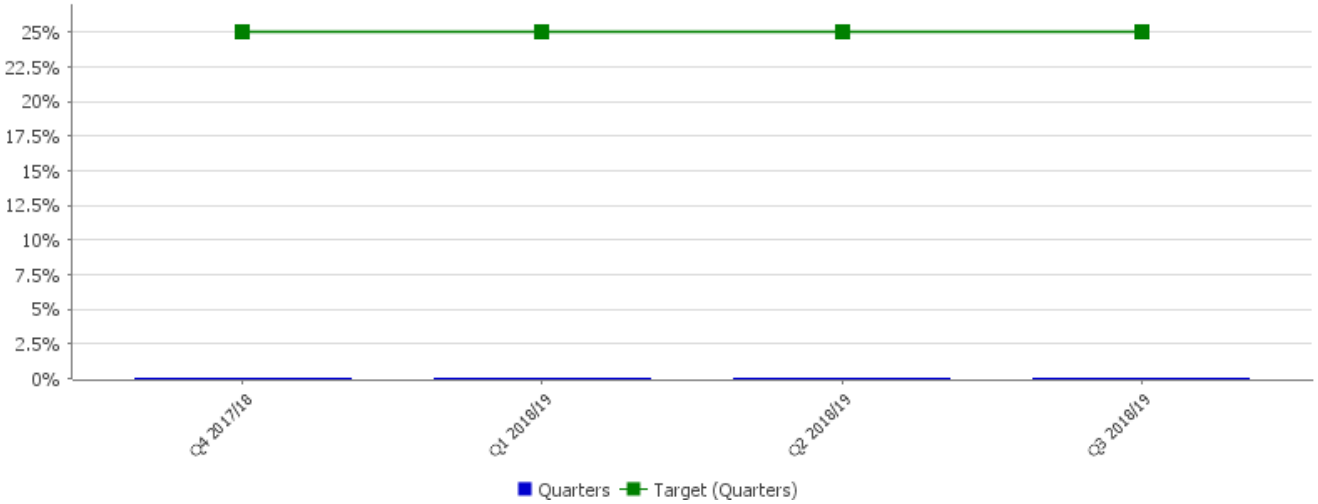
The service received a total of three complaints in Q4 2017/18. Two complaints related to the introduction of the blue badge charge and the other complaint was linked to the mobility assessment process for blue badges. All three complaints were not upheld.

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

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

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

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



Q3 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	0%
Current Target:	25%
Red Threshold:	60%
Amber Threshold:	50%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 3 2018/19. Both complaints were not upheld.

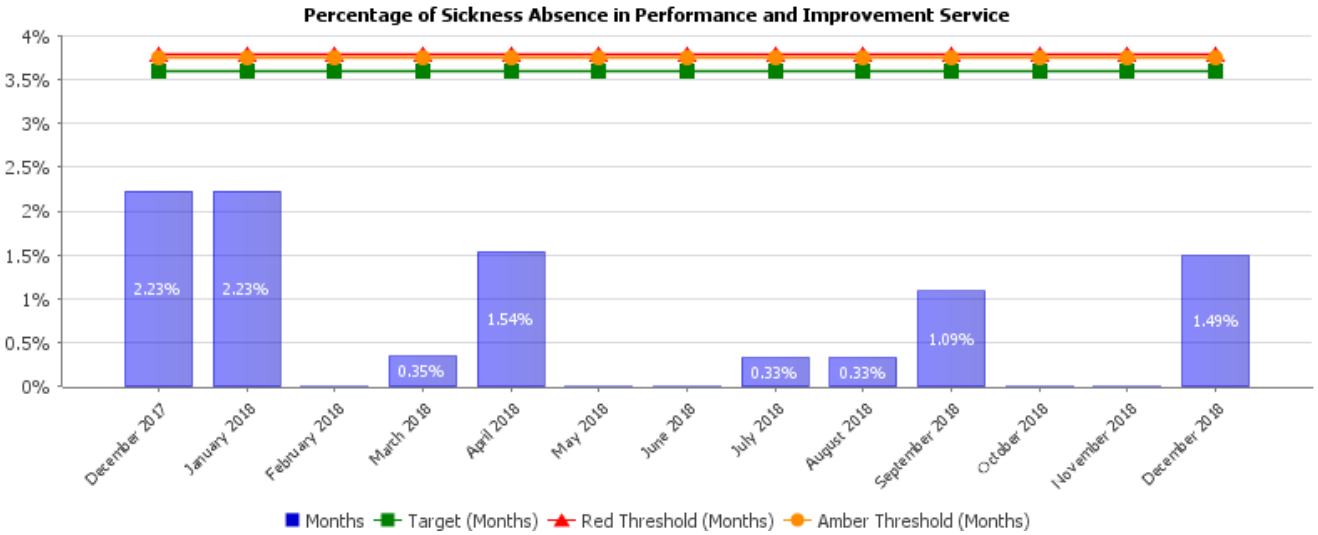
The service received a total of one complaint in Quarter 2 2018/19. The complaint was not upheld.

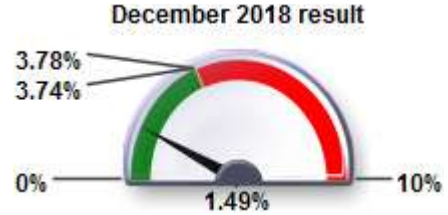
The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 1 2018/19. Both complaints were not upheld.

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

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	1.49%
Current Target:	3.6%
Red Threshold:	3.78%
Amber Threshold:	3.74%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary

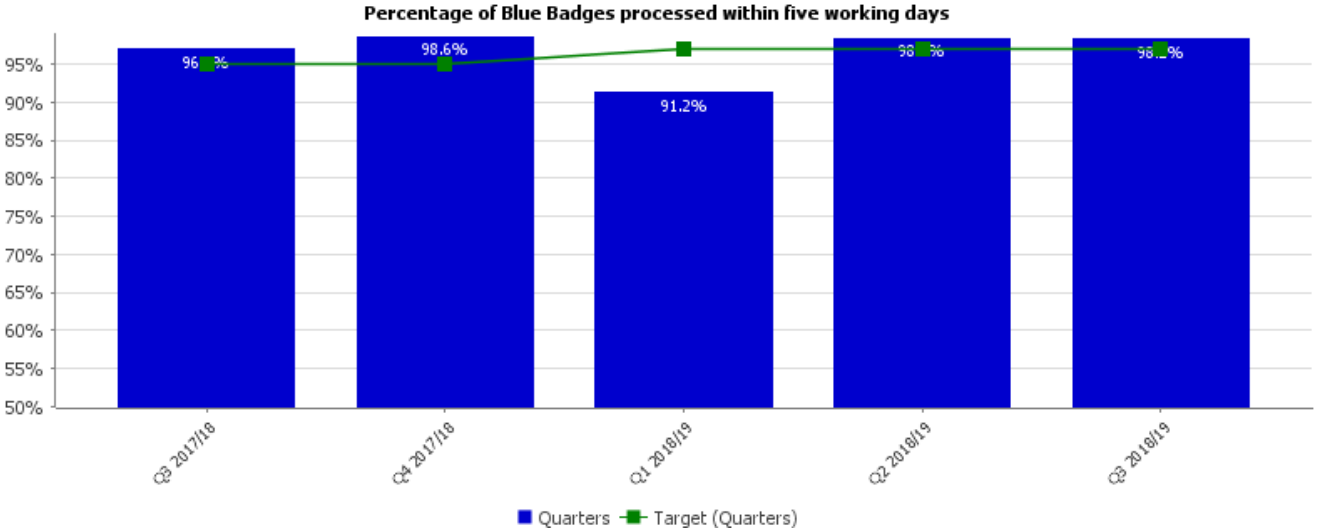
The Performance and Improvement Service comprises 14.3 full time equivalents and due to the size of the service, a small number of staff absent from work can greatly impact the performance in this indicator.

The trend shows that there was no period where the service failed to meet the corporate target of 3.6 percent, with eight periods where performance was 0 or less than 1 percent. Periods of absence in the service have been short-term, with one day of absence in the service in March, July and August 2018, four days in April 2018 and December 2018 and six days in December 2017 and January 2018.

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

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

PI Code & Short Name	**PIS514_6b.5 Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days**		
Description	This indicator measures the percentage blue badge applications that are processed by the service within five working days on a quarterly basis. This is a service standard to ensure that blue badges are processed in a timely manner. There are two distinct categories of blue badge application, the first is those that automatically qualify by meeting eligibility criteria. The second is discretionary applications, which require desktop assessment and in some cases an Independent Mobility Assessment to assess eligibility. The service aims to process all blue badge applications within five working days to ensure that customers receive a timely decision and blue badges are issued to eligible customers as quickly as possible.	**PI Owner(s):**	zPIS_PIAdmin; Joe Murray



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	98.2%
Current Target:	97%
Red Threshold:	91%
Amber Threshold:	94%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

There was a 0.1% reduction in quarter 3 2018/19 performance at 98.2% when compared to the previous quarter but performance was above the service target of 97%.

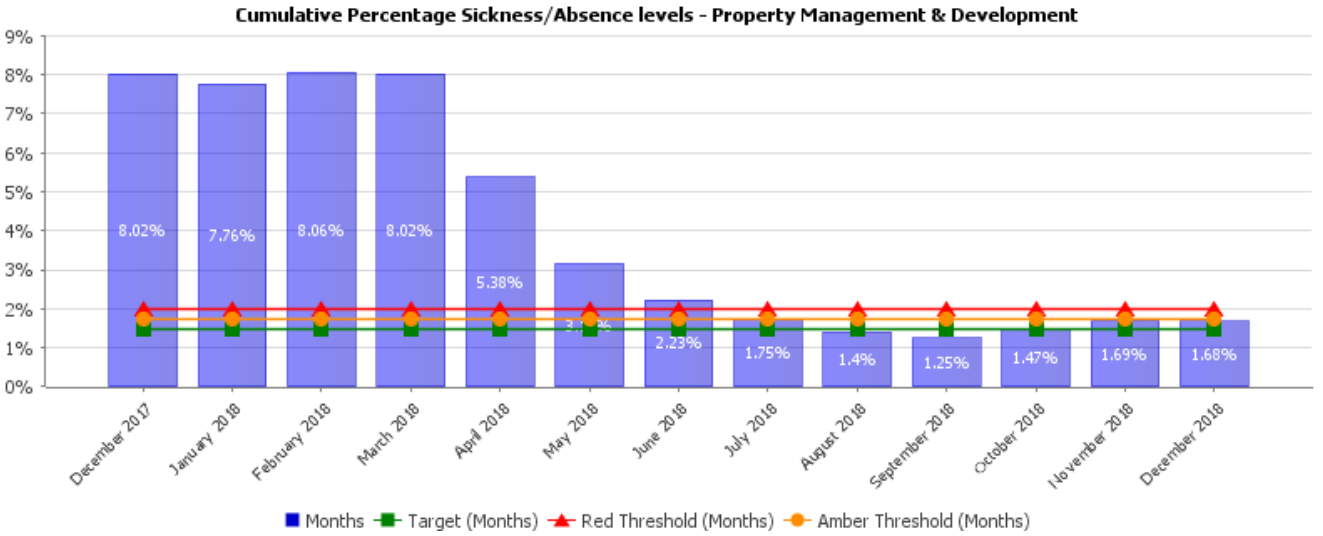
Quarter 2 2018/19 performance improved when compared to the previous quarter. There was a slight reduction in the number of applications required to be processed and the blue badge payment process issues were all resolved in quarter 1.

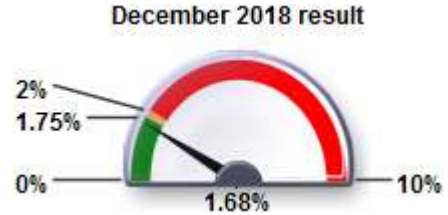
There was a dip in performance in Q1 2018/19 with the introduction of the blue badge charge. This was due to a technical issue with the online payment system that had to be resolved by the system supplier in the first few weeks of April 2018. The delay impacted upon the ability to take online payments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

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

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	1.68%
Current Target:	1.5%
Red Threshold:	2%
Amber Threshold:	1.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

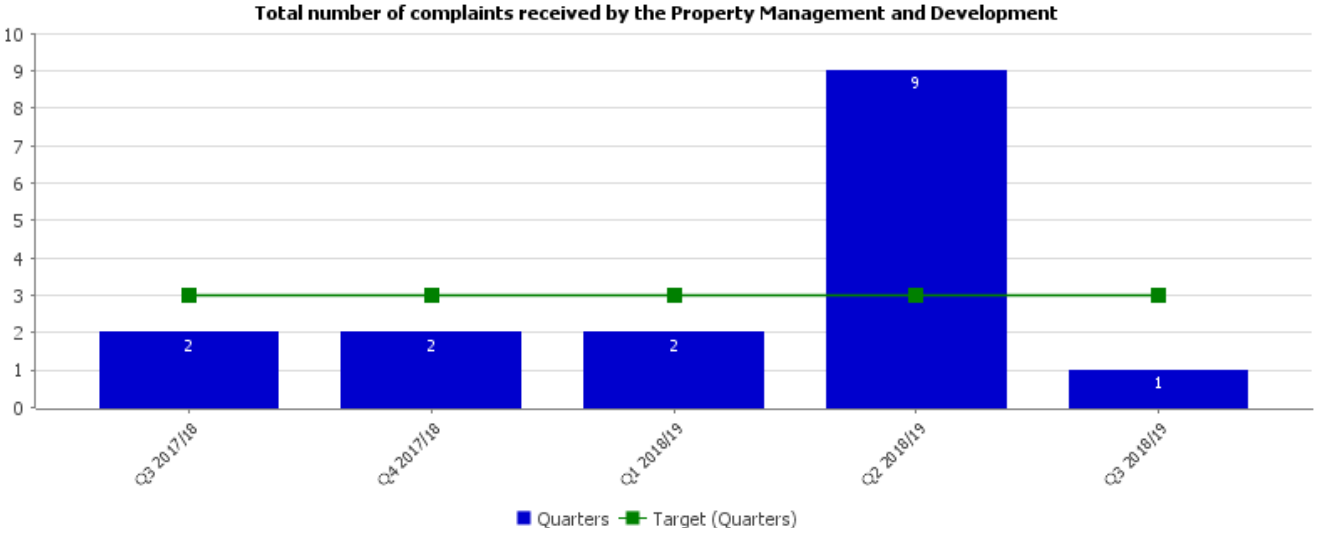
Trend Chart Commentary

The pattern of sickness absence for the unit relates to long conditions and circumstances. There are 2 members of staff who have long term conditions that has resulted in periodic periods of absence and are being managed through the occupational health process. We have 2 members of staff who have required hospital attendance for period of time for operations and subsequent recuperation, one is now fortunately back to full health. All long term absences have now returned to work.

The SPI figure for December 2018 is 1.68% which an improvement on the 8.02% recorded for December 2017.

The West Lothian Council target of 3.6% was last hit this month as current performance was 1.68%. which is an decrease on last months figure of 1.69%. Target going forward will remain at the Finance & Property Service target of 1.5%.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	✔
Current Value:	1
Current Target:	3
Red Threshold:	5
Amber Threshold:	4
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

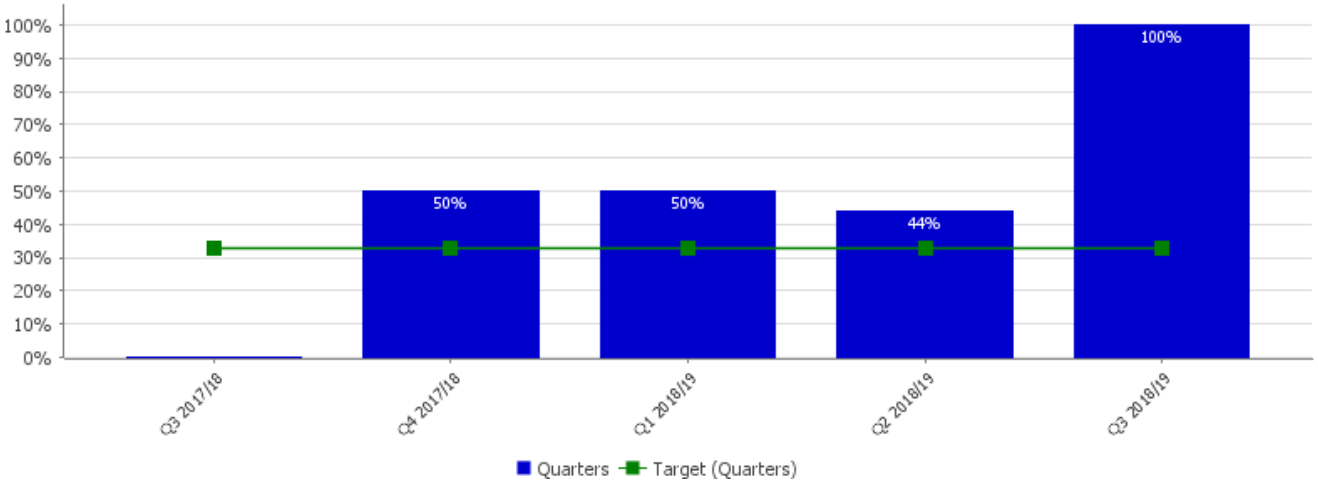
The Service received two complains in Q1, 2018/19. Nine Complaints in Q2 2018/19. One Complaint in Q3 2018/19;
The one complaint received during Q3 was incorrectly allocated to Financial Management Unit's (FMU) complaints queue and shows as their complaint. It has been advised that changes won't show in the Q3 report however this will be picked up correctly on the annual report The complaint was upheld and measures have been taken to resolve and prevent reoccurrence in future

The Service received four complains in Q1, 2017-18. three complaints in Q2, 2017-18. Two complaints in Q3. 2017-18. Two complaints in Q4. 2017-18.

The quarterly target for 2018-19 remains at Three complaints.

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

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



Q3 2018/19 result

Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	100%
Current Target:	33%
Red Threshold:	67%
Amber Threshold:	34%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

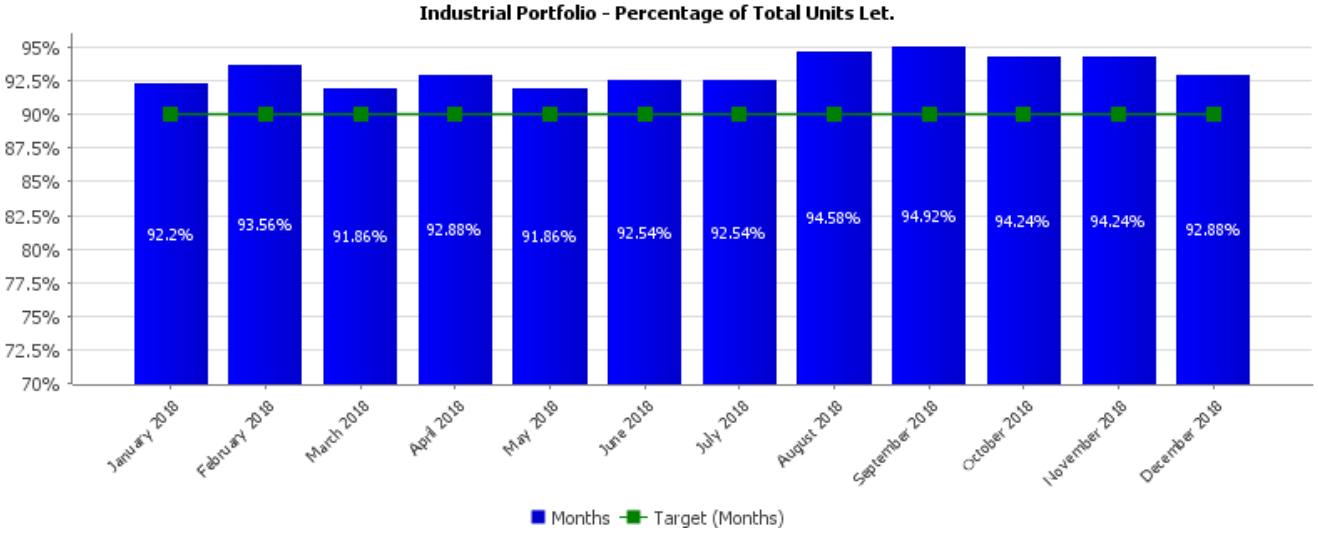
The Service received Two complaints in Q1, 2018-19, of which One was partly upheld. Four of the nine complaints received was upheld or partially upheld in Q2. However Four of those Nine complaints where incorrectly logged and reallocated accordingly including two that where upheld. Only one complaint was received and was upheld during Q3. However this won't show in the Q3 report as was incorrectly allocated to Financial Management Unit's complaints queue. Has been corrected however this won't show until the annual report is produced.

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

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

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

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



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	92.88%
Current Target:	90%
Red Threshold:	81%
Amber Threshold:	85.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Development and Transport; PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

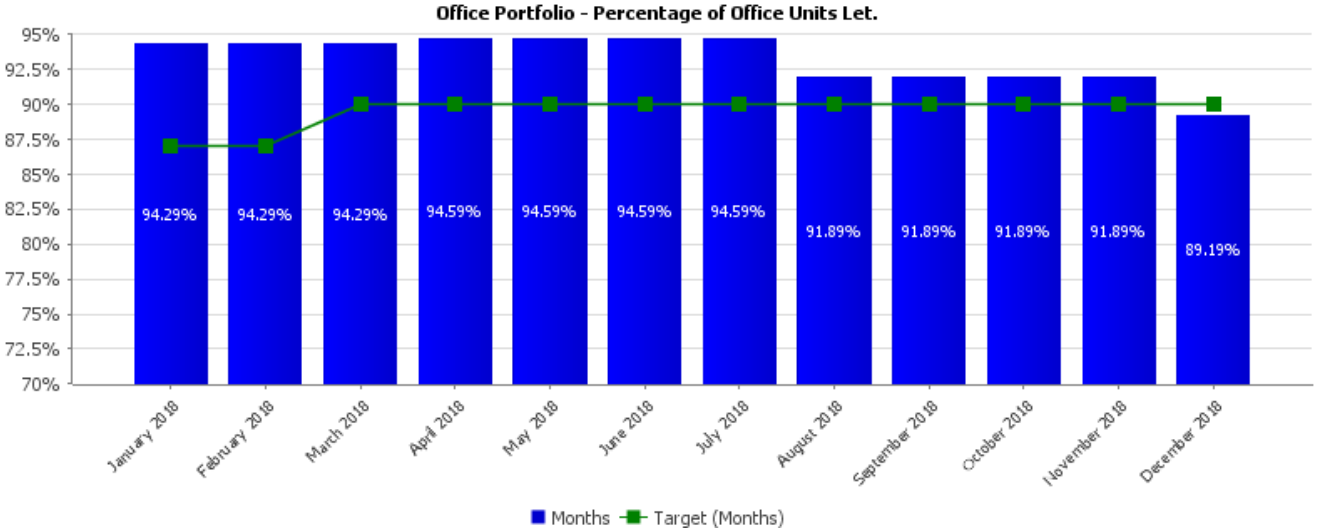
Trend Chart Commentary:

Occupancy for this month (December 2018) is 92.88% and is in the middle of the 12 month range 91.86% to 94.94%. Occupancy levels are above target and have been relatively stable over the past 12 months. A number of larger size industrial units have come vacant. These take longer to re let and this is likely to affect the trend over the next six months.

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

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

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



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	89.19%
Current Target:	90%
Red Threshold:	81%
Amber Threshold:	85.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

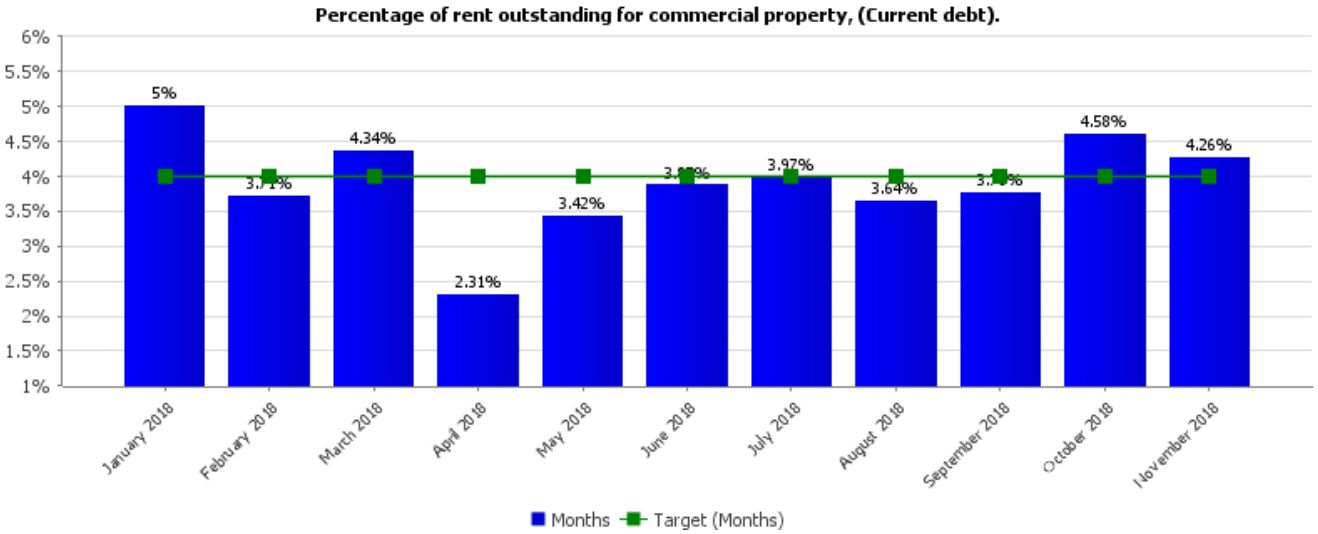
This month (December 2018) sees occupancy at 89.19%. The 12 month range has been 89.19% to 94.59% and occupancy has been fairly stable. Where units do become void they are taking longer to re let compared to the shop and industrial properties, which is indicative of the weak office market.

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

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

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

PI Owner(s): zPMD_PIAdmin; Paul Kettrick



Last Updated:	November 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	4.26%
Current Target:	4%
Red Threshold:	5%
Amber Threshold:	4.5%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

The debt level for November 2018 has decreased to 4.26%, but still above target of 4%.

