



Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel

West Lothian Civic Centre
Howden South Road
LIVINGSTON
EH54 6FF

29 November 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, Livingston** on **Friday 6 December 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 Minutes of Meeting of Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel held on Friday 04 October 2019 (herewith).
5. Lothian Valuation Joint Board - Report by Chief Executive (herewith)
6. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman - Annual Report 2018/19 - Report by Chief Executive (herewith)
7. Councillors' Code of Conduct - Annual Review 2018/19 - Report by Governance Manager and Monitoring Officer (herewith)
8. Quarterly Performance Report - Quarter 2 of 2019/20 - Report by Depute Chief Executive (herewith)

9. Customer Information Service - Reduction in Opening Hours - Report by Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (herewith)
10. Plana Gaidhlig Comhairle Lodainn An Lar/West Lothian Council Gaelic Language Plan - Report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)
11. Construction Charter - Report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)
12. Sickness Absence (1 April 2019 - 30 September 2019) - Report by Head of Corporate Services (herewith)
13. 2019/20 Financial Performance - Month 6 Monitoring Report - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)
14. Property Asset Management - Performance Update - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)
15. Food Poverty Update - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)
16. Horizon Scan - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services and Head of Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration (herewith)
17. Social Security, Benefits and Welfare Reform Update - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)
18. Implementation of the Keep Safe Initiative - Report by Head of Finance and Property Services (herewith)
19. Workplan (herewith)

NOTE **For further information please contact Val Johnston, Tel No.01506 281604 or email val.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk**

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

This form is to help members. It is not a substitute for declaring interests at the meeting.

Members should look at every item and consider if they have an interest. If members have an interest they must consider if they have to declare it. If members declare an interest they must consider if they have to withdraw.

NAME	MEETING	DATE

AGENDA ITEM NO.	FINANCIAL (F) OR NON- FINANCIAL INTEREST (NF)	DETAIL ON THE REASON FOR YOUR DECLARATION (e.g. I am Chairperson of the Association)	REMAIN OR WITHDRAW

The objective test is whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor.

Other key terminology appears on the reverse.

If you require assistance, please ask as early as possible. Contact Julie Whitelaw, Monitoring Officer, 01506 281626, julie.whitelaw@westlothian.gov.uk, James Millar, Governance Manager, 01506 281695, james.millar@westlothian.gov.uk, Carol Johnston, Chief Solicitor, 01506 281626, carol.johnston@westlothian.gov.uk, Committee Services Team, 01506 281604, 01506 281621, committee.services@westlothian.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF KEY TERMINOLOGY FROM REVISED CODE

The objective test

“...whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your discussion or decision making in your role as a councillor”

The General Exclusions

- As a council tax payer or rate payer or in relation to the council's public services which are offered to the public generally, as a recipient or non-recipient of those services
- In relation to setting the council tax.
- In relation to matters affecting councillors' remuneration, allowances, expenses, support services and pension.
- As a council house tenant, unless the matter is solely or mainly about your own tenancy, or you are in arrears of rent.

Particular Dispensations

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- Specific dispensation granted by Standards Commission
- Applies to positions on certain other public bodies (IJB, SEStran, City Region Deal)
- Allows participation, usually requires declaration but not always
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

The Specific Exclusions

- As a member of an outside body, either appointed by the council or later approved by the council
- The position must be registered by you
- Not all outside bodies are covered and you should take advice if you are in any doubt.
- Allows participation, always requires declaration
- Does not apply to quasi-judicial or regulatory business

Categories of “other persons” for financial and non-financial interests of other people

- Spouse, a civil partner or a cohabitee
- Close relative, close friend or close associate
- Employer or a partner in a firm
- A body (or subsidiary or parent of a body) in which you are a remunerated member or director
- Someone from whom you have received a registrable gift or registrable hospitality
- Someone from whom you have received registrable election expenses

MINUTE of MEETING of the PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL held within COUNCIL CHAMBERS, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, on 4 OCTOBER 2019.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Tom Conn (substituting for Councillor Dave King), Kirsteen Sullivan, Peter Johnston, George Paul and Damian Timson

Apologies – Councillors Chris Horne and Dave King

In attendance – Robert Montgomery (Unison Representative), John Sives (Joint Forum of Community Councils Representative), Pat Tedford (Unite Representative)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair ruled that agenda item 11, *Plana Gaidhlig Comhairle Lodainn An Lar / West Lothian Council Gaelic Language Plan*, would be considered as the first substantive item of business.

3. MINUTE (23 AUGUST 2019)

The Panel approved the Minute of its meeting held on 23 August 2019. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

4. MINUTE (12 SEPTEMBER 2019)

The Panel approved the Minute of its meeting held on 12 September 2019. The Minute was thereafter signed by the Chair.

5. PLANA GAIDHLIG COMHAIRLE LODAINN AN LAR/ WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services advising members of the work undertaken to develop a draft Gaelic Language Plan in accordance with the terms of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 as well as the council's requirement to seek feedback on the draft plan via a public consultation exercise.

In response to statutory notice received by the council in August 2017, a draft Gaelic language plan had been developed, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The plan recognised that West Lothian had not been one of Scotland's traditional Gaelic speaking areas and did not have

a large number of people who spoke Gaelic today; it was therefore proposing that the Council would pursue a pragmatic, incremental approach to help develop the Gaelic language in West Lothian.

In response to questions from panel members, officers clarified that there were currently 667 residents in West Lothian who were able to speak Gaelic. It was also noted during discussion that there had been no funding from the government to undertake the consultation and development of the plan, although funding would be provided in different forms to aid implementation.

It was recommended that the panel:

1. Note and provide comment on the contents of the draft Gaelic Language Plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report;
2. Note that the council was required to consult on the terms of the draft Gaelic Language plan for a period of six weeks;
3. Note that the draft plan must be approved by Bòrd na Gaidhlig and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills prior to implementation;
4. Note that the Bòrd na Gaidhlig would receive the council's draft Gaelic Language Plan by 20 December 2019, following the plan being progressed through PDSP and Council Executive.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

6. ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN OPERATIONAL PROPERTIES

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services advising members of the current number of properties considered accessible for people with disabilities and asking members to consider proposed improvements to the current approach.

The report recalled that the Equalities Act 2010 places a duty on service providers to deliver services in a way that does not discriminate in terms age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.

The report went on to list the requirements in the duty in relation to disability as well as the criteria used to record the accessibility of operational properties used to deliver a service to the public. It was noted that steady improvement was being achieved from 2014/15 in relation to the percentage of accessible buildings from which the council delivers a service.

Following a benchmarking exercise with other local authorities,

improvements to the current approach were recommended to ensure that performance could be measured in line with recognised standards and to ensure accessibility would be further improved in buildings accessed by the public. It was proposed that three additional criteria be adopted from 2020/21 onwards to reflect current best practice, relating to access route width, a suitable hearing assistance system for reception areas, and sufficient corridor width for wheelchair users.

Further details were then provided regarding agreed budgets and access audits as well as about induction loop provision standards. An Integrated Relevance Assessment had been completed and was shown in Appendix 1.

During discussion members suggested changes to the report for clarity of wording and content. Members also requested further information on properties currently not fully accessible and that this information be included in the final report to Council Executive.

It was recommended that the panel note and consider the following recommendations, which were intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. To note that the 2018/19 performance in relation to accessible properties indicates 97 out of the 127 properties used for service delivery are considered accessible (76.7%);
2. To agree the proposed amendments to the method for measuring accessibility, moving from seven criteria to ten criteria from 2020/21 onwards;
3. To agree the categories for prioritising any recommended accessibility improvements works;
4. To agree that priority 1 and 2 recommendations in relation to car parking, roads and paths should be the responsibility of Operational Services to undertake and that annual capital budget for accessibility be top sliced to resource this; and
5. To agree the proposed standard for provision of induction loops in council properties.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To forward the report to the next appropriate meeting of the Council Executive seeking approval of the recommendations contained in the report.
3. To note the comments made by members regarding amendments to the final report to Council Executive.

7. REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2020/21 TO 2022/23

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Property Services providing a summary of potential operational efficiency measures and potential additional saving measures within the remit of the Panel for their scrutiny.

The report provided a summary update on the development of the council's revenue financial plan for the remaining three years 2020/21 to 2022/23. As noted at the Partnership and Resources PDSP on 12 September 2019, further information on the potential additional saving measures within the remit of the Panel was provided for scrutiny and consideration. Following scrutiny by PDSPs and the local government finance settlement announcement in December 2019, the options would be considered when preparing an updated three-year revenue budget for determination by council in February 2020.

Taking account of the anticipated changes, the revised budget gap was £6.730 million. Potential operational efficiency saving measures had been identified based on changes already implemented or changes that could be implemented with minimal or no impact on service delivery. Details of those measures were included in Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 expanded on the initial information for potential additional budget saving measures included in the report to the Partnership and Resources PDSP in September. An Integrated Relevance Assessment had been undertaken for all operational efficiency and potential additional budget saving measures, and a copy of each assessment was included in Appendices 1 and 2.

Discussion followed on the proposal to close automated public conveniences (APCs) and member requested details about the locations of APCs to be replaced by comfort partners. The impact of the closure on the transgender community was also discussed, and officers noted that such issues would be considered as part of community engagement. It was suggested that availability of comfort partners be widely advertised, also noting, however, that provision might not be available at certain times.

It was recommended that the Panel:

1. Note the revised estimated budget gap of £6.730 million as the latest planning assumption for the three years 2020/21 to 2022/23;
2. Note and consider officer operational efficiency saving measures with minimal service impact within the Partnership and Resources portfolio which were proposed to be included in the budget report to be considered in February 2020, as set out in Appendix 1;
3. Note and consider the potential additional saving options identified by officers within the Partnership and Resources portfolio, as set out in Appendix 2, noting that these were provided for information at that stage and could potentially be utilised to address any remaining budget gap;

4. Note and consider the Integrated Relevance Assessments undertaken on the potential options, as included in Appendices 1 and 2;
5. Note that, where a full Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) was assessed as being required, that this would be completed in advance of any of those measures being presented to the budget setting meeting and would be included in the budget report;
6. Note that, in relation to revenue budget reduction measures, decisions by members which substantially change or delete decisions made by Council at the annual budget setting meeting each year must be made at full council;
7. Note that the Head of Finance and Property Services would continue to review and refine the budget model assumptions and present a three-year detailed revenue budget for 2020/21 to 2022/23 to council in February 2020 for consideration and approval.

Decision

To note the contents of the report.

8. SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND 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 funding arrangements for the Scottish Welfare Fund, the increasing pressures on the fund and proposed steps to help mitigate the challenges faced.

The report noted that with the ongoing impact of the economic situation, the roll-out of Universal Credit and the delivery of the Welfare Reform programme, support must be provided to help residents to tackle and mitigate the impact of poverty. The Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018 to 2023 set out the council's commitment to tackling poverty for the most vulnerable residents in the community, and the Scottish Welfare Fund was a vital source of emergency assistance available whilst individuals worked towards financial resilience.

West Lothian Council had experienced an increase in SWF applications from the start of the fund in 2013. Comparing the grant applications received in 2013/14 to 2018/19, there had been an 85% increase in the number of applications received, with no comparative increase in budget to cover the increase in demand and the resulting increase in workload. However, the administration of the fund had been under constant review to address demand and there was a continued commitment to further improve the service provided to individuals.

Measures to cope with demand were then discussed, and members requested further information on the specific problems leading to

applications for crisis and community care grants.

It was recommended that the Panel note the contents of the report, the intention to present the paper to the Council Executive and:

1. Note the funding arrangements and continued additional funding from West Lothian Council to help administer the fund;
2. Note the pressure placed on the Scottish Welfare Fund budget as a result of the welfare reform agenda;
3. Note the increasing numbers applying for both crisis and community care grants and that the criteria had been set at 'high' since March 2018; and
4. Note the intention to seek approval from Council Executive to one-off funding to help ease the potential overspend in budget received from the Scottish Government.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To forward the report to the next appropriate meeting of the Council Executive seeking approval of the recommendations contained in the report.

9. REVIEW OF DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS - MISCELLANEOUS CHANGES TO STANDING ORDERS

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Governance Manager presenting proposed changes to Standing Orders in relation to Licensing Committee, Employee Appeals Committee and 'for information' reports at meetings.

The changes proposed concerned additional meetings of Licensing Committee fixed by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair, and the number of members called to Employee Appeals Committee. It was also proposed that reports that were for information be taken as read without comment and without officers staying at a meeting to speak to the reports, unless members intimated that they wished to ask questions or hear from officers. Finally, it was proposed that the Social Work Complaints Review Committee be deleted from the Scheme of Administration as it was no longer required.

It was recommended that the panel note the following recommendations that would be reported to full council for determination:

1. To note that Council Executive on 20 August 2019 instructed officers to bring forward proposals through Partnership & Resources PDSP in relation to decision-making arrangements including minor changes in relation to meetings of Licensing Committee and Employee Appeals Committee and in relation to

the disposal of 'for information' reports at meetings;

2. To agree the proposed changes to Standing Orders for the Regulation of Meetings and the Scheme of Administration set out in the Appendix; and
3. To note that since the Council Executive meeting it has been ascertained that the Social Work Complaints Review Committee is no longer required and so to agree that it be deleted from the Scheme of Administration.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.
2. To forward the report to the next appropriate meeting of full council seeking approval of the recommendations contained in the report.

10. REVIEW OF DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS - STYLE OF MINUTES

The panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Governance Manager proposing a new approach to the preparation of minutes of council, committee and PDSP meetings.

The report set out the statutory requirements for council minutes, noting that some particular types of business, especially regulatory business, might require a specific form or content. The council's Standing Orders provided further details of the council's specific requirements for minutes.

It was noted that there was scope for reducing their size and length of minutes by omitting the narrative based on reports, thus reducing the workload of officers and saving time for those reading the minutes, whilst still meeting legal and good practice requirements. Further details about the proposed approach were included in Appendix 1, while Appendices 2 and 3 contained minute samples in the proposed new format.

It was recommended that the panel consider the following recommendations, which would be reported to Council Executive for determination:

1. To note that Council Executive on 20 August 2019 instructed officers to bring forward proposals through Partnership & Resources PDSP in relation to a new approach to the preparation of minutes of meetings; and
2. To agree the new approach outlined in Appendix 1 whereby minutes will be shorter and easier to read and resulting in a reduction in the resources required for their production.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report.

2. To forward the report to the next appropriate meeting of the Council Executive seeking approval of the recommendations contained in the report.

11. WORKPLAN

A copy of the workplan was circulated for information.

Decision

To note the contents of the workplan.



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

LOTHIAN VALUATION JOINT BOARD

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes the terms of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2019 of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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

VIII Consultations

None required.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

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

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

Appendix 1 provides the minutes of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board meeting held on 23 April 2019.

E. CONCLUSION

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

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

West Lothian Council Code of Corporate Governance.

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Minutes of meeting of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board held on 23 April 2019.

Contact Person: Morgan Hewitt, Project Officer

Email morgan.hewitt@westlothian.gov.uk; Telephone 01506 281080

Graham Hope
Chief Executive
6 December 2019

Lothian Valuation Joint Board

Edinburgh, 23 April 2019

Present:

City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors Key (Convener), Corbett, Doggart, Doran, Gordon, Henderson, Neil Ross (substituting for Councillor Gloyer) and Work.

East Lothian Council – Councillor Goodfellow.

Midlothian Council – Councillor Russell.

West Lothian Council – Councillor McGuire (Vice-Convener).

1. Minute

Decision

To approve the minute of the Lothian Valuation Joint Board of 4 February 2019 as a correct record.

2. Appointments

Midlothian Council had appointed Councillor Kieran Munro to serve on the Joint Board in place of Councillor Winchester who had resigned.

Councillor Winchester also served on the Joint Board's Appointment Committee and the Board was now requested to appoint a member from Midlothian Council to fill that vacancy.

Decision

- 1) To note the appointment of Councillor Munro, Midlothian Council to the Joint Board.
- 2) To appoint Councillor Munro, Midlothian Council to the Joint Board's Appointment Committee.

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

3. Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2022-23 – Progress Update

An update was provided on development of a medium term financial plan for the Joint Board. The plan had been developed in alignment with the Joint Board's Corporate and Service Plan which set out the priorities and commitments it sought to deliver.

Lothian Valuation Joint Board
23 April 2019

Projections had been made for the effect of the anticipated pay award and other inflationary assumptions as well as implementation of the recommendations of the Barclay Review and Individual Electoral Registration.

Following recommendations of the Scottish Budget Review Group, the Scottish Government had indicated that it would bring forward a three year funding settlement for local government from 2020/21 onwards. This would give the Joint Board greater clarity to support medium term financial planning.

Decision

- 1) To note progress on the medium terms financial plan and that further updates would be provided to the Board during 2019/20 in advance of approving a budget for 2020/21.
- 2) To note future cost savings achieved would be required to address cost pressures as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report.
- 3) To note the Assessor and ERO would update the Board during 2019/20 of any changes to Barclay/Individual Electoral Registration with service and financial implications both within the medium term financial plan and the quarterly Board cycle.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)

4. Assessor's Report to the Joint Board

The Assessor presented an update on the service overview and priorities, current issues and the future direction of the Joint Board.

The 2018 annual canvass had concluded on 1 December 2018 with the publication of the electoral register. A return rate for household enquiry forms of 75% had been recorded which compared favourably with previous years – 2016 70% and 2017 74%.

Service priorities over the next three months included:

- 2018 Absent Vote personal identifier refresh
- Electoral engagement strategy
- Continue with other engagement activities
- 2020 annual household canvass
- Council tax
- 2017 revaluation appeal disposal
- Commercial rental evidence (CRE) form issue

Lothian Valuation Joint Board
23 April 2019

- Transformation and cultural change programme
- Governance

Decision

To note the updates.

5. Update on Non-Domestic Rates Reform

Members were provided with an update on progress being made both nationally and locally in respect of Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) Reform following the recommendations arising from the 2017 Barclay Review of Non-Domestic Rating.

Details were also given of projects supporting the implementation of NDR Reform including enhancing ICT systems and process improvement, engagement activities and developing training and performance frameworks.

The current anticipated annual funding levels to support the NDR Reform were as follows – 2019/20 £154,000, 2020/21 £279,000, 2021/22 £350,000, 2022/23 £350,000, 2023/24 £358,000 and 2024/25 £379,000.

Members also considered the latest iteration of the NDR Reform Risk Register which detailed the steps taken to mitigate identified risks and any required further action.

Decision

To note the report.

(References – Lothian Valuation Joint Board 4 February 2019 ((item 6); report by the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer, submitted.)

6. External Audit Plan 2018-19

The External Audit Plan for 2018-19 was presented. Core elements of the Plan included:

- an audit of the 2018/19 annual accounts
- a review, where applicable, of the Joint Board's arrangements for governance and transparency, financial management, financial sustainability and value for money
- any other work requested by Audit Scotland.

Decision

To note the External Audit Plan for 2018/19.

(Reference – report by the Treasurer, submitted)



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN: ANNUAL REPORT 2018 - 2019

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Panel on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's annual report 2018-2019.