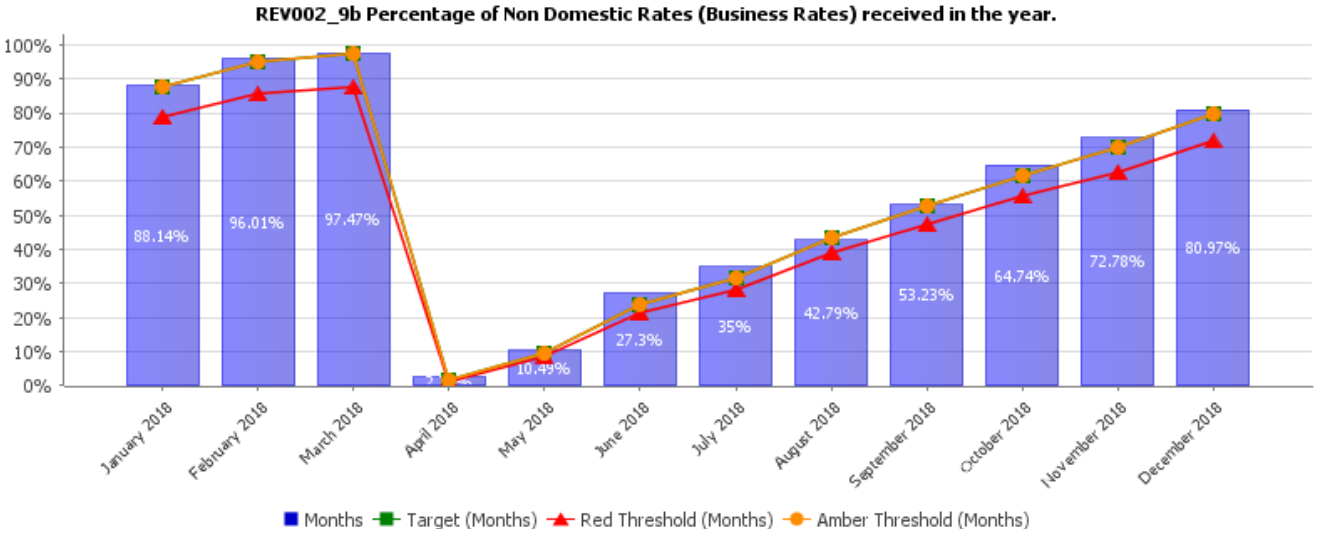
PM&D have established a debt recovery / rent arrears group led by the Corporate Estates Manager and involving other services (Revenues and Financial Management) to improve the recovery of debts. The council has a number of debtors already being progressed via Sheriff Officers.

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

Target for December 2018/19 is set at 4% and reflects the unit targeting to improve these results in the future.

Unable to provide December figures at this time as process requires Revenues Unit to confirm they have allocated payments. Normally completed by 10th of the month due to festive break December figures are normally produced around the 2nd half of the month.

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



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	80.97%
Current Target:	79.7%
Red Threshold:	71.73%
Amber Threshold:	79.7%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

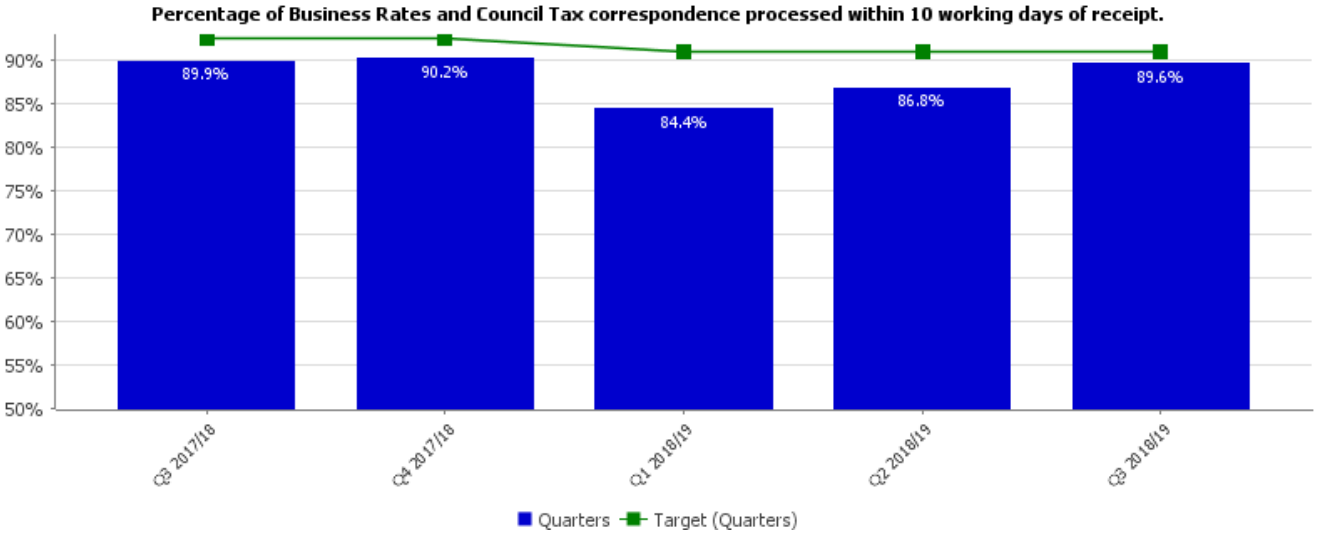
2018/19

December 2018: In year collection is up 1.05%.
November 2018: In year collection is up 3.08%
October 2018: In year collection is up 3.01%.
September 2018: In year collection is 0.53% above target. This increase was partly as a result of Final Notices being issued to all closed accounts for 2018 and the number of annual lump sum payments made in September.
August 2018: In year collection is 0.65% below target. Final Notices will be issued early September 2018 for all closed accounts and the annual lump sum payments are due by the end of September 2018. Additional resources will also be allocated to tasks to help improve the comparable monthly collection rate.
July 2018: In year collection has increased by 3.45%. This increase is partly as a result of some council liabilities being paid earlier than in previous years.
June 2018: In year collection has increased by 3.46%. This increase is partly as a result of some council liabilities being paid earlier than in previous years.
May 2018: In year collection is 1.08% above target.
April 2018: Customer payments for their Business Rates liability are not due until May 2018. The low collection for April 2018 is on trend.

2017/18

March 2018: In year collection is 0.29% above target. This has been attributed to the increase in intervention income.
February 2018: In year collection is 0.99% above target. A number of large payments were received in February 2018 following our intervention.
January 2018: In year collection is 0.39% above target. A number of large payments were received in January 2018 following our intervention.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	89.6%
Current Target:	91%
Red Threshold:	86.45%
Amber Threshold:	90.09%
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

Quarter 3: Performance in quarter 3 was below target of 91% but improved by 2.8% from the previous quarter. 40,716 items of correspondence were processed with 36,481 processed within the target of 10 working days. This is an increase of 1,726 items of correspondence processed in this quarter against the same quarter last year. Although performance has improved from the previous quarter it remains below target due to an increase in correspondence received at a time when available staff resources were reduced due to maternity leave. This increase in the level of correspondence received is mainly linked to those liable for Council Tax moving home.

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

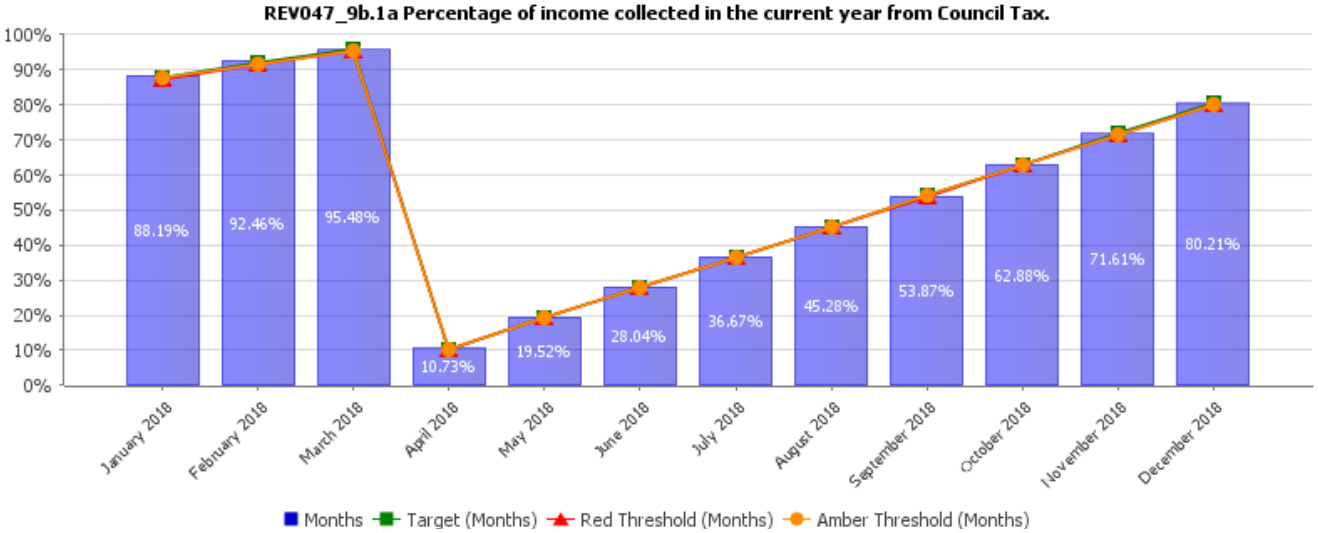
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 was below target of 91%. 13,702 items of correspondence were processed with 11,562 processed within the target of 10 working days. This is an increase of 551 items of correspondence processed in this quarter against the same quarter last year. Performance fell due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

2017/18

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

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

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



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	
Current Value:	80.21%
Current Target:	80.23%
Red Threshold:	79.83%
Amber Threshold:	79.99%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

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

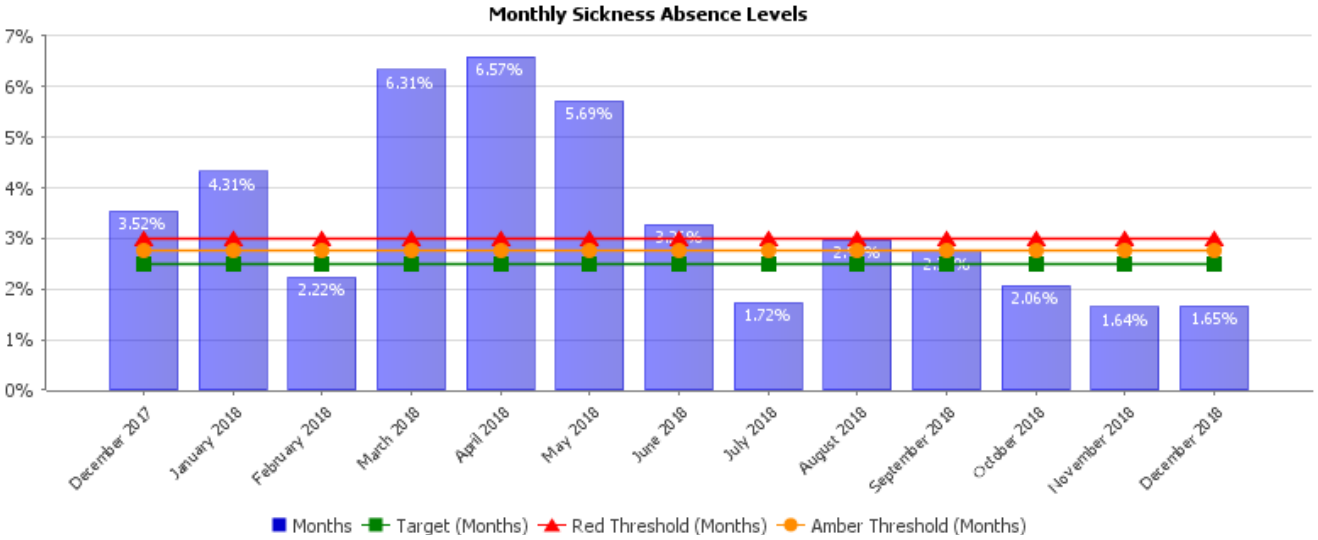
2018/19

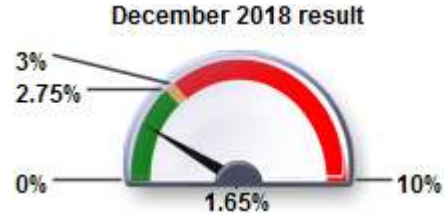
December 2018: In year collection is down 0.02% below target. This is as a result of a reduction in customers paying by direct debit and an issue with a payment file for 24 December.
November 2018: In year collection is 0.08% above the target.
October 2018: In year collection is 0.02% above the target.
September 2018: In year collection is 0.21% below target. In comparison to last year there has been a drop in income from the DWP for Water Direct payments of approximately £50,000 and although the payments in relation to the council's liability for homeless and supported accommodation properties were authorised, payment allocation to the accounts were not processed before the end of September 2018.
August 2018: In year collection is 0.06% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the level of customers paying by direct debit.
July 2018: In year collection is 0.13% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.
June 2018: In year collection is 0.14% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.
May 2018: In year collection is 0.20% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.
April 2018: In year collection is 0.33% above the target. The increase in collection has been attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.

2017/18

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

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





Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	1.65%
Current Target:	2.5%
Red Threshold:	3%
Amber Threshold:	2.75%
Categories:	Absence - sickness; High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

December 2018: Sickness absence levels for December 2018 increased slightly from the previous month. In December 2018 there were 33 sick days out of a possible 1,996 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We await confirmation of the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services for comparison figures across the service.

November 2018: Sickness absence levels for November 2018 reduced from the previous month. In November 2018 there were 32 sick days out of a possible 1,951 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 2.88% (149) days for November 2018.

October 2018: Sickness absence levels for October 2018 reduced from the previous month. In October 2018 there were 42 sick days out of a possible 2,034 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 3.43% (182) days for October 2018.

September 2018: Sickness absence levels for September 2018 reduced from the previous month. In September 2018 there were 55 sick days out of a possible 2,007 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 3.24% (173) days for September 2018.

August 2018: Sickness absence levels for August 2018 increased from the previous month. In August 2018 there were 62 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 3.19% (174) days for August 2018.

July 2018: Sickness absence levels for July 2018 decreased from the previous month. In July 2018 there were 36 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 2.02% (111) days for July 2018.

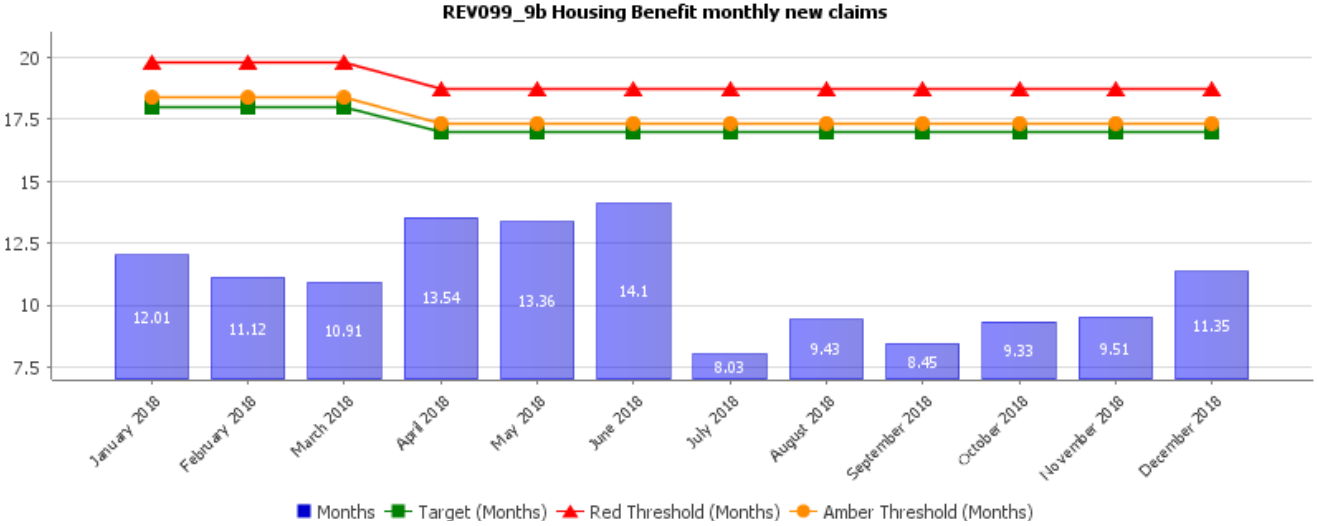
June 2018: Sickness absence levels for June 2018 decreased from the previous month. In June 2018 there were 66 sick days out of a possible 2,025 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.

May 2018: Sickness absence levels for May 2018 decreased from the previous month. In May 2018 there were 119 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. Of the 119 sick days a total of 79 are attributed to long term absence and 40 for short term absence. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are above the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 4.89% (268) days for May 2018

April 2018: Sickness absence levels for April 2018 increased from the previous month. In April 2018 there were 133 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. Of the 133 sick days a total of 104 are attributed to long term absence and 29 for short term absence. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are above the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 4.09% (263) days for April 2018

2017/18
March 2018: Sickness absence levels for March 2018 increased from the previous month. In March 2018 there were 132 sick days out of a possible 2,092 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
February 2018: Sickness absence levels for February 2018 decreased from the previous month. In February 2018 there were 42 sick days out of a possible 1,890days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
January 2018: Sickness absence levels for January 2018 increased from the previous month. In January 2018 there were 91 sick days out of a possible 2,111days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.
December 2017: Sickness absence levels for December 2017 decreased from the previous month. In December 2017 there were 75 sick days out of a possible 2,130days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring.

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



Last Updated:	December 2018
Status:	✔
Current Value:	11.35
Current Target:	17
Red Threshold:	18.7
Amber Threshold:	17.34
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

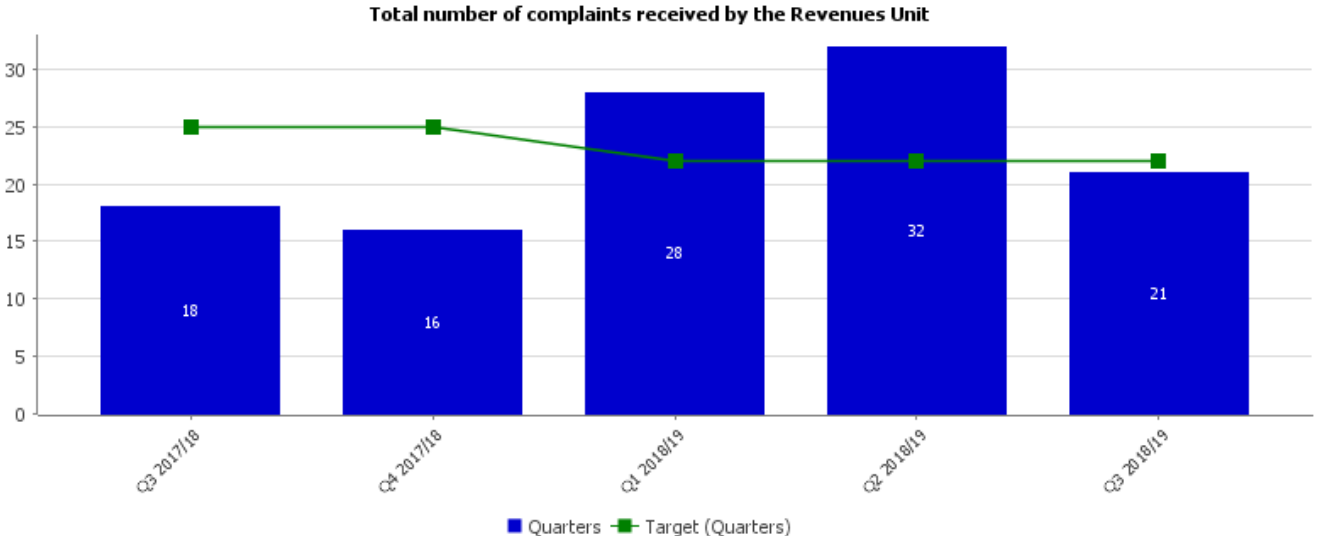
The target for 2018/19 has been set at 17 days. The target has been reviewed and set based on last years performance and factoring in a number of changes that will impact the Benefit Team over the coming year. The main changes include the roll out of Universal Credit full service from May 2018 and the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

2018/19

December 18 - The increase in the number of days to process new claims from 9.51 days to 11.35 days is due the benefit officers assisting Scottish Welfare Fund with Crisis Grants and the additional work received as a result of the new Contributions Policy for non-residential social care charges.
November 18 - No significant change to the number of days to process new claims which remain well within target at 9.51 days.
October 18 - The number of days to process new claims remains well within target at 9.33 days. The slight increase is due to Benefit Officers having to assist with Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants which were in a back log situation.
September 18 - The number of days to process new claims remains well within target at 8.45 days.
August 18 - The number of days to process new claims remains well within target at 9.43 days. This is because we continue to priorities certain claim types due to the vulnerability of the tenants. This has a positive effect on the end to end processing times.
July 18 - Performance this month is significantly under target at 8.03 days, however, this is because we processed 86 housing benefit applications for bed and breakfast accommodation within 1 day which has had a positive impact on the overall end to end processing figures for this month.
June 18 - Performance this month has dipped slightly to 14.10 days. This is a result of the staff training that was delivered in preparation for the roll out of Universal Credit full service on 16 May 2018.
May 18 - Performance remains within target for May 18 at 13.36 days.
April 18 - Performance remains within target despite the additional work over the year end period; reduction in staffing numbers and staff leave over the Easter holiday period.

2017/18
March 18 - Performance has improved to 10.91 days. This is the best performance recorded for this indicator.
February 18 - Performance has improved to 11.12 days which is a further improvement from last month and a new best ever performance.
January 18 - 12.01 days is our best reported performance for this indicator. Previous initiatives and improvements that we have put in place are continuing to deliver positive results.

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



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	21
Current Target:	22
Red Threshold:	28
Amber Threshold:	26
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

Quarter 3: 21 complaints were received during this quarter. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information. The number of complaints decreased in this quarter with 81% of complaints not upheld.

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

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

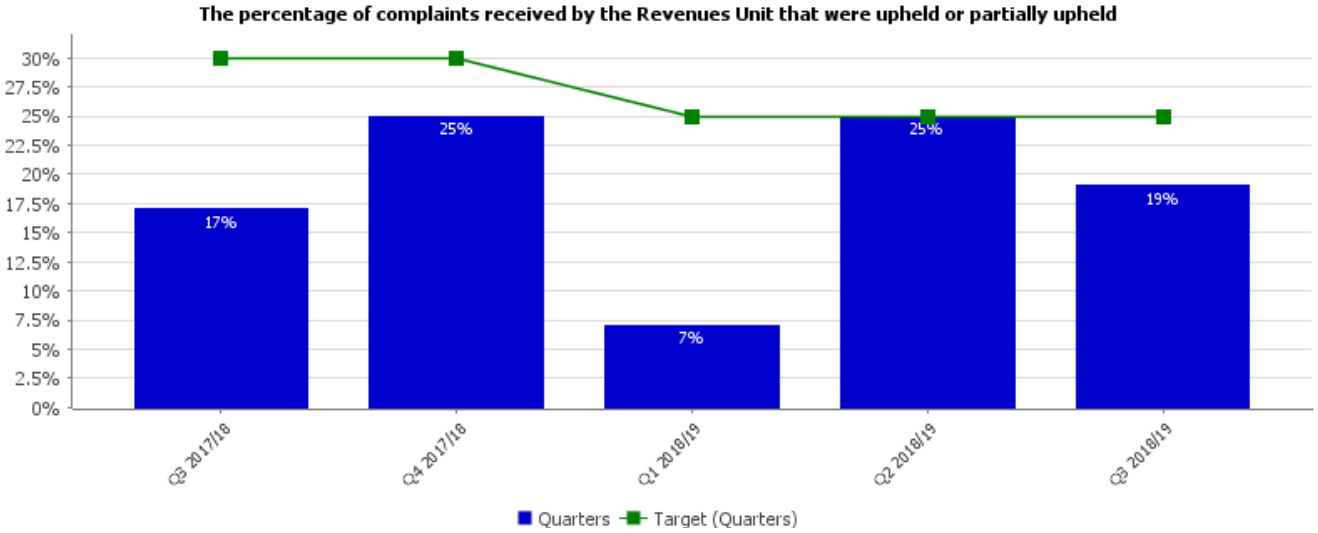
2017/18

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

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

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

PI Owner(s): zREV_PIAdmin; Scott Reid



Last Updated:	Q3 2018/19
Status:	
Current Value:	19%
Current Target:	25%
Red Threshold:	27.5%
Amber Threshold:	25.5%
Categories:	High Level; PDSP_Partnership & Resources

Trend Chart Commentary:

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

2018/19

Quarter 3: 1 of the 21 (4.8%) complaints received this quarter was upheld and another 3 (14.2%) were part upheld. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information.

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

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

2017/18

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

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

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2018 – 31 DECEMBER 2018)

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report on sickness absence levels in the council over the 9 month period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 together with a brief commentary on the application of the new Policy and Procedure on Supporting Attendance at Work which became effective from 1 September 2018.

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)**	Council policy seeks to strike a balance between effective management of sickness absence and the promotion of a healthy workforce taking into account the council's obligations under Equality legislation.
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The sickness absence SPI for 2018/19 at the start of the first Quarter of the year was at its highest for the past 3 years. However Quarters 2 and 3 have shown a considerable reduction with sickness rates at a lower level than the same periods in 2017/18.

V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	National Outcome 15: Our Public Services are high quality, continually improving and responsive to local people's needs. Reduced sickness absence levels increase the efficiency and productivity of the council.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Sickness absence is managed within service budgets.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	None
VIII	**Other consultations**	None

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

The Council Executive on 26 June 2018 approved a Policy and Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work that replaced the former Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence with effect from 1 September 2018.

This report covers the 9-month period from 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 inclusive of the 5 month period of 1 April 2018 to 31 August 2018 when the former policy was in operation.

D.2 SICKNESS ABSENCE RATES

Standard Performance Indicator – Council Wide

The sickness absence Standard Performance Indicator (SPI) for the full council for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 (2018/19) is set out at Appendix 1 of this report together with the SPI performance indicators for the full years (2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18).

The SPI for December 2018 is 5.18%, which is marginally lower than at the same point in 2017 (5.48%). A total of 4,978 employees were absent from work for the previous rolling 12 months.

Standard Performance Indicators – Services

The sickness absence SPI for each service area (figures for teaching and non-teaching staff shown separately), for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 is set out at Appendix 2.

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

Chief Executive, Finance & Property (3.48%) Corporate Services (2.27%) and Education Services (3.35%) are the services reporting below the Council target of 3.6%.

A history of the last 3 years SPI data for each service is attached at Appendix 3.

Long-Term/Continuous Absence (1 April 2018 – 31 December 2018)

Of the days lost due to sickness absence during this period, a significant proportion of those absences are attributable to long term absence. Provision 4.9.2 of the previous council Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence, defines a period of continuous (long-term absence) as; 'a period of absence in excess of 4 weeks'. In the Supporting Attendance at Work Policy, this is referred to as continuous absence as in paragraph 5.7.

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

- Of the total number of 14,919 days lost in Housing, Customer & Building Services, 11,168 (74.86%) is attributable to long-term/continuous absence and were accounted for by 264 employees.

- Of the total number of 30,188 days lost in Operational Services, 24,250 (80.33%) is attributable to long-term/continuous absence and were accounted for by 347 employees.

- Of the total number of 1,188 days lost in Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration 826 (69.53%) is attributable to long-term absence and were accounted by 17 employees.

- Of the total number of 21,122 days lost in Social Policy 15,755 (74.59%) is attributable to long-term/continuous absence and were accounted for by 220 employees.

The average percentage days lost due to long term absence across the four services was 77.13%. The average percentage of sick days lost due to long term absence across the council as a whole was 72.63%. The average length of long-term absence during the period was 74 days with the longest absence lasting 260 days.

Disregarded Absences (1 April 2018 – 31 August 2018)

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

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

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

Analysis of Categories of Absence (1 April 2018 – 31 December 2018)

The most common reason for long-term/continuous absence across the council during the period fell within the category of Mental and Behavioural (29,553 days).This category constituted 33.26% of all long term absence and 29.79% of all absences for the period (long/continuous and short/intermittent).

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

- Musculoskeletal (15,162 days) constituting 16.69% of all long-term absence and 15.29% of all absence

- Surgery (12,005 days) constituting 13.30% of long-term absence and 12.10% of all absences.

- Gastrointestinal (8,631 days) constituting 5.35% of all long-term absence and 17.59% of all absences.

- Accidents, Injuries and Poison (8,198 days) constituting 7.90% of all long-term absence and 8.26% of all absence.

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 monitoring and management of sickness. Table 1 below shows the number of employees at each stage of the Policy & Procedure as at 31 December 2018, compared to the previously reported positions.

Table 1

	Counselling/ Informal Review Meeting	**Stage 1**	**Stage 2**	**Total**
Total at 31 December 2018	**450**	**456**	**308**	**1214**
Total at 31 December 2017	492	515	227	1234
Total at 31 December 2016	674	428	243	1345

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

Table 2

	Counselling/ Informal Review Meeting	**Stage 1**	**Stage 2**	**Total**
Cases on going from 30 September 2018	255	371	300	926
New cases since 30 September 2018	195	85	8	288
Total	**450**	**456**	**308**	**1214**

ii) Other Support Initiatives

Occupational Health Contract

The Occupational Health contract is currently out for re-tender with a closing date of 11 February 2019. A decision on the successful bidder will be made in March 2019 and the outcome reported to the panel in the next quarterly report.

HR Adviser Input – Management Meetings

During Quarter 3 (2018/19), three of nine service areas in receipt of targeted input and support from Human Resources reported reductions in sickness absence levels. Since April 2018, three functional areas have reduced their absences overall and five are reporting a lower SPI% for the same period in 2017.

Customer and Community Services in particular are operating at 5.46% in December 2018 and while this is still above the council target of 3.6%, it represents a reduction of 4.05% since December 2017 at which time the reported figure was 9.51%.

Employee Assistance Programme

A telephone based counselling service (Help EAP) has now been live since 1 November 2018. Statistics for the first two-month's operation show that 48 calls were handled resulting in 4 employees receiving mental health assessment. A further 2 employees were referred on for structured telephone counselling sessions.

HR Advisers will continue to promote the use of this service and the trade unions have also been asked to promote these services to their members.

Employee Wellbeing

An Employee Wellbeing initiative is currently being developed that focuses on amalgamating the various strands of support mechanisms available locally and nationally for ease of access for both employees and line managers.

The term "wellbeing" covers various aspects of the way people feel about their lives, including their jobs and their relationships with the people around them. These support mechanisms do not solely focus on issues within the workplace but extend to other general areas in which employees may require support in relation to mental, physical, financial, and environmental wellbeing.

This initiative will supplement existing support measures being promoted through the council's Healthy Working Lives Working Group, the Advice Shop Services and Human Resources. Further information will be provided as the initiative is develops.

D.4 SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE AT WORK (1 September 2018 – 31 December 2018)

The Supporting Attendance at Work Policy was approved by the Council Executive on 26 June 2018 and became effective from 1 September 2018.

Since its introduction, 53 requests for management discretion have been discussed with Human Resources, 42 (79%) of which have resulted in discretion being applied to suspend application of the trigger level for a limited period taking into account the circumstances of the individual case.

The general categories for discretion requests are broken down as follows:

Main Category	Discretion Applied	Discretion Not Applied
Assault	3	0
Bereavement	6	0
Industrial Injury	7	1
Medical Treatment	6	6
Personal Difficulties	2	2
Surgery	14	0
Trauma	4	2
Total	**42**	**11**

Although provision exists within the policy for employees to request that decisions not to exercise discretion are reviewed by a more senior manager, no such requests have been received to date. Applying a positive interpretation of this position would infer that individuals feel that they are being treated fairly under the new policy.

E. CONCLUSION

As indicated earlier in this report in relation to SPI reporting, while council sickness absence rates are lower than they were for the corresponding period in 2017/18, a longer reference period will be required to assess whether the new Policy for Supporting Attendance at Work has a positive impact on reversing the upward trend in corporate sickness absence rates experienced over recent years.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

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

Appendices/Attachments: 3

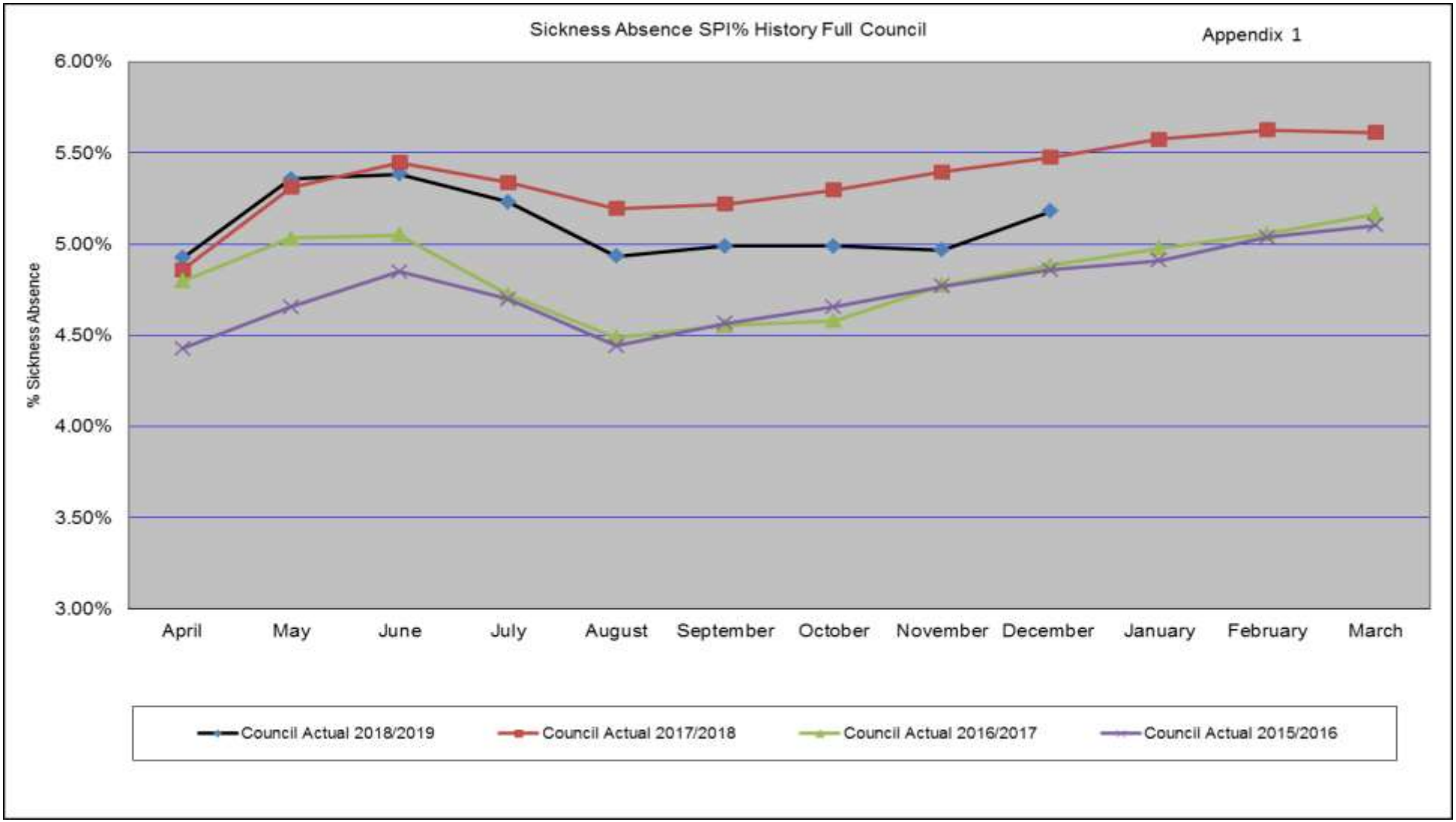
1. Sickness Absence SPI% History – Full Council
2. Sickness Absence SPI% all services – 2018/19
3. Sickness Absence SPI% History - Services

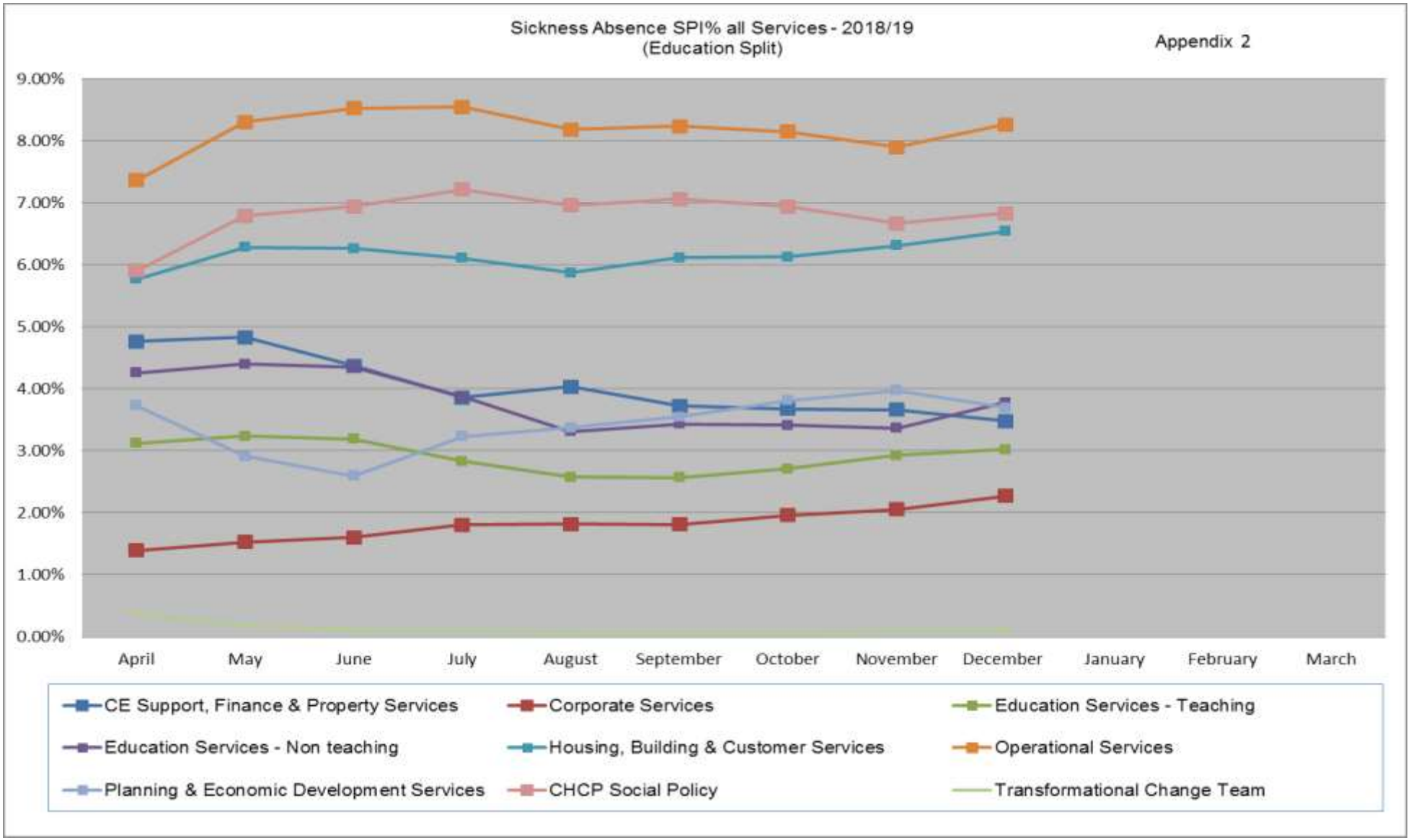
Contact Person: Fraser Mackenzie, HR Manager – Policy & Advice (01506 281422)

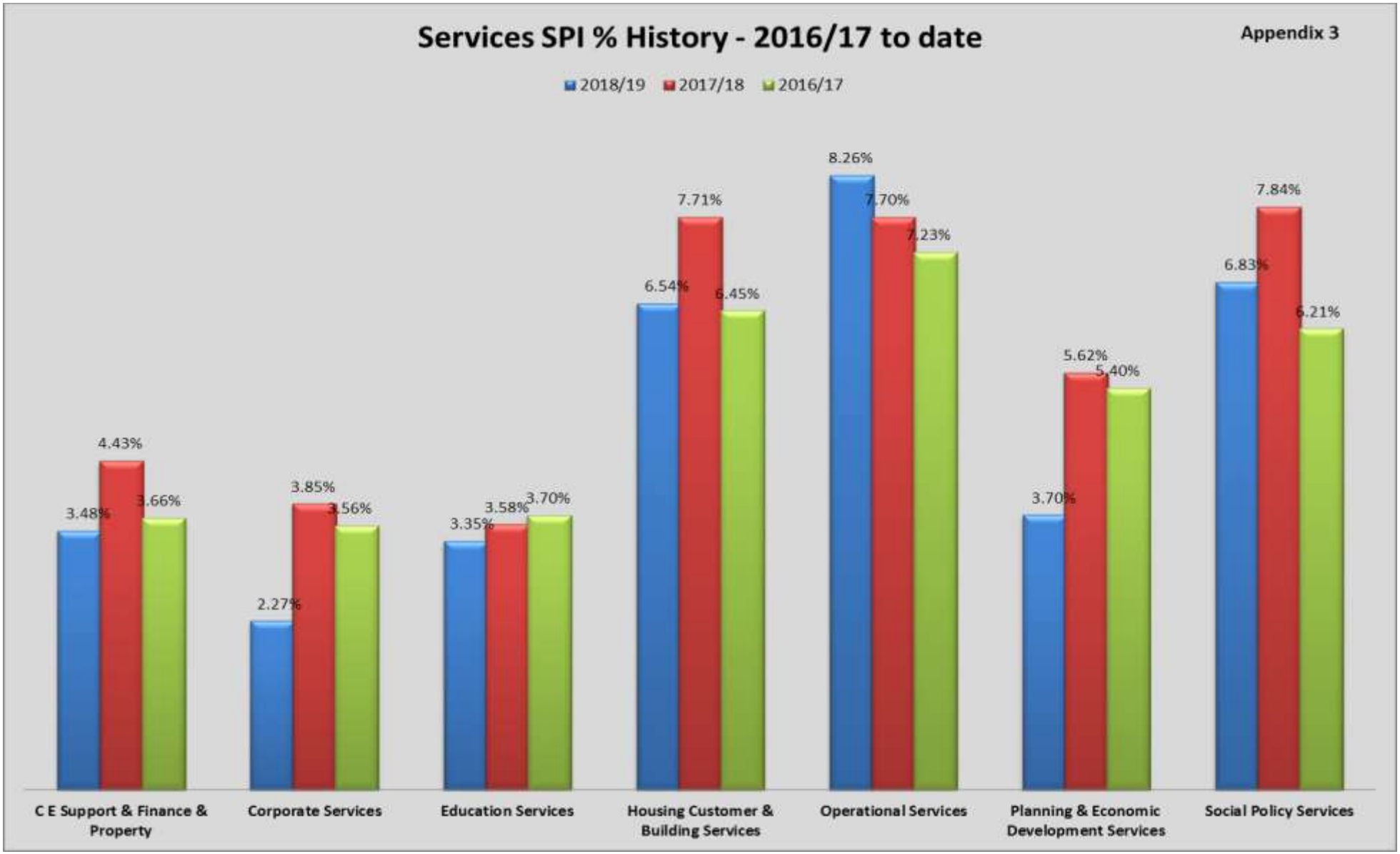
Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Date: 1 February 2019


Sickness Absence SPI% History Full Council
Appendix 1
6.00%
5.50%
5.00%
4.50%
4.00%
3.50%
3.00%
% Sickness Absence
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December
January
February
March
Council Actual 2018/2019
Council Actual 2017/2018
Council Actual 2016/2017
Council Actual 2015/2016


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


Services SPI % History - 2016/17 to date
Appendix 3
2018/19
2017/18
2016/17
3.48%
4.43%
3.66%
2.27%
3.85%
3.56%
3.35%
3.58%
3.70%
6.54%
7.71%
6.45%
8.26%
7.70%
7.23%
3.70%
5.62%
5.40%
6.83%
7.84%
6.21%
C E Support & Finance & Property
Corporate Services
Education Services
Housing Customer & Building Services
Operational Services
Planning & Economic Development Services
Social Policy Services

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2019/20 TO 2022/23

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report presents the draft Corporate Procurement Strategy 2019/20 to 2022/23.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel considers and provide comment upon the content of the draft Corporate Procurement Strategy which is intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	The Strategy contains a range of performance indicators which will be used to monitor performance against the Strategy Outcomes
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Supporting the delivery of outcomes at a local, council wide and partnership level.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	None
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Partnership and Resources PDSP 1 February 2019
VIII	**Other consultations**	Corporate Procurement Board

D. TERMS OF REPORT

Background

The Corporate Procurement Strategy 2019/20 to 2022/23 has been developed to support the delivery of the priorities in the council's Corporate Plan. The Strategy is intended to ensure that there is sound governance and a framework to help the Council meet national and local obligations, including targets defined by the Scottish Government.

The Strategy supports the council's vision for procurement to achieve superior procurement performance through advanced sustainable procurement practices for the benefit of the council and its stakeholders.

D.1 The Corporate Procurement Strategy Outcomes

The Corporate Procurement Strategy builds on previous strategies, with the actions and outcomes focusing on the delivery of sustainable, compliant, regulated procurement. There are five outcomes in the Corporate Procurement Strategy, as set out below:

1. Contracts

Outcome 1 is focused on ensuring that all spend that can be positively influenced by procurement activity has a corresponding contract and those contracts and their suppliers are managed effectively.

2. Compliance

Outcome 2 focuses on ensuring that all procurement activity complies with statutory and regulatory requirements and the council's standing orders.

3. Accessibility

Outcome 3 is focused on improving opportunities for procurement contract awards to supporting local businesses, micro and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), voluntary organisations, third sector bodies, supported businesses and social enterprises.

4. Community Benefits

Outcome 4 focuses on ensuring that the Council is committed to maximising the benefits to its community through its procurement activities and those contracts awarded. Community Benefit clauses are to be included as a consideration at a contract strategy stage, where relevant.

5. Sustainability

Outcome 5 is focused on ensuring that the Council is committed to maximising the benefits delivered from sustainable procurement through its procurement activities and those contracts awarded to achieve value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits, not only to the procuring organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

This Outcome also targets an increased percentage of council suppliers paying the living wage. It should be noted that the council is not authorised to enforce payment of the living wage by suppliers.

Each of the outcomes is supported by a range of activities and actions which will be progressed during the lifetime of the Strategy to support improvement in the Council's procurement capability, processes and performance.

D.2 Performance Scorecard and Reporting

Key measures of the success for each outcome have been identified and these will be used to track, monitor and report on performance throughout the lifetime of this strategy.

An annual review will be undertaken and reported to the council's Corporate Management Team and to the Partnership & Resources PDSP. This will include an update on the agreed performance scorecard and action plan and will also be published on the performance pages of the council website.

An end of strategy review will be undertaken in the final year of the strategy to report on the achievement in the outcomes and final position in the performance indicators (against the target) and the agreed actions.

D.3 Action Plan

There are 31 actions that have been identified to support the delivery of the Corporate Procurement Strategy outcomes. Progress in the actions will be included in the monitoring arrangements for the Strategy.

E. CONCLUSION

The Corporate Procurement Strategy 2019/23 provides a framework to support the Council to meet the requirements of national legislation whilst also enabling delivery of procurement which is demonstrates best value, continuous improvement, sound performance management, partnership working, community benefits and sustainable development. Regular reporting on progress will be undertaken by the Corporate Procurement Board and Corporate Management Team.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Corporate Procurement Strategy 2013/18

Appendices/Attachments: 1

Corporate Procurement Strategy 2019/23

Contact Person: Angela Salmons, angela.salmons@westlothian.gov.uk, Tel 01506

Julie Whitelaw

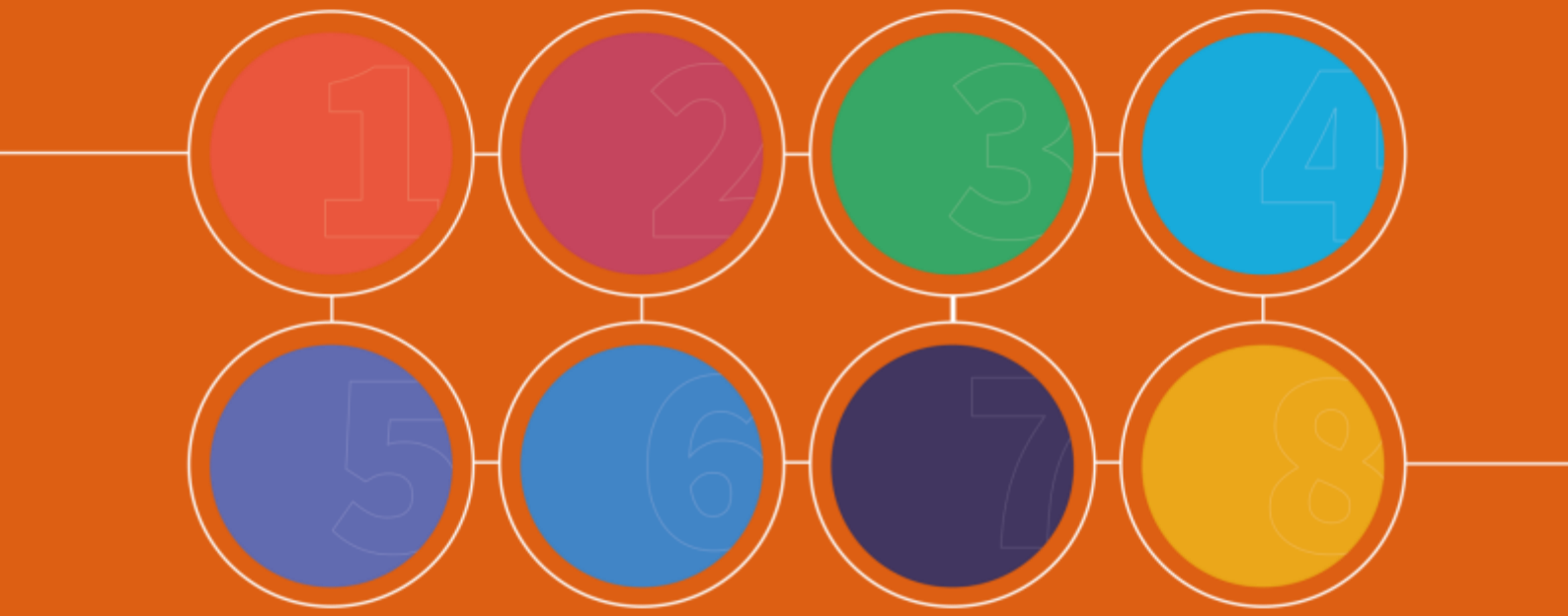
Head of Corporate Services

Date of meeting: 1 February 2019

Data label: OFFICIAL

Corporate Procurement Strategy

2019/20 to 2022/23



transforming yourcouncil

West Lothian Council

Welcome to the Corporate Procurement Strategy

The Corporate Procurement Strategy sets out the key outcomes, activities and behaviours that the council will pursue in support of our corporate priorities and

Recognising that effective and efficient procurement will positively support West Lothian Council in achieving its priorities, this strategy will provide a corporate vision, direction and focus for all procurement activities in the authority.

The council's vision for procurement is "to achieve superior procurement performance through advanced sustainable procurement practices for the benefit of the council and its stakeholders". The council's Corporate Procurement Strategy will therefore help to demonstrate best value, continuous improvement, sound performance management, partnership working, community benefits and sustainable development.

This strategy has been developed In line with Council's Corporate Plan which sets West Lothian Council's strategic direction and priorities.

The Corporate Plan and Corporate Procurement Strategy reflect the views and the needs and aspirations of West Lothian community. The Strategy identifies the outcomes that we aim to achieve, it explains how we will deliver these outcomes and in doing so, the main challenges that we will face across the next four years.

As with all public sector organisations, West Lothian Council is facing significant financial pressures. Council procurement activity will be paramount in delivering service provision that has the greatest positive impact upon the citizens of West Lothian. The Corporate Procurement Strategy provides a clear and consistent framework to ensure that procurement activity supports all services to meet the council's priorities.

This strategy advocates the positive role that robust procurement activity has in allowing the council to continue to deliver effective and efficient services.

Julie Whitelaw
Head of Corporate
Services

Strategy outcomes

The Corporate Procurement Strategy sets out how the council's vision of superior procurement performance will be advanced, whilst maintaining strong governance and a robust framework for effective, compliant procurement activity.

Excellent organisations have a long-term vision of what they want to achieve and how they want to succeed. They will share that vision and instil a collective focus on achievement at every level of their operation. This will be evident in the strategic decisions that are taken, down to the day-to-day actions of their people.

The council has a clear mission, values and strategic outcomes. These influence every part of the way that we operate but also, how we evaluate our success as an organisation.

In order to succeed in improving the quality of lives for people in West Lothian, we must ensure that results that will be critical success factors for our priorities are identified and that we carefully manage cause and effect in these results.

Vision:
Improving the quality of life for all of those living, working and learning West Lothian

The Council's priorities:
1. Improving attainment and positive destinations
2. Delivering positive outcomes and early interventions for early years
3. Minimising poverty, the cycle of deprivation and promoting equality
4. Improving the quality of life for older people
5. Improving the employment position in West Lothian
6. Delivering positive outcomes on health
7. Reducing crime and improving community safety
8. Protecting the built and natural environment

The Corporate Procurement Strategy has five outcomes and these are:

The five outcomes in the Corporate Procurement Strategy are required to enable superior procurement performance in support of achieving corporate priorities and outcomes.

The outcomes will be progressed and monitored by the Council's **Procurement Board**, which will conduct scheduled reviews to ensure that the council remains on track to deliver the outcomes and that these continue to be relevant to the council and the achievement of corporate priorities.

Purpose

The Corporate Procurement Strategy is intended to ensure that there is sound governance and a framework for the Council's Procurement Continuous Improvement Plan. This plan will detail the actions necessary to support improvement in the Council's procurement capability, processes and ultimately performance.