B. RECOMMENDATION

1. The Panel is asked to note the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's (SPSO) annual report 2018-2019, and recommend that it be submitted to the Council Executive for information; and,
2. The Panel is asked to note West Lothian Council's performance in relation to the number of complaints received by the SPSO and the outcome; and,
3. The Panel is asked to note the learning from SPSO complaints which is appended to this report for information.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources;
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None.
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The council is required to report against a set of performance indicators developed by the SPSO.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	None.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	The previous annual report was considered by the Partnership and Resources PDSP at its meeting of 7 December 2018.

VIII Other consultations

None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) handles complaints at the final stage for public services in Scotland, including local authorities, the National Health Service (NHS), housing associations, prisons, most water and sewage providers, the Scottish Government and its agencies and departments, universities and colleges and most Scottish Public Authorities. The SPSO investigates complaints when the complainer has exhausted the formal complaints procedure of the relevant authority.

The SPSO has specific powers and responsibilities to publish complaints handling procedures, and monitor and support best practice in complaints handling.

Additionally, the SPSO is the Independent Review Service for the Scottish Welfare Fund with the power to overturn and substitute decisions made by councils on Community Care and Crisis Grant applications.

From 1 July 2020, the SPSO is taking on the role of the Independent National Whistleblowing Officer for the NHS in Scotland.

D2 Local Government – Annual Review of Complaints and Issues

The SPSO reports that the number of complaints received regarding local government has decreased by 12% to 1301 for 2018-19 from 1474 the previous year.

In 2018-19, complaints about local government made up 31% of all complaints to the SPSO, which has decreased from 36% in 2017-18. 34% of complaints received by the SPSO can be attributed to the health sector, making it accountable for the largest proportion of cases received in 2018-19.

The percentage of premature complaints about local government has decreased from 28% in 2017-18 to 24% in 2018-19. This is in line with the decline in the overall rate of premature complaints across all sectors from 24% to 20%.

This year, the number of upheld complaints for local government increased slightly from 58% in 2017-18 to 59% in 2018-19.

D3 West Lothian Council – Statistics and Update

The SPSO provides each council with information specific to that local authority to consider. The SPSO's Annual Letter is attached as Appendix 1. Appendix 2 provides tables of statistics about complaints to the SPSO regarding West Lothian Council in the past two years. The tables illustrate complaints received by subject area and complaints determined by outcome for 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Appendix 2 highlights that the total number of complaints received about West Lothian Council is 54, which has decreased from the 71 complaints received in 2017-18. As detailed in Appendix 2, the greatest number of complaints about West Lothian Council was in relation to Housing, which is in line with the sector as a whole. Social Work and Planning were ranked the second and third most complained about areas in West Lothian, respectively.

There were 18 complaints about West Lothian Council which were dealt with at the advice stage as they were not suitable for the SPSO, whilst a further 33 were

considered to have had an early resolution. This is comparable to the 34 complaints considered to have had an early resolution in 2017-18. The percentage of premature complaints has decreased to 20% in 2017-18 in comparison to 23% in 2017-18.

There were four complaints regarding West Lothian Council which were fully investigated by the SPSO, compared to 12 in 2017-18. Of these complaints which were investigated, one was fully upheld, and the remaining three were not upheld. This is in comparison to 2017-18 when four complaints were fully upheld.

D4 Scottish Welfare Fund

Appendix 3 provides details about the requests for reviews that the SPSO received for Scottish Welfare Fund applications by applicants in the West Lothian Council area. The SPSO took decisions on 14 of the 20 enquiries received. Cases are recorded as upheld when the SPSO changes the council's decision. Three of the 14 cases were upheld. This is in comparison to four out of five cases being upheld in 2017-18.

The SPSO record suggestions for improvement (findings) on all cases they take a decision on, regardless of whether they are upheld or not. The SPSO made 16 suggestions for improvement across the 14 decisions taken.

D5 Improving Complaints Standards

In 2018-19 the SPSO consulted with public bodies about their experience of the Model Complaints Handling Procedures (MCHP). The analysis of responses is being undertaken in 2019-20 and the SPSO are aiming to have an updated MCHP ready for implementation from 1 April 2020.

D6 SPSO Recommendations

The SPSO's Annual Letter for 2018-19 notes the continued focus by the SPSO on helping authorities improve public services through learning from complaints. One of the ways this is progressed is through the recommendations made by the SPSO to local authorities.

Appendix 4 sets out the SPSO recommendations and service improvement actions for complaints closed by the Ombudsman in 2018-19.

Learning from SPSO decisions are also reported to the council's Complaints Steering Board and Performance Committee on a quarterly basis.

E CONCLUSION

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

The SPSO reports that the total number of complaints received about West Lothian Council has decreased to 54 in 2018-19, with one fully upheld complaint after SPSO investigation. It should also be noted that 20% of complaints were decided as having been reported prematurely.

The SPSO continue to expect organisations to be proactive in ensuring that opportunities for learning from complaints is embedded in governance structures. A report will continue be submitted quarterly to the council's Complaints Steering Board and quarterly to Performance Committee, outlining the learning from SPSO decisions, which have been implemented by the council in response to complaints

made.

F BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman: Annual Report 2018-2019
- Partnership and Resources PDSP, 7 December 2018

Appendices/Attachments: 3

Appendix 1: Letter to West Lothian Council from Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

Appendix 2: Tables of statistics to illustrate West Lothian Council complaints received by subject area and complaints determined by outcome for 2017-18 and 2018-19

Appendix 3: 2018-19 SWF Review Statistics

Appendix 4: Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning 2018-19

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

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

Date of meeting: 6 December 2019

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

17 October 2019

Dear Mr Hope

Annual letter from SPSO

1. I am pleased to send you my annual letter, which includes statistics relating to cases we handled about your organisation in 2018-19 and news about developments in the SPSO. I hope you find it useful.
2. The statistics are to inform you about service issues the public have complained to me about. This is so that you can use it with your own complaints performance data to build a picture of what drives dissatisfaction with your organisation and whether there are systemic changes that you can make.
3. Learning from complaints is an intrinsic part of complaints handling and should be embedded in governance structures, to promote an organisational 'valuing complaints' culture. I encourage you to share the enclosed information widely within your organisation, especially with staff who have service delivery or service improvement responsibilities.

2018-19 complaints overview

4. This year, the health sector accounted for the largest proportion of cases received by the SPSO. This is primarily due to a decrease in complaints received about local authorities compared to last year. The decrease in cases is likely to be attributable to a combination of effective complaints handling within local authorities and services now being delivered by Health and Social Care Partnerships for which we have seen a large increase in complaints.

Complaints handling advice

5. During 2018-19 we provided support and guidance on enquiries from organisations on 259 occasions. By volume this was an increase of just over 13% on the previous year when we responded to 228 such requests. However, over several years we have seen a reduction in the requests we receive (for example, during 2015–16 we responded to



621 requests). As the model complaints handling procedure has become more firmly established, and we see a culture change towards valuing complaints and the improvement opportunities they provide, it is encouraging to see the number of requests for advice reduce.

Compliance with recommendations

6. We set a deadline for, and follow up, all recommendations until we are satisfied they have been implemented. Public bodies and complainants have the opportunity to comment on the timescales we set at both provisional decision and draft report stages.
7. Ninety-four percent of our recommendations were implemented within three months of the target date set. This is good performance by public bodies but we will continue to monitor compliance and will engage through our Support and Intervention Policy with organisations that consistently fail to meet timescales.

Provisional decisions

8. As you are aware from my letter of 28 June 2019, we changed our approach to closing complaints where we investigate and issue a decision letter rather than a report. Since February 2019, we share with you and the complainant our provisional views, giving you opportunity to comment if you think we have made factual inaccuracies/mistakes and/or you have new information that impacts on the provisional view. This makes our decision-making more transparent and gives you an opportunity to be involved.
9. Thank you to the organisations who have provided feedback on the change in our approach; it has been very helpful.
10. It is important that your organisation responds to provisional decisions, if only to say you have no comments, as it can make a difference to the outcome and the wording of our final decision. Where we have upheld a complaint against an organisation and made recommendations to which the organisation agrees, it is very helpful to be told this, as we will reflect it in our final decision. Not only does this demonstrate positive outcomes and approaches, it also helps you to display your commitment to learning from complaints.
11. We are still finding that some organisations are sending a lot of information at this provisional decision stage, which we would have expected them to have sent when we notified them of the investigation, and which we would have expected them to be aware of when responding to the initial complaint at Stage 2. We would ask you to be mindful of this, and to make sure your organisation provides us with relevant information during the course of our investigation.

Model Complaints Handling Procedures (MCHP) review

12. In 2018-19, we consulted with public bodies about your experience of the MCHP in order to improve public sector complaints handling. Responses are being analysed and will inform a review of the MCHP.
13. Thank you to everyone for your constructive feedback and comments.



14. The analysis of responses is being undertaken during 2019-20. Emerging findings include:
 - Satisfaction with the MCHP is high
 - 84% said the MCHP definition of a complaint is helpful
 - SPSO guidance and tools are useful but we need to increase awareness of and access to the full range
 - Not all performance indicators are helpful. Feedback indicated a need for clarity about the requirement to test customer satisfaction, and about authorising extensions to timescales
 - More guidance about the use of social media to submit complaints would be helpful
 - The MCHP format and the website could be more intuitive and user-friendly, for example with greater use of hyperlinks within the documents.
15. Work is continuing into the 2019-20 year, with the aim of having an updated MCHP for implementation from 1 April 2020.

Support and Intervention Policy

16. As you will know, we developed our [Support and Intervention Policy](#) in 2018-19 and it went live in April 2019. The policy formalises the mechanisms we already use to offer support to organisations and take intervention when required. It offers more clarity to public bodies regarding what to expect from us, how and when.
17. Support action under the policy gives guidance and support to organisations to help them improve their practice or address poor performance.
18. Intervention action is more formal and will usually require the public body to take specific action to improve performance in relation to complaints handling, handling of Scottish Welfare Fund reviews or engagement with SPSO investigations and reviews.
19. This does not replace the advice and feedback we already give as part of our handling of complaints, nor does the policy prevent public bodies asking us for help and advice; but makes it clearer how we use our statutory powers in a more structured way to promote improvement.
20. More information about the Support and Intervention Policy is available [on our website](#).

Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF)

Overview

21. This year we saw a 34% increase from 2017-18 in total contacts with our service, largely accounted for by signposting enquires. We discovered this was primarily down to SPSO's telephone number appearing more prominently than some councils' contact details on online search engines.



22. There was a 7% increase in decisions we made. This shows that more applicants are reaching the final stage of the review process than ever before, but raises the question of why they feel the need to seek a review.
23. We disagreed with the council's decision in 51% of community care grant reviews and 32% of crisis grant reviews across Scotland. This is a marginal reduction on our uphold rates last year of 52% and 35% respectively. While this is a small, but encouraging, step in the right direction, it suggests there is scope for further learning to improve the accuracy of decision-making.

Learning and improvement

24. We continue to promote and support the development of a culture where learning and improvement is embedded in SWF practice. This year our SWF team delivered three regional workshops for council decision-makers in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow. These focused on hot topics for decision-makers, evaluating evidence and reasoned decision-making. We also welcomed visits from councils to enhance understanding of our role and deliver information on our findings.
25. This coming year, we plan to introduce an online tool to support decision-making as a further measure for learning and improvement.

SWF Guidance

26. We continue to highlight areas of the statutory guidance that would benefit from change as a result of findings from our casework. This year's recommendations included an emphasis on more structured, logical decision-making to promote accuracy in council's decision-making. We also noted our continued disappointment about poor accessibility to the fund, particularly in relation to the first tier review having to be in writing and around examples where there has been a failure to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.

And finally ...

27. Please contact me if you have any questions or comments, or would like to discuss any aspect of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Agnew
Scottish Public Services Ombudsman



CC: Cllr Lawrence Fitzpatrick
Mr Finlay Brown
Ms Kirsty Rodger

Local Authority Complaints Received 2018-19

	West Lothian Council					
Subject Group	West Lothian Council	Rank	Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Rank	Complaints as % of total
Housing	13	1	24.07%	251	1	19.29%
Social Work	9	2	16.67%	206	2	15.83%
Planning	7	3	12.96%	130	4	9.99%
Education	5	4	9.26%	143	3	10.99%
Roads & Transport	4	5=	7.41%	111	5	8.53%
Environmental Health & Cleansing	4	5=	7.41%	101	6	7.76%
Legal & Admin	4	5=	7.41%	67	8	5.15%
Finance	3	8	5.56%	98	7	7.53%
Land & Property	2	9	3.70%	16	10	1.23%
Recreation & Leisure	1	10	1.85%	26	9	2.00%
Building Control	0	-	0.00%	15	11	1.15%
Personnel	0	-	0.00%	7	12	0.54%
Other	0	-	0.00%	6	13	0.46%
Economic Development	0	-	0.00%	5	14	0.38%
Valuation Joint Boards	0	-	0.00%	3	15=	0.23%
Welfare Fund - Community Care Grants	0	-	0.00%	3	15=	0.23%
National Park Authorities	0	-	0.00%	2	17	0.15%
Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	0	-	0.00%	1	18	0.08%
Subject unknown or Out of Jurisdiction	2	-	3.70%	110	-	8.46%
Total	54		100.00%	1,301		100.00%
Complaints as % of Sector						
	4.2%			100.0%		

Local Authority Complaints Received 2017-18

	West Lothian Council					
Subject Group	West Lothian Council	Rank	Complaints as % of total	Sector Total	Rank	Complaints as % of total
Housing	23	1	32.39%	316	1	21.44%
Social Work	11	2	15.49%	254	2	17.23%
Education	8	3	11.27%	151	3	10.24%
Roads & Transport	6	4	8.45%	104	7	7.06%
Environmental Health & Cleansing	5	5	7.04%	116	5	7.87%
Planning	4	6	5.63%	134	4	9.09%
Finance	1	7=	1.41%	112	6	7.60%
Legal & Admin	1	7=	1.41%	71	8	4.82%
Recreation & Leisure	1	7=	1.41%	24	9	1.63%
Land & Property	1	7=	1.41%	17	10	1.15%
Personnel	1	7=	1.41%	12	12	0.81%
Building Control	0	-	0.00%	16	11	1.09%
Welfare Fund - Community Care Grants	0	-	0.00%	7	13	0.47%
Other	0	-	0.00%	6	14	0.41%
Consumer Protection	0	-	0.00%	4	15=	0.27%
National Park Authorities	0	-	0.00%	4	15=	0.27%
Fire & Police Boards	0	-	0.00%	3	17	0.20%
Economic Development	0	-	0.00%	2	18=	0.14%
Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	0	-	0.00%	2	18=	0.14%
Subject Unknown or Out Of Jurisdiction	9	-	12.68%	119	-	8.07%
Total	71		100.00%	1,474		100.00%
Complaints as % of Sector						
	4.8%			100.0%		

Local Authority Complaints Determined 2018-19

Stage	Outcome Group	2018-19	
		West Lothian Council	Sector Total
Advice	Not duly made or withdrawn	9	255
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	0	2
	Premature	9	244
	Total	18	501
Early Resolution	Not duly made or withdrawn	1	45
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	1	70
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	3	47
	Outcome not achievable	4	71
	Premature	2	55
	Proportionality	20	358
	Resolved	2	26
	Total	33	672
Investigation	Fully upheld	1	34
	Some upheld	0	23
	Not upheld	3	40
	Resolved	0	1
	Total	4	98
Total Complaints		55	1,271

Total Premature Complaints	11	299
Premature Rate	20.0%	23.5%
Total Investigation Decisions	4	97
Total Upholds	1	57
Uphold Rate	25.0%	58.8%

Local Authority Complaints Determined 2017-18

Stage	Outcome Group	2017-18	
		West Lothian Council	Sector Total
Advice	Not duly made or withdrawn	14	253
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	0	3
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	0	5
	Premature	14	381
	Total	28	642
Early Resolution	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	38
	Out of jurisdiction (discretionary)	2	99
	Out of jurisdiction (non-discretionary)	11	113
	Outcome not achievable	3	85
	Premature	3	53
	Proportionality	14	314
	Resolved	1	29
	Total	34	731
Investigation	Fully upheld	4	47
	Some upheld	1	49
	Not upheld	6	69
	Not duly made or withdrawn	0	1
	Resolved	1	3
	Total	12	169
Total Complaints		74	1,542

Total Premature Complaints	17	434
Premature Rate	23.0%	28.1%
Total Investigation Decisions	11	165
Total Upholds	5	96
Uphold Rate	45.5%	58.2%

Old Uphold Rate Calculation		
Total Cases 'Fit for SPSO'	12	169
Total Upholds	5	96
Uphold Rate	41.7%	56.8%

2018-19 SWF Review Statistics

The statistics below provide information about the reviews received from applicants in your area and compare these to the overall picture of reviews across Scotland. For comparison purposes, we have also included last year's figures.

We record cases as upheld where we change the council's decision. Uphold rates are therefore a useful indicator of how councils are performing as they illustrate how regularly we assess that a different decision should have been made. For councils with very low numbers of SPSO reviews, the uphold rates and comparisons are likely to be less representative. However, recording the uphold rates helps create a baseline for comparison in future years.

The average uphold rates in 2018-19 were (last year's figures in brackets):

- 32% (35%) for crisis grants
- 51% (52%) for community care grants.

The tables below summarise how we handled enquiries, cases that we closed before decision and decision outcomes. Examples of the reasons for closing applications before making a decision include where applicants have contacted us before asking for a first tier review, before receiving their first tier decision (premature) or have chosen to withdraw their review request (not duly made or withdrawn).

Authority	West Lothian Council
Total enquiries	20 (7)

West Lothian Council – cases closed pre-decision			
Outcome	Community Care	Crisis	Total
Not duly made or withdrawn	0 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)
Out of Jurisdiction	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)
Premature	2 (1)	3 (0)	5 (1)
Total	2 (2)	4 (0)	6 (2)

Application type	Total decision	Not upheld	Upheld	Uphold rate	National average uphold rate
Crisis grant	12 (3)	11 (1)	1 (2)	8% (67%)	32% (35%)
Community care grant	2 (2)	0 (0)	2 (2)	100% (100%)	51% (52%)
Total	14 (5)				

Suggestions for improvement

Where we identify potential or actual failings, we record suggestions for improvement which we highlight directly to councils. We do this for all cases, whether or not we uphold them. For transparency, we include these in our decision letters to applicants.

We have outlined the findings we have recorded for your council broken down by the 'findings subject' and whether or not they were material to the decision. For clarity, findings which are material to the decision cause us to disagree with the overall decision, whereas non-material findings are general suggestions for improvement.

This information provides detail around the areas of your casework where we considered improvements could be made, and we anticipate this will be used for identifying areas of focus for learning. Examples of our findings are available via our online case directory at www.spsso.org.uk/scottishwelfarefund/case-summaries. Councils have also been provided with detailed case by case feedback throughout the year.

We hope you find this helpful. If you would like to discuss this with them, or how we might provide learning support, please get in touch with the SWF team on 0800 014 7299.