The strategy also provides a framework to help the Council to meet national and local obligations. This includes targets defined by the Scottish Government and also targets or objectives that have been agreed by the Council in strategic plans, such as:

- Delivering procurement activities that achieve Best Value and support the eight priorities in the Corporate Plan and the delivery of positive outcomes in West Lothian's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.
- Participating in the Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme and working to improve performance year on year.
- Following national procurement legislation, policy and guidance to ensure compliance in all our procurement activities.
- Enabling delivery of the Council's Transformation Programme (Transforming Your Council) by supporting more efficient and effective use of the Council's assets and resources. Maximising opportunities to engage in collaborative or shared procurement will form part of transformation activities.

Scope of the strategy

The Corporate Procurement Strategy covers all categories of procurement activity in the Council. It has been subject to consultation with the Procurement Board, key stakeholders and approval by Council Executive.

The strategy covers the period 2019/20 to 2022/23, which is also the duration of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Regulated Procurement and General Policy

The council will procure an estimated £1.125 billion of contracts over the period of the Strategy, as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1

2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
234 projects £175m	c140 projects c£275m	c160 projects c£325m	c170 projects c£350m

The Council is committed to obtaining value for money in all of its procurement activity and to ensuring that it meets its legal responsibilities under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

In conjunction with the Contract Standing Orders, the Corporate Procurement Procedures and relevant legislation, all staff with authority to procure are committed to conducting their procurement activities taking into consideration the council's wider responsibilities in terms of legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact. Effective procurement will support the council priorities.

Legal Compliance and Governance

To comply with legislation, the council must observe a number of general duties and comply with specific obligations. West Lothian Council is committed to meeting its obligations under the Act and in accordance with this have included a statement on each of these as set out below.

The Council will ensure that:

- its regulated procurements will contribute to the carrying out of its functions and achievements of its purposes;
- its regulated procurements will be carried out in compliance with its duty to treat economic operators equally and without discrimination;
- its regulated procurements will be carried out in compliance with its duties to act in a transparent and proportionate manner
- it complies with the Sustainable Procurement Duty

All procurement staff involved in the procurement process are fully aware of the procurement rules and council officers involved in the procurement process undertake mandatory training. Procurement staff undertake ongoing training keeping abreast of any legislative changes and best practice. Our internal procedures, processes and documentation are adapted to reflect this.

A category management approach has been adopted by the Corporate Procurement Unit which is aligned with the service areas of the council. This allows regulated procurement activity to align with local and national outcomes.

All regulated procurements will be conducted in compliance with the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, transparency, proportionality and mutual recognition.

The council will utilise portals including PCS and PCS-T to publish its procurement opportunities and will strive to provide well defined specifications and clear selection and award criteria to promote innovation.

The council will undertake regulated procurements in compliance with the Sustainable Procurement Duty. Consideration will be given to environmental, social and economic issues relating to all regulated procurement activity.

The council will consider the appropriate use of lotting to increase accessibility to as many bidders as possible including local suppliers, SMEs, third sector and supported businesses.

Value for Money

The council will ensure that its regulated procurements will deliver value for money.

In making regulated procurement contract awards, a combination of sustainability factors, quality and cost criteria will be used to identify the most economically advantageous tender. Weightings and award criteria will be adapted to suit each individual contract ensuring the council obtains value for money.

The council will make use of appropriate collaborative contracting arrangements (e.g. national, sectoral or local framework agreements or contracts) to deliver contracts for the council that have improved contract terms, contract and supplier management, sustainable procurement outcomes and deliver value for money.

General Policy Statements

Community Benefits

For every procurement over £4m, all public bodies are required to consider community benefits and how they can improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of their area through the inclusion of community benefit clauses. West Lothian Council believes that community benefits are a key step in meeting our corporate objectives and outcomes and therefore consider community benefits for all relevant and appropriate procurements over £50k.

West Lothian Council will engage with the voluntary sector to identify the best use of community benefits to secure by contract. Community benefits will be implemented through various forms and will include contributions to community projects, work placements, training opportunities and sub-contracting opportunities. The council will monitor their delivery and local impact over the lifespan of the contract.

Consultation

For each procurement undertaken, consideration will be given to the community affected by the resultant contract to ensure any affected persons or organisations are consulted. This may be for example, community representatives and users of the public services. For example, a new contract for health and social care may impact the users of the service, their families and their carers.

The level of consultation will vary between contracts and any consultations will always be on a scale that is relevant and proportionate to the procurement in question.

Fair Work Practices and the Living Wage

The council recognises the value of fair work practices and the positive impact that has on employees which increases the likelihood of delivering a higher quality service. A workforce that is well-motivated, well led and has appropriate opportunities for training and skills development are important for workforce recruitment and retention, and thus continuity of service.

West Lothian Council itself has adopted workforce policies as well as offering staff benefits and practices to meet these requirements. The policies include:

- A pay policy that is focused on tackling poverty (e.g. through a commitment to paying at least the living wage);
- Fair employment practices;
- No inappropriate use of zero hour's contracts.

It is recognised that the payment of the Living Wage is a significant indicator of an employer's commitment to fair work practices and demonstration of this clearly shows an employer's positive approach to their workforce.

West Lothian Council encourages suppliers to pay the Living Wage. In order to ensure the highest standards of service quality in our contracts we expect suppliers whose workers work alongside ours to take a similarly positive approach to workforce related matters as part of a fair and equitable employment and reward package. As such, a workforce matters question is included as part of the evaluation for all relevant contracts.

Health and Safety

West Lothian Council is committed to contracting only with suppliers that comply with all appropriate and relevant legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Where appropriate, and on a contract by contract basis, the council will assess the legislation applicable to a procurement and take steps to ensure that bidders comply with such legislation. Where appropriate, the compliance of sub-contractors may also be assessed.

Fair and Ethical Trading

The council is in support of the sourcing of goods that are fairly and ethically traded and this is considered when developing procurement commodity strategies. Where relevant, the appropriate standards and labels will be included in a procurement to take account of fair and ethical trading considerations.

Provision of Food

The council is committed to finding practical ways to supply healthy, fresh, seasonal and sustainably grown food which represents value for money and improves the health, wellbeing and education of communities. The procurement of food will continue to focus on putting affordable contracts in place that meet nutritional quality, health and wellbeing whilst minimising the environmental impact such as packaging and sourcing coupled with promoting the highest standards of animal welfare in accordance with relevant legislation.

The council's facilities management services aim to provide the highest professional standards of catering services and provide a choice of meals for schools, social care establishments and council staff. This includes supporting school learning/projects by delivering seasonal and themed catering and encouraging healthy eating in support of health and BEBL (Better Eating Better Learning).

Prompt Payment

The council complies with Late Payment legislation and will review on a contract by contract basis whether such obligations should be enforced and monitored further down the supply chain.

The council's contractual terms and conditions include a prompt payment clause which is payment within 30 days from receipt of a valid invoice. Suppliers are required to apply the same terms and conditions with their sub-contractors who are delivering and supporting the council contract.

Outcome 1 – Contracts

Description

The Council estimates that over the period of the Strategy, £1.125 billion worth of contracts will require to be procured. Outcome 1 in the Corporate Procurement Strategy is focused on ensuring that all spend that can be positively influenced by procurement activity has a corresponding contract and those contracts and their suppliers are managed effectively.

Activities

The main activities of the Council during the period of the Strategy will:

- Continue to manage contracts that meet council requirements and procurement regulations
- Continue to create opportunities for establishing collaborative contracts with partner organisations
- Continue to implement framework contracts where appropriate, to increase Best Value
- Continue to undertake contract and supplier management

Key performance indicators

We have identified the key measures of the success for this outcome and will track, monitor and report on our performance in these performance indicators throughout the lifetime of our strategy:

Percentage of all influencable council expenditure covered by contracts

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Percentage of contract and supplier management meetings conducted with strategically critical suppliers

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Number of collaborative opportunities explored as a percentage of all contracts awarded

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Number of contracts awarded through a framework as a percentage of all contracts awarded

2022/23 target performance:
85%

Outcome 2 – Compliance

Description

Outcome 2 in the Corporate Procurement Strategy is focused on ensuring that all procurement activity complies with statutory and regulatory requirements and the council's standing orders.

Activities

The main activities of the Council during the period of the strategy will be:

- Continue to review all contract spend to ensure full contract compliance
- Continue to digitise and automate procurement processes within the council in order to increase efficiency and compliance levels
- Continue to deliver council wide procurement training
- Continue to utilise the intranet to communicate procurement information across the council

Key performance indicators

We have identified the key measures of the success for this outcome and will track, monitor and report on our performance in these performance indicators throughout the lifetime of our strategy:

Number of Contract Strategies generated as a percentage of all contracts awarded by West Lothian Council

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Percentage of internal customers who rated the efficiency of the CRM system as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
90%

Percentage of internal customers who rated the ease of access to council contract information as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
90%

Percentage of customers who rated procurement fundamentals and EU legislation training and awareness sessions as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
95%

Outcome 3 – Accessibility

Description

Outcome 3 in the Corporate Procurement Strategy is focused on improving opportunities for procurement contract awards to supporting local businesses, micro and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), voluntary organisations, third sector bodies, supported businesses and social enterprises

Activities

The main activities of the Council during the period of the strategy will be:

- Continued promotion of tender opportunities and procurement information to the supply chain to reduce barriers to doing business with the council
- Contracts will continue to be structured to allow easier access to SMEs, voluntary organisations , third sector bodies, supported businesses and social enterprises
- Promote the delivery of Supplier Development Programme (SDP) tender training to SMEs, voluntary organisations, third sector bodies, supported businesses and social enterprises

Key performance indicators

We have identified the key measures of the success for this outcome and will track, monitor and report on our performance in these performance indicators throughout the lifetime of our strategy:

Percentage of suppliers who rated the ease of access to information about council contract opportunities as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
90%

Percentage of suppliers who rated the quality and clarity of information contained within tenders as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Percentage of SME voluntary organisations, third sector bodies, supported businesses and social enterprises suppliers attending SDP tender training

2022/23 target performance:
50%

Outcome 4 – Community Benefits

Description

Outcome 4 in the Corporate Procurement Strategy is focused on ensuring that the council is committed to maximising the benefits to its community through its procurement activities and those contracts awarded, Community Benefit clauses are to be included as a consideration at a contract strategy stage, where relevant.

Activities

The main activities of the Council during the period of the strategy will be:

- Continue to seek inclusion of community benefit provisions for spend equating to £50,000 and above
- Continue to deliver an appropriate Community Benefits training and awareness programme
- Continue to monitor the delivery of all community benefits, and identify the local impact

Key performance indicators

We have identified the key measures of the success for this outcome and will track, monitor and report on our performance in these performance indicators throughout the lifetime of our strategy:

Number of contract strategies considering community benefits as a percentage of all contract strategies

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Percentage of customers who rated the content of training relating to the delivery of community benefits as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Number of contracts with community benefits awarded as a percentage of the total number of contracts awarded

2022/23 target performance:
30%

Outcome 5 – Sustainability

Description

Outcome 5 in the Corporate Procurement Strategy is focused on ensuring that the council is committed to maximising the benefits delivered from Sustainable Procurement through its procurement activities and those contracts awarded to achieve value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits, not only to the procuring organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

Activities

The main activities of the Council during the period of the strategy will be:

- Continue to implement the sustainable procurement duty for spend equating to £50,000 and above
- Continue to deliver an appropriate Sustainability training and awareness programme
- Maintain Level 2 within the Scottish Government's Sustainability Framework Assessment
- Continued promotion of the payment of the Living Wage

Key performance indicators

We have identified the key measures of the success for this outcome and will track, monitor and report on our performance in these performance indicators throughout the lifetime of our strategy:

Number of contract strategies considering sustainable procurement elements as a percentage of all contracts strategies

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Percentage of customers who rated the content of training relating to the delivery of sustainable procurement as good or excellent

2022/23 target performance:
100%

Sustainability Framework Assessment score assigned to West Lothian Council

2022/23 target performance:
Level 2

Percentage of suppliers paying the living wage as a percentage of all contracts awarded – 2022/23 target performance

2022/23 target performance:
30%

Developing the strategy and reporting progress

The strateg support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and tc range of factors that are likely to impact the delivery of council services in the next five years.

Context

The next five years will be a period of significant challenge for the council with ongoing spending constraints expected to continue. However, the council has clearly defined long term aims relating to the development of high quality services, designed to meet the needs of its customers. These long term aims are captured in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Community Plan and in the council's Corporate Plan and together these strategic plans determine the work of the council's services.

The development of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 has been directly influenced by the views of the people living and working in West Lothian, ensuring that all employees are focused on meeting the needs of a growing and vibrant community. The Corporate Plan sets the strategic priorities for the council up to 2022/23 and this will be the continued focus for all council services during the period.

This will help to ensure that we continue to tackle the most important issues for West Lothian. Also, that we invest in and prioritise the services which make the most significant contribution to the achievement of positive outcomes.

Influences

There will be many internal and external factors that influence the strategy. The Corporate Procurement Strategy reaffirms the Council's commitment to developing and improving its procurement practices to ensure that procurement activities are as effective and efficient as possible. The Scottish Government supports this commitment and through their Public Procurement Reform Programme is making a positive impact upon public sector purchasing. Now in its third phase, the programme places emphasis on accelerating the pace of procurement change and the delivery of benefits, and embedding improvement initiatives into 'business as usual'. At its heart is the concept of value for money in procurement being an informed balance between cost, quality and sustainability. The current phase of the programme 'Transforming Procurement: Accelerating Delivery' focuses on four key priorities:

- Maximising efficiency and collaboration
- Delivering and demonstrating real cash savings across the public sector
- Improving access to public sector contracts, particularly for small and medium enterprises and the voluntary sector
- Embedding sustainable procurement at the heart of the reform agenda

The Procurement Reform Delivery Group oversees implementation of the Public Procurement Reform Programme. It drives pursuit of the work and changes required to achieve successful delivery of public procurement reform in Scotland. One of the objectives of the procurement reform programme championed by the delivery group is the annual assessment of public procurement capability. Initially assessed in 2009, West Lothian Council has increased its procurement performance year on year.

Strategy development process

The strategy builds on the Corporate Procurement Strategy 2013/18 and in particular on the actions progressed under that Strategy, recognising that these are still relevant and appropriate to the delivery of an effective and compliant procurement service, focusing on key activities to support the Council's commitment to delivery of sustainable procurement which makes a positive impact on those living, working and doing business in West Lothian. The strategy actions have been reviewed and developed taking account of best practice guidance for procurement within the public sector, as prescribed through Scotland's Public Procurement Reform Programme, whilst also acknowledging the role of procurement in supporting service delivery and realising council priorities. The actions will be delivered throughout the lifetime of the Strategy.

The process and timescales for the development, publication and review of the strategy is set out, including consultation with the appropriate stakeholders.

Strategy governance

Group	Governance Scrutiny role	Reporting Frequency
Council Executive	a) Approval of the strategy	◆ Approval ◆ End of Strategy Review
Partnership and Resources PDSP	b) Engagement on the strategy and strategy outcomes at the development stage c) Regular updates to the Corporate Management Team on the progress of d) specific programmes of work	◆ Consultation ◆ Annual strategy review ◆ End of strategy review
Corporate Management Team	e) Engagement on the strategy and strategy outcomes at the development stage f) Regular updates to the Corporate Management Team on the progress of g) specific programmes of work	◆ Consultation ◆ Annual strategy review
Stakeholders	h) Engagement on the strategy and strategy outcomes at the development stage	◆ Consultation
Customers (internal)	i) Engagement on the strategy and strategy outcomes at the development stage	◆ Consultation

Strategy monitoring

The strategy lead and the Corporate Management Team will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to track and monitor in-year progress.

An annual review will be undertaken and reported to the council's Corporate Management Team and to the relevant PDSP. This will include an update on the agreed performance scorecard and action plan and will also be published on the performance pages of the council website.

An end of strategy review will be undertaken in the final year of the strategy to report on the achievement in the outcomes and final position in the performance indicators (against the target) and the agreed actions.

Supporting the delivery of Council priorities

This strategy will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan

Corporate strategies are designed to support the delivery of the Corporate Plan 2018/23 by improving the culture, agility, resilience and performance of the council. Each strategy has clearly defined outcomes and measurable indicators of success and actions for the period. Specifically, this strategy aligns to the enablers and deliverables that have been identified as key to the success of the Corporate Plan, this outlined in the following table.

Alignment with Corporate Enablers

Council enabler	Deliverable	Strategy key activity / process	Indicator(s)	2017/18 Performance	2022/23 Target
(E2.6) Corporate Governance and Risk	Continuing to develop efficient and effective procurement strategies and procedures.	◆ Continue to manage contracts that meet council requirements and procurement regulations	Percentage of all influencable council expenditure covered by contracts.	97%	100%
		◆ Continue to deliver council wide procurement training	Percentage of customers who rated the delivery of procurement fundamentals and EU legislation training and awareness sessions as good or excellent.	70%	95%
		◆ Continued promotion of tender opportunities and procurement information to the supply chain to reduce barriers to doing business with the council	Percentage of suppliers who rated the ease of access to information about council contract opportunities as good or excellent	62%	90%
		◆ Continue to seek inclusion of community benefit provisions for spend equating to £50,000 and above	Number of contract strategies considering community benefits as a percentage of all contract strategies.	100%	100%
		◆ Achieve Level 2 within the Scottish Government's Sustainability Framework Assessment	Sustainability Framework Assessment score assigned to West Lothian Council.	N/A	Level 2

Appendix 1: Strategy Scorecard

The council will report on the following key measures of the success throughout the lifetime of our strategy, targeting performance improvement against the baseline year (2017/18)

OUTCOME 1 – CONTRACTS

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Target 2019/20	Target 2020/21	Target 2021/22	End of Strategy Performance Target 2022/23
Percentage of all influencable council expenditure covered by contracts.	97%	98%	98%	99%	**100%**
Percentage of contract and supplier management meetings conducted with strategically critical suppliers		100%	100%	100%	**100%**
Number of collaborative opportunities explored as a percentage of all contracts awarded	100%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**
Number of contracts awarded through a framework as a percentage of all contracts awarded	80%	80%	80%	82%	**85%**

OUTCOME 2 – COMPLIANCE

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Target 2019/20	Target 2020/21	Target 2021/22	End of Strategy Performance Target 2022/23
Number of Contract Strategies generated as a percentage of all contracts awarded by West Lothian Council	93%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**
Percentage of internal customers who rated the efficiency of the CRM system as good or excellent	N/A	75%	80%	85%	**90%**
Percentage of internal customers who rated the ease of access to council contract information as good or excellent.	62%	75%	80%	85%	**90%**
Percentage of customers who rated the delivery of procurement fundamentals and EU legislation training and awareness sessions as good or excellent	70%	90%	92%	93%	**95%**

OUTCOME 3 – ACCESSIBILITY

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Target 2019/20	Target 2020/21	Target 2021/22	End of Strategy Performance Target 2022/23
Percentage of suppliers who rated the ease of access to information about council contract opportunities as good or excellent	62%	75%	80%	85%	**90%**
Percentage of suppliers who rated the quality and clarity of information contained within tenders as good or excellent	80%	90%	93%	97%	**100%**
Percentage of SME voluntary organisations, third sector bodies, supported businesses and social enterprises suppliers attending SDP tender training	N/A	30%	35%	45%	**50%**

OUTCOME 4 – COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Target 2019/20	Target 2020/21	Target 2021/22	End of Strategy Performance Target 2022/23
Number of contract strategies considering community benefits as a percentage of all contracts strategies.	100%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**
The percentage of customers who rated the content of training relating to the delivery of community benefits as good or excellent	N/A	90%	93%	97%	**100%**
Percentage of contracts with community benefits awarded as a percentage of the total number of contracts awarded	14%	23%	25%	28%	**30%**

OUTCOME 5 – SUSTAINABILITY

Indicators	Baseline Performance 2017/18	Target 2019/20	Target 2020/21	Target 2021/22	End of Strategy Performance Target 2022/23
Number of contract strategies considering sustainable procurement elements as a percentage of all contracts strategies.	100%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**
The percentage of customers who rated the content of training relating to the delivery of sustainable procurement as good or excellent.	N/A	90%	93%	97%	**100%**
Sustainability Framework Assessment score assigned to West Lothian Council.	N/A	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	**Level 2**
Percentage of suppliers paying the living wage as a percentage of all contracts awarded	N/A	20%	23%	28%	**30%**

Appendix 2: Strategy Action Plan

The council will undertake a range of actions to support delivery of corporate priorities and objectives, improve services and deliver transformation.

Actions 2019/23

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status Update
Outcome 1 **Contract Development**	Continue to develop contracts for each area of spend identified through the five year procurement delivery plans and resulting annual procurement delivery plans.	Ensure Best Value across the council for all procurement requirements.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 1 **Contract Cashable Savings**	Continue to ensure that all contracts achieve best market price at the time of tender.	Maximise opportunities to achieve savings through procurement.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 1 **Efficient Ordering and Invoicing**	Continue to review ordering and invoicing techniques to ensure that they continue to support effective payment performance for invoices and reduced costs to the council and its suppliers for the purchase to pay process.	Maximise ordering and invoicing performance.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 1 **Category A, Category B and UK Government contracts**	Continue to review the relevance and best value delivery of: – Scottish Procurement and Commercial Directorate Category A contracts, – Scotland Excel's Category B contracts – Government's Procurement Service contracts.	Maximise use of collaborative contracts where Best Value can be delivered.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 1 **Framework Contracts**	Continue to evaluate the option of using framework contracts to ascertain if they will deliver best value.	Maximise use of framework contracts where Best Value can be delivered.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active

Actions 2019/23

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status Update
Outcome 1 **Collaborative Contract Opportunities**	Continue to review collaborative opportunities available for Category C1 contracts.	Maximise use of collaborative contracts where Best Value can be delivered.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 1 **Supplier Contract KPIs and SLAs**	Continue to agree contract KPIs and SLAs with suppliers to enable enhanced performance.	Maximise supplier performance for council contracts.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 1 **Contract and Supplier Management**	Continue to establish strategically critical suppliers through supplier segmentation and to engage these suppliers in contract and supplier management.	Maximise management and monitoring of supplier performance	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 **Accessible procurement information**	Regular review of procurement information on the Internet and Intranet.	Maximise accessibility of Council Procurement information for both internal and external customers.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Digitisation of procurement processes within the Council**	Review and digitisation of key procurement processes to improve process performance and increase compliance with regulations and legislation.	Improved procurement performance (timescales and cost) for council contracts and increase compliance.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Compliance Review - High Value and High Risk Contracts**	Continued review of high value and high risk contracted suppliers spend to ensure compliance with standing orders and the corporate procurement procedures.	Maximise levels of compliance with council standing orders and procurement procedures for high value and high risk contracts.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Supplier Rationalisation Exercise**	Continue to review spend against non-contracted suppliers and a regular supplier rationalisation exercise to reduce their availability and ensure compliance with contracted suppliers.	Decreased levels of spend against non-contracted suppliers.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active

Actions 2019/23

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status Update
Outcome 2 **Digital processes**	Continue to digitise and automate procurement processes to increase efficiency and compliance levels.	Maximise automation to increase efficiency and improve ease of access for customers.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Contract Strategies**	Continue to complete contract strategies for all tender opportunities, including community benefits, market research, financial review, defining need and specification review.	Comprehensive contract strategies in place for all council procurement requirements.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Procurement Training Strategy**	Continue to deliver Procurement Training to ensure that suitable training provision is delivered.	Greater competence and skill levels of staff carrying out procurement activities.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Online Training**	Online training courses will continue to be developed and implemented to provide procurement fundamentals training across the council.	Increased accessibility to procurement training for all council staff.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 2 **Procurement Competency Framework**	A Procurement Competency Framework will continue to be used to identify procurement skills gaps across the council.	A Procurement Competency Framework will be used to identify procurement skills gaps across the council.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 3 **Procurement Surgeries**	Monthly procurement surgeries to continue.	Maximise information and awareness to suppliers regarding local authority procurement.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 3 **Small Lots**	'Small Lot' provision will continue to be used where appropriate to provide local suppliers and SMEs with contract opportunities.	Maximise number of Small Lot provisions where Best Value can be delivered.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active

Actions 2019/23

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status Update
Outcome 3 **Reserved Contracts**	'Reserved Contract' arrangements will continue to be considered.	Maximise number of Reserved Contract provisions where Best Value can be delivered.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 3 **Supplier Development Programme**	Supplier Development Programme training events to be attended by corporate procurement unit representatives, providing presentations to SMEs regarding local authority procurement.	Increased information and awareness to SMEs regarding local authority procurement.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 3 **Third Sector Working Group**	Further development of a working group with local third sector organisations to review any potential working partnerships.	Improved joint working relationships between the Corporate Procurement Unit and third sector organisations.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 3 **Reducing Barriers to Doing Business**	Continue to consult with local and SME business community through an annual survey to identify and reduce barriers to doing business.	Increased contract opportunities for local and SME businesses.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 4 **Contract Strategies - Community Benefits**	Continue to complete contract strategies for all contracts, in line with the Community Benefits Procedure, to include the following Community Benefits considerations.	Community Benefits taken into account for all contract strategies.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active
Outcome 4 **Community Benefits Training**	Training will continue to be provided to all relevant service area staff to ensure that community benefits is integrated into major purchasing decisions, to ensure they understand the reasons and benefits of implementing the Community Benefit Procedure.	Increased understanding and compliance with the Community Benefits Procedure.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active

Actions 2019/23

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status Update
Outcome 4 **Monitoring Community Benefits**	Continue to monitor the delivery of the Community Benefit Procedure including the local impact.	Information available to report to Procurement Board on the local impact of Community Benefit achieved and will assist in delivering future procurement requirement.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Planned
Outcome 5 **Contract Strategies – Sustainability**	Contract strategies will continue to be completed for all contracts.	Social, Environmental and Economic considerations taken into account for all contract strategies	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Planned
Outcome 5 **Sustainable Procurement Training**	Sustainable procurement awareness and training, including whole life costing will continue to be promoted to ensure that procurement professionals integrate sustainability into major purchasing decisions.	Increased awareness of sustainable procurement by staff.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Planned
Outcome 5 **Sustainable Procurement Supplier Engagement and Partnership Events**	Supplier training will continue to be promoted to encourage and guide businesses to adopt sustainable development principles and practices. Support will also continue to be provided for the implementation of sustainable procurement practices throughout the council and supply chains.	Increased awareness and use of sustainable development principles and practices by West Lothian businesses.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Planned
Outcome 5 **Sustainable Action Plan**	Actions from the West Lothian Council Sustainable Action Plan will continue to be implemented to ensure that the council achieves level four within the Sustainability Flexible Framework Assessment.	Maintain level two within the Scottish Government Sustainability Flexible Framework Assessment.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active

Actions 2019/23

Action	Description	Planned Outcome	Owner(s)	Start	End	Status Update
Outcome 5 **Living Wage**	Promote the implementation of payment of the Living Wage through a West Lothian Council webpage.	Increased awareness and uptake of the Living Wage by West Lothian businesses.	Corporate Procurement Manager	April 2019	Ongoing	Active

Corporate Procurement Strategy

2019/23

West Lothian Council

February 2019

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DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WELFARE REFORM: QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

B. RECOMMENDATION

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

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

		and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business. • We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities. • People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances. • We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Officers will continue to assess the ongoing financial and staffing implications for the council.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Regular quarterly updates on welfare reform have been reported to the Panel since 2012.
VIII	**Other consultations**	With services, and ongoing consultations with the voluntary sector and other partners.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Overview

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 introduced several major changes to the welfare system which are now fully operational.