Authority	West Lothian Council
Total findings	16 (10)

Findings: Material to Decision		
Subject	%	Total
Guidance not followed	33.33% (40%)	1 (2)
Insufficient information/ inquisitorial failure	33.33% (20%)	1 (1)
New information provided	33.33% (40%)	1 (2)
Total	*99.99% (100%)	3 (5)

Findings: Not Material to Decision		
Subject	%	Total
Communication issues – written	69.2% (60%)	9 (3)
Guidance not followed correctly	23.1% (0%)	3 (0)
Other	0% (40%)	0 (2)
Positive feedback	7.7% (0%)	1 (0)
Total	100% (100%)	13 (5)

**percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding*

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 – Q4 2018/19

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 2018/19

Service and SPSO ref.	Outcome	Customer Complaint(s)	SPSO Recommendation / Areas to consider
Education Services (SPSO Response date: 15.05.18)	Not progressed	You have complained about the council's response to your concerns about your daughter's previous primary school, who you believe failed to take appropriate action to stop your daughter being bullied. You have told us that you believe the school have lied in the complaints investigation, as you disagree with the accuracy of what is said in the response.	1. No Recommendation
Education Services (SPSO Response date: 10.05.18)	Not progressed	You highlighted two sets of incidents in your complaint: one involving a group of primary six boys that took place during the week beginning 20 November 2017 and the second involving a group of girls from your son's class that took place on 13 December 2017.	1. No Recommendation
Education Services (SPSO Response date: 13.06.18)	Not progressed	You complained about how the council treated the members of the Bathgate Academy Sports Trust (BAST) who were until recently involved in the management of the sports facilities at the school.	1. No Recommendation
Housing Customer and Building Services (SPSO Response date: 23.05.18)	Not progressed	You told us that your CO2 detector has was activating repeatedly with false positives. You said you reported this to the council who investigated and did not find a fault. They replaced the system of detectors in December 2017, but you said this has not resolved the issue. You said that you were told by council staff to solve the problem by turning off your hearing aid. You told us you would like the whole system replaced with one from another manufacturer, as you believe this will resolve the problem.	1. No Recommendation

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 – Q4 2018/19

Service and SPSO ref.	Outcome	Customer Complaint(s)	SPSO Recommendation / Areas to consider
Housing Customer and Building Services (SPSO Response date: 09.04.18)	Not progressed	<p>You complained about the council's failure to deal with the actions of your neighbours in xxxx Road. You said your neighbours have been using strobe-like torches and powerful outside lights which have been shining into your property since 16 January 2018. You said you suffer from epilepsy and your neighbours are doing this deliberately as they are aware of this. You said you have recorded the times, events and names of those responsible as well as taking photographs which support your view.</p> <p>You said the council dismissed your complaints about this without looking at the evidence. You said you raised the issue with Police Scotland and Shelter who felt this constituted antisocial behaviour. You said you do not have photo-sensitive epilepsy but you have had two seizures due to the stress your neighbours have caused.</p>	1. The council to arrange a meeting with you to look at the evidence you feel they have not considered.
Housing Customer and Building Services (SPSO Response date: 23.04.18)	Not progressed	I understand that your complaint relates to the application for housing that Mr X currently has open with the Council. Mr X does not feel that information provided by his previous Consultant Psychiatrist has been given a reasonable amount of consideration when the Council have assessed his application. In addition to this, he has complained about poor communication on the part of the Council.	1. No Recommendation
Housing Customer and Building Services (SPSO Response date: 17.04.18)	Not progressed	The complaint relates to the sloped area between your garden path and driveway, which the council are refusing to fix, and which you consider is unsafe.	1. No Recommendation
PEDRS (SPSO Response date: 16.06.18)	Not progressed	1. The complaint related to several planning application and advice the complainant received from the Planning Services.	1. No Recommendations
Social Policy (SPSO Response date: 25.05.18)	Not progressed	<p>1. Failed to provide a reasonable level of care to your mother</p> <p>2. Unreasonably communicated with you about your mother's care.</p>	1. Issue an apology for the other failings they (the council) identified in their initial complaint response.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 – Q4 2018/19

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q2 2018/19

Service and SPSO ref.	Outcome	Customer Complaint(s)	SPSO Recommendation / Areas to consider
Education Services (SPSO Response date: 29.08.18)	Not Upheld	The school failed to take the appropriate action following the incident in the playground in November 2017; (not upheld); The school failed to keep the parent informed weekly as agreed (not upheld).	Complaints handling: I note the council advised the parent that the complaint would be responded to within 20 working days, given the complexity of the concerns raised. While I agree that the complaint was investigated at stage 2 of the complaints procedure, care should be taken to ensure it is made clear that it is stage 2 of the complaints procedure.
Finance and Property Services (SPSO Response date: 22.08.18)	Not Progressed	You complained about the amount of council tax the council does not collect every year.	2. No Action
HCBS (SPSO Response date: 04.07.18)	Not Progressed	Your complaint was about the council's failure to resolve an issue with the water pressure at your home for around seven months.	2. No Action
HCBS (SPSO Response date: 17.08.18)	Not Progressed	I understand that your complaint relates to the back door of your property. You state that you have reported to the council that the back door lets in draughts but that they have not taken appropriate steps to resolve this.	1. No Action
Operational Services (SPSO Response date: 30.07.18)	Not Progressed	You told us that your wife's car was damaged whilst driving over a pothole on XXXX on 21 December 2017. You made a claim to the council for the cost of the damage to your wife's car. A representative from the council's insurers, Gallagher and Bassett, told you that they do not consider the council to be legally responsible as there were no defects reported at the last inspection of the road. In your complaint to this office, you told us the responses you received from the council was subject to time delays.	2. No Action
Social Policy (SPSO Response date: 30.07.18)	Not Upheld	The Council failed to assess the suitability of the West Lothian service user to reside at XXXX (not upheld); And The Council did not remove the service user timeously from XXXXX (not upheld).	1. No Action

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 – Q4 2018/19

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q3 2018/19

Service and SPSO ref.	Outcome	Customer Complaint(s)	SPSO Recommendation / Areas to consider
Finance and Property Services (SPSO Response date: 19.10.18)	Not progressed	The council unreasonably pursued you for council tax arrears.	No Recommendations
HCBS (SPSO Response date: 12.11.18)	Not progressed	The council have unreasonably failed to consider your circumstances when applying restrictions on your contact under their Unacceptable Actions Policy (UAP).	No Recommendations
Operational Services (SPSO Response date: 12.10.18)	Not progressed	The council have unreasonably failed to provide you with substantive evidence to support claims that you exhibited unacceptable behaviour towards council staff members.	No Recommendations
PEDR (SPSO Response date: 29.10.18)	Not progressed	a) Failure to consider relevant planning objections; and b) You said you think applications receiving one or more material objections should be put to Committee.	No Recommendations
PEDR (SPSO Response date: 29.10.18)	Not progressed	You were not informed amended plans had been submitted and that building works had commenced on site although no planning permission had been issued.	No Recommendations
Social Policy (SPSO Response date: 04.10.18)	Complaint withdrawn	A complaint relating to West Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership. No further detail available.	No Recommendations
Social Policy (SPSO Response date: 23.11.18)	Not progressed	Complaint is about the decision by the care service MEARS to withdraw their service and for the delay in providing you with a replacement service.	No Recommendations
Social Policy (SPSO Response date: 23.11.18)	Not progressed	You were convicted of two counts under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. You were sentenced to 12 months in cumulo (12 months for both charges). However you are concerned that this information has been incorrectly recorded, as you being sentenced to 12 months on each charge to run concurrently.	No Recommendations

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q4 2018/19

Data label: Public

4

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 – Q4 2018/19

Service and SPSO ref.	Outcome	Customer Complaint(s)	SPSO Recommendation / Areas to consider
Education Services (SPSO Response Date: 30.01.19)	Not progressed	<p>PART 1: the Council unreasonably failed to apply for outreach support through literacy base, the Council unreasonably failed to carry out dyslexia identification and record a response,</p> <p>PART 2: the Council unreasonably failed to investigate your concerns about their response to your request for a dyslexia assessment, the Council unreasonably concluded their investigation without looking at Skyla's education record, and the Council's response to your complaints unreasonably failed to identify that the data in the parents views section of the Assessment of Wellbeing Form were not your views.</p>	No Recommendations
Operational Services (SPSO Response Date: 18.01.19)	Not progressed	1. The Council have unreasonably failed to ensure that the access road to Standhill football ground is maintained to an adequate standard.	No Recommendations
Operational Services (SPSO Response Date: 23.01.19)	Not progressed	<p>Customer unhappy that the Council undertook work to replace light units in their street. The previous lights had shed light all around, however the new design focuses the light in a downward beam.</p> <p>The areas where the customer would walk to his home is now in darkness, including the driveway to their house.</p>	No Recommendations
PEDR (SPSO Response Date: 21.02.19)	Not Upheld	Complaint about the handling of a planning application which was an extension to a neighbouring property.	No Recommendations

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) Complaint Recommendations and Service Learning Q1 – Q4 2018/19

<p>Social Policy (SPSO Response Date: 29.01.19)</p>	<p>Upheld</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council failed to investigate your complaint reasonably; (upheld) 2. The Council failed to administer the CRC appropriately; (upheld) 3. Following the CRC the Council issued a decision letter which did not reflect the findings or views of the Panel; (upheld) and 4. The Council failed to communicate with you reasonably following the CRC hearing. (upheld) 	<p>The Council should apologise unreservedly to you and your family for failing to handle your complaint reasonably or appropriately.</p> <p>The Council should reflect on the failings identified by this investigation to ensure that all relevant learning has been fed back to staff.</p> <p>Written evidence that all the recommendations of the CRC have been complied with.</p>
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PARTNERSHIP & RESOURCES PDSP

COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT – ANNUAL REVIEW 2018/19

REPORT BY GOVERNANCE MANAGER AND MONITORING OFFICER

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Panel of some of the significant issues in relation to the Councillors' Code of Conduct in 2018/19.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

To note and consider the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:-

1. To note the summary of the issues arising in relation to the Councillors' Code of Conduct in 2018/19
2. To note that the annual presentation to members on the Code will take place before the council meeting on 28 January 2020

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Being honest, open and accountable
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 and related regulations – members' duties to observe and uphold the Code; council's duties to promote the Code and assist members in its observance
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	N/a
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	N/a
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	N/a
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	N/a
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Ongoing
VIII	Other consultations	Corporate Management Team

D. TERMS OF REPORT

1 Background

- 1.1 The maintenance of high ethical standards in public life is crucial to public confidence in public institutions. The Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 created a statutory framework which applies to local authorities and to other devolved public bodies. A statutory Code of Conduct for Councillors (the Code) was approved by the Scottish Parliament, first in 2003, then in 2010 and amended in 2018. It is supplemented by statutory guidance (refreshed in September 2017 and July 2018) and a growing library of Advice Notes on specific issues. The Code is enforced through complaints to the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland (the ESC) and onwards to the Standards Commission (the Commission). Members found to have breached the Code may be censured, suspended or disqualified from being a councillor. Complaints alleging breaches of the Code can also be submitted to the council. There is an internal procedure for carrying out those investigations (revised in 2019) which may divert an issue away from the more formal path but which does not provide a substitute for it.
- 1.2 The council's duties are to raise awareness of the Code; to promote the observance by members of high standards of conduct; to assist members to comply with the Code; and to provide induction and training sessions.
- 1.3 Members' obligations include compliance with the Code and its underpinning statutory rules, having regard to the statutory guidance; attending training and induction sessions; knowing and understanding the Code and Guidance; promoting and supporting the Code and encouraging compliance by others. Compliance with the Code is the personal responsibility of each member.

2 The ESC's year

- 2.1 Table 1 in the appendix summarises the complaints received by the ESC during the year. A complaint and a case can involve more than one respondent. The first and higher figure in the table is a count of the complaints received. The second and lower figure (in brackets) is the number of cases processed once complaints against the same member or members are amalgamated. A case can have a different outcome for each member subject to the same complaint.
- 2.2 These are some highlights from the ESC's year and from the complaint figures:-
 - The number of complaints received increased from 146 to 173 (most of the increase from members of the public). The number of active cases during the year was almost unchanged
 - The number of cases completed during the year increased from 90 to 109. There remained a back-log of uncompleted cases at the year end, up from 20 to 28 but the anticipated increase in investigative capacity (see D2.6, below) should reduce that in future years
 - Complaints about decision-making on planning applications continued a downward trend from the previous three years
 - Complaints about registration and declaration of interests increased

- Complaints about disrespect increased by the greatest proportion. However, the number is at the same level as it was for the years before 2017/18. The ESC last year expressed the view that the sharp drop in 2017/18 was a blip due to the local government elections in May 2017. That seems to have been borne out this year by the return to more typical numbers
- 2.3 The ESC's practice adopted last year of publishing only a small selection of anonymised decision summaries continues. That makes it harder to keep track of and comment on trends amongst "the ones that got away". For the first time, there is no insight provided in the annual report either about the subject-matter of the breach cases referred on to the Commission this year.
- 2.4 In addition, the year-end reporting of statistics by the ESC no longer provides a breakdown between complaints against councillors and complaints against other public body members. That is regrettable and is surprising in the face of the Commission's concerns that misconduct in devolved public bodies was going unreported or under-reported. It can be safely assumed that councillor complaints formed the vast majority of new complaints and cases, if not all of them, but the annual report provides no statistical breakdown to be able to tell.
- 2.5 To add to those changes, the categorisation by the ESC of cases referred on to the Commission and cases rejected has ceased. This has further diluted the available information and restricted the ability to draw conclusions about patterns and trends of disposal of complaints.
- 2.6 Caroline Anderson has been the ESC since 1 April 2019. She has arrived with a "new broom" approach. She states bluntly in her annual report that the complaints handling function she inherited was over-stretched and operating sub-optimally. By incurring some unanticipated cost and spending she has overseen a restructuring of the complaints-handling side of her role, including doubling the hours available for investigative work whilst keeping the FTE staffing the same, introducing a complaints case management system, and improving the time taken to close investigations.

3 The Commission's year

3.1 Some of the highlights from the Commission's activities for the year as follows:-

- Concluding and publishing a survey of members of devolved public bodies to ascertain if misconduct was unreported or under-reported
- The average end-to-end time for disposing of a case referred by the ESC was reduced from 12 weeks to 10.5 weeks
- To add to the single case carried forward from 2017/18, eleven cases were referred by the ESC. The Commission decided that all of those would proceed to a hearing
- Eight hearings were conducted (compared to 12 in 2017/18) leaving a back-log of four cases at the year end
- The eight cases heard were all about councillors and a breach was found to have taken place in all of them

- 3.2 The sanctions it imposed in the eight breach decisions comprised six censures; one full suspension (from all meetings with possible loss of senior councillor payments); and one partial suspension (from designated committees). No disqualifications were imposed.
- 3.3 Table 2 in the appendix summarises the Commission cases for the year.
- 3.4 The Commission is working with the Scottish Government on its review of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. That Code requires to be approved by the Scottish Parliament. The Commission has invited suggestions from members as well as officers.
- 3.5 The Commission had also been dealing with its first substantive appeal to the courts against the findings in one of its cases. It was determined after the reporting year end. It concerned a Fife councillor sitting at a licensing committee who made offensive comments regarding the character of an applicant. The appeal failed. The Sheriff Principal decided that the Commission's procedures and approach were lawful and competent, that the decision (partial suspension) was justified, and, that the decision of a specialist tribunal such as the Commission should carry significant weight and should not be over-turned lightly.

4 The council's year

- 4.1 An internal audit of the council's arrangements for meeting its Code of Conduct obligations was started in February 2019. It concluded after the year end and was reported to Audit Committee on 7 October 2019. Control was found to be effective. The low-level actions agreed have been completed.
- 4.2 Training for members in 2017/18 had been concentrated in the post-election induction programme. Fewer sessions were delivered in 2018/19. The annual presentation on the year 2017/18 was given on 22 January 2019. It was attended by 18 members and 16 officers were present. The annual report was made to P&R PDSP on 7 December 2018 and to Council Executive on 18 December 2018.
- 4.3 A briefing was given to members on 23 May 2018 in relation to decision-making on planning applications. It covered lobbying, voting on pre-determined lines, making prior statements of opinion and taking part in a hearing.
- 4.4 Another session was delivered on 27 September 2018 on the Commission's Advice Note for Councillors on Bullying and Harassment and its Advice Note for Councillors on Distinguishing between their Strategic Role and any Operational Work, both issued in July 2018.
- 4.5 Members also received periodic emails passing on information about significant developments, such as Commission decisions, its quarterly bulletins and new Advice Notes.
- 4.6 The council's updated history of involvement with the ESC and the Commission, and of its internal procedures, is shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5 of the appendix.
- 4.7 The number of complaints made through the council's internal procedure was the highest it has been. Eight complaints were received with three of those relating to the same circumstances, so six cases were determined. The outcomes were as follows:-
- None of the six cases resulted in a finding of a breach of the Code

- Two cases concerned alleged failures in responding to communications. They (and one case outstanding from 2017/18) were rejected because the Code of Conduct contains no requirement or prescription around communications or timeliness of responding to enquiries
 - In two cases the councillors were held not to have been acting as councillors, one in relation to emails and one in relation to social media
 - One case about social media comments was not found to have involved disrespectful language and to be covered by the Article 10 protection for discourse about issues of public and political interest
 - One case about declaration of interests (against more than one councillor) was not upheld because the members were not taking part in decision-making at the time
- 4.8 Three complaints against West Lothian councillors were made to the ESC during the year. One concerned two councillors. That number of complaints does not represent a departure from the norm.
- 4.9 In all of those cases the complaint was of disrespectful language in social media posts. In two cases there was found to have been no breach based on the context, the language used and the Article 10 protection. The other and last complaint was referred on to the Commission but it had not been determined before the end of the year.

5 Significant messages

- 5.1 Although there were the usual ESC and Commission cases about failure to register and failure to declare interests, the more noteworthy cases relate to the “respect” obligation, especially when using, or misusing, social media. Some of those involved conduct clearly deliberate. Others were about careless or accidental misuse, or a lack of awareness of the way comments would be perceived. Local experience matches the national picture.
- 5.2 For the previous two years the Commission had been particularly concerned about cases where councillors had strayed well over the line in relation to their treatment of council officers and interfering in operational matters when pursuing constituents’ complaints. Those kinds of complaints do not figure this year. Last year’s Advice Note for Councillors on Distinguishing between their Strategic Role and any Operational Work may well be a factor in that, along with the messages delivered to members by officers.