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

The Scotland Act 2016 devolved certain aspects of welfare in Scotland to the Holyrood Parliament. The Scottish Government has set out draft timetables and arrangements to implement the devolved welfare powers over the course of the current Parliament. The Social Security (Scotland) Bill received royal assent on 1 June 2018.

D.2 Discretionary Housing Payment Fund

The Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Fund can provide additional support to households where a tenant is entitled to Housing Benefit or the housing cost element paid as part of their UC award, and who require further assistance to pay their rent.

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

As shown in the table below, funding for DHP transferred from April 2017 to the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government reimburse councils for mitigating the impact of the bedroom tax so the funding for that is not reflected in the first table below.
In addition to the budget allocation from Scottish Government, West Lothian Council committed an additional £115,000. £34,000 of this top up was utilised in 2017/18, and the balance of £81,000 will be used in 2018/19 to help address increased demand arising from the full service rollout of UC.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The current DHP spend to 6 January 2019 is summarised as follows:

	Number of Awards	Spend to date £'000
Benefit Cap	176	94
Bedroom Tax	4277	1,672
Local Housing Allowance /Combination	306	76
Total	**4759**	**1,842**

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

The funding allocation for 2019/20, including the level of funding for each local authority, has not yet been confirmed by the Scottish Government. It is anticipated that this will be received sometime during February, as it was last year.

D.3 Scottish Welfare Fund

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

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

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

The 2018/19 SWF spend to 7 January 19 is as follows:

	Number of Awards	Expenditure £'000
Crisis Grants	5664	245
Community Care Grants	2029	533
Total	**7693**	**778**

The Scottish Government have confirmed that funding for 2019/20 will be frozen at the 2018/19 rates. The total allocation for Scotland will therefore remain at £37,873,210, which is made up of £32,995,240 SWF for spend, and £4,877,970 for administration. West Lothian's total allocation is £1,225,289, made up of £1,067,475 for SWF spend, and £157,814 for administration. The level of administration funding provided is not sufficient to cover the costs of providing this service.

D.4 Universal Credit

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

UC is delivered by the DWP. Whilst local authorities will not have a role in the administration of Universal Credit, UC will affect the administration of those benefits retained by local authorities, including the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS), DHP, and SWF. West Lothian went live with UC full service on 16 May 2018 with claims for UC now including couples and families.

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

- December 2018 – Automatic entitlement to housing support for 18 to 21 year olds will be reinstated. This reverses the previously announced cut to support for this group and means they will be able to claim support for housing costs under UC.
- April 2019 –The Work Allowance, which is the amount that households with children, and people with disabilities can earn before their Universal Credit award begins to be withdrawn, will be increased by £1,000.
- July 2019 to September 2020 – For those who are self-employed, the Minimum Income Floor will apply after a 12 month grace period, not just for those in the first year of their business. The Minimum Income Floor is an amount the DWP sets, which uses the national minimum wage for the customer's age group, multiplied by the number of hours they are expected to look for, and be available for work. This comes in to effect from July 2019

for managed migration cases and from September 2020 for those moving across through a change of circumstances.

- October 2019 – The maximum rate at which deductions can be made from a Universal Credit award will be reduced from 40% to 30% of the standard allowance, (the money meant for adults living costs).
- July 2020 – People moving on to UC currently receive an additional payment of housing benefit during their transition to UC. This provision is being extended to cover the income-related elements of income support, employment support allowance or jobseeker's allowance, meaning the customer will receive a further two weeks payment of the above benefits during the five week wait for UC to be paid.
- October 2021 – the maximum period over which an advance of Universal Credit can be paid back will be extended from twelve to sixteen months.

Further announcements were made by the UK Government on 11 January 2019 confirming future changes as detailed below;

- The autumn budget statement of October 2018 confirmed that the roll out timetable for managed migration would be delivered slowly and carefully with limited numbers. The process will start in July 2019 as planned with up to 10,000 claimant's, however, it is anticipated that this will now be conducted as a pilot, with the results helping to inform the scaled-up migration due to start in November 2020. The UC migration process is still due to be complete by the end of 2023.
- Private landlords will be able to request their tenant's rent to be paid directly, where appropriate, to help their tenant's secure their homes. To facilitate this change the DWP will build a new online system for private landlords.
- Work will be carried out to test the provision of more frequent payments, and making payments to the main carer in the household.
- The two child limit on Universal Credit for children born before April 2017 has been removed. This means that from February 2019 claimants with three or more children will be able to claim UC, with all children born before April 2017 being supported by Universal Credit.

The latest UC Official Statistics published by the DWP on 11 December 2018 state that, as at 8 November 2018, a total of 4,203 people in West Lothian are on UC. This shows an increase of 399 from the position reported as at 11 October 2018. Livingston Job Centre has 2,140 UC claimants and Bathgate has 2,063.

The DWP official statistics of 8 November 2018 show 1,307 UC recipients in West Lothian are in some limited form of employment and 2,021 are "searching for work".

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

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

D.5 Universal Support Provision

On 1 October 2018, the DWP announced a new partnership with Citizen's Advice and Citizen's Advice Scotland to deliver Universal Support. The new partnership is

effective from 1 April 2019, and from this date local authorities will no longer be asked to deliver this support.

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

The council are involved in ongoing discussions with Citizen's Advice Scotland to ensure an effective handover in West Lothian.

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

The Scotland Act, includes provisions to devolve eleven benefits to Holyrood, and to give Holyrood the power to top up any benefits, reserved or devolved, provided the funding is met by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Government are delivering a new Social Security agency with enhanced phone and online support, which incorporates face-to-face pre-claims and support-services locally, in existing public sector locations, co-located with current local partners. The agency will not use private companies to carry out assessments, including fitness for work health assessments, and the Scottish Government has stated that the system will be based on dignity and respect and an assessment process which is not demeaning or deliberately difficult.

Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018

The Act received royal assent on 1 June 2018 and sets out an over-arching legislative framework for the administration of social security in Scotland, making provision for operational functions such as overpayments, fraud, error, re-determinations and appeals.

On 1 September 2018, Social Security Scotland officially opened for business as an executive agency of the Scottish Government, and is operating a freephone client helpline at its headquarters in Dundee.

During September, the first payments were made through Social Security Scotland with 76,000 carer's receiving the new Carer's Allowance Supplement. Further payments were made in December.

Applications for the Best Start Grant Pregnancy and Baby Payment, which replaces the Sure Start Maternity Grant, are also now being taken as of 10 December 2018. The payment provides a one-off grant of £600 for the first child in low income families – (an increase of £100 on the previous rate), and the re-introduction of £300 for subsequent children and two payments of £250 each during a child's early years. More than 4,000 claims were made before the end of the first day, matching the same number of UK Government Sure Start Maternity Grants for the whole of 2017/18 in Scotland. The previous one child limit has been removed increasing the financial support parents are eligible for.

The Funeral Expense Assistance will also be delivered from summer 2019 and aims to process applications within ten days – significantly faster than at present and to make it easier for people to understand if they are eligible for assistance

.

The eleven benefits being devolved to Scotland comprise:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Scheme
- Carer's Allowance
- Sure Start Maternity Grants
- Funeral Payments
- Cold Weather Payments
- Winter Fuel Payments
- Discretionary Housing Payments

Ten of the eleven devolved benefits, totaling around £2.9 billion of annual payments, will be delivered directly by the new Scottish Social Security Agency itself. Discretionary Housing Payments will continue to be delivered by local authorities.

D.7 Further Welfare Changes

A number of changes previously announced in relation to ongoing welfare reform that are still to be implemented, or, are being implemented are detailed below;

- The freeze on working age benefits, including Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowance, will continue until the 2019/20 financial year. This is expected to save £4bn a year by then. It will not affect payments to sick and disabled people.
- From February 2019 claimants with three or more children will be able to claim UC.
- Claimants in receipt of Severe Disability Premium will remain on legacy benefits until the DWP move them as part of their managed migration plans. They will receive transitional protection at this point if their entitlement reduces as a result of moving to UC.
- New incentives will be introduced for parents to take up short-term or temporary work by making sure the cost of childcare costs does not reduce transitional protection.
- A short-term increase in earnings won’t end transitional protection as long as the claimant makes a new claim within three months of when they received the additional payment.
- Capital over £16,000 will be disregarded for twelve months for claimants who move from tax credits to UC.

Further changes have also been made to ensure that housing benefit continues to be targeted to support those who need it. This includes;

- The revision of the timetable for transferring rent support from Housing Benefit to Pension Credit, to delay the transfer by three years. This will ensure the transfer aligns with the full implementation of UC.
- Funding for supported housing will remain within the welfare system, rather than moving to a local funding model.

E. CONCLUSION

As the welfare changes are rolled out, and as further changes take effect, officers will assess the cumulative effects of these challenges in order to develop and shape work going forward.

This will include further analysis of the measures in the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 and engagement with the new Social Security Scotland Agency and with COSLA, and the IRRV, as the practicalities of the proposed changes in Scotland are considered.

The potential issues arising from DWP led reforms, notably the roll-out of UC Full Service, will also be addressed.

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

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services
1 February 2019

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

HORIZON SCAN

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

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with:

1. A summary of the latest UK economic indicators and announcements, including the potential implications following the referendum vote to leave the European Union (EU);
2. An update on the estimated revenue budget position facing the council as a result of ongoing unavoidable spending pressures and government funding constraints, including highlighting budget model risks and uncertainties.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Panel:

1. Notes the results of the horizon scan for the UK, Scotland and West Lothian;
2. Notes the horizon scan for West Lothian Council;
3. Notes that officers are currently updating the council's budget model for 2019/20 to 2022/23;
4. Notes that the constraints in funding and expenditure pressures will lead to an increased budget gap for 2019/20 to 2022/23;
5. Notes the risks and uncertainties in relation to the council's budget model.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I.	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable, focusing on our customers' needs, making the best use of our resources, working in partnership
II.	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	The council is required to approve a balanced revenue budget for each financial year. Audit Scotland and CIPFA best practice guidance recommends medium term financial plans are prepared for at least five years. Leaving EU membership could have significant implications for West Lothian, the local economy, communities and the council.
III.	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	No implications at this stage.
IV.	**Impact on performance and performance indicators**	The current EU programmes to 2020 support business development, community regeneration and employment projects. Ongoing government restraint has implications for the council's budget and performance.

V.	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	The revenue budget provides the resources necessary to help deliver the Single Outcome Agreement. Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes.
VI.	**Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Scottish Government grant funding is not sufficient to meet increasing costs and demand for services. Based on agreed budget assumptions, the council faces a revenue budget gap of £65.3 million over the five year period 2018/19 to 2022/23. West Lothian Council agreed budget savings of £60.1 million, leaving a balance to be found of £5.2 million.
VII.	**Consideration at PDSP**	None.
VIII.	**Other consultations**	Heads of Service and Depute Chief Executives.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

It was previously agreed that the Head of Finance and Property Services would provide horizon scan and budget model updates to the Partnership and Resources PDSP on a quarterly basis to provide latest information on the UK, Scottish, West Lothian and council economic position, and the potential impact on the council's medium term financial strategy. On 13 February 2018, Council agreed the five year priority based revenue budget strategy, noting an estimated budget gap of £65.3 million. Council also approved savings of £60 million and agreed a number of areas for officers to consider for additional potential savings.

This report provides an update on key developments and potential implications following the UK referendum vote to leave the EU on 23 June 2016. The report includes the latest update on economic factors that could have an influence on the council's financial strategy. The report also provides an update on the council's approved revenue financial plan for the period as well as setting out the budget model risks and uncertainties.

D.2 HORIZON SCAN – UK

EU Implications

The UK formally triggered Article 50 on 29 March 2017 meaning that the UK would cease to be a member of the EU from 29 March 2019. In March 2018 EU leaders approved guidelines for the negotiation of future relations with the UK after Brexit and also agreed a 21 month transition period to the end of 2020 if a deal on the relationship is reached before the exit date in 2019. In addition EU state aid and procurement rules would also continue to be in effect until at least 2021.

On 15 January 2019, the Prime Minister's Brexit deal was defeated by 230 votes, with MPs voting by 432 votes to 202 to reject the deal which set out the proposed terms of Britain's exit from the EU on 29 March. Following this a confidence vote took place on 16 January 2019 and the Prime Minister won this vote by 325 votes to 306.

MPs are due to vote on a modified version of the Prime Ministers deal on 29 January 2019. The Prime Minister vowed to seek changes from the EU to the Irish "backstop" - the measures intended to ensure that whatever else happens, there will be no return to a visible border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic after the UK leaves the EU. The Prime Minister also scrapped the £65 fee EU citizens were due to pay to secure the right to continue living in the UK after Brexit. Outlining the proposed way forward, the

Prime Minister refused to rule out a no-deal Brexit and insisted there was no majority in the House of Commons for another referendum. Given the fast moving events in this area, a further verbal update will be provided at the Panel on any additional information that is available.

UK Economic Update

Debt and Borrowing

The most recent forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) on 29 October 2018 provided updated borrowing forecasts. Public Sector Net Debt is expected to fall from 85.0% of GDP in 2017/18 to 83.7% of GDP in 2018/19 before gradually falling to 74.1% in 2023/24.

Borrowing fell more in the first half of 2018/19 than anticipated, relative to the same period last year. This reflected stronger tax revenues and lower spending on welfare and debt interest than expected. Although borrowing has reduced, debt as a percentage of GDP is reducing at a slower rate than historical standards. In addition, the Chancellor's policy and spending announcements in the Autumn Budget 2018 meant that the additional tax receipts have not accelerated the reduction in the debt deficit.

Economic Growth

The most recent update from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in January 2019 was the World Economic Outlook Update. Growth estimates have been revised down for the UK with the IMF expecting growth to slow from 1.8% in 2017 to 1.4% in 2018. Growth projection for 2019 remains at 1.5%, however there is substantial uncertainty around this baseline projection, as this assumes a Brexit deal is reached in 2019 and that the UK transitions gradually to the new regime. However, as of mid-January, the shape that Brexit will ultimately take remains highly uncertain.

The most recent publication from the Bank of England in November 2018 maintained its 2018 growth forecast at 1.5% whilst reducing their 2019 forecast by 0.1% to 1.7%. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released economic growth figures on 21 December 2018 with growth improving in the third quarter by 0.6% between Quarter 2 and Quarter 3. Services remained the strongest contributor to growth in Quarter 3, construction and manufacturing also contributed positively to the growth. In comparison with the same quarter a year ago, the UK economy has grown by an unrevised 1.5%.

Exports and Inward Investment

In the immediate wake of the referendum, sterling fell sharply to a 31 year low versus the dollar, and was down about 6% against the euro. A weak pound makes the goods Britain buys from abroad more expensive, affecting the cost of living, but can also help to support UK exports. The pound has been making a very slow recovery against the dollar and, on 21 January 2019, the pound was $1.28 against the dollar and €1.13 against the euro.

The British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) published its Quarterly Economic Survey in January 2019. The latest survey finds that the UK economy ended 2018 stuck in a weak holding pattern, with stagnating levels of growth and business confidence as a result of heightened Brexit uncertainty and other economic pressures. The key findings were:

- Percentage of services firms reporting an increase in domestic sales and orders drops to two year low

- Recruitment difficulties in manufacturing joint highest on record, services sector recruitment difficulties hover near record-high

- Price pressures rise further for businesses, particularly manufacturers

Inflation

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), was 2.0% in the year to December 2018, down from 2.2% in November 2018. The largest downward contribution came from falls in petrol and air fares, where ticket prices rose between November and December 2018, but by less than a year ago. These downward effects were offset by upward contributions from a variety of categories including accommodation services and, to a lesser extent, mobile phone charges, games, toys and hobbies, and food.

Interest Rates

The Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously to maintain Bank Rate at 0.75% on 20 December 2018. At this meeting the MPC sets monetary policy to meet the 2% inflation target, and in a way that helps to sustain growth and employment. Since the MPC's previous meeting, the near-term outlook for global growth has softened and downside risks to growth have increased. The Committee judges that the loosening of fiscal policy in Budget 2018, announced after the November Inflation Report projections were finalised, will boost UK GDP by the end of the MPC's forecast period by around 0.3%, all else equal.

Unemployment

The latest figures published on 11 December 2018 was estimated at 4.1% over the period August to October 2018, virtually unchanged compared with May to July 2018 but lower than the estimate for a year earlier (4.3%). There were an estimated 32.48 million people in work, 79,000 more than for May to July 2018 and 396,000 more than for a year earlier.

In October 2018, the OBR updated their Economic and Fiscal Outlook. This shows the 2017 unemployment forecast as 4.4%, with forecasts of 4.0% in 2018, 3.7% in 2019, 3.8% in 2020 and 3.9% in 2021.

House Prices

The latest ONS House Price Index published on 16 January 2019 showed that in the year to November 2018 average house prices in the UK increased by 2.8%, up slightly from 2.7% in October 2018. Over the past two years, there has been a slowing in UK house price growth, driven mainly by a slowdown in the south and east of England.

D.3 HORIZON SCAN – SCOTLAND

EU Implications

The Scottish economy is likely to be affected by Brexit in a similar way to that of the UK in general terms, however changes to the tax system now means that Scotland's own economic performance will have a more direct impact on the Scottish Budget.

Scottish Economic Update

Economic Growth

The Scottish economy grew by 0.3% in quarter 3, half the rate of the UK over the same period. This growth in quarter 3 represented a slowing of growth in Scotland relative to the previous quarter which was 0.5%. Latest forecasts suggest that growth in 2018 Q4 was 0.36% which, at an annual rate, is 1.46%. This is broadly in line with growth in the previous quarter.

The shape of economic growth in the UK and Scotland in the first three months of 2019 will be shaped by preparations for Brexit, and the extent of the resolution of the current uncertainty around Brexit.

Unemployment

The latest Labour Market Briefing, published in January 2019, showed that in quarter 3 2018, the unemployment rate was 3.6%, with 99,000 people unemployed. The rate of employment is 75.3% with earnings forecast to continue to be behind overall UK levels.

House Prices

The ONS publication for House Price Index (HPI) showed that the average house price in Scotland increased by 2.9% over the year to stand at £151,000.

2019/20 Scottish Budget and Longer Term Financial Outlook

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Economy and Fair Work, in a statement to the Scottish Parliament on 12 December 2018, announced the Scottish Draft Budget 2019/20. The Scottish Government published Local Government Finance Circular 8/2018 on 17 December 2018.

In overall terms, Scotland's total proposed spending plans, as set out in the Draft Budget 2019/20, amount to £42,539 million, an increase of £1,984 million compared to the Scottish Budget 2018/19. The total proposed spending plans include both revenue resource and capital spending plans with health and sport receiving the biggest increase in funding of £724 million.

Following the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Budget in October 2018, the Scottish Government committed to allocating the full health Barnett Consequentials of £550 million to health spending in Scotland. Health and sport received substantially more funding, with health resource spending increasing by 3.4% in real terms. Excluding capital, health now represents approximately 50% of the total Scottish resource budget. With health receiving additional resource funding over and above Barnett Consequentials, other portfolios have seen real terms reductions in revenue resource funding, masked to some degree in the totals by capital funding. Local government represents the second largest element of the overall Scottish Budget, and in the draft budget core local government funding has seen the majority of the reduction in resource funding.

The overall funding available to local government in 2019/20 will increase in cash terms, however the core local government settlement will decrease in real terms by 3.4% in 2019/20. This decrease is calculated after allowing for new specific grants, which are earmarked for delivery of Scottish Government priorities such as early learning and childcare, and the return of £150 million in general capital grant which was reprofiled from the 2016/17 local government finance settlement.

Providing some context, local government has seen its percentage share of the overall Scottish Budget falling year on year. In 2007/08, local government received 28.62% of the total budget. In 2019/20, based on the draft budget, local government's share will be 26.03%. As confirmed by the Fraser of Allander Institute (FAI), the headline local government settlement is flat in real terms only because capital and specific grants are included. The significant cash reduction in funding for existing council services received through the general revenue grant will have major implications for local service delivery in all councils.

Budget reductions have been delivered over a number of areas of the Scottish Budget however local government has seen largest reduction in core funding. Between 2016/17 and 2019/20, the core local government finance settlement will have decreased by 9% in real terms. The size of the local government budget means that substantial additional funding would be required to restore funding to 2016/17 levels in real terms. To restore core funding, £539 million would be required.

D.4 HORIZON SCAN – WEST LOTHIAN

EU Implications

In the 2011 Census, the total number of West Lothian residents from other EU countries was 5,112 with 85% of the total EU group of working age. Total West Lothian employment sustained by exports to the EU is between 4,500 and 5,000 jobs. Excluding retail, around 40 companies of scale are European owned with total employment approaching 2,000.

West Lothian Economic Update

Unemployment

Unemployment at local authority level is measured by the proportion of working age people not in work. In West Lothian this is 2.1% for November 2018 which is lower than the Scottish rate (2.7%) and British rate (2.2%).

House Completions

The number of house completions in December 2018 was 76. This is an increase in the figure from December 2017 which was 48. Completions to date in 2018/19 are 706, which is an increase of 244 from the same point in 2017/18.

D.5 HORIZON SCAN – WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL

Economic implications of the decision to leave the EU remain highly uncertain and may not be clear for some time. Brexit affects the future funding of public services through the impact it has on the overall economy as public finances, such as tax receipts, are highly sensitive to economic performance.

In addition, whilst the council only has funding confirmed for 2019/20, it is clear from forecasts and commentators that public sector funding will remain constrained. The confirmation of the six priorities, the Scottish Government commitment to health and the outcome of the 2019/20 local government finance settlement (LGFS), all suggest that local government will continue to receive constrained core funding settlements.

As the council has an approved five year strategy, it is in as strong as possible a position in the current climate to address continued future restrictions in public sector funding. Economic and budget announcements will continue to be reviewed and taken into consideration to ensure that the approved financial strategy remains reflective of current assumptions. In particular officers will continue to monitor key announcements in relation to public spending, interest rates, CPI forecasts and economic risks, in order to assess the likely impact on the council's budget position for 2018/19 to 2022/23.

D.6 BUDGET PLANNING SCENARIO AND CHANGES TO THE BUDGET MODEL

The revenue budget for 2018/19 to 2022/23 was approved by Council on 13 February 2018. The approved financial plan included a budget gap of £65.3 million over the five years to 2022/23, with approved savings of £60 million. These savings are in addition to the £92 million of savings which the council delivered over the ten year period 2007/08 to 2017/18. Officers continue to monitor announcements and other information to review and refine budget assumptions. The main risk areas currently being reviewed are:

- Pay award
- Teachers pensions
- School demographics
- Revenue consequences of the capital investment programme
- Service budget pressures

- Inflation and indexation
- Council tax income
- Local Government Finance Settlement

The council received draft Scottish Government grant funding for 2019/20 in the local government finance circular published on 17 December 2018. As outlined in the Scottish Budget and LGFS report to Council Executive on 15 January 2019, the council's draft 2019/20 Scottish Government funding would be £322.862 million which is £4.692 million greater than the equivalent figure in 2018/19. Within the council's provision grant allocation for 2019/20 there is £9.462 million of funding which relates to new additional expenditure commitments. Taking account of this, the council's 2019/20 core funding from the Scottish Government for existing service delivery is equivalent to a £4.77 million reduction compared to 2018/19.

The approved 2019/20 revenue budget included a number of assumptions regarding grant funding. It was assumed that the council would receive a reduction in core funding of £4 million, offset by some additional funding for historic loans fund borrowing and the Living Wage for Social Care. The total budgeted grant movement for 2019/20 agreed on 13 February 2018 was a reduction of £3.27 million. The council's actual movement in Scottish Government grant funding for 2019/20 is a reduction of £4.77 million. This means that the 2019/20 settlement is £1.5 million worse than the budgeted position for 2019/20 assumed in February 2018.

The increased use of ringfenced funding for Scottish Government initiatives and priorities, means that total resources available to support existing core local service delivery are becoming very constrained. Since 2013/14, the council has received a cash increase in grant funding of £20.057 million but within that overall total cash funding of £35.446 million has been provided for a number of national commitments including, but not limited to, council tax freeze, health and social care and funding for schools. This means that over the period since 2013/14, the council has received a cut in core funding of £15.389 million.

Following the announcement of the draft local government finance settlement, officers have been reviewing the budget model to incorporate the updated funding for 2019/20. In addition, officers are reviewing expenditure assumptions to reflect any changes in circumstances since approval of the budget in February 2018.

Given the reduction in grant funding, and emerging increases in expenditure assumptions for items such as pay and superannuation, the budget gap to the period 2022/23 will increase. Taking account of the 2019/20 local government finance settlement, and the latest budget model assumptions, the Head of Finance and Property Services will present an updated 2019/20 budget, four year revenue financial plan and updated nine year capital investment programme to Council for approval in February 2019.

D.7 HORIZON SCAN BUDGET MODEL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

In addition to the risks outlined in section D.6 of this report there remain a number of other risks and uncertainties in the long term financial assumptions underlying the budget model. These include the risk that the increase in costs associated with demand led services, such as social care, is greater than assumed and the emergence of policy or legislative changes by the UK or Scottish governments which restrict the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally.

The nature of forecasting means it is challenging to identify with any certainty expenditure pressures and income. In addition, there are more general risks and uncertainties which will continue to be monitored. Some of the more general risks and uncertainties are:

- Economic growth being less than forecast, which has further moved to the downside as Brexit negotiations continue, resulting in further public spending reductions.

- Funding not being provided to fully cover the costs of introducing new legislation.
- Policy changes by the UK or Scottish governments which restrict the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally.
- Ring fencing of grant funding, constraining how local authorities allocate resources.
- Changes to local government remits with uncertainty for service provision and funding.

E. CONCLUSION

The report provides a high level overview of the latest economic indicators and other announcements likely to have a financial impact on the council. Following the outcome of the EU referendum, the negotiations required for the UK to leave the EU and to negotiate Britain's new trade relationships with the EU continue. Based on currently available forecasts and commentary, the outlook would suggest that in the short, medium and long term public finances will continue to be constrained. This will likely mean the funding environment for local government in Scotland generally and West Lothian Council specifically will remain challenging. The UK, Scottish, West Lothian and council position will be reported on a quarterly basis as part of the horizon scanning of factors that could have an impact on the council's medium term financial strategy.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services

Craig McCorriston
Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

AFFORDABLE CREDIT UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to update the Panel on:

1. The first year of trading of Conduit Scotland, which was commissioned as the preferred Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) provider, to establish a not-for-profit lending operation in partnership with Fife and Falkirk Councils.
2. The work of the two local credit unions: Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union and West Lothian Credit Union which offers credit and saving products across the county.