E. CONCLUSION

- 1 An up-to-date awareness of issues relating to the Code of Conduct will help members fulfil their legal obligations in relation to ethical standards.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- 1 Councillors’ Code of Conduct and Guidance
http://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/uploads/files/1542107127180709CCfCouncillorsGuidance_July2018FINAL.pdf
- 2 Commission Annual Report 2018/19 -
<https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/uploads/files/1567432450SCfSAnnualReport201819.pdf>

- 3 ESC Annual Report 2017/18 -
https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/ESC%20Annual%20Report%20and%20Accounts%202018-19_1.pdf

Appendices/Attachments: 1. Summary of complaints and statistics

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Julie Whitelaw, Monitoring Officer, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden Road South, Livingston, EH54 6FF, 01506 281626, julie.whitelaw@westlothian.gov.uk

Date of meeting: 27 November 2019

APPENDIX

Table 1 – ESC cases (national)					
	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
Complaints and cases against everyone	692* (111)	245 (132)	174 (106)	146 (80)	173 (117)
Complaints and cases against councillors	680	202	165	134	**
Complaints and cases against public body members	12	33	9	3	**
Complaints from members of the public	663	202	110	123	148
Complaints from councillors	20	36	54	19	21
Complaints about planning	81	85	35	39	24
Complaints about registration of interests	4	4	6	4	10
Complaints about declarations of interests	26	19	22	5	13
Complaints about disrespect	33	75	63	31	60
Completed complaints and cases	692 (99)	214 (111)	224	176 (90)	153 (109)
Cases dropped or not competent	135 (73)	157 (82)	111	121 (59)	78
Cases where no breach found	17 (14)	49 (22)	95 (55)	43 (23)	23
Cases where breach found and referred onto the Commission	540 (12)	8 (7)	18 (14)	12 (8)	8

The first figure is the number of complaints received. The second, in brackets, where relevant, is the number of cases dealt with after complaints are combined.

* The number of complaints in 2014/15 was skewed by a large number made against the same councillors arising from the same facts (sending a letter stating the council's position on the independence referendum along with annual council tax notices).

** The numbers of complaints and cases regrettably have not been broken down between these two categories.

Table 2 – Commission cases concluded (national)				
Main complaint	Case	Facts	Decision	Sanction
Respect	LA/Fi/2050	Offensive personal comments about licence applicant at regulatory committee meeting	Breach	Suspension from regulatory committee for 2 months
	LA/An/2094	Inappropriate physical contact with 2 councillors and 2 officers in public	Breach	Full suspension for 3 months
	LA/An/2134	Inaccurate and offensive social media posts about removal of school chaplain	Breach	Censure
Registration	LA/As/2062	Membership of business improvement district steering group	Breach	Censure
	LA/ESC/2091	33% shareholding in company	Breach	Censure
	LA/As/2173	100% shareholding in company	Breach	Censure
Declaration	LA/I/2113	Close friends with developer in planning application decision	Breach	Censure
	LA/AB/2125	Member of Housing Association significantly affected by planning application	Breach	Censure

Table 3 - Complaints to ESC (council)	
2004/05	4
2005/06	6
2006/07	4
2007/08	1
2008/09	7
2009/10	6
2010/11	1
2011/12	2

Table 4 - Complaints to ESC (council)	
Conduct in the Chamber	11
Payment of allowances	1
Respect	13
Principles of leadership & accountability	2
Planning applications/declarations	14
Use of council facilities	3
Declaring financial interests/withdrawal	4
Lobbying on planning applications	1

2012/13	6
2013/14	3
2014/15	2
2015/16	4
2016/17	1
2017/18	0
2018/19	3
Total	50

Other (matters not relevant to Code)	1
Total	50

Table 5 - Internal complaints	
2011/12	4
2012/13	6
2013/14	4
2014/15	1
2015/16	3
2016/17	1
2017/18	6
2018/19	8
Total	33



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – QUARTER 2 OF 2019/20

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 62 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 62 performance indicators are categorised as follows:

Summary of Performance Indicator status (RAG)	
Status (against target)	Number of PIs
 Green	39
 Amber	5
 Red	11
 Unknown	7

**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.

1. APS019_Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days (quarterly)

Current performance: 75.5%
Target: 97%

The trend chart shows performance below target in Quarter 2 in 2019/20 following the transfer of Blue Badge administration to Anti-Poverty Service in July 2019. This was a dip from the previous quarter, when 95.9% of Blue Badges were processed within the local target. It was also recorded at a time when staff in the service were still being trained to process applications and an increase is anticipated in future periods.

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

Current performance: 64%
Target: 75%

The trend chart shows performance remained below target in Quarter 2 in 2019/20 with performance of 64% and below the equivalent quarter in 2018/19, when performance of 69% was reported. 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.

This performance indicator and target are under review to ensure that all performance is correctly attributable to the CSC and not recording issues that are not suitable for frontline resolution.

3. There were five services with indicators that were triggering red for the percentage of sickness absence:
 - The Anti-Poverty Service (P:APS014)
 - Customer and Communities (P:CuCS021)
 - Financial Management Unit (P:FM048)
 - HR Services (HRS525)
 - Property Management and Development (P:PMD111b)
4. There were four services with indicators that were triggering red for the percentage of complaints upheld / part upheld:
 - Customer Service Centre (CSC063m)
 - Construction Services (P:Csg113)
 - Customer and Communities (P:CuCS011q)
 - Property Management and Development (P:PMD145)

D.4 Unknown Performance Indicators

There were 7 performance indicators with an Unknown status that related 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.

D.5 Changes to the Partnership and Resources PDSP Scorecard in 2019/20

The Panel should note that changes to council services will occasionally result in the removal / addition of indicators to the scorecard report.

The formation of the new Anti-Poverty Service in quarter 1 of 2019/20 led to the transfer of a number of activities and functions and the subsequent re-coding of information in the performance management system. As a result, FEADS007_Customer satisfaction with the Advice Shop has now been archived and will be replaced by a new indicator in the next report that will reflect the full and newly constituted Anti-Poverty Service.

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

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Graeme Struthers

Depute Chief Executive

6 December 2019

APPENDIX 1

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES SCORECARD REPORT



Traffic Light Red


















Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	P:APS019_6b.5 Percentage of Blue Badges processed within five working days (quarterly)	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	75.5%	97%
	P:APS041_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Anti-Poverty Service.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	6.96%	3.6%
	P:CSC063m_6b.4 Percentage of Complaints Upheld and part upheld against Customer Service Centre	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	75%	55%
	P:CSC100_9b.1a Percentage of Customer Service Centre enquiries resolved at first point of contact	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	64%	75%
	P: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)	100%	50%
	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)	75.0%	60.0%
	P:CuCS021_7b.1 Customer and Communities - Percentage of Sickness absence	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	7.3%	3.6%
	P:FM048_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Financial Management Unit - Cumulative	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2.71%	2%
	P:HRS525_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in HR Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	4.2%	3.6%
	P:PMD111b_7b.1 Cumulative Percentage Sickness/Absence levels - Property Management & Development	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2.43%	1.5%
	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
	P:CC081_9b.1a Percentage of new social media followers on the West Lothian Council sites per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.1%	2%
	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)	70.1%	75.0%
	P:ITS007_6a.7 Percentage of IT Services Customers Rating the Overall Quality as Good or Excellent.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	94%	98%
	P:REV048a_7b.1 Monthly Sickness Absence Levels	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2.92%	2.5%
	P:REV123_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Revenues Unit that were upheld or partially upheld	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	25%	24%

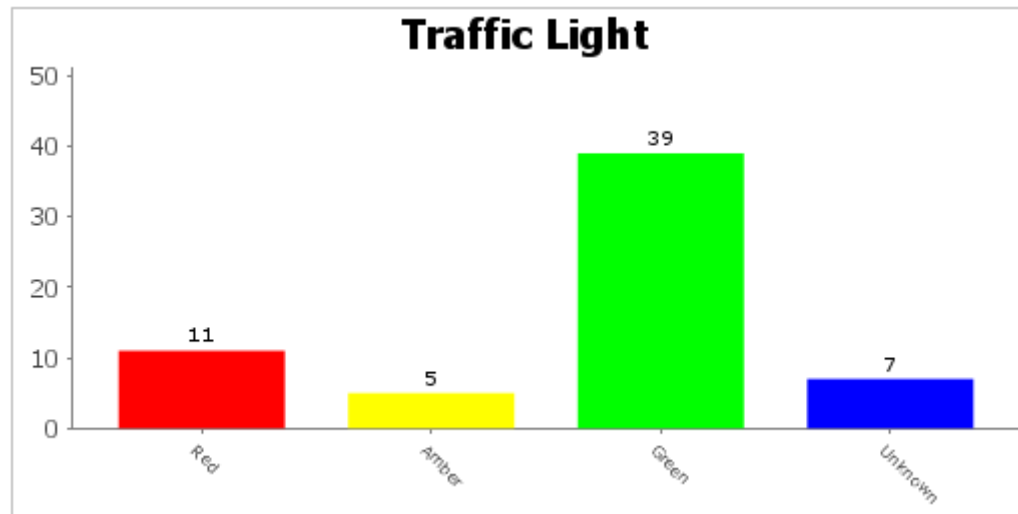
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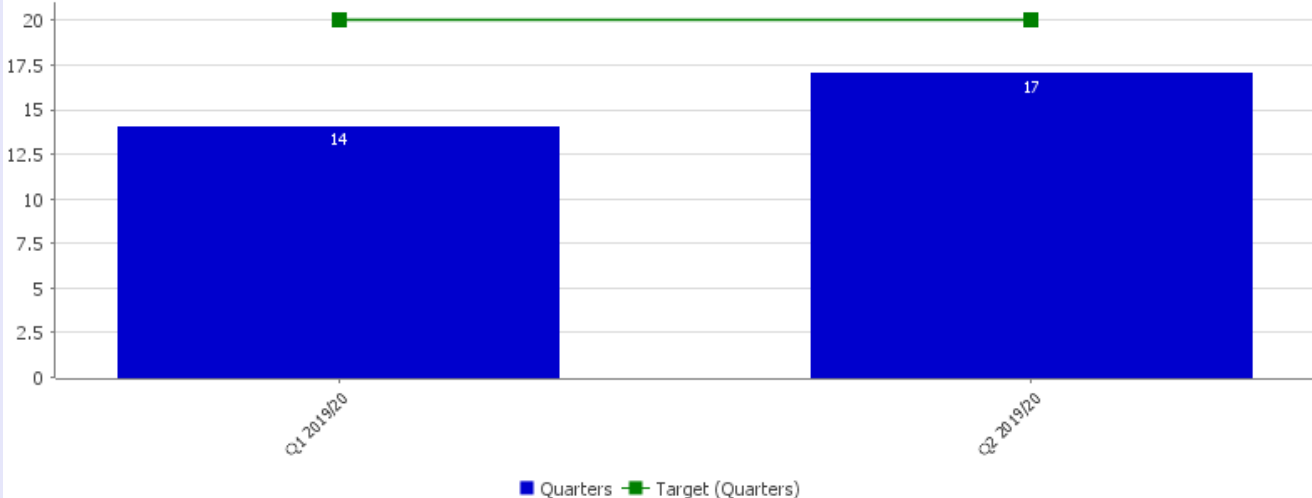

Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
✓	P:APS017_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	17	20
✓	P:APS018_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	35.3%	50%
✓	P:APS060_9b.1a Total quarterly amount the Advice Shop has gained in extra benefits for its customers.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	£7,435,368	£6,750,000
✓	P:APS077_9b Housing Benefit monthly new claims	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	11.82	15
✓	P:CC014_6b.3 Total number of complaints received per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
✓	P:CC031_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Communications	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0%	3.6%
✓	P:CPU017a_7b.1 Percentage of sickness absence in Corporate Procurement Unit	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0%	3.6%
✓	P:CPU019b_9b.1a Percentage of relevant compliant council expenditure per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	93%	92%
✓	P: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
✓	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)	96.7%	92.0%
✓	P:CSC062m_6b.3 Total Number of Complaints against Customer Service Centre (CSC)	.Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services (AM Carr)	4	7
✓	P:CSg112_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Construction Services	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1	3
✓	P:CSg301_7b.1 Construction Services - Cumulative Percentage of Sick Days	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1.16%	2%
✓	P:CSg600_9b.1c Percentage of Total Capital Programme Spend Delivered in Year by Construction Services.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	49%	35%
✓	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)	99.4%	99.0%
✓	P: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)	8	27
✓	P:FM001_6b.5 Percentage of Suppliers paid within 30 Days of Receipt.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	96.1%	96%
✓	P:FM037_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Financial Management Unit	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2	3
✓	P:HRS104_9b.2 Number of reportable incidents to the Health and Safety Executive per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	8	9
✓	P:HRS550_6b.3 Number of complaints received by HR Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	1
✓	P:IA015_9b.1a Average length of time (in weeks) to issue draft audit reports.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	9.3	10
✓	P:IA051_7b.1 Cumulative percentage of sickness absence within the Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud Unit.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	1.39%	2%

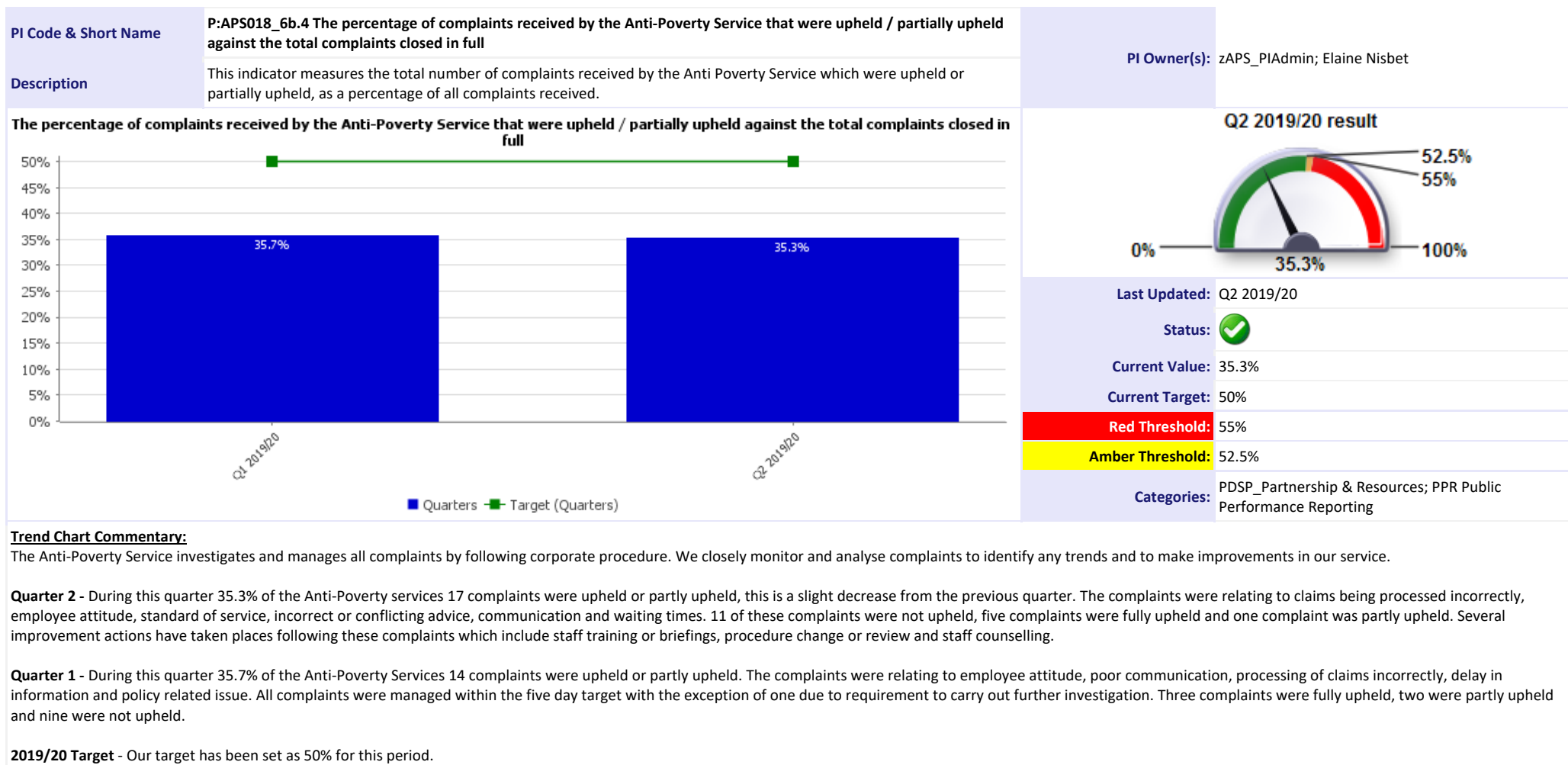
Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	P:IA066_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	0	0
	P:ITS010_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	P:ITS011_6b.4 Percentage of complaints received that were upheld/partially upheld	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	0
	ITS054_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in IT Services (cumulative)	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	1.23%	3.6%
	ITS079a_9b.1c Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact.	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	41%	40%
	P:LS007_7b.1 Percentage Sickness Absence Levels in Legal Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0.39%	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)	2%	6%
	P:PIS011_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0	1
	P:PIS023_7b.1 Percentage of Sickness Absence in Performance and Improvement Service	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	0.83%	3.6%
	P:PMD144_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Property Management and Development	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	2	4
	P:PMD161_9b.1a Industrial Portfolio - Percentage of Total Units Let.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	91.84%	90%
	P:PMD163_9b.1a Office Portfolio - Percentage of Office Units Let.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	91.67%	90%
	P:PMD164_9b.1c Percentage of rent outstanding for commercial property (Current debt).	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	4.43%	4%
	P:REV002_9b Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) received in the year.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	56.16%	53.23%
	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)	95.4%	91.2%
	P:REV047_9b.1a Percentage of income collected in the current year from Council Tax.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	54.58%	53.87%
	P:REV122_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Revenues Unit	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	24	27

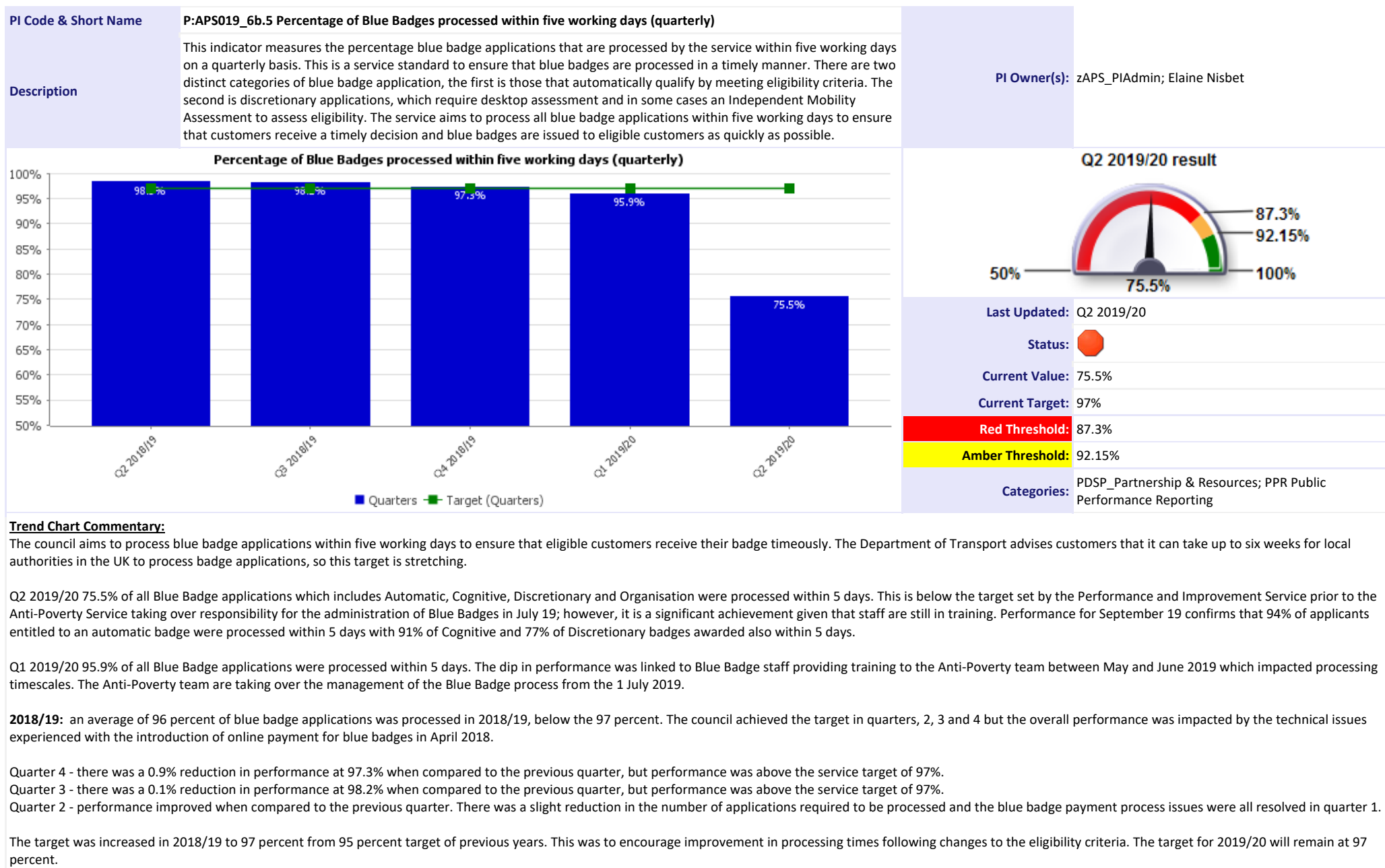
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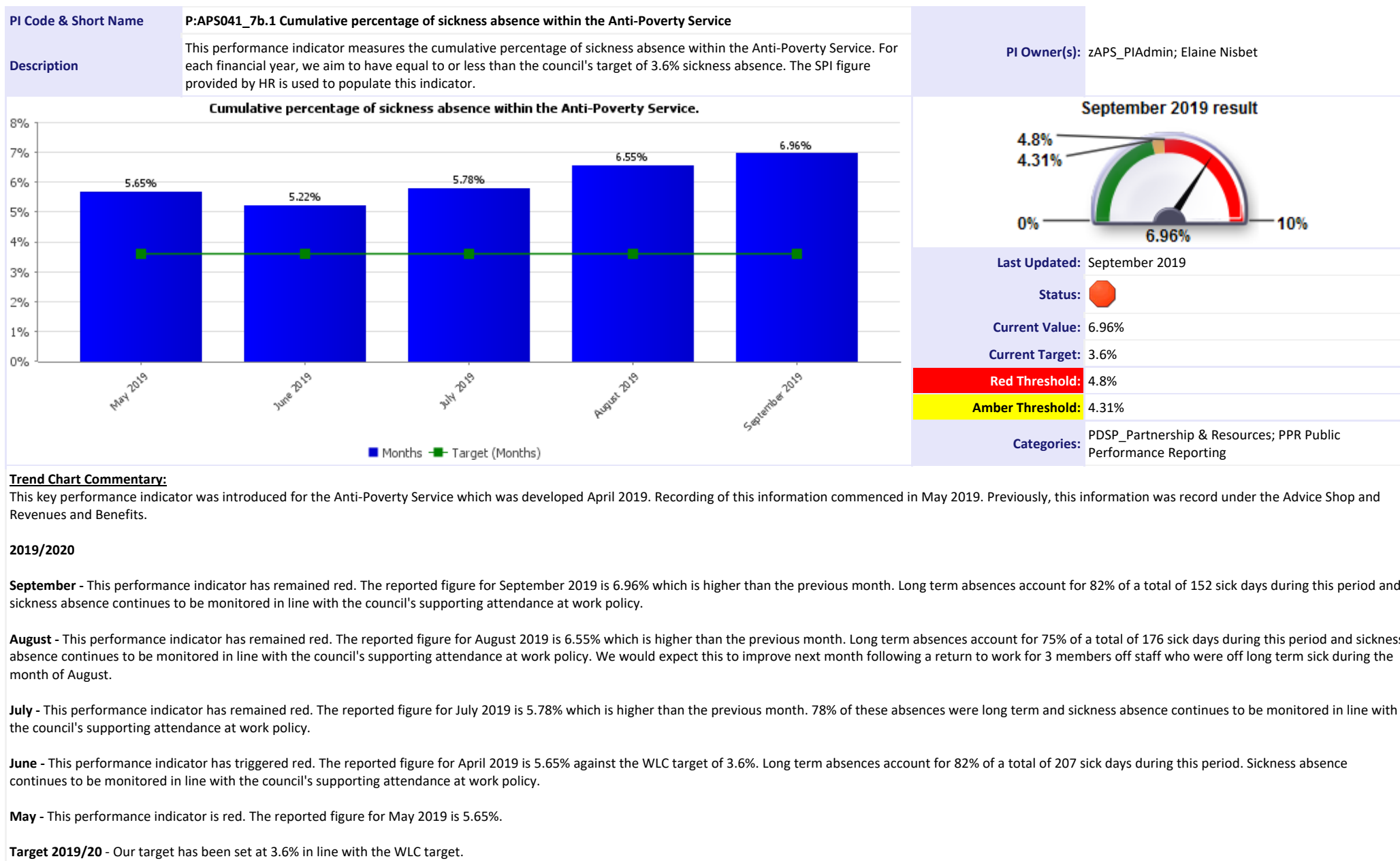
Status	PI Code & Short Name	Head of Service	Value	Target
	P:CC016_6b.4 The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0%
	P:CPU047d_6b.4 The percentage of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	0%
	P:HRS554_6b.4 Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	25%
	P: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	0%
	P: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%
	P:LS087_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Legal Services	.Head of Corporate Services (J Whitelaw)	N/A	2
	P: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)	N/A	50%

09 PDSP – PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES PIS – ALL (DETAIL)

PI Code & Short Name	P:APS017_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service		PI Owner(s): zAPS_PIAAdmin; Elaine Nisbet																									
Description	<p>This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service. It is the total number of complaints received by the service 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.</p> <p>The Anti-Poverty Service 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.</p>																											
<div><p>Total number of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service.</p><table><caption>Data for Total number of complaints received by the Anti-Poverty Service</caption><thead><tr><th>Quarter</th><th>Complaints</th><th>Target (Quarters)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Q1 2019/20</td><td>14</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>Q2 2019/20</td><td>17</td><td>20</td></tr></tbody></table></div>			Quarter	Complaints	Target (Quarters)	Q1 2019/20	14	20	Q2 2019/20	17	20	<div><p>Q2 2019/20 result</p><table><thead><tr><th>Metric</th><th>Value</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>Q2 2019/20</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>20</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>22</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>21</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</td></tr></tbody></table></div>	Metric	Value	Last Updated:	Q2 2019/20	Status:	✓	Current Value:	17	Current Target:	20	Red Threshold:	22	Amber Threshold:	21	Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting
Quarter	Complaints	Target (Quarters)																										
Q1 2019/20	14	20																										
Q2 2019/20	17	20																										
Metric	Value																											
Last Updated:	Q2 2019/20																											
Status:	✓																											
Current Value:	17																											
Current Target:	20																											
Red Threshold:	22																											
Amber Threshold:	21																											
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting																											
<p>Trend Chart Commentary: The Anti-Poverty Service 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.</p> <p>2019/20 Quarter 2 - During this period the Anti-Poverty service received 17 complaints, this is an increase of 3 from the previous quarter. The complaints were relating to claims being processed incorrectly, employee attitude, standard of service incorrect or conflicting advice, communication and waiting times. 11 of these complaints were not upheld, five complaints were fully upheld and one complaint was partly upheld. Ten complaints were dealt with within the five day target and others required further investigation. One complaint was escalated to stage 2. Several improvement actions have taken places following these complaints which include staff training or briefings, procedure change or review and staff counselling. The service has also identified a need for further training in relation to managing complaints which will take place in quarter 3.</p> <p>Quarter 1 - During this quarter the Anti-Poverty Service received 14 complaints. The complaints were relating to employee attitude, poor communication, processing of claims incorrectly, delay in information and policy related issue. All complaints were managed within the five day target with the exception of one due to requirement to carry out further investigation. Three complaints were fully upheld, two were partly upheld and nine were not upheld.</p> <p>Target 2019/20 - Our target has been set at 15 complaints per quarter. We have set our trigger levels to early identify trends.</p>																												







Trend Chart Commentary:

This key performance indicator was introduced for the Anti-Poverty Service which was developed April 2019. Recording of this information commenced in May 2019. Previously, this information was record under the Advice Shop and Revenues and Benefits.

2019/2020

September - This performance indicator has remained red. The reported figure for September 2019 is 6.96% which is higher than the previous month. Long term absences account for 82% of a total of 152 sick days during this period and sickness absence continues to be monitored in line with the council's supporting attendance at work policy.

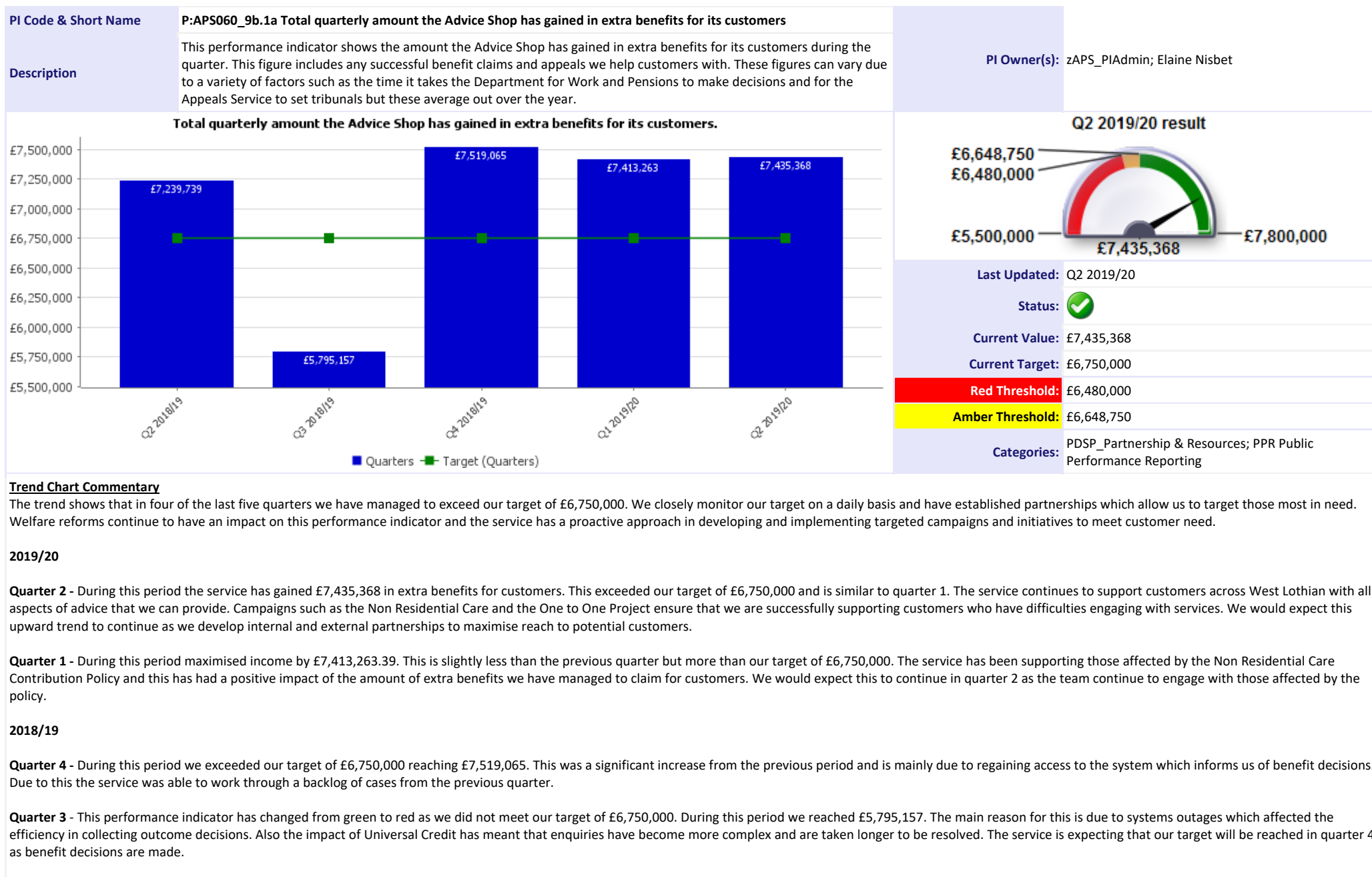
August - This performance indicator has remained red. The reported figure for August 2019 is 6.55% which is higher than the previous month. Long term absences account for 75% of a total of 176 sick days during this period and sickness absence continues to be monitored in line with the council's supporting attendance at work policy. We would expect this to improve next month following a return to work for 3 members off staff who were off long term sick during the month of August.

July - This performance indicator has remained red. The reported figure for July 2019 is 5.78% which is higher than the previous month. 78% of these absences were long term and sickness absence continues to be monitored in line with the council's supporting attendance at work policy.

June - This performance indicator has triggered red. The reported figure for April 2019 is 5.65% against the WLC target of 3.6%. Long term absences account for 82% of a total of 207 sick days during this period. Sickness absence continues to be monitored in line with the council's supporting attendance at work policy.

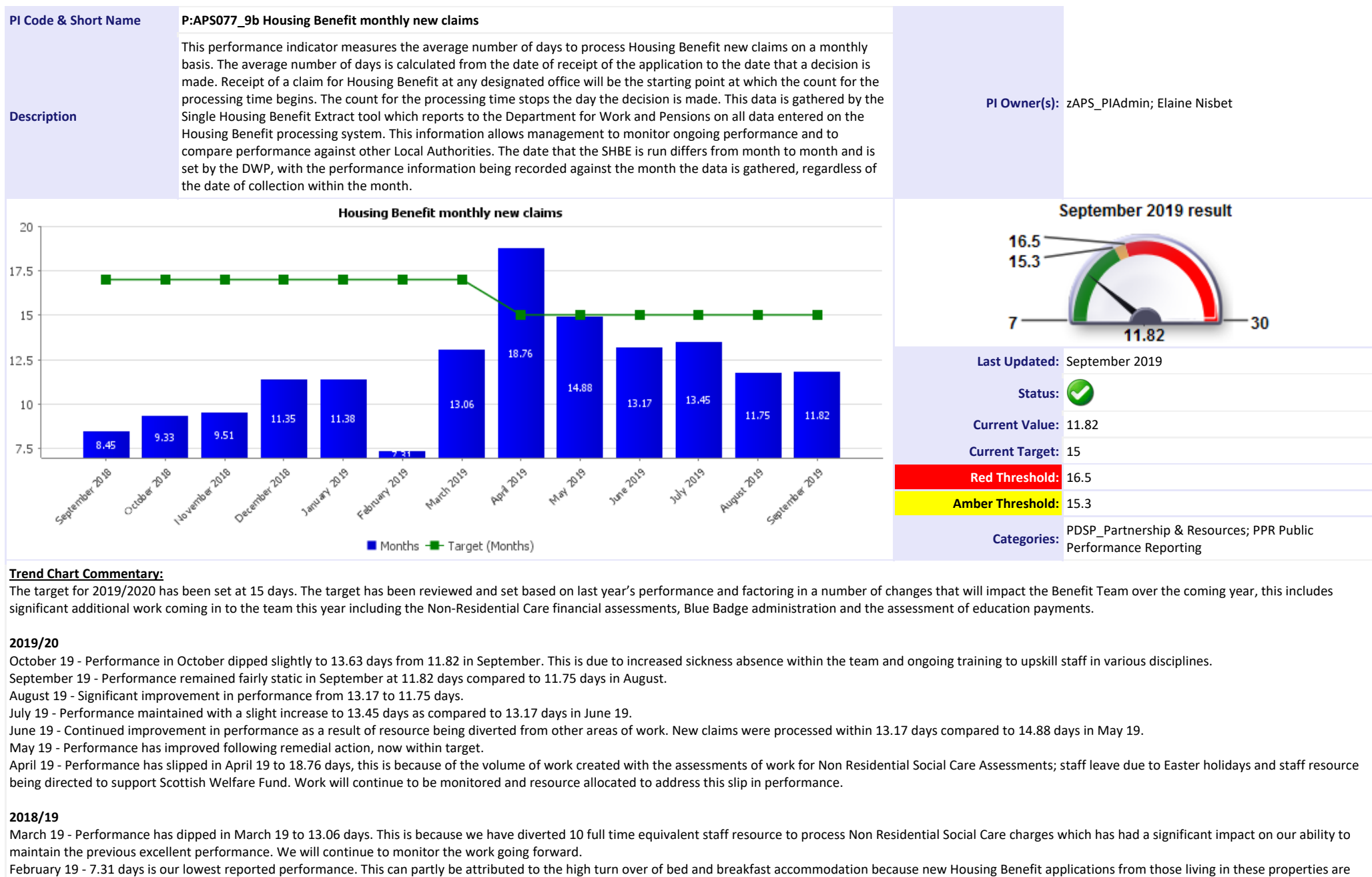
May - This performance indicator is red. The reported figure for May 2019 is 5.65%.

Target 2019/20 - Our target has been set at 3.6% in line with the WLC target.



Quarter 2 - In this quarter we exceeded our target reaching £7,239,739. 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.

2019/20 Target - The service has sustained performance in 4 out of the last 5 quarters and our quarterly target will remain at £6,750,000 due to the ongoing challenges with welfare reforms.