Both services are part of the Community Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy and contribute to Outcome 5: low income households are able to access services and are socially and financially included.

B. RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to note the contents of the report and in particular:

1. £589,518 has been loaned to 1,179 financially excluded individuals through the CDFI;
2. The utilisation of new technology to support widening access to affordable credit; and,
3. The valuable contribution Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union along with West Lothian Credit Union are making to improve financial inclusion options for low income families.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, section 20, and related statutory guidance – will secure the advancement of the economic and social well-being of affected and eligible residents

III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None.
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	Performance indicators have been developed as part of the Anti-Poverty Strategy.
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed We are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	The contribution required from West Lothian Council towards the CDFI included one off loan capital of £100,000 to be paid back at the end of the project. In addition, set up costs of £50,000 and annual running costs in each of the first three years of £40,000 from time limited funding.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	On 28 February 2017, Council Executive agreed to award the procurement contract to Conduit Scotland to deliver CDFI services.
VIII	**Other consultations**	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) along with economists and policymakers has voiced increased concerns about household debt. This increase in consumer credit comes at the same time as wages are constrained. Financial exclusion from mainstream sources of credit is an increasing problem for households that, in turn, have led to many seeking alternative high cost lenders such as home collected credit, pawn shops and payday lenders.

Carnegie UK Trust and Barrow Cadbury Trust have commissioned a number of reports setting out the difficulties faced by low income households in accessing affordable credit that is important as affordable credit reduces the cost of borrowing for those outside of the mainstream, supports financial inclusion and promotes equality and fairness. There is a significant body of evidence emerging which shows the damaging impact of unsecured debt and high cost credit on individuals, families and communities. Debt is a part of everyday life and access to affordable credit is an essential part of supporting budgets and responding to financial shocks.

An analysis of the Scottish Household Survey on the use of credit by Ipsos MORI Scotland shows that 588,000 households in Scotland have no savings; this is about a quarter of all households. 91% of households with no savings rent their home. 700,000 households in Scotland owe money on credit, store or charge cards and almost 19% said they had borrowed from unsecured sources in the past 12 months.

D2 Community Development Finance Initiative (CDFI) Project

A CDFI is a social enterprise which offers affordable loans and budgeting advice and supports people to engage with other financial services, such as savings with institutions like credit unions, income maximisation, and debt management. A CDFI provides an affordable alternative to high cost short term lenders and mainstream financial service providers whom financially excluded persons cannot access. The customer base of a CDFI tends to be those on low incomes with no record of savings and who have an extremely poor or no credit rating.

Falkirk, Fife and West Lothian councils formed a consortium to improve access to affordable loans through a preferred provider, Conduit Scotland. Conduit Scotland operates four shops across the three local council areas. The West Lothian shop is in South Bridge Street, Bathgate which is open from 10.00 to 16.00 Monday to Friday. There is a call centre to take telephone applications which is open from 08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday. Pop-ups are available in outreach locations within the West Lothian area. Conduit Scotland's main business is responsible lending. It actively refers those who have not been successful in their loan application to other local advice and support services but will not itself deliver those services.

D3 Impact of CDFI lending

Conduit Scotland commenced lending in August 2017. In its first year, it has established a shop in four localities across the three local authorities and embedded a community presence in partnership with other services in outlying areas. Conduit received 3,227 applications for loans of which 30% were converted into loans. Affordability was the key factor where a loan was declined. Conduit has lent £589,518 to 1,179 individuals. Of the total number of loans: 60% of borrowers are female, 23% are single parents, 76% have an income below £18,000 and 48% are working. The average loan value was £500 and 55% of customers had previously used a high cost lender. 78% of loans are made on-line. In West Lothian, 362 loans totalling £177,679 were agreed.

By working with Conduit, customers saved £281,404 compared to a high cost loan. Importantly, 9 out of 10 customers felt they got the help they needed and said accessing Conduit meant they did not have to access high interest credit. Over 1,000 customers were referred onto key partners for other forms of support including income maximisation, budgeting and debt management. A key outcome of this project is to help customers to improve their financial resilience and Conduit customers reported they felt they had an improved understanding of when to use credit and that they would be willing to access support or advice before things got out of control in the future. 94% of customers said they would not access high interest credit in the future.

D4 Local Credit Unions and New Technology

In 2017/18, West Lothian Credit Union and Blackburn, Seafield and District Credit Union received £66,920 of funding from West Lothian Council through time limited funding. This funding was to support the development of an on-line presence through new websites, mobile apps, on-line loan application and electronic signature processes.

Most of this work has either been completed or is in the process of development with roll out expected over the coming months. Jointly, the two local credit unions have over 7,000 members with 654 new members in the last year. The credit unions have loaned £1.65m and have combined member savings of £4.17m. West Lothian Credit Union reports that 57% of members are accessing on line and both credit unions, even in this short space of time, have shown that new technology has increased access, attracted new members and made it easier for members to get a loan and, with the introduction of the other modules early this year, we should see a further rise in online activity.

E. CONCLUSION

Conduit Scotland has filled a gap within West Lothian for small amounts of credit to low income, vulnerable households whilst referring significant numbers onto further support. It is building relationships with partners to increase referrals and embed the service in local communities.

The increasing use of new technology to simplify and speed up the process of applying for and receiving a loan has supported low income families to access credit when they need it. Customers are reporting an increase in confidence in their understanding of when to use credit and are building their skills and knowledge in terms of managing their money, learning to save and become more financially included.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None.

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of Meeting: 1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DISCRETIONARY NON DOMESTIC RATES RELIEF SCHEME

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Panel of the criteria relating to the current Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief Scheme in relation to charitable organisations and those who are assisting in the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes that on 20 November 2018 the Council resolved that officers bring a report to this Panel in relation to the criteria attaching to the Discretionary Rates Relief Scheme in West Lothian and its application to charitable organisations in general and those assisting delivering the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

2. Notes and considers the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to the Council Executive on 26 February 2019.

   The current Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief Scheme is amended from 1 April 2018 to include:

   - A 20% “top up“ relief for those organisations registered as a Scottish charity and with the Financial Conduct Authority as a Community Development Financial Institution whose charitable objects include the prevention or relief of financial hardship through the provision of affordable personal loans to financially excluded individuals.
   - A 20% “top up” relief for Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources.
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief Scheme. The Local Government (Financial Provisions etc.) (Scotland) Act 1962 gives the council the power to award discretionary relief of rates to certain organisations.

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)**	The existing annual cost to the council is approximately £170,000, which is provided for in the current revenue budget. The changes to the scheme will cost just under £2000 in 2018/19 and this will be met from the existing revenue budget.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	The report is being presented to the Panel prior to reporting to the Council Executive.
VIII	**Other consultations**	Anti-Poverty and Welfare Advice Manager.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

West Lothian Council is responsible for the administration of Non Domestic Rates as the rating authority. Relief is available to ratepayers under both mandatory and discretionary schemes and the council is required to determine a scheme for discretionary relief.

The Local Government (Financial Provisions etc) (Scotland) Act 1962 provides for discretionary rate relief to be given to:

- Registered Scottish charities where the ratepayer is entitled to 80% mandatory relief,
- Organisations not established or conducted for profit, and
- Clubs or societies not established or conducted for profit.

Properties occupied by local authorities, except as trustees, are specifically excluded from relief.

A non-profit making organisation is one which is established on a not for profit basis and each of its main objects are either charitable, otherwise philanthropic, religious or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts.

A club is one which is wholly or mainly used for the purposes of recreation.

D2 Current Scheme

The current scheme was amended following the Council meeting on 20 November 2018 to provide 100% relief from rates for Foodbanks. The current scheme is effective from 1 April 2018 and is set out in appendix 1.

A detailed list of organisations that currently receive discretionary non domestic rates relief is set out in appendix 2. In summary, the scheme provides rates relief to the following category of organisation:

Category	No. of Accounts	Mandatory Relief	Discretionary Relief	Total Relief
Scottish Registered Charities	132	80%	20%	100%
Clubs/societies with a licence to sell alcohol	1	Nil	80%	80%
Clubs/societies without a licence to sell alcohol	17	Nil	100%	100%
British Legion/Miners Welfare	1	Nil	80%	80%
Community Interest Companies	3	Nil	100%	100%
Credit Unions	2	Nil	100%	100%
Sports Clubs	51	Nil	100%	100%

The council funds 25% of the cost of the scheme with the remaining 75% being borne by the rates pool, except in the case of sports clubs where the total cost is borne by the rates pool. The cost to the council of applying the existing scheme is around £170,000 per annum, which is provided for in the annual revenue budget.

D3 Relationship Between Current Scheme and Organisations Assisting in the Delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy

There are a number of key partners assisting in the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, all of whom receive a level of relief from rates through mandatory and/or discretionary relief.

Discretionary Relief (100%)

The following key partners receive 100% discretionary relief under the current scheme:

- West Lothian Credit Union

Mandatory and Discretionary Relief (100%)

The following key partners receive 80% mandatory relief as a Scottish registered charity and 20% discretionary relief under the current scheme:

- West Lothian Foodbank
- The School Bank West Lothian
- Home-Start West Lothian
- Open Door Accommodation Project
- The Larder

Mandatory Relief (100%)

The following key partners receive 100% mandatory relief under the Small Business Bonus Scheme:

- West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network
- The Bridge Community Project

Mandatory Relief (80%)

The following key partners receive 80% mandatory relief as a Scottish registered charity:

- Weslo Housing Management
- Almond Housing Association
- Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian
- Five Lamps Trading Ltd (Conduit Scotland)

D4 Proposed Amendment to Current Scheme

It is proposed that the current scheme be amended from 1 April 2018 to provide a 20% discretionary relief top up to an 80% mandatory relief entitlement as a Scottish registered charity for:

- Organisations who are a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and whose charitable objects include the prevention or relief of financial hardship through the provision of affordable personal loans to financially excluded individuals.
- Citizens Advice Bureau West Lothian

The additional cost of just under £2000 in 2018/19 can be met from the existing revenue budget.

E. CONCLUSION

The proposed amendment to the current discretionary non domestic rates relief scheme will allow the council to continue to assist those organisations previously targeted as well as targeting other partners assisting in the delivery of the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1: Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief Scheme

Appendix 2: Organisations Receiving Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief

Contact Person: Scott Reid, Revenues Manager, 01506 282700

Email: scott.reid@westlothian.gov.uk

Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of meeting: 1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

Appendix 1

West Lothian Council

Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief Scheme

Reliefs Commencing 1 April 2018

- An additional 20% discretionary relief for organisations already in receipt of 80% relief as a Scottish registered charity or Community Interest Company where they:

    - are mainly concerned with working with youths (under 19 years of age), or
    - operate a museum (as described by the Assessor in the Valuation Roll) and do not charge entry, or
    - provide community facilities in village halls and community centres, or
    - operate a foodbank, or
    - would otherwise qualify for 100% discretionary rates relief as a club, society or other organisation that does not have a licence to sell alcohol, is not conducted for profit and is used mainly for recreational purposes.

- 80% discretionary relief to be granted to clubs, societies or other organisations that have a licence to sell alcohol, are not conducted for profit and are used mainly for recreational purposes.

- 80% discretionary relief to be granted to British Legion Clubs and Miners Welfare Clubs.

- 80% relief to be granted to Community Interest Companies (CICs) designed to promote community benefits and interests.

- 100% discretionary relief to be granted to clubs, societies or other organisations that do not have a licence to sell alcohol, are not conducted for profit and are used mainly for recreational purposes.

- 100% discretionary relief to be granted to all clubs which are recognised as a sporting activity by Sports Scotland.

- 100% relief to be granted to Credit Unions who operate as non-profit making organisations.

- 100% relief to be granted to Foodbanks.

Note:

All applicants must demonstrate that they apply the principles of equal opportunities.

Appendix 2

Organisations Receiving Discretionary Non Domestic Rates Relief

Scottish Registered Charities

Organisation	Property Address		
1st West Lothian Sea Scouts	(A/1) Woodcockdale	Linlithgow	EH49 6QE
2nd West Lothian Scout Group	6 Dogwell Wynd	Linlithgow	EH49 7EH
6th West Lothian Scout Association	55 Station Road	Broxburn	EH52 5QU
9th West Lothian Scout Group	(1) Bankton Walk	Livingston	EH54 9EG
Acredale House Association	Mid Street	Bathgate	EH48 1PS
Action for Children Scotland	(13/1A) Carmondean Centre	Livingston	
Almond Valley Heritage Trust	(37) Millfield	Livingston	EH54 7AR
Armadale Community Education Centre Association	7(E) North Street	Armadale	EH48 3QB
Armadale Families Unit	26 Armadale Industrial Estate	Armadale	EH48 3LL
Astro Gymnastics	5 Hutton Square	Livingston	EH54 9DJ
Barnardo's Property & Facilities Management	51 Falkirk Road	Linlithgow	EH49 7PH
Barnardo's Property & Facilities Management	8 Blackness Road	Linlithgow	EH49 7JB
Bathgate Community Education Centre Association	31/1 South Bridge Street	Bathgate	EH48 1TS
Beechbrae SCIO	(17A)Heights Road	Blackridge	EH48 3SW
Bellsquarry Village Hall Association	21 Calder Road	Livingston	EH54 9AA
Benhar Evangelical Church	31a Stanley Road	Harthill	ML7 5QX
Bennie Museum	9-11 Mansefield Street	Bathgate	EH48 4HU
Blackburn Local Employment Scheme	6a-6b Whitestone Place	Bathgate	EH47 7HR
Blackridge Community Education Centre	(55a) Main Street	Blackridge	EH48 3RL
Blackridge Community Education Centre	(B) Craiginn Terrace	Blackridge	EH48 3SR
Boghall Community Association	(30) Marina Road	Bathgate	EH48 1SY
Boghall Drop In Centre	(a) Marina Road	Bathgate	EH48 1SR
Bridgehouse Community Hall	(D/1) Bridgecastle	By Bathgate	EH48 3DN
Broxburn Family & Community Development	1 Park Court	Broxburn	EH52 5RA
Broxburn Family & Community Development	2 Park Court	Broxburn	EH52 5RA
Broxburn Family & Community Development	(A) Park Terrace	Broxburn	EH52 6AP

Broxburn Family Centre	8 Park Court	Broxburn	EH52 5RA
Carmondean Community Centre	(D) Nether Dechmont	Livingston	EH54 8AX
Children 1st	7 Gardner's Lane	Bathgate	EH48 1TP
Craigsfarm Community Development Project	(1) Craigs	Livingston	EH54 6AA
Crofthead Farm Community Education Association	(2) Crofthead Farm	Livingston	EH54 6DG
Dechmont Memorial Hall Association	71 Main Street	Dechmont	EH52 6LJ
East Whitburn Community Education Association	(D) Hens Nest Road	East Whitburn	EH47 8EX
Eczema Outreach Support	129(1F1) High Street	Linlithgow	EH49 7EJ
Eczema Outreach Support	Car Space - 129 (1F1/1) High Street	Linlithgow	EH49 7EJ
Family And Community Development West Lothian	1-3 Henderson Place	Broxburn	EH52 6EY
Family And Community Development West Lothian	198 Mayfield Drive	Armadale	EH48 2JL
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust Ltd	8 Main Street	Fauldhouse	EH47 9HX
Fauldhouse Community Development Trust Ltd	(2) Eastfield Road	Fauldhouse	EH47 9LE
Fauldhouse Partnership Centre Association	(3) Lanrigg Road	Fauldhouse	EH47 9JD
Forestbank Community Education	(1a) Forestbank	Livingston	EH54 6DX
Girl Guide Association	(F) Rosemount (Mid Street)	Bathgate	EH48 1QE
Girl Guides Association	10 Dogwell Wynd	Linlithgow	EH49 7EH
Harburn Village Hall Association	(2a) Harburn	West Calder	EH55 8RP
Home-Start West Lothian	(13a) Fairbairn Road	Livingston	EH54 6TS
Home-Start West Lothian	57 West Main Street	Whitburn	EH47 0QD
Home-Start West Lothian	(13ACP) Fairbairn Road	Livingston	EH54 6TS
Jane Moore Trust	3 Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
Jane Moore Trust	3(1) Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
Kirknewton Community Development Trust	Main Street	Kirknewton	EH27 8AH
Knightsridge Adventure Project	(A) Knightsridge East	Livingston	EH54 8RA
Ladywell Neighbourhood Network	28 Heatherbank	Livingston	EH54 6EE
Lanthorn Community Trust	(D) Kenilworth Rise	Livingston	EH54 6JJ
Linlithgow Heritage Trust	93 (BF2) High Street	Linlithgow	EH49 7EZ
Linlithgow Heritage Trust	93 (1F1) High Street	Linlithgow	EH49 7EZ
Linlithgow Union Canal Society	(1b) Manse Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6AP
Linlithgow Young People's Project	29 The Vennel	Linlithgow	EH49 7EX
Live For Life Foundation	(1b/4f2-4f3) Alderstone Road	Livingston	EH54 7DN
Live For Life Foundation	(1b/1f08) Alderstone Road	Livingston	EH54 7DN
Living Memory Association	43h Almondvale Centre	Livingston	EH54 6HS
Livingston Station Community Association	(4) Main Street Deans	Livingston	EH54 8BE

Lowland Rfca	2-4 Pyothall Court	Broxburn	EH52 6GX
Lowland Rfca	52 Baron's Hill Avenue	Linlithgow	EH49 7JG
Lowland Rfca	4-B Maple Grove	Livingston	EH54 5JE
Lowland Rfca	(S) Drumshoreland	Broxburn	EH52 5PQ
Lowland Rfca	(B) Barkhill Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6HL
Lowland Rfca	264 West Main Street	Whitburn	EH47 0LB
Midcalder Community Education Centre Association	15(A) Market Street	Mid Calder	EH53 0AL
Military Museum Scotland	Legion Hall (A) Louis Braille Avenue	Wilkieston	EH27 8EJ
Mosswood Community Centre Association	85 Ferguson Way	Livingston	EH54 8JF
Murieston Initiative Ltd	(A) Murieston West	Livingston	EH54 9HZ
Newton Community Education Association	26 Duddingston Crescent	Newton	EH52 6QG
Newyearfield Farm Managment Committee	(A) Newyearfield	Livingston	EH54 6AB
Open Door Accommodation Project Ltd	Almondbank Centre 52(7) Shiel Walk	Livingston	EH54 5EH
Open Door Accommodation Project Ltd	7-12 Adelaide Street	Livingston	EH54 7HG
Polbeth & West Calder Community Garden	(A) Parkhead	Polbeth	EH55 8BQ
Polbeth Community Education Association	Polbeth Village Hall	(2) Polbeth	EH55 8TZ
River Kids	63-67 East Main Street	Broxburn	EH52 5EE
River Kids	4(4) Alba Campus	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	4(2) Alba Campus	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	1D Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7HG
River Kids	1D(1) Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	1D(2) Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	2A Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	2A(1) Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	2A(2) Alba Business Pavilions	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	2 Alba Campus	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	4-(1F-2F) Alba Campus	Livingston	EH54 7EG
River Kids	1b(Gf) Alba Business Pavillions	Livingston	EH54 7HG
Salvation Army Social Work Trust	(5) Kingsport Avenue	Livingston	EH54 6BA
Seafield Community Education Centre Association	(I/5) Redhouse Road	Seafield	EH47 7AL
Simply Play	133(A) Main Street	East Calder	EH53 0EP
Stoneyburn Community Education Association	75 Main Street	Stoneyburn	EH47 8BY
Team Jak Foundation	(5/43) Kirkton North	Livingston	EH54 6AA
Team Jak Foundation	(5/43a) Kirkton North	Livingston	EH54 6GU
Team Jak Foundation	Ochil House Suite 6(A/2) Owen Square	Livingston	EH54 6PW
Team Jak Foundation	Geddes House (5/40)Kirkton North	Livingston	EH54 6GU

Team Jak Foundation	Geddes House (5/40CP) Kirkton North	Livingston	EH54 6GU
The Action Group Ltd	8(1) Almondside	Livingston	EH54 6QU
The Bathgate Band	6 Houstoun Interchange	Livingston	
The Bathgate Band	Car Park 6(A) Houstoun Interchange	Livingston	EH54 8ZZ
The Ecclesmachan & Threemiletown Village Hall Association	(D/2) Ecclesmachan	Uphall	EH52 6NJ
The Governors Of The Donaldson Trust	(32) Preston Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6HE
The Larder West Lothian	B2(6) Brewster Square	Livingston	EH54 9BJ
The Larder West Lothian	1 Calderwood Square	East Calder	EH53 0GH
The School Bank West Lothian	Suite 7 Dryburgh House (3/8) Meikle Road	Livingston	EH54 7DE
The School Bank West Lothian	Suite 9 Dryburgh House (3/6) Meikle Road	Livingston	EH54 7DE
The Scout Association	(B) Westfield Road	Torphichen	EH48 4LR
The Scout Association	50-58 Marjoribanks Street	Bathgate	EH48 1AH
The Scout Association	Calderhall Terrace	East Calder	EH53 0BS
The Scout Association	(21) Mill Road	Linlithgowbridge	EH49 7RA
Torphichen Community Education Centre Association	(29) Bowyett	Torphichen	EH48 4LZ
Uphall Community Education Centre	(A) Strathbrock Place	Uphall	EH52 5QQ
West Calder Education Centre	Young Street	West Calder	EH55 8EG
West Lothian Boomerang Talking Newspaper	211a West Main Street	Whitburn	EH47 0LP
West Lothian Foodbank	5 Heron Square	Livingston	EH54 8QY
West Lothian Foodbank	31 Market Place	Whitburn	EH47 0EU
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	(1) Almondvale Parkway	Livingston	EH54 6NB
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	(B) Torphichen Road	Bathgate	EH48 4LA
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	11 Church Street	Broxburn	EH52 5EL
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	(A) Craigswood	Livingston	EH54 5EP
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	20a Raw Holdings	East Calder	EH53 0JN
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	77 West Main Street	Whitburn	EH47 0AE
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	124 East Main Street	Broxburn	EH52 5EH
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	7(D) North Street	Armadale	EH48 3QB
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	(A) Kettilstoun Mains	Linlithgow	EH49 6SQ
West Lothian Leisure Ltd	1 Blackness Road	Linlithgow	EH49 7JA
West Lothian Youth Action Project	4(136-137) Craigshill Road	Livingston	EH54 5DT
West Lothian Youth Action Project	(A) Glenview Road	Stoneyburn	EH47 8DE
West Lothian Youth Action Project	Craigsfarm Community Hub	Livingston	EH54 5BP
Whitburn Band	(1) Murraysgate Industrial Estate	Whitburn	EH47 0LE
Whitburn Community Education Centre Association	(33) Manse Road	Whitburn	EH47 0DQ

Number of Accounts: 132

Community Interest Companies

Organisation	Property Address		
Kidz-Eco CIC	3a Almondvale Centre	Livingston	EH54 6HS
Kidz-Eco CIC	20-24 George Street	Bathgate	EH48 1PW
Kidz-Eco CIC	103 Almondvale Centre	Livingston	EH54 6HS

Number of Accounts: 3

Clubs/Societies without a licence to sell alcohol

Organisation	Property Address		
Broxburn & Uphall Pigeon Club	Bridge Place	Broxburn	EH52 5RR
Broxburn Old Age Pensioner's Day Centre Association	East Main Street	Broxburn	EH52 5AE
Craigshill Good Neighbourhood Network	(2) Almondbank	Livingston	EH5 5AA
East Calder & District Homing Society	(G19)Linhouse Road	East Calder	EH53 0DE
East Calder And District Homing Society	(1) Oakbank Road	East Calder	EH53 0BT
Fauldhouse Community Sports & Recreation Association	(A) Parkview	Fauldhouse	EH47 9JS
Fauldhouse Homing Social Club	53 Main Street	Fauldhouse	EH47 9HY
Forth Area Federation Of Anglers	(212a) High Street	Linlithgow	EH49 7ES
New Town Entertainers	(G05) Adelaide Street	Livingston	EH54 5HG
New Town Entertainers	(G31) Adelaide Street	Livingston	EH54 5HQ
New Town Entertainers	(G32) Adelaide Street	Livingston	EH54 5HQ
Newland Concert Brass Band	(6a) Belvedere Road	Bathgate	EH48 4AX
Pumpherston Premier Pigeon Club	(42a) Drumshoreland Road	Pumpherston	EH53 0LH
The Broxburn Band	(9/1) East Main Street	Broxburn	EH52 5AB
West Calder Homing Society	14 Cleuch Brae	West Calder	EH55 8NA
Winchburgh And District Homing Society	(130a) Craigton Place	Winchburgh	EH52 6RW
Winchburgh Community Education Centre	130 Craigton Place	Winchburgh	EH52 6RW

Number of Accounts: 17

Clubs/Societies with a licence to sell alcohol

Organisation	Property Address		
Armadale Public House Society	50a West Main Street	Armadale	EH48 3QA

Number of Accounts: 1

Credit Unions

Organisation	Property Address		
West Lothian Credit Union	52(06) Shiel Walk	Livingston	EH54 5AP
West Lothian Credit Union	57a Almondvale Centre	Livingston	EH54 6HS

Number of Accounts: 2

British Legion/ Miner Welfare Clubs

Organisation	Property Address		
Royal British Legion (Scotland)	46 North Bridge Street	Bathgate	EH48 4PP

Number of Accounts: 1

Sports Clubs

Organisation	Property Address		
Armadale Bowling Club	124a South Street	Armadale	EH48 3JU
Armadale Thistle Football Club	7(C) North Street	Armadale	EH48 3QB
Bankton Mains Bowling Club	(2) Bankton Walk	Livingston	EH54 9LE
Bathgate Bowling Club Ltd.	(17/1) Balbardie Road	Bathgate	EH48 1AP
Bathgate Golf Club	(15c) Edinburgh Road	Bathgate	EH48 1BA
Blackburn Bowling Club	(12d) Bathgate Road	Blackburn	EH47 7LW
Blackridge Bodybuilding Club	(16a) Drummond Place	Blackridge	EH48 3SF
Bridgend & District Golf Club	(B) Willowdean	Bridgend	EH49 6NW
Broxburn Bowling Club	West Burnside	Broxburn	EH52 5RG
Buchan Park Bowling Club	(76b) Greendykes Road	Broxburn	EH52 5BS
Deans Bowling Club	2 Main Street Deans	Livingston	EH54 8BE
East Calder Bowling Club	255 Main Street	East Calder	EH53 0EL
Fauldhouse Cricket Club	38 Victoria Road	Fauldhouse	EH47 9LS
Glenmavis Bowling Club	Torphichen Street	Bathgate	EH48 4HH
Greenburn Golf Club	Greenburn	Fauldhouse	EH47 9HG
Harburn Golf Club	(5A) Harburn	West Calder	EH55 8RP
Hatton Sports Club	(1) Burnwynd	Kirknewton	EH27 8EA
Linlithgow Bowling Club	2 Philip Avenue	Linlithgow	EH49 7BH
Linlithgow Golf Club	(A) Braehead	Linlithgow	EH49 6EF
Linlithgow Rose Football Club	(59) Braehead Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6HF
Linlithgow Rugby Club Ltd	(B) Mains Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6DB
Linlithgow Sports Club	(A/1) Edinburgh Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6AB
Livingston & District Amateur Boxing Club	Maple Grove	Livingston	EH54 5JE
Livingston Cricket Club	10a Murieston Valley Road	Livingston	EH54 9HB
Livingston Letham Bowling Club	(A) Spruce Grove	Livingston	EH54 5NG
Livingston Rugby Football Club	(1) Almond Park	Livingston	EH54 5NP
Midcalder Bowling Club	(9a) School Lane	Mid Calder	EH53 0AT
Middleton Hall Bowling Club	(A/19) Middleton Hall	Broxburn	EH52 5DH
Morton Rifle & Pistol Club	(3) Morton Reservoir	Mid Calder	EH53 0JT
Ms Sheena Sutherland & Raymond Kaczmarek	(1/1-2) Firth Road	Livingston	EH54 5DJ
Niddry Castle Golf Club	(G) Niddry Mains	Winchburgh	EH52 6QW
Oakbank Bowling Club	(2) Oakbank	East Calder	EH53 0JS
Oatridge Golf Club	(E1) Binny	Ecclesmachan	EH52 6ND