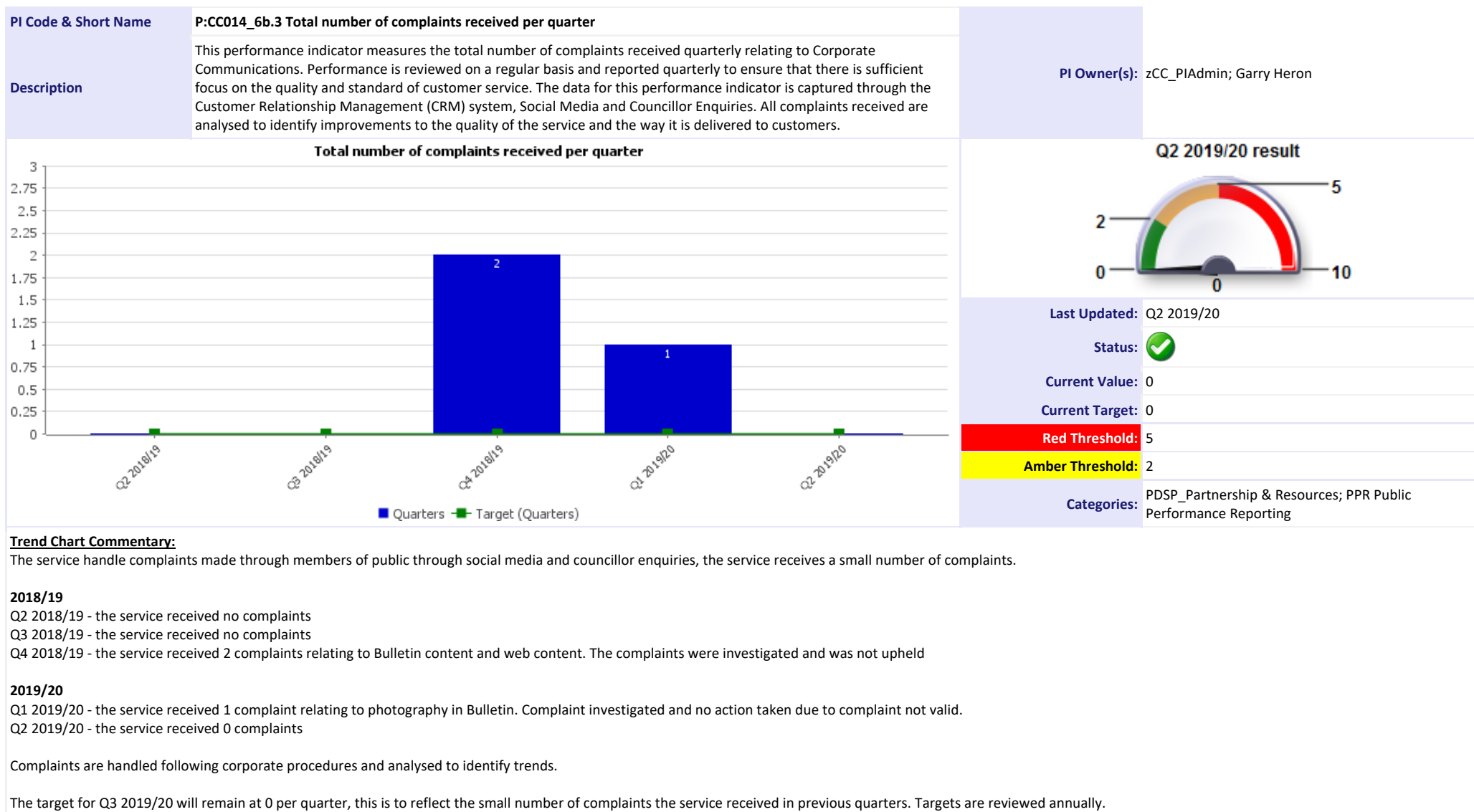


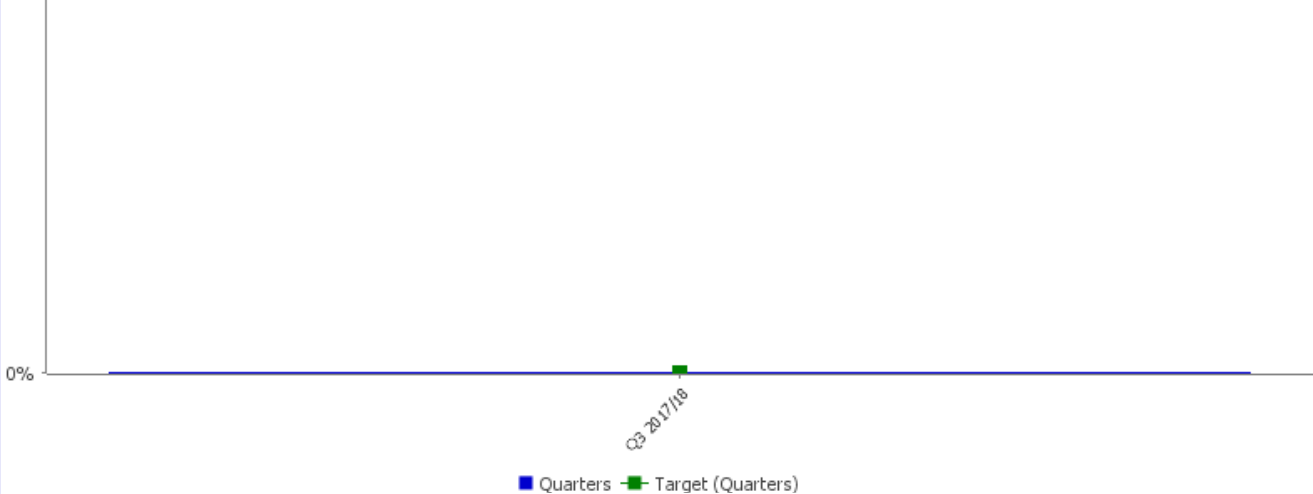
prioritised.

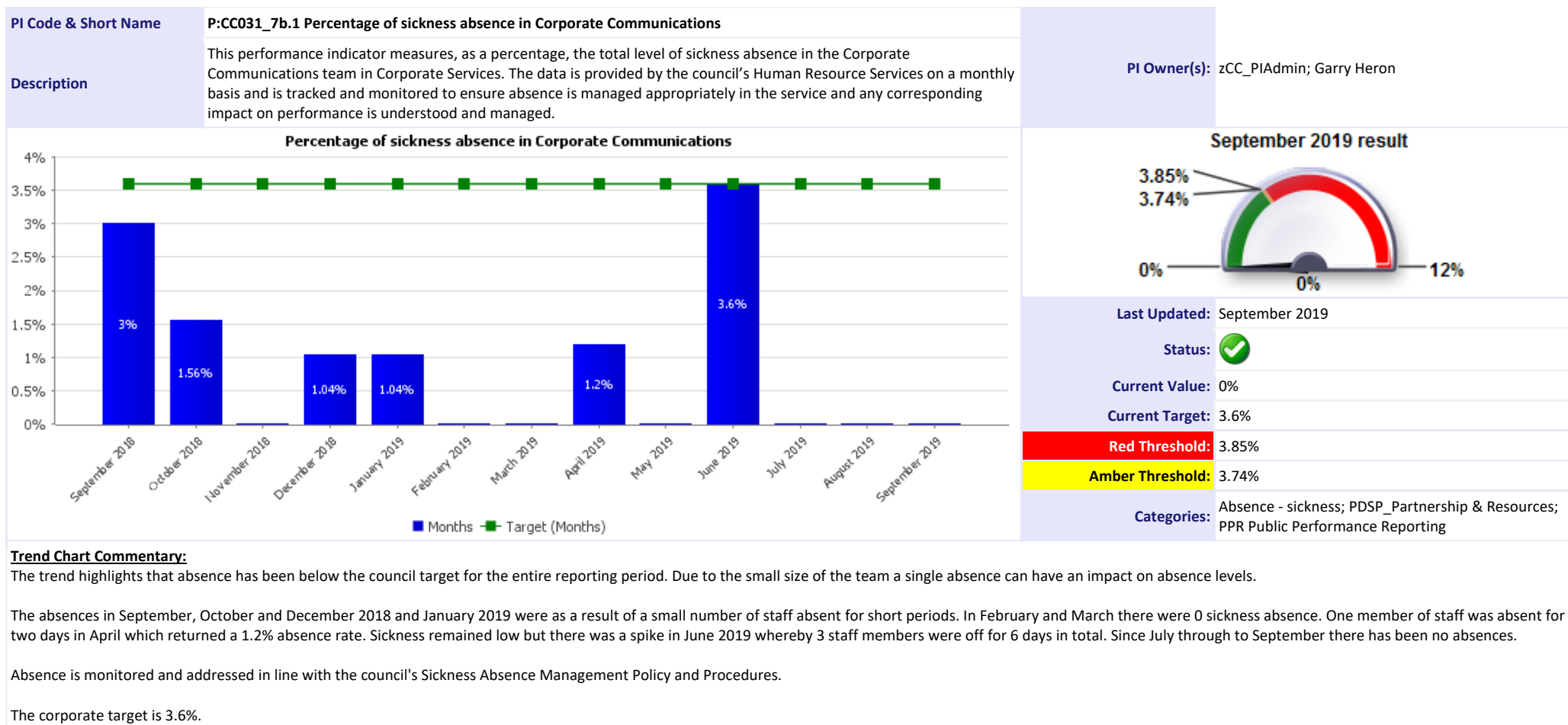
January 19 - Performance against this target remains fairly static with very little decrease in performance from December 18. This is despite this period covering the festive holidays and maximum staff leave.

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.



PI Code & Short Name	P:CC016_6b.4 The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter	
Description	<p>This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of Corporate Communications complaints that have been investigated and upheld or part upheld during each quarter.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>The complaints are analysed to identify improvements to the way the service is delivered to customers.</p>	PI Owner(s): zCC_PIAAdmin; Garry Heron
<p>The percentage of complaints by Corporate Communications that were upheld/part upheld per quarter</p> 		<p>Q2 2019/20 result N/A</p> <p>Last Updated: Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Status: ?</p> <p>Current Value: N/A</p> <p>Current Target: 0%</p> <p>Red Threshold: 0%</p> <p>Amber Threshold: 0%</p> <p>Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</p>
<p>Trend Chart Commentary:</p> <p>In the last five quarters, the service has not received any complaints. 1 complaint was received relating to Bulletin content in quarter 3 2017/18 and it was not upheld.</p> <p>Q2 2019/20 no complaints were received by the service and therefore it is a nil entry. Q1 2019/20 no complaints were received by the service and therefore it is a nil entry.</p> <p>Q4 2018/19 no complaints were received by the service and therefore it is a nil entry. Q3 2018/19 no complaints were received by the service and therefore it is a nil entry. Q2 2018/19 no complaints were received by the service and therefore it is a nil entry.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The target for 2019/20 will remain at 0% based on previous years' results.</p>		



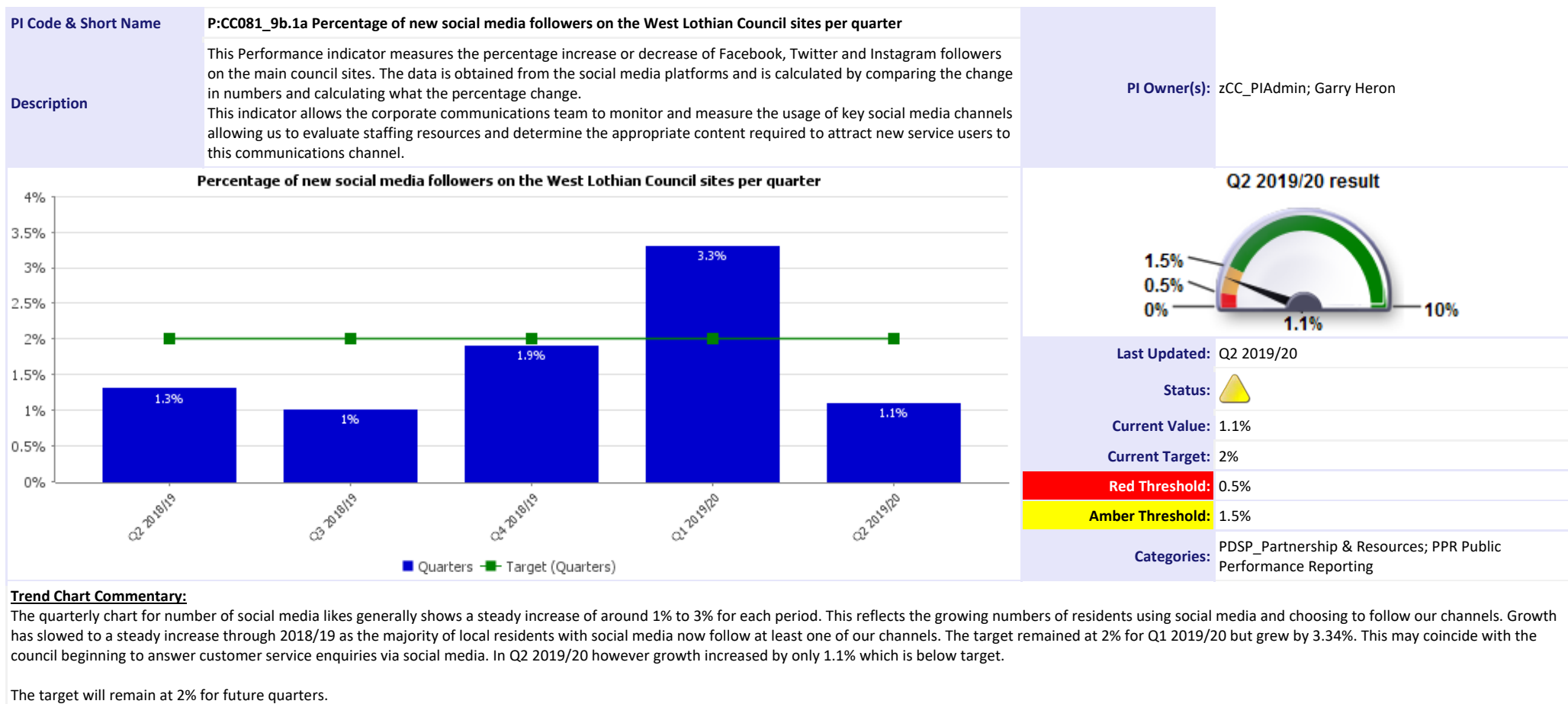
Trend Chart Commentary:

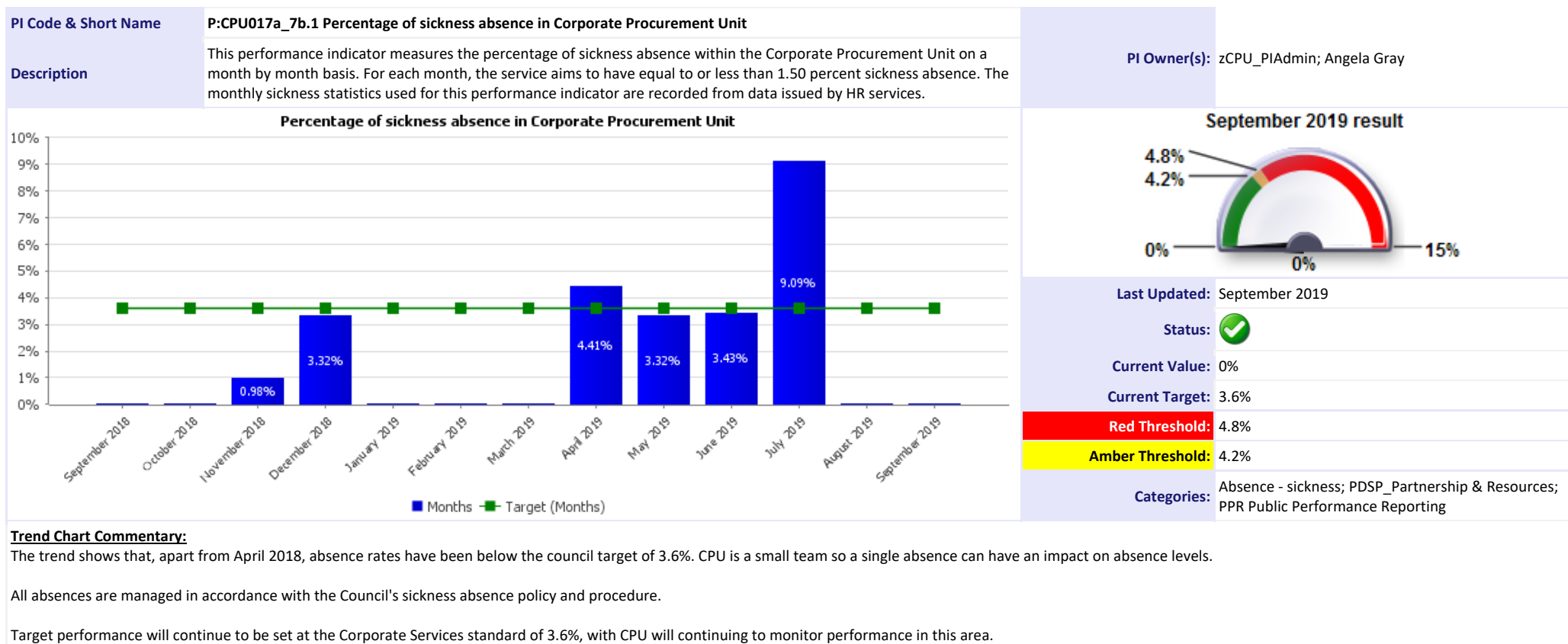
The trend highlights that absence has been below the council target for the entire reporting period. Due to the small size of the team a single absence can have an impact on absence levels.

The absences in September, October and December 2018 and January 2019 were as a result of a small number of staff absent for short periods. In February and March there were 0 sickness absence. One member of staff was absent for two days in April which returned a 1.2% absence rate. Sickness remained low but there was a spike in June 2019 whereby 3 staff members were off for 6 days in total. Since July through to September there has been no absences.

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

The corporate target is 3.6%.



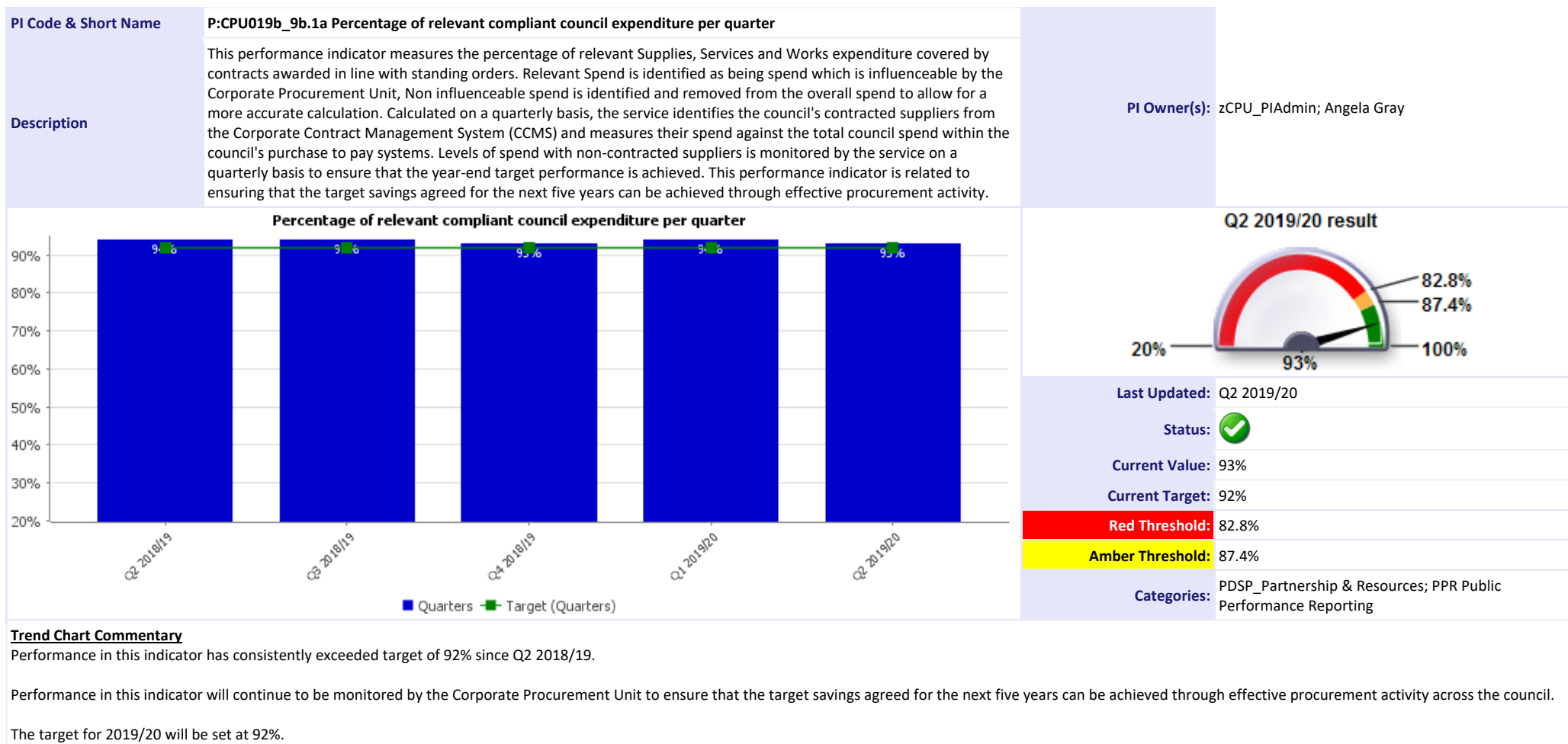


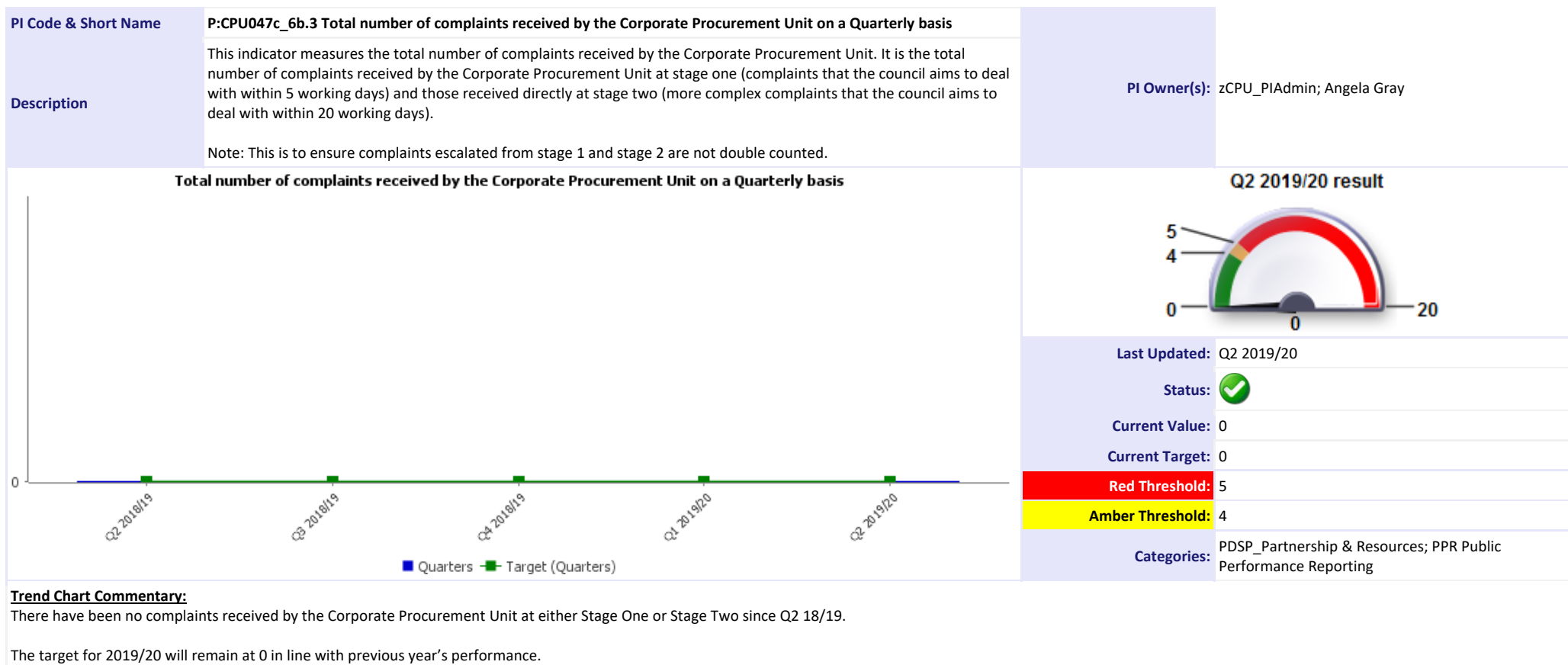
Trend Chart Commentary:

The trend shows that, apart from April 2018, absence rates have been below the council target of 3.6%. CPU is a small team so a single absence can have an impact on absence levels.

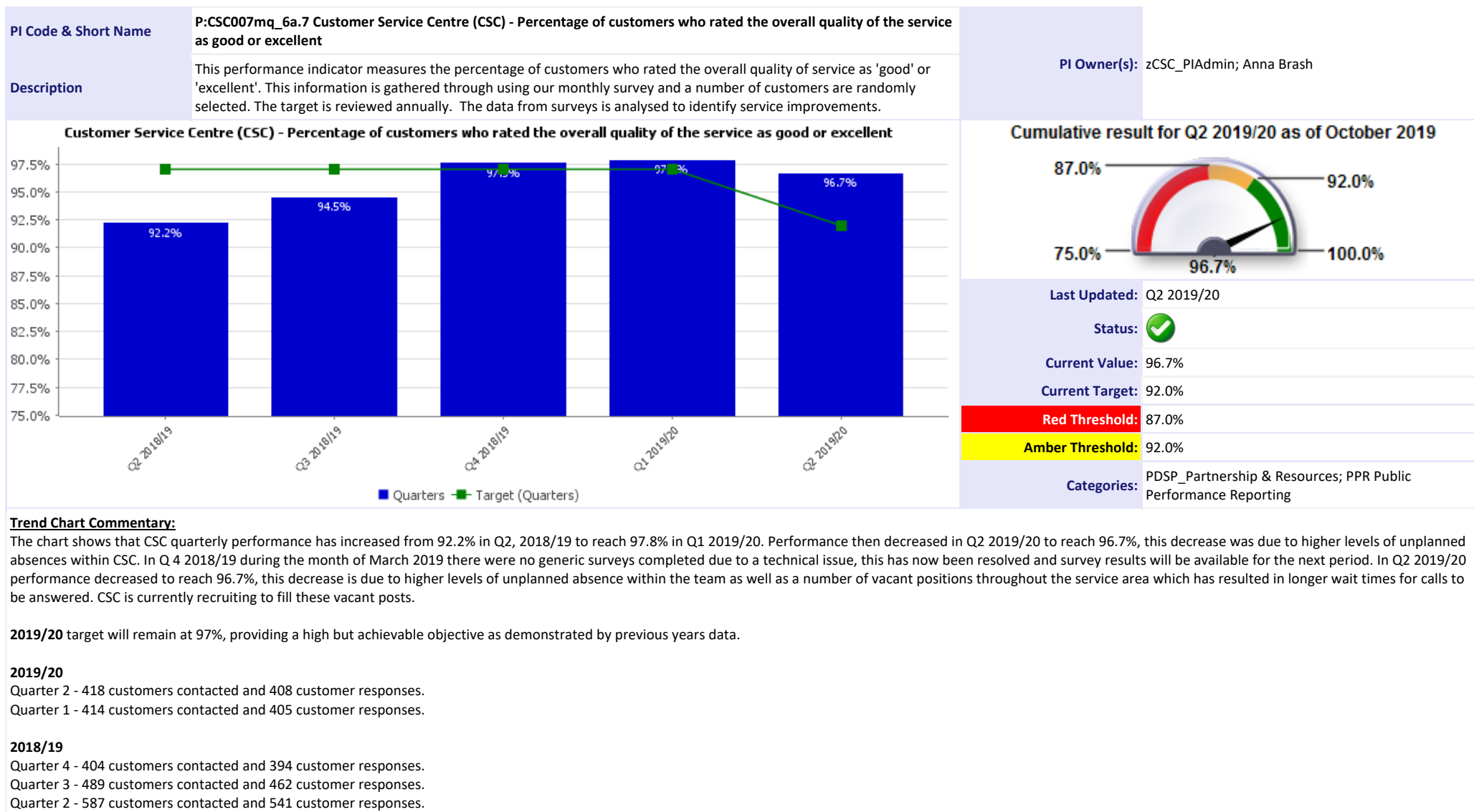
All absences are managed in accordance with the Council's sickness absence policy and procedure.

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.





PI Code & Short Name	P: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_PIAAdmin; Angela Gray
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. 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).		
<div>The percentage of complaints received by the Corporate Procurement Unit that were upheld / partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full</div> <div></div> <div>■ Quarters ■ Target (Quarters)</div>			Q2 2019/20 result N/A
			Last Updated: Q2 2019/20
			Status: ?
			Current Value: N/A
			Current Target: 0%
			Red Threshold: 80%
			Amber Threshold: 77%
Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting			
<div>Trend Chart Commentary: No complaints have been received by the Corporate Procurement Unit during the years 2017/18 and 2018/19. The target for 2019/20 has been set at 0 in line with previous year’s performance.</div>			



Trend Chart Commentary:

The chart shows that CSC quarterly performance has increased from 92.2% in Q2, 2018/19 to reach 97.8% in Q1 2019/20. Performance then decreased in Q2 2019/20 to reach 96.7%, this decrease was due to higher levels of unplanned absences within CSC. In Q 4 2018/19 during the month of March 2019 there were no generic surveys completed due to a technical issue, this has now been resolved and survey results will be available for the next period. In Q2 2019/20 performance decreased to reach 96.7%, this decrease is due to higher levels of unplanned absence within the team as well as a number of vacant positions throughout the service area which has resulted in longer wait times for calls to be answered. CSC is currently recruiting to fill these vacant posts.

2019/20 target will remain at 97%, providing a high but achievable objective as demonstrated by previous years data.

2019/20

Quarter 2 - 418 customers contacted and 408 customer responses.

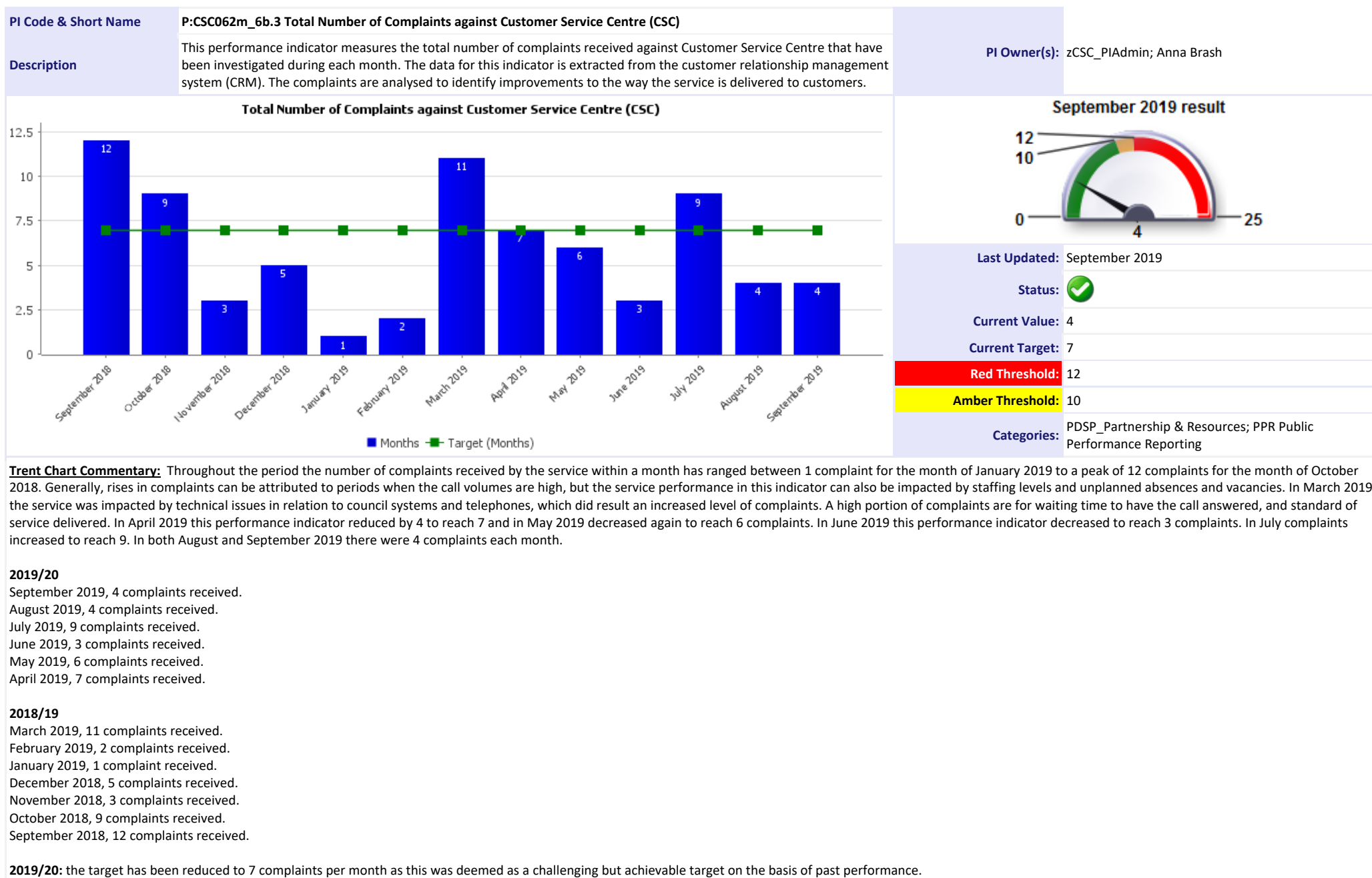
Quarter 1 - 414 customers contacted and 405 customer responses.

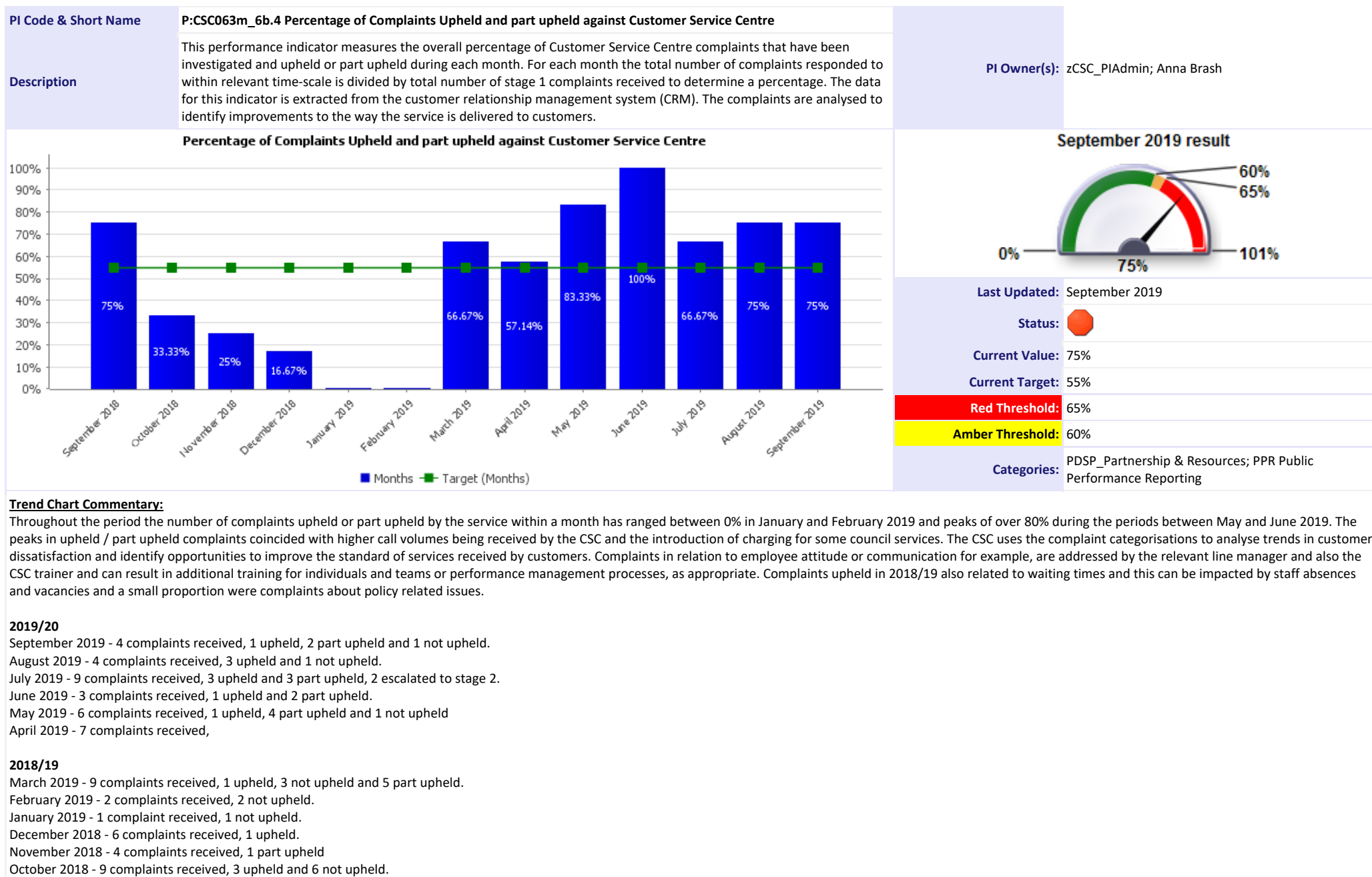
2018/19

Quarter 4 - 404 customers contacted and 394 customer responses.

Quarter 3 - 489 customers contacted and 462 customer responses.

Quarter 2 - 587 customers contacted and 541 customer responses.





Trend Chart Commentary:

Throughout the period the number of complaints upheld or part upheld by the service within a month has ranged between 0% in January and February 2019 and peaks of over 80% during the periods between May and June 2019. The peaks in upheld / part upheld complaints coincided with higher call volumes being received by the CSC and the introduction of charging for some council services. The CSC uses the complaint categorisations to analyse trends in customer dissatisfaction and identify opportunities to improve the standard of services received by customers. Complaints in relation to employee attitude or communication for example, are addressed by the relevant line manager and also the CSC trainer and can result in additional training for individuals and teams or performance management processes, as appropriate. Complaints upheld in 2018/19 also related to waiting times and this can be impacted by staff absences and vacancies and a small proportion were complaints about policy related issues.