Philpstoun And District Bowling Club	(13) The Avenue	Philpstoun	EH49 6RE
Pumpherston Bowling Club	26 Uphall Station Road	Pumpherston	EH53 0LP
Pumpherston Golf Club.	(42) Drumshoreland Road	Pumpherston	EH53 0LH
Redcraig Rifle Club	2 Camps	East Calder	EH27 8DF
S Sutherland T/A Bathgate Tae Kwon-Do Sports	21(A) Mid Street	Bathgate	EH48 1PS
Scottish Auto-Cycle Union Ltd	28 West Main Street	Uphall	EH52 5DW
Seafield Bowling Club	Redhouse Road	Seafield	EH47 7AL
Stoneyburn Community Bowling Club	(A) Park View	Stoneyburn	EH47 8AX
Uphall Golf Club	(C) Houstoun Mains	Uphall	EH52 6JX
Uphall Station Bowling Club	12 Marrfield Terrace	Uphall Station	EH54 5PY
West Calder Bowling Club	32 Harburn Road	West Calder	EH55 8AH
West Lothian County Cricket Association	(A/4) Edinburgh Road	Linlithgow	EH49 6AB
West Lothian Golf Club	(G) Upper Bonnytoun	Linlithgow	EH49 7LP
West Lothian Indoor Bowling Club	(C) Howden South Road	Livingston	EH54 6AE
West Lothian School Of Gymnastics Trust	(5A) Craigshill Road	Livingston	EH54 5DT
Whitburn Bowling Club	(121) West Main Street	Whitburn	EH47 0QF
Whitburn Junior Football Club	(10/1) East Main Street	Whitburn	EH47 0RB
Winchburgh Bowling Club	128a Craigton Place	Winchburgh	EH52 6RW

Number of Accounts: 51

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

LOANS FUND REVIEW

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with a note of proposed actions following a review of the operation of the loans fund, and of outstanding issues which continue to be discussed by relevant stakeholders.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Panel notes:

1. The review of the operation of the loans fund;
2. The proposal to revise the method of interest apportionment between the general fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA);
3. The proposal to adopt the asset life method for all loans fund advances from 1 April 2018;
4. The proposal to adopt a repayment period of 35 years for all loans fund advances from 1 April 2018;
5. The proposal to adopt a repayment interest rate of 5.5% for all loans fund advances from 1 April 2018;
6. The current position regarding the application of a reprofiling adjustment to loans fund repayments, and notes the intention for officers to provide further reports on this issue when the position is clarified;
7. The intention to include these proposals in the treasury management report to Council in February 2019.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I.	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable, focusing on our customers' needs, making the best use of our resources, working in partnership
II.	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Complies with the council's Treasury Policy Statement, the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, the CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services – Code of Practice and Cross Sectional Guidance Notes and the Local Government Investments (Scotland) Regulations 2010.
III.	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	No proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.
IV.	**Impact on performance and performance indicators**	None.
V.	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	None.
VI.	**Resources (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Efficient operation of a loans fund account is part of a framework for operating treasury management activities designed to minimise risk and the future borrowing costs of the council.

VII.	**Consideration at PDSP**	None.
VIII.	**Other consultations**	Legal Services, Link Asset Services, who are the council's external treasury advisors.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 BACKGROUND

The Local Authority (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 (the 2016 Regulations) came into force on 1 April 2016. These Regulations replaced the statutory provisions for local authority borrowing, lending and Loans Fund as set out in Schedule 3 of the Local Authority (Scotland) Act 1975.

The 2016 Regulations stipulate that local authorities must operate a loans fund, which is a way for the council to recognise the amount of capital expenditure that is being financed by borrowing each year and also the amount of this borrowing that is being repaid each year and charged to the revenue account. All borrowing undertaken to fund the capital programme must be repaid through the loans fund on a prudent basis. The Regulations require the statutory Loans Fund to be administered in accordance with the Regulations, proper accounting practice and prudent financial management.

The statutory purpose of the Loans Fund is:

- to recognise, by making advances from the Loans Fund, the expenditure incurred, or loans made to third parties, by the authority, which a local authority has determined are to be financed by borrowing;
- to record transactions – opening balances each year, new advances, repayments charged to revenue (statutory repayment of debt), and a closing position balance at each financial year end, being the value of the Loans Fund advances still to be repaid/ charged to revenue;
- for each Loans Fund advance made, to record the annual repayment to be made to revenue. This will provide an authority with a profile of annual charges representing the amount of statutory repayment of debt to be charged to the General Fund/Housing Revenue Account in any financial year.

Section 14 of the 2016 Regulations states that:

- A local authority must, at the time of making a loans fund advance, determine:
  - the period over which the advance is to be repaid to the loans fund; and
  - the amount of repayment to be made to the loans fund in each financial year over that period.
- A local authority may subsequently vary either the period or the amount of the repayment (or both), if it considers it prudent to do so.

The 2016 guidance sets out four options for the calculation of the repayment of loans fund advances and simplifies the statutory purpose of the loans fund. The four options are:

- **Option 1 – Statutory Method** – per the 2016 Regulations, this method will no longer be available after 2021;
- **Option 2 – Depreciation Method** – a complex method that links the calculated repayment to the depreciation charged each year and movement in the value of the asset;
- **Option 3 – Asset Life Method** – a simpler alternative to the depreciation method, either on an equal instalment basis or on an annuity basis; or
- **Option 4 – Funding/Income Profile Method** – repayments calculated by assessing future income receivable from the use of the asset, if the asset created generates income.

The guidance indicates that these four options are those likely to be most relevant for the majority of local authorities for loans fund advances made for the authority's own capital expenditure. Other approaches are not ruled out but must be considered by the local authority to be a prudent repayment.

D.2 LOANS FUND REVIEW

As reported to Partnership and Resources PDSP on 5 October 2018 and to full Council on 20 November 2018, officers have been investigating options to review the operation of the loans fund, including any potential opportunities for savings. Following the introduction of the new regulations, a review of both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account loans fund advance repayments has been carried out, and advice has been sought from the council's treasury advisors, Link Asset Services (LAS).

The review was undertaken in order to ensure that the council continues to make a prudent provision each year for the repayment of loans fund advances. Prudent repayment of a loans fund advance is one which is reasonably commensurate with the period and pattern of benefits provided to the community from the capital expenditure funded by the borrowing. In determining what is prudent for an authority, it may be that providing for debt repayment over too short a period is just as imprudent as providing over too long a period.

The review covered the following areas:

- A review of the Authority's key data and calculations from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2018;
- Advice regarding those debt liabilities which need not be subjected to Loans Fund repayments;
- Suggested amendments for any revision of the Loans Fund Policy;
- Outline of the optimum manner and procedures for future compliance with the statutory responsibility;
- Detailed methodology for the calculation of Loans Fund repayments, including the whole life impact of the proposed changes.

D.3 PROPOSALS

After reviewing and considering the options and recommendations resulting from the Loans Fund Review, officers are proposing a number of changes to the way that the statutory loans fund is currently operated, as set out below.

D.3.1 Interest Apportionment

External borrowing is undertaken by the council to fund capital expenditure for both of the council's capital programmes, the general fund capital programme and the housing capital programme. Interest incurred on external borrowing is a revenue expense and, at the moment, this is apportioned between the general fund revenue account and the housing revenue account based on the loans fund pool rate, which is a percentage rate based on the total outstanding debt applicable to the general fund and the HRA.

Rather than using the pool rate to calculate the apportionment of these interest charges, it is proposed to take the actual borrowing position at the year end into account when allocating interest charges between the general fund and the HRA. As outlined in the treasury management plan each year, council officers, in conjunction with treasury advisors Link Asset Services, continually monitor prevailing interest rates and market forecasts to identify the most opportune time for borrowing during the year. In some years, this can mean that the council has an under borrowed position at the year end, which means that council reserves have been used to finance the capital programmes rather than actually borrowing the full amount required. This can also be referred to as internal borrowing, as this is utilising existing internal resources rather than borrowing additional external resources.

While interest rates are low, this is an effective use of working capital and balances in the short term. As the majority of council reserves are general fund reserves, currently around 99%, then it is considered appropriate for the general fund to gain the benefit from any internal borrowing due to the cost of lost interest earned on general fund balances. It is therefore proposed that the interest charges apportionment calculation at the end of each financial year is amended to take into account the internal borrowing position and that this change will be implemented from 1 April 2018.

D.3.2 Repayment Option

As noted above, the 2016 guidance sets out four options for the calculation of the repayment of loans fund advances and simplifies the statutory purpose of the loans fund. The council has historically used the statutory method (option 1) however, under the 2016 regulations, this option will no longer be available after 2021 and another option will need to be identified and adopted.

Under the asset life method (option 3), repayments are based on the initial estimated life and value of assets and thereafter do not change. Adopting the annuity method under this option links the repayment of the borrowing to the flow of benefits from the asset. On this basis, the asset life method is considered the method that is most appropriate to meet the requirements of the 2016 regulations for a prudent repayment of a loans fund advance, which is reasonably commensurate with the period and pattern of benefits provided to the community from the capital expenditure funded by the borrowing.

Having reviewed the options set out in the guidance, and having also considered the fact that the guidance allows for other options to be considered if a local authority considers those options to be prudent, officers are proposing that the annuity option under the asset life method (option 3) is the most appropriate and prudent method for the council and that this should be adopted from 1 April 2018.

D.3.3 Period of Repayment

As noted in section D.1 above, section 14 of the 2016 regulations states that a local authority must, at the time of making a loans fund advance, determine the period over which the advance is to be repaid to the loans fund. Since the inception of West Lothian Council in 1996, a number of repayment periods have been applied for repayment of debt to the loans fund using the annuity method. From 2007/08 to 2016/17, a standard 30 year repayment period was used, and for 2017/18 the repayment was 40 years to reflect the borrowing required to complete a specific asset. The average loan repayment period was 35 years for the general fund and 30 years for the HRA.

Loans fund repayments should be profiled over a period which reasonably reflects the period over which the community receives the economic benefit of the asset. To profile over a shorter period could be imprudent as it could be viewed as requiring the tax payer to repay capital investment before receiving the full benefit from the asset, however profiling over a longer period could mean that the tax payer is not repaying the full capital investment before the asset's life has ended.

A number of factors have been taken into account when considering what a prudent repayment period should be. Increasing pressure on capital budgets and constraints on capital funding have meant greater emphasis on maintaining existing assets rather than creating new assets, and improvements to building design, technology and materials mean that buildings can and are lasting longer than previously expected.

Taking this into account, it is considered prudent to revise the current policy on loans fund repayments and it is proposed to extend the repayment period to 35 years to more accurately reflect the increasing expected average life of assets for all new loans fund advances from 1 April 2018.

D.3.4 Interest Rate

Section 14 of the 2016 regulations also states that, at the time of making a loans fund advance, a local authority must determine the amount of repayment to be made to the loans fund in each financial year over the period. Once a prudent determination of repayment period has been made, an authority is required to use an appropriate interest rate to calculate the annual repayment amount. A review of loans fund interest applied from 2002/03 to 2017/18 gives an average rate of 5.5%, and it is considered that this historic average rate is a prudent rate to apply for future loans fund advances as it reflects the average interest rate on external borrowing. It is therefore proposed that an interest rate of 5.5% is used for all loans repayment calculations on all new loans fund advances from 1 April 2018.

D.4 REPROFILING ADJUSTMENTS

As outlined above, the 2016 guidance stipulates that a local authority must, at the time of making a loans fund advance, determine the period over which the advance is to be repaid to the loans fund and the amount of repayment to be made to the loans fund in each financial year over that period. The proposed changes outlined in section D.3 above, to be actioned from 1 April 2018, meet the requirements outlined in the guidance.

The regulations also state that a local authority may subsequently vary either the period or the amount of the repayment (or both), if it considers it prudent to do so. Therefore, as long as a local authority considers it prudent, then the period or amount of repayment previously identified as being the most appropriate at a specific point in time may be reviewed and changed or updated based on latest information, and that this would include all debt repayments.

As a result of this part of the guidance, a number of Scottish local authorities, including West Lothian, have been reviewing their historic debt repayments to assess whether the repayment methodology applied to historic loans fund advances is still the most prudent option. As a result of these reviews, and for the reasons outlined in section D.3 above, many authorities believe that they should now be repaying their historic loans fund advances over a longer period of time, to ensure that the payments can be assessed as prudent and to ensure that the repayments reasonably reflect the period over which the community receives the economic benefit of assets that are now lasting longer than originally assumed. This would mean that local authorities had effectively over provided for loans fund repayments in prior years and could therefore under provide in future repayments to offset the previous over provision. Two Scottish local authorities have already made this reprofiling adjustment and have implemented the changes from 2017/18.

This part of the guidance has been the subject of differing views and interpretation, the main points of which are set out below:

Audit Scotland Opinion

Following a number of changes made under the new regulations by Authorities, Technical Bulletin 2018/4 was issued by Audit Scotland (AS) on 11 December 2018 which states:

- *Auditors are reminded that the statutory guidance (paragraph 33 in part 2) is clear that all loans fund advances made prior to 1 April 2016 should continue to be repaid as if paragraph 15 of Schedule 3 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1975 had not been repealed. It follows that the prudent repayment options apply only to advances made from 1 April 2016.*
- *Auditors should confirm that loans fund advances made before 1 April 2016 continue to be repaid in accordance with the 1975 Act. Further guidance on this matter is provided at module 3 (paragraphs 38 to 42) of TGN 2018/10(LG)*

Audit Scotland has also indicated:

- *"The Regulations give Councils greater flexibility but, in Audit Scotland's view, this is not permissible under the statutory framework in Scotland."*
- *"The 2018/19 accounts of the affected councils will contain a material misstatement, in that the charge to the general fund for repaying loans fund advances would be understated. If uncorrected, this would lead to auditors qualifying their opinion on the accounts in respect of that misstatement."*

The Audit Scotland Opinion outlined above indicates that they do not think that local authorities can subsequently vary either the period or the amount of the loans fund repayment if they consider it prudent to do so, as stated in the 2016 regulations, and that the regulations only apply to new loans fund repayments from 1 April 2016, when the new regulations came into effect.

Link Asset Services Opinion

Link Asset Services, the council's treasury advisors, disagree with the opinion put forward by Audit Scotland. Their opinion is that the key aim of the new regulations was to give local authorities more flexibility to apply a prudent provision for loans fund repayments and support changes to repayments to repay loans fund advances over a different period, as long as it can be justified to do so.

LAS note that changes in the repayment of debt liability have been successfully carried out over the last five years in England and Wales and that the National Audit Office have supported the reprofiling of these charges going forwards which includes historic debt liability balances.

LAS argue that the Local Authority (Capital Financing and Accounting) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 (Loans Fund Accounting) have changed the basis on which the Loans Fund is accounted. The change moves from a prescriptive basis on how repayment values are to be calculated, to a prudent one with each local authority now provided with the ability to determine what is prudent, and the statute is quite clear that it is for the authority to determine what is prudent. They also note that, when the 2016 Scottish regulations were being developed, the clear intent was to give Scottish local authorities the same flexibility as authorities in England, as can be evidenced in the papers for the working group established to develop the 2016 regulations. These papers, published on the Scottish Government web site, state that the remit for the loans fund was to *replace existing provisions with a similar provision to that in the English legislation – an authority is under a statutory duty to repay an amount of debt it considers to be "prudent".*

Following the changes in legislation in 2016, Scottish local authorities have also been exploring this area, with 10 authorities in Scotland commissioning LAS to carry out reviews over the last 14 months. Two Scottish local authorities have already implemented changes to their historic debt repayments from 2017/18 without any adverse comments in their audit reports from their external auditors.

The treasury advisors also note that the technical bulletin from Audit Scotland appears to specifically quote a section of the guidance that states that all loans fund advances made prior to 1 April 2016 should continue to be repaid and that the prudent repayment options apply only to advances made from 1 April 2016. This section of the guidance specifically refers to option 1 (statutory method) of the four options, and not to option 3 (asset life method) which is the option favoured by most authorities under the new guidance.

Internal Legal Opinion

The council's Chief Solicitor was asked to provide a legal opinion on the proposals for implementing changes to the existing loans fund repayment policy. The Chief Solicitor has confirmed that, in her opinion, the intention of the 2016 regulations was to permit flexibility for local authorities to structure their loans fund repayments in a manner considered most

prudent by them, that changes to the historic loans fund repayments would be consistent with this and that the ability to vary repayments in terms of Regulation 14, i.e. existing and new loans fund advances, arises from the broad terms of Regulation 14 and is not restricted in the manner suggested by Audit Scotland in their Technical bulletin 2018/4.

Section 95 Officer Opinion

Taking account of all the information available, it is my opinion that implementing a review of historic loans fund debt to reprofile outstanding debt over a longer period is consistent with the actions permitted by the 2016 regulations. I agree with LAS that the purpose of the new regulations was to provide similar flexibility to that afforded to English authorities and that it is the responsibility of the authority to determine its own policy for repayment of loans fund charges, as long as the authority deems these repayments to be prudent.

As set out in section D.3, it is proposed to extend the loans fund repayment period to 35 years to more accurately reflect the increasing expected average life of assets for all loans fund advances from 1 April 2018, to take into account the fact that assets now generally have a longer estimated useful life than previously expected. It is also proposed that an interest rate of 5.5% is used for all loans repayment calculations on all new loans fund advances from 1 April 2018, to reflect the historic average interest rate on external borrowing. It is the view of officers that applying the same principles retrospectively to historic debt repayments would be both prudent and consistent. This would mean that loans fund repayments had been over provided for and that under provision could be made in future repayments to offset the prior year over payments.

Given the ongoing and severe financial pressures facing the council, I consider that the flexibility to determine what is prudent in terms of loans fund repayments, as was the clear intent of the 2016 regulations, would be a key factor in the overall context of the council's medium term financial strategy. Although the overall amount of repayment that needs to be made against outstanding debt would remain the same, the benefit to the council of being able to implement these reprofiling changes would be to be able to make the repayments over a longer period and to reduce payments in the shorter term. This would support the medium term financial strategy by allowing plans to be put in place for further budget savings still to be identified to balance the overall revenue budget in the medium term.

D.5 CURRENT POSITION

The difference in opinion between Audit Scotland, Link Asset Services and Scottish local authorities regarding the ability to subsequently vary loans fund advances and make retrospective adjustments to prior year advances has been raised with both Audit Scotland and the Scottish Government. The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) are also raising the matter on behalf of councils with the Scottish Government.

The latest position is that Audit Scotland has sought an external legal opinion on its interpretation of the 2016 regulations. The Scottish Government have also stated that they will issue further guidance once Audit Scotland's external legal opinion has been received. West Lothian Council is also seeking an external legal opinion on the matter.

Officers are therefore waiting for the position to be clarified, and will provide a report to the Panel on possible further recommendations for a reprofiling adjustment to loans fund repayments once further clarity on the position is available.

E. CONCLUSION

Following a review of the operation of the loans fund, it is proposed to make changes to the way that interest is apportioned between general fund and the HRA to take account of internal borrowing. It is also proposed that, under the Local Authority (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Scotland) Regulations 2016, the asset life (annuity) method is adopted as the most appropriate option for calculating repayment of debt through the loans fund from 1 April 2018, and that a repayment period of 35 years at an interest rate of 5.5% is also

adopted for all loans fund advances from 1 April 2018. These proposals will be included in the Annual Treasury Management Plan to be reported to Council in February 2019.

There is ongoing uncertainty around the issue of retrospective adjustments to the repayment of loans fund advances. A further report will be provided once further information and clarity on the position is available.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

The Local Authority (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Scotland) Regulations 2016

Local Government Finance Circular 7/2016 – Commentary and Guidance on The Local Authority (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Scotland) Regulations 2016 – Loans Fund Accounting – 13 July 2016

National Audit Office - Auditor Guidance Note 6 – Local Government Audit Planning – 4 January 2018

Audit Scotland Technical Bulletin 2018/4 – 11 December 2018

Link Asset Services – Loans Fund Reviews Scotland – December 2018 Update

Link Asset Services – Loans Fund Reviews Scotland – Position Statement January 2019

Link Asset Services – Loans Fund Reviews – Key Points Briefing Note – January 2019

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Donald Forrest
Head of Finance and Property Services

1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

PROPOSED CAR PARK CHARGING

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Panel of the intention to progress a review of car parking controls in West Lothian.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes that a wider review for the management of parking (both on and off street) will be progressed to ensure a comprehensive approach to parking controls in West Lothian; and

2. Notes the review will consider the various models for the delivery of parking controls.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; working in partnership
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	An integrated impact assessment will be undertaken as part of the wider review of parking.
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)**	The council agreed a five year revenue plan for 2018/19 to 2022/23 on 13 February 2018

		including a proposal for charging for car parks. The approved saving and income generation total is £260,000 per annum from 2019/20. The work on wider parking strategy development will be funded within existing one off resources.
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	The report is for consideration by the PDSP.
VIII	**Other consultations**	Legal Services, Roads and Transportation, Housing, Financial Management Unit and Corporate Transformational Change Unit.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Introduction

The council, as part of its Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2018/19 to 2027/28, aims to manage its assets effectively and efficiently for the benefit of our communities and in support of corporate objectives and priorities.

In relation to car parks, the aims are maximise the benefits from these (both utilisation and financial); to regulate and improve parking; to sustain and improve the condition and suitability of car parks; achieve cost savings on maintenance and non-domestic rates; and to generate income.

Council previously agreed as part of the approval of the Revenue Budget Strategy 2018/19 to 2022/23 in February 2018 that the proposal for implementing car parking controls and charging should be presented to Partnership and Resources PDSP for further consideration.

This report sets out the intention to undertake a wider review of parking management in West Lothian and to identify proposals to maximise the benefits from these assets.

D2 Context

West Lothian Council is one of only four local authorities in Scotland that do not currently charge for parking. The opportunity therefore exists to improve the management and control of car parks, maximise the utilisation of these assets, improve condition and suitability through private investment, achieve savings and potentially generate income.

D3 Car Parking Management Models

An initial review of the main models for managing car parks has been undertaken by officers from various services including Roads, Property, Legal, Housing and Finance. This concluded that various options may be suitable for further consideration such as In-House direct management (using Road Traffic Regulation Act powers), External Management (using Road Traffic Regulation Act powers), Decriminalised Parking Enforcement and a Lease Agreement approach.

Whilst all of these have various advantages and disadvantages it was concluded that any model(s) to be considered for adoption in West Lothian require to be compatible with a wider strategic framework and that these do not prohibit the implementation of other models.

A development of a strategy for the management of car parking in West Lothian is considered essential as it will enable the establishment of wider aims and objectives for these assets. In addition, it will establish the framework to effectively and efficiently manage car parks and to establish the mechanisms and models for parking controls that will meet council and community objectives.

It is proposed that the development of the strategy is undertaken in advance of any proposals for the implementation of parking controls and revised management arrangements to ensure compatibility with corporate objectives and local requirements. As part of the development of the strategy the various models that are considered appropriate for the control and pro-active management of car parks and parking in general will be evaluated and reported upon.

D4 Parking Strategy Development

The development of the proposed parking strategy will be progressed by officers from various relevant services to ensure that any proposals that come forward in the future are comprehensive and seek to achieve corporate and service level objectives. Previous consideration of parking and management approaches will be reviewed including decriminalised parking and regulated parking. These were previously reported to Environment PDSP in March 2014 as part of the review of traffic warden provision and potential for decriminalised parking enforcement in West Lothian. This report concluded that due to resource requirements and longer term financial viability concerns, the council would not progress parking controls using these models.

It is proposed however, that the previous conclusions are reviewed and that other parking models such as a lease arrangement are considered as part of the comprehensive review and strategy development.

The undertaking of the wider review and the proposed parking strategy development is proposed to be initiated and progressed with appropriate reporting on conclusion of the research. It is proposed that the saving for car park charging is not included in the planned savings at this time but is reviewed on conclusion of the parking strategy research and development.

E. CONCLUSION

It is proposed that officers proceed with research and development of a wider strategy for parking management in West Lothian including evaluation of appropriate models that can be adopted. In undertaking the wider review and the development of a strategic framework for the management of parking, the council will be able to consider appropriate models to achieve its corporate objectives for the management of these assets.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Revenue Budget 2018/19 to 2022/23 – Report to Council – 13 February 2018

Review of Traffic Warden Provision and Potential for Decriminalised Parking Enforcement - Report to Environment PDSP - 27 March 2014

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of meeting: 1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THE KEEP SAFE INITIATIVE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Panel of proposals to establish "Keep Safe Places" at a range of council facilities across West Lothian.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Considers and notes the content of this report.

2. Notes that it is planned to present a further update report to the Panel in due course.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; 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**	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.
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	Staffing - Staff training will be required. This will be provided free of charge by Police Scotland. Trade Unions will be consulted on any implications for staffing duties.

VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	This is the first consideration at PDSP.
VIII	**Other consultations**	Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services. West Lothian Leisure.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Introduction

The Keep Safe Initiative works with a network of local businesses such as shops, libraries and cafes who have agreed to make their premises a "Keep Safe Place" where vulnerable members of the public can go if they feel frightened, distressed or are the victim of crime when out in the community. The initiative is supported and promoted by Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity.

Members of the public wishing to use the initiative are issued with a contact card containing details of their name, health concerns, communication needs and contact details for nominated family members or friends.

Businesses taking part in the initiative are issued with a Keep Safe sticker to display in their premises window, letting vulnerable people know that they provide a Keep Safe Place. If a member of the public enters a Keep Safe Place and presents their contact card, a trained member of staff will reassure that person and contact one of the individuals named on their card, or the police if a crime has been committed.

The service is provided free of charge by the I Am Me charity and training for staff in participating premises is provided free of charge by Police Scotland. Any premises being promoted for inclusion in the Keep Safe initiative are vetted in advance by Police Scotland to ensure suitability.

Council agreed on 22 January 2019 that officers should report to Partnership and Resources PDSP to identify suitable council premises across the county that could potentially provide a Keep Safe Place for vulnerable members of the public.

D.2 Summary of Proposals

It is considered that prominent public buildings in accessible locations would best serve the aims of this initiative and that our Partnership Centres may be particularly well suited for that role. It is therefore proposed that the opportunity for establishing a Keep Safe Place at each of the following locations should be explored:

- Armadale Partnership Centre
- Bathgate Partnership Centre
- Blackburn Partnership Centre
- East Calder Partnership Centre
- Fauldhouse Partnership Centre
- Linlithgow Partnership Centre (Tam Dalyell House)
- Strathbrock Partnership Centre, Broxburn
- West Lothian Civic Centre, Livingston

In considering this matter, officers concluded that properties within the council's school estate should be disregarded on safety and logistical grounds. Community Education Centres were also discounted on the basis that these are leased to and run by individual management committees with widely varying opening hours, facilities and staffing capacities.

In addition to the foregoing, preliminary discussions have been held with representatives from West Lothian Leisure, who have confirmed a willingness to explore opportunities for establishing Keep Safe Places at suitable Xcite locations.

E. CONCLUSION

The Keep Safe is initiative can make a significant difference to the lives vulnerable members of our community in times of need and distress. The initiative is supported and promoted by Police Scotland, who provide staff training free of charge.

It is proposed that officers will work with Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity to explore opportunities for establishing Keep Safe Places at the aforementioned locations. These proposals will also be discussed with Trade Unions to ensure any implications on staffing duties are addressed. A further update will be presented to the Panel in due course on progress.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None.

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of meeting: 1 February 2019

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP & RESOURCES PDSP

REVIEW OF DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT BY GOVERNANCE MANAGER

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Following previous consideration by the Panel, to consider improvements that may be made to the council's decision-making arrangements.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To note the updated note of themes and concerns that have emerged from officers' discussions with members and at PDSP meetings following council's instruction in February 2018 to review decision-making arrangements (Appendix 2)

2. To consider those issues to assist in identifying potential improvements and in taking the review forward for decision-making

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Being honest, open and accountable; making the best use of our resources
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973; Standing Orders
III	**Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers**	None at this stage
IV	**Impact on performance and performance Indicators**	N/a
V	**Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement**	N/a
VI	**Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)**	N/a
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Partnership & Resources PDSP, 24 August and 5 October, both 2018

VIII	**Other consultations**	Relevant elected members; Committee Services; Corporate Management Team

D. TERMS OF REPORT

1 Background

1.1 Part of council's decision on the revenue budget report on 13 February 2018 was "to review the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of its present decision-making arrangements and to report to Partnership and Resources PDSP for consideration of possible changes". The present committee and PDSP structure is shown in Appendix 1.

1.2 The council's decision-making arrangements are mainly found in Standing Orders. The elements within the scope of this review are principally Standing Orders for the Regulation of Meetings and the Scheme of Administration. They contain procedural rules and committee/PDSP remits and powers, respectively. Some changes to the Scheme of Delegations may come about as a result of decisions taken. There are other related procedures and arrangements that sit below Standing Orders but which may be considered for improvement, such as the Petitions Procedure.

1.3 A not dissimilar instruction was given by council on 11 May 2017, at the post-election statutory meetings. That was confined to the remit of Audit & Governance Committee and the number and remits of PDSPs. The resulting report led to the creation of the separate Audit Committee and Governance & Risk Committee, but no changes were made at that time to PDSPs.

1.4 Since then, the council's annual audit report and its Best Value Assurance Report have been dealt with. The Asset Transfer Committee and the Asset Transfer Review Body have been created. The remit of West Lothian Leisure Advisory Committee has been revised and updated. Changes have been agreed to the membership of Development Management Committee and the Local Review Body to address the risk of not having a quorum present due to declarations of interest and withdrawal from meetings.

1.5 A new process for involving elected members in setting council and budget priorities has been agreed. Arrangements for reporting and scrutinising service and financial performance have been revised and implemented. Proposals for Community Choices are in progress, as is a review of the Community Planning Partnership structure. All actions arising from the Best Value Assurance Report have been concluded.

2 Discussions and progress

2.1 The Group Leaders and the independent councillor were consulted before the summer recess in 2018. The Corporate Management Team and Committee Services were consulted too. All were provided with the same information to try to focus discussion. Separate meetings took place. There emerged some areas of common interest and/or concern, although not a consensus on how to address them all. Those common themes were fed back to all involved to inform further discussion and PDSP and committee and council reports.

2.2 The Panel considered a report on 24 August 2018. The report included as an appendix a note of the areas of concern and interest that had merged until that point. The Panel requested that officers consult again with members to see if there were any additional concerns or different views on what changes might be pursued. Those meetings have taken place. There were some further discussions around the points noted previously by the Panel. A small number of additional points emerged through discussions with members and from officers. Those additional points were added to the report to the PDSP on 5 October 2018.

2.3 After discussion at that meeting, officers were requested to circulate additional information to members (a) to identify the issues listed in Appendix 2 that would ultimately require changes to Standing Orders by full council, and (b) to suggest some issues where there seemed to be a consensus for change and so which might be taken forward. That information was provided to relevant members and has now been incorporated into Appendix 2 to this report.

2.4 As advised to the Panel before, the constraints which were explained to councillors during these meetings were as follows:-

- Statutory requirements. Some committees are a requirement of legislation (Asset Transfers) and some are an essential mechanism to make legislation work with appropriate member involvement (Licensing Committee, Development Management Committee)

- Volume and timing of business. Especially in regulatory business, meetings have to be scheduled to make sure that statutory deadlines can be met (Development Management Committee). The volume of business often dictates the frequency of meetings (Council Executive, Licensing Committee)

- Meeting dates and times. The Scheme of Administration now provides that meetings of bodies in the Scheme of Administration should not be timetabled to take place in the long school holiday periods. They also require that they do not start before 9.30 am or after 3.30 pm

- Political composition. This is a political decision subject to change depending on political balance and decisions on party representation

- Advice has been given and accepted at recent meetings on the need and/or desirability for some committees. The advice stands (Asset Transfer committees, Audit Committee and Governance & Risk Committee)

- Council's responses to the 2016/17 external audit report and the Best Value Assurance Report. Actions were agreed in responding to these reports which have already resulted in changes. (West Lothian Leisure Advisory Committee, PDSPs)

- Existing Senior Councillor posts and payments. Again, these are political decisions within statutory limits (14 posts, not counting the Leader or Provost; can have different additional payments but with the total contained within a fixed sum of money)

3 Moving forward

3.1 This report represents another more formal step towards eventual decision-making. There may emerge some areas which can be progressed by officers for decision. There will also be areas of disagreement. Further PDSP reports may be required. Council Executive might be required to direct officers as to what should be taken forward. Final changes required to Standing Orders and the Scheme of Administration will have to be made at full council.

3.2 The contents of Appendix 2 are not necessarily exhaustive and additional ideas may still be brought forward in the course of any further PDSP or committee or council consideration.

E. CONCLUSION

1 Discussion, comments and suggestions will help inform and progress the ongoing review of decision-making arrangements.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

1 Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

2 Council's Standing Orders - http://intranet.westlothian.gov.uk/article/6941/Councils-Standing-Orders-and-Corporate-Governance

3 West Lothian Council – 11 May and 7 June 2017; 16 January, 13 February, 20 March, 22 May and 20 November, all 2018

4 Audit Committee, 8 October 2018

5 Partnership & Resources PDSP, 24 August and 5 October, both 2018

Appendices/Attachments: 1. Decision-making structure

2. Updated common themes and areas for discussion

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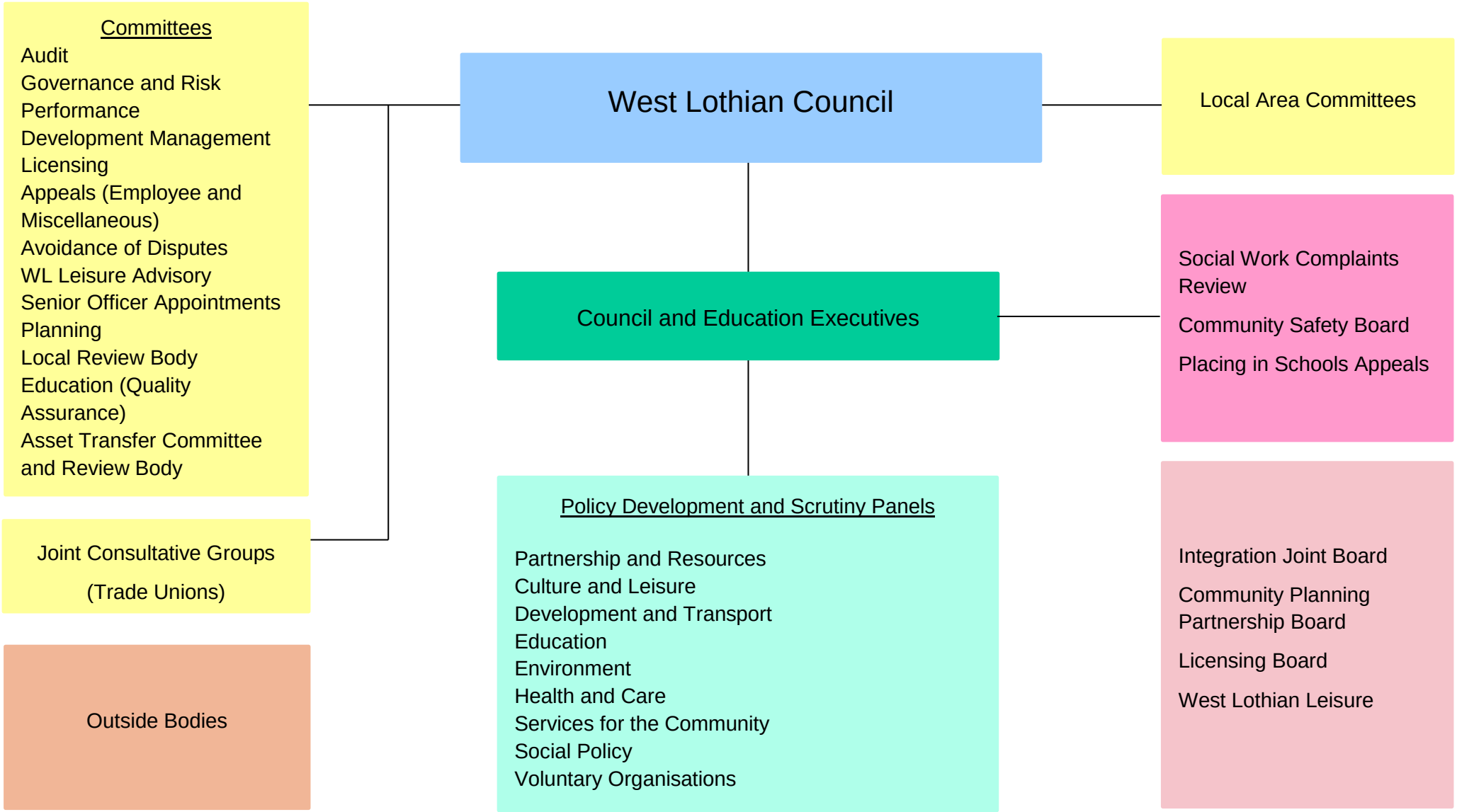
Date of meeting: 1 February 2019

APPENDIX 1

West Lothian Council – Decision-Making Structure



May 2018

APPENDIX 2

The entries highlighted in green are those where no further action is required or proposed, where changes are complete or in hand.

The entries highlighted in amber are those which officers may be able to take forward and either implement or report back with suggestions or recommendations, as indicated for each.

The remaining entries are those where officers require a decision or direction from members before being able to report with suggestions or recommendations.

A. PDSPs

	SUGGESTED CHANGE	FULL COUNCIL, OR NOT	COMMENTS/ACTIONS
1	Service remits should be reviewed to make them work better and the number of PDSPs could (probably) be reduced as a result, by merger or reallocation	Full council, changes required to Standing Orders.	Officers can draft some suggestions but require a clear steer by members.
2	Aligning PDSP remits to management structure may be relevant but should not be the determining factor. Designing PDSPs around corporate priorities or strategies may be worth exploring	Full council, changes required to Standing Orders.	Officers can draft some suggestions but require a clear steer by members.
3	Frequency of meetings should be dictated by the volume of business to be done – no meetings for the sake of having them	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	Can be dealt with by ensuring this is included in the committee report as a consideration when setting the calendar of meetings at Council Executive each March. No further action proposed apart from that.
4	Better/wider community representation and participation in PDSP business	If change to be imposed on all PDSPs then full council, changes required to Standing Orders.	Compulsory changes require direction from members, officers cannot make recommendations. There is potential for drafting a halfway house proposal e.g., each PDSP required to formally and in public review through an agenda item each year the ways in which it engages with

			the community, partners and stakeholders
5	Service performance reporting at PDSPs could be improved – too much information at the same time and same meeting	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No further action necessary or proposed. Full review carried out as an Action from the BVAR. All BVAR actions are complete (confirmed at Audit Committee on 8 October 2018) .
6	Review Chair's powers to change dates and times of PDSP meetings. Consider adding a requirement to consult members first	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Requires direction from members, officers may offer advice.

B. LACs

	SUGGESTED CHANGE	FULL COUNCIL, OR NOT	COMMENTS/ACTIONS
1	LACs need to be revamped and improved or replaced with something better - powers need to be extended, they need to do more than hearing quarterly service performance reports. Abolition without something to replace them would be wrong	Full council, changes required to Standing Orders.	Requires direction from members, officers may offer advice.
2	Better/wider community representation and participation should be looked at, by compulsion through Standing Orders if necessary	If change to be imposed on all LACs then full council, changes required to Standing Orders.	Compulsory changes require direction from members, officers cannot make recommendations. There is potential for drafting a halfway house decision e.g., each LAC required to formally and in public review through an agenda item each year the ways in which it engages with the community, partners and stakeholders
3	Having partners reporting and present	No changes needed to Standing	No further action necessary or proposed, unless

	(e.g., police) is a good thing	Orders.	changes are sought through wider reforms of the LACs.
4	Opportunities for change may come from development of community empowerment and community choices	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No action necessary or proposed through this process. The policy and process will be developed separately via PDSP and committee. That has been started through decisions in November 2018 on the voluntary organisations' grants budget held by PED&R. Any LAC involvement can be considered elsewhere
5	Quarterly meetings are about right	Setting a rule for all LACs will involve a change to the Standing Orders and so full council.	At the moment, LACs set their own meeting dates through an agenda item at a LAC meeting each year. Decision required by members. preparation of calendar of meetings for August 2019 till July 2020 is underway.
6	Local Area Committees should be required to meet in their ward areas	Setting a rule for all LACs will involve a change to the Standing Orders and so full council.	At the moment, LACs set their own meeting dates through an agenda item at a LAC meeting each year and (by implication and practice) can choose their venues. Requires investigation as to whether every ward has suitable premises available. Costs to be considered (room hire, travel, time out of office in travelling). Decision required by members.

C. Other committees

	SUGGESTED CHANGE	FULL COUNCIL, OR NOT	COMMENTS/ACTIONS
1	General acceptance that existing committees have a demonstrable reason and advantages for their existence. Abolition of some and/or merging are not	Any change to number, remits and membership will require changes to the Standing Orders and so full council.	No further action necessary or proposed, no calls for change. Membership and political balance may feature later in political debate regardless, but officers cannot make recommendations.

	realistic options		
2	More effective performance reporting and monitoring (e.g., concentrating on exception reporting)	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No further action necessary or proposed. Full review carried out as an action from the BVAR. All BVAR actions are complete (reported to Audit Committee on 8 October 2018) .
3	Remove or cut down on reports that serve no purpose and which might be progressed differently, such as more delegated powers or keeping "for information" reports to Council Executive and Education Executive to a minimum	No changes needed to Standing Orders	Officers could review what can be achieved and return with advice and suggestions.
4	Consultation responses – do so many Scottish Government consultations need an answer, and do they all have to go to PDSP and then committee?	Changes to Standing Orders would be required if this to be pursued, so full council.	No further action proposed on the basis of general acceptance that decisions affecting policy should be made at committee, not "decided" by PDSP. Without straying into policy matters, officers can be more selective in those that are put to committee.
5	Make sure the meetings timetable reflects the volume and timescales of business to be done and progression of business from PDSP to committee	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	Can be dealt with by ensuring this is included in the committee report as a consideration when setting the calendar of meetings at Council Executive each March. No further action proposed apart from that.
6	Possible need to adjust membership of Development Management Committee and Local Review Body. Six out of nine DMC members withdrew because they could not deal with a report due to their very recent prior involvement in an identical application LRB	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Changes were approved at council on 20 November 2018
7	Additional meetings of Licensing Committee have been required to	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	No disagreement. Officers can therefore prepare proposals for consideration to replicate EAC rules for

	manage pressure of business. At the moment those can only be convened as Special Meetings. That is a restrictive and inflexible procedure. Suggestion to allow Clerk to fix additional meetings in consultation with the Chair, as happens for Employee Appeals Committee. Felt to be more flexible and will meet needs of and fairness to applicants better than current arrangements		Licensing Committee.

D. Standing Orders and related procedures

	SUGGESTED CHANGE	FULL COUNCIL, OR NOT	COMMENTS/ACTIONS
1	Allow "for information" reports at committee to be taken as read, without comment and without officers waiting, unless members intimate before the meeting that they wish to ask questions or hear from officers	Changes required to Standing Orders	Officers could draft suggested changes for consideration. Potential for a halfway house through Chair's use of existing and longstanding power to determine Order of Business. That would not involve changes to Standing Orders.
2	Overall, balance between Chair's powers and duties is fine	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No further action necessary or proposed.
3	SO18 on Formal Questions – identify the purpose of the SO first and consider if it achieves that purpose	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Politically sensitive, officers cannot make recommendations, requires a direction from members.
4	Petitions and deputations – keep the deputations procedure but make it better and easier (e.g., make formal provision for them at PDSP, no lodging papers on the day). Refer petitions automatically	For petitions, no changes required to Standing Orders. For deputations, changes are required to Standing Orders, so full council.	No significant disagreement. Officers can review potential minor changes to tidy up the procedures and return with suggestions. Wider changes will require direction from members.

	and immediately to PDSP rather than committee		
5	On the admin side, consider issuing agendas and reports sooner to allow more time for consideration and consultation.	A change for all committees to the deadline for agendas would require changes to Standing Orders, so full council.	Lead Officers are trying where practicable to issue agendas and reports before the Standing Orders deadline, but that is not always possible. .
6	Consider reducing size and scope of minutes by removing the narrative part and just record the actual decision and anything else judged by the clerk to be significant (e.g., legal advice)	Changes to minutes would not require changes to Standing Orders.	For minutes, officers can review potential minor changes to tidy up the procedures and return with suggestions
7	Review Chair's powers to change dates and times of committee meetings. Consider adding a requirement to consult members first	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Requires direction from members, officers may offer advice but cannot make recommendations on any changes desired by members.
8	If a motion or amendment does not attract a seconder, record the terms of the motion or amendment as well as simple dissent from the decision	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Requires direction from members, officers may offer advice on the approach to and purpose of minutes.
9	Even where there is no need for a vote record who moved and seconded the position which led to the unanimous decision	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Requires direction from members, officers may offer advice on the approach to and purpose of minutes.

E. Others

	SUGGESTED CHANGE	FULL COUNCIL, OR NOT	COMMENTS/ACTIONS
1	Political balance on committees and PDSPs – out of scope	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	No action proposed by officers, but may be introduced and debated later by members themselves, regardless.
2	Involvement of members in outside bodies – no indication that numbers of appointments should be reduced	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No further action necessary or proposed, no apparent desire for change.
3	Extending broadcasting and recording of meetings – depends on success of doing so for full council and on cost	Changes required to Standing Orders, so full council.	Can only be done for meetings in the Council Chamber. Officers could investigate costs and other implications and report back if so directed.
4	Numbers and distribution of senior councillor payments – not in scope except as a consequence of structural changes	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No action proposed by officers, but may be introduced and debated by members themselves and may flow from other changes made elsewhere.
5	Budget-setting process - out of scope, being addressed separately arising from a different council decision (BVAR)	No changes needed to Standing Orders.	No further action necessary or proposed. Full review carried out as an action from the BVAR. All BVAR actions are complete.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

West Lothian Council

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

CONSULTATION ON PRISONER VOTING

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Panel of the Scottish Government's consultation on prisoner voting. The consultation paper sets out the Scottish Government's proposals for ensuring compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights on the matter of prisoners voting.

B. RECOMMENDATION

To consider the Scottish Government's consultation with a view to informing the council's response.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	**Council Values**	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities
II	**Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)**	Representation of the People Act 1983; Scotland Act 2016; Human Rights Act 1998
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)**	Within existing resources
VII	**Consideration at PDSP**	Partnership and Resources PDSP
VIII	**Other consultations**	Elections Team, Criminal Justice

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) found in 2005 that the UK's ban on any convicted prisoners voting in elections breaches their human rights.

The Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee published a report on Prisoner Voting in Scotland on 14 May 2018. The Committee asked the Scottish Government to consider a wide range of views on this issue going forward, and to consult as many stakeholders as possible.

The Scottish Government is consulting on its proposals for ensuring compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights on the matter of prisoners voting. The proposal relates to Scottish Parliament and Scottish local government elections.

The consultation sets out the background to the issue and seeks views on a proposal to allow only those prisoners sentenced to short sentences to vote. The Scottish Government's view is that it is not appropriate to give all prisoners the right to vote.

D2 The Proposals

The options examined in the consultation paper are

- To link disenfranchisement to the length of a prisoner's custodial sentence.
- To make disenfranchisement an additional sentencing option, to be applied at the discretion of the sentencing judge.
- To link disenfranchisement to the type of crime committed.
- To link a prisoner's regaining the right to vote to the length of time remaining on their custodial sentence

In the light of the range of evidence and arguments, the Scottish Government's view is that it is neither appropriate, nor necessary, to enfranchise all prisoners to ensure compliance with the ECHR.

Having considered the Equalities and Human Rights Committee's report, the case-law of the ECtHR and international practice, the Scottish Government proposes that the right balance will be struck by enabling prisoners serving short sentences (which would be defined as a sentence of imprisonment for a length of time which is below a specified maximum threshold) to vote.

Views are sought on what length of sentence would be an appropriate threshold.

D3 Where and How Should Prisoners Vote

The consultation paper proposes that prisoners would not be able to vote in person but would need to register for a postal or a proxy vote in the same way that prisoners on remand currently do. Prisoners would be registered to vote by declaration of local connection to a previous or intended address or local authority, rather than the prison address.

D4 The Consultation Questions

The consultation asks the following

1. Do you think that prisoners' right to vote in Scottish Parliament and Local Government elections should be linked to the length of their sentence? (Yes/No)

2. If your answer to Question 1 is 'no', what would be your preferred approach to extending prisoners' voting rights?

3. If your answer to Question 1 is 'yes', what length of sentence would be appropriate as the eligibility threshold for prisoner voting rights? (12 months or less/6 months or less/another duration)

4. If your answer to Question 3 is 'another duration', please specify this duration.

5. Do you have any comments on the practicalities of prisoner voting?

6. Do you have any other comments that have not been captured in the responses you have provided above?

The full consultation paper is available at:

https://consult.gov.scot/elections/prisoner-voting/user_uploads/consultation-on-prisoner-voting.pdf

Consultation responses should be made by 8 March 2019. Responses can be made online at https://consult.gov.scot/elections/prisoner-voting, or sent to Elections Team, Scottish Government, Area 2W, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG. Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence.

COSLA has also asked for council responses, by 8 February 2019, with a view to informing a collective response to the Government, if possible.

D5 Electoral Administration

Electoral administrators offer no view on whether prisoners should be entitled to vote. It is a matter of policy for legislatures to determine.

The Electoral Commission has previously highlighted the following issues in relation to the practicalities of prisoner voting.

- Any legislation should be commenced no later than six months prior to the beginning of the annual canvass. This would give Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) sufficient time to plan and implement the changes, both for the canvass and for related public awareness activities.

- As there is a relatively short window between the issue of postal ballot packs by Returning Officers and the deadline for returning a completed postal ballot in time for it to be counted. Arrangements for processing prisoners' mail would need to enable prisoners to receive and return their postal ballots within the necessary timeframe.

- If prisoners are entitled to vote by post, there should be necessary safeguards in place so that they can complete their postal ballot pack in secret. This may be achieved through including specific wording in the legislation or receiving an assurance from the prison service this will happen.

- If prisoners are able to vote by proxy they should not be required to have their application attested. This is because by nature of being in prison the voter has a sufficient reason for not being able to attend their polling station.

- If some prisoners become eligible to vote at elections, it will be important to ensure they know that they can vote and how to register and cast a vote. They should also have access to information about the policies of candidates, parties and other campaigners so they can make an informed decision when they vote.

The Electoral Management Board for Scotland is collating feedback on these practical issues from electoral administrators across Scotland, and will respond to the consultation on this perspective.

D6 Impact on council resources

It is not anticipated that there will be any significant impact on council resources. It should be noted that there is already a presumption against short sentences of six months or less, with the Scottish Government committing to increase this to 12 months, so the numbers are likely to remain low. There may be a very small proportionate increase in the number of postal votes to be issued and counted. Awareness-raising activities will have to take account of any change in voting rights. These are minor changes and are expected to be absorbed in existing budgets for both the council and the Returning Officer.

E. CONCLUSION

The Scottish Government is consulting on prisoner voting and a proposal enabling prisoners serving short sentences (which would be defined as a sentence of imprisonment for a length of time which is below a specified maximum threshold) to vote.

The Electoral Management Board for Scotland is co-ordinating a response on the practicalities of prisoner voting for electoral administrators across Scotland.

The Panel should consider whether it wishes to respond to the consultation and if so, recommend a response to the Council Executive.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Graham Hope, Chief Executive

Date of meeting: 1 February 2019

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORKPLAN – WORKING COPY

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
1.	Code of Conduct Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually December 2019
2.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually 5 April 2019
3.	West Lothian Development Trust Annual Report	Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration	Annually 5 April 2019
4.	Annual Complaints Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Annually August 2019
5.	Quarterly Performance Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 October 2019 December 2019
6.	Quarterly Welfare Reform update	Head of Finance and Property Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 August 2019 December 2019
7.	Quarterly Sickness Absence Update	Head of Corporate Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 August 2019 December 2019
8.	Horizon Scan Report	Head of Finance and Property Services	Quarterly 1 February 2019 7 June 2019 August 2019 December 2019
9.	Polling Scheme Review	Chief Executive	5 April 2019
10.	Commercial Property Performance and Rent Strategy	Head of Finance and Property Services	7 June 2019
11.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board minutes	Chief Executive	As available

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

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