2019/20

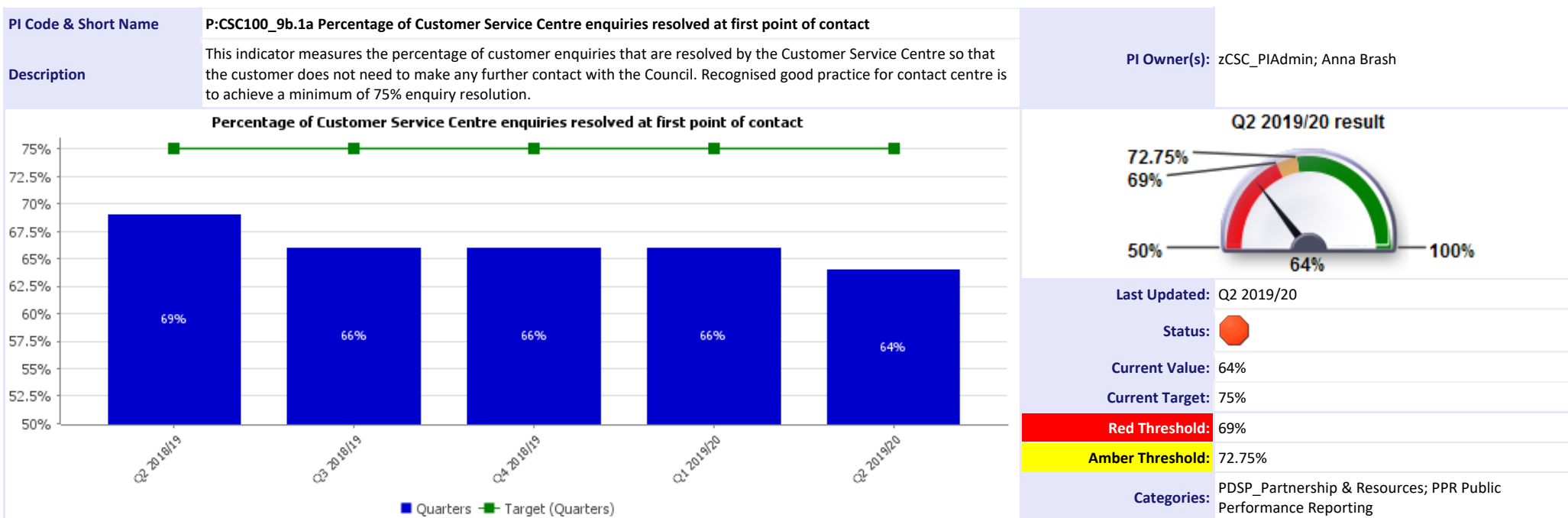
September 2019 - 4 complaints received, 1 upheld, 2 part upheld and 1 not upheld.
August 2019 - 4 complaints received, 3 upheld and 1 not upheld.
July 2019 - 9 complaints received, 3 upheld and 3 part upheld, 2 escalated to stage 2.
June 2019 - 3 complaints received, 1 upheld and 2 part upheld.
May 2019 - 6 complaints received, 1 upheld, 4 part upheld and 1 not upheld
April 2019 - 7 complaints received,

2018/19

March 2019 - 9 complaints received, 1 upheld, 3 not upheld and 5 part upheld.
February 2019 - 2 complaints received, 2 not upheld.
January 2019 - 1 complaint received, 1 not upheld.
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.

2019/20 - the target for this indicator will reduce from 55% to 50% in 2019/20. This reflects the performance in the past year but remains a challenging target.



Trend Chart Commentary:

Reports are automatically run from CRM with the calculation for this performance indicator, corporately. Over the last year performance for this indicator has decreased from 69% to reach 64% in Quarter 2 2019/20 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.

2019/20

This indicator is under review, target will be set to reflect the service performance against operational influence.

Quarter 2 - 64% first point resolution.

Quarter 1 - 66% first point resolution.

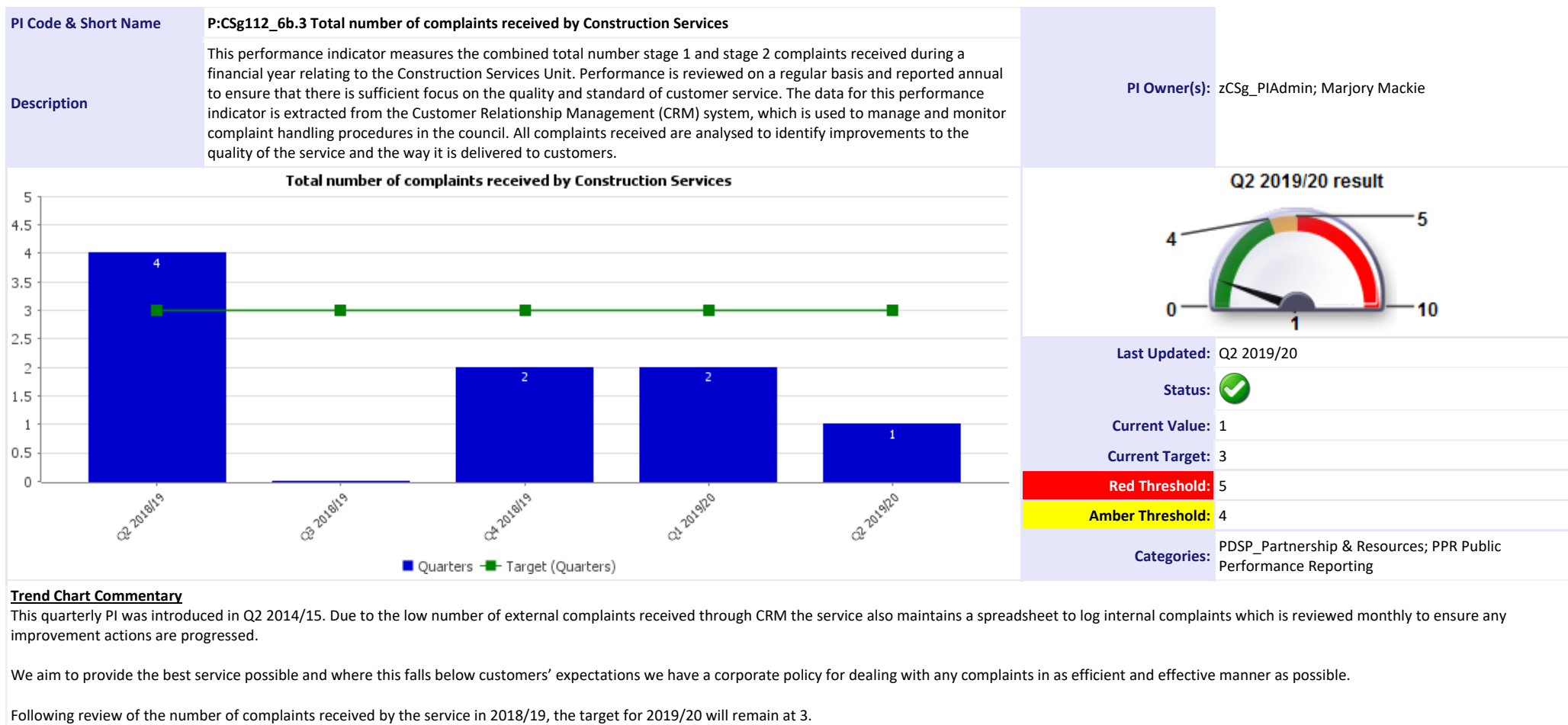
2018/19

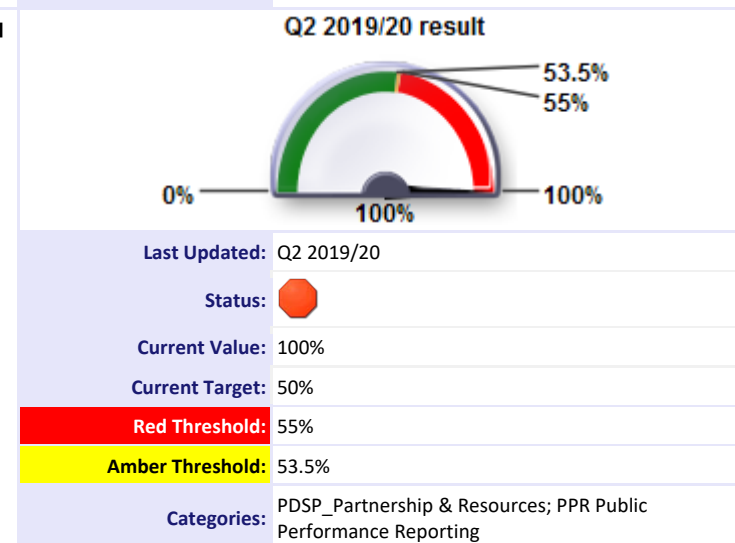
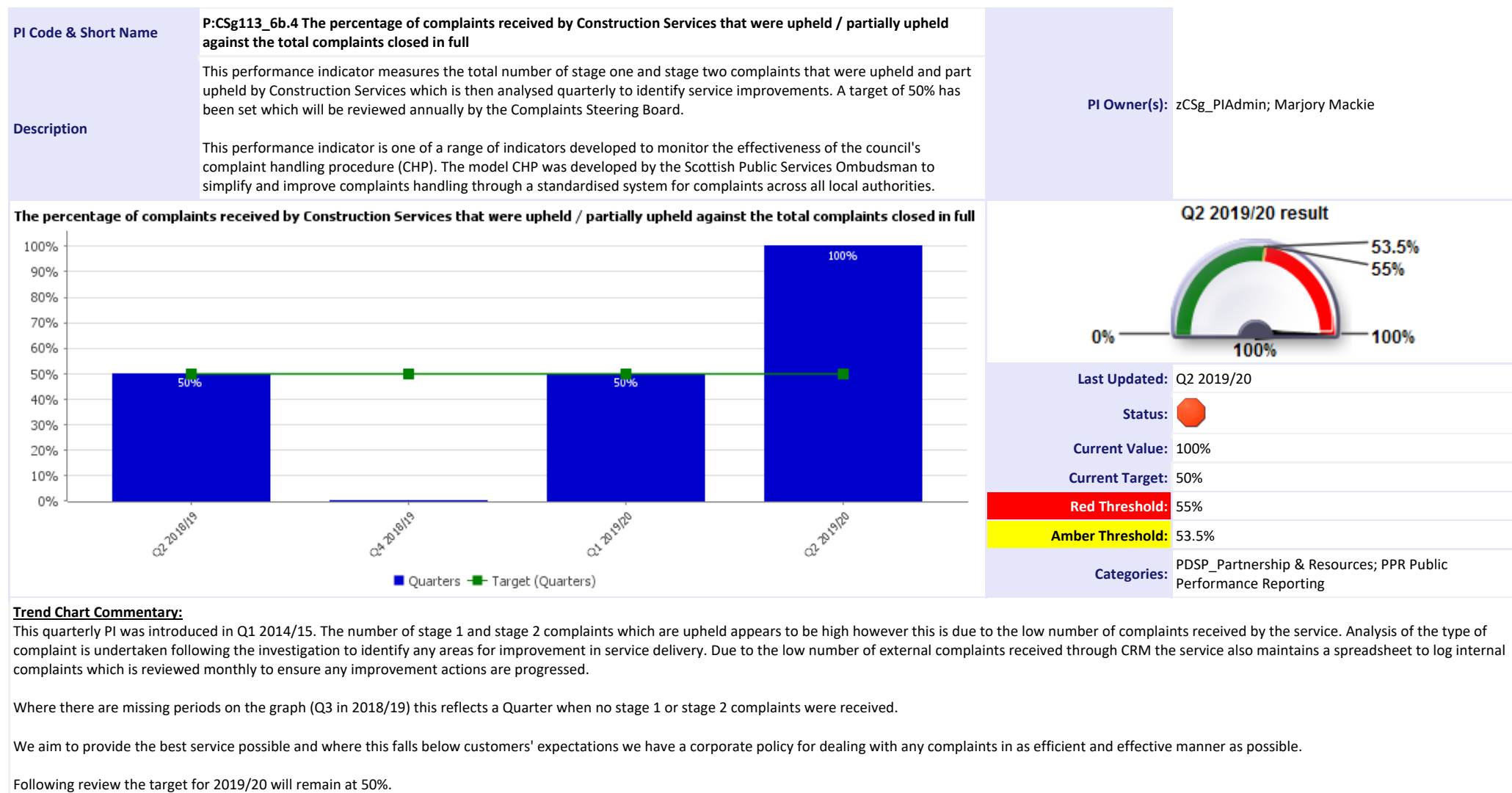
Quarter 4 - 66% first point resolution

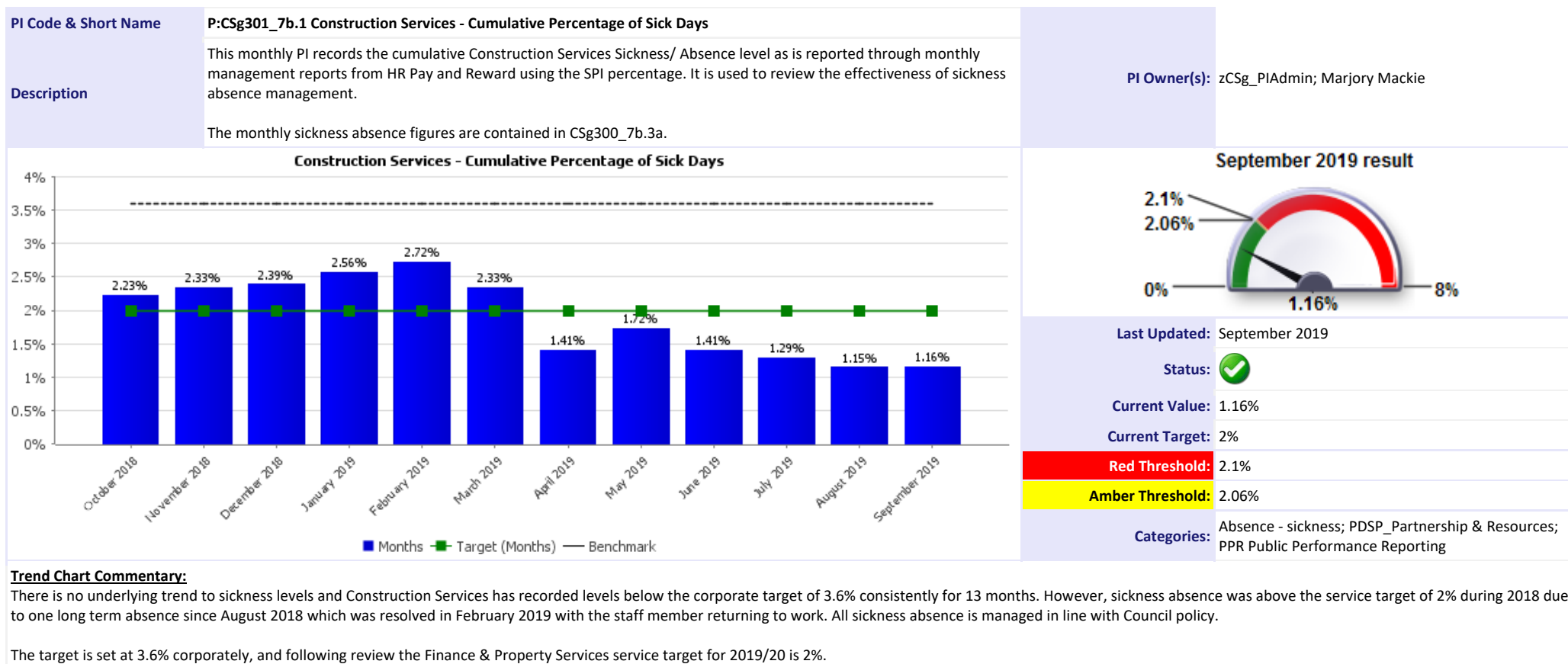
Quarter 3 - 66% first point resolution.

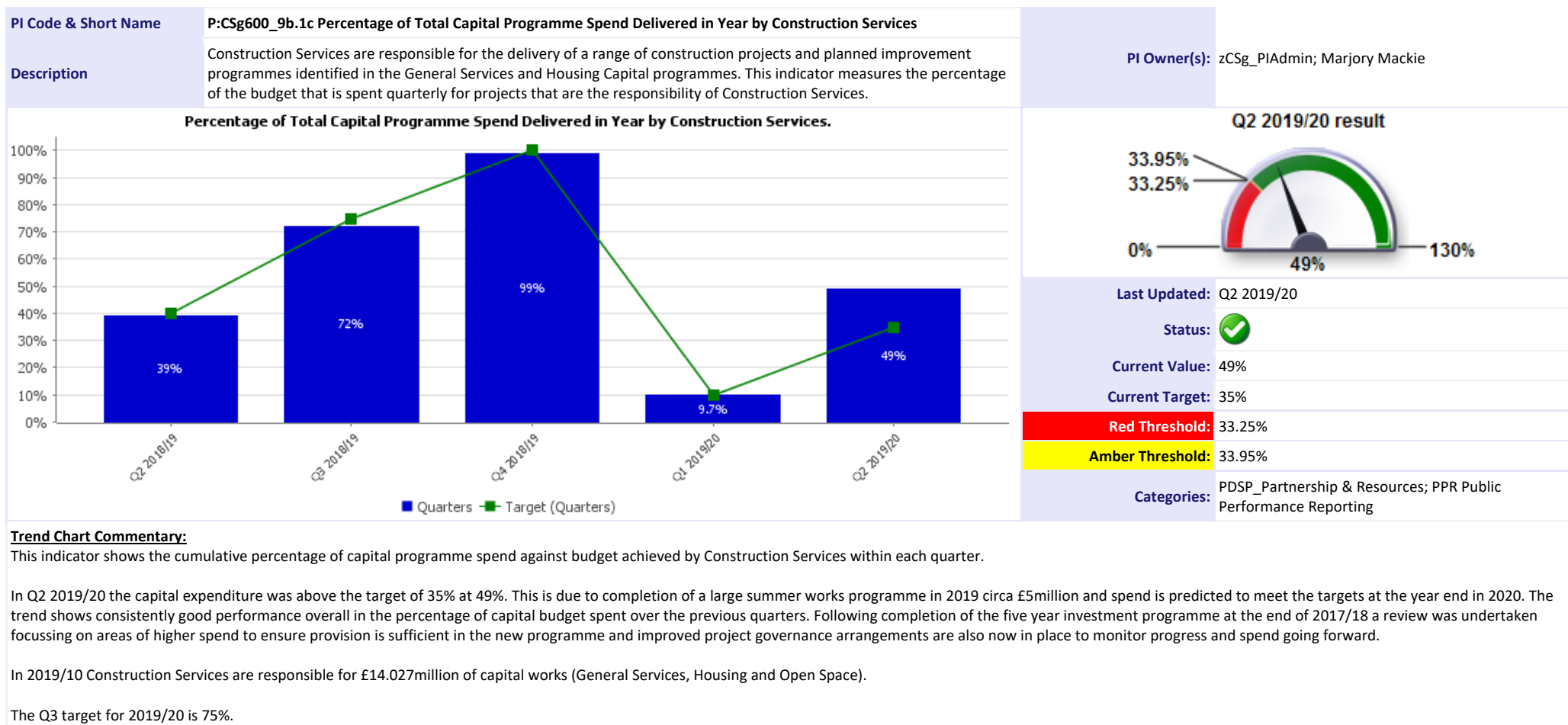
Quarter 2 - 69% first point resolution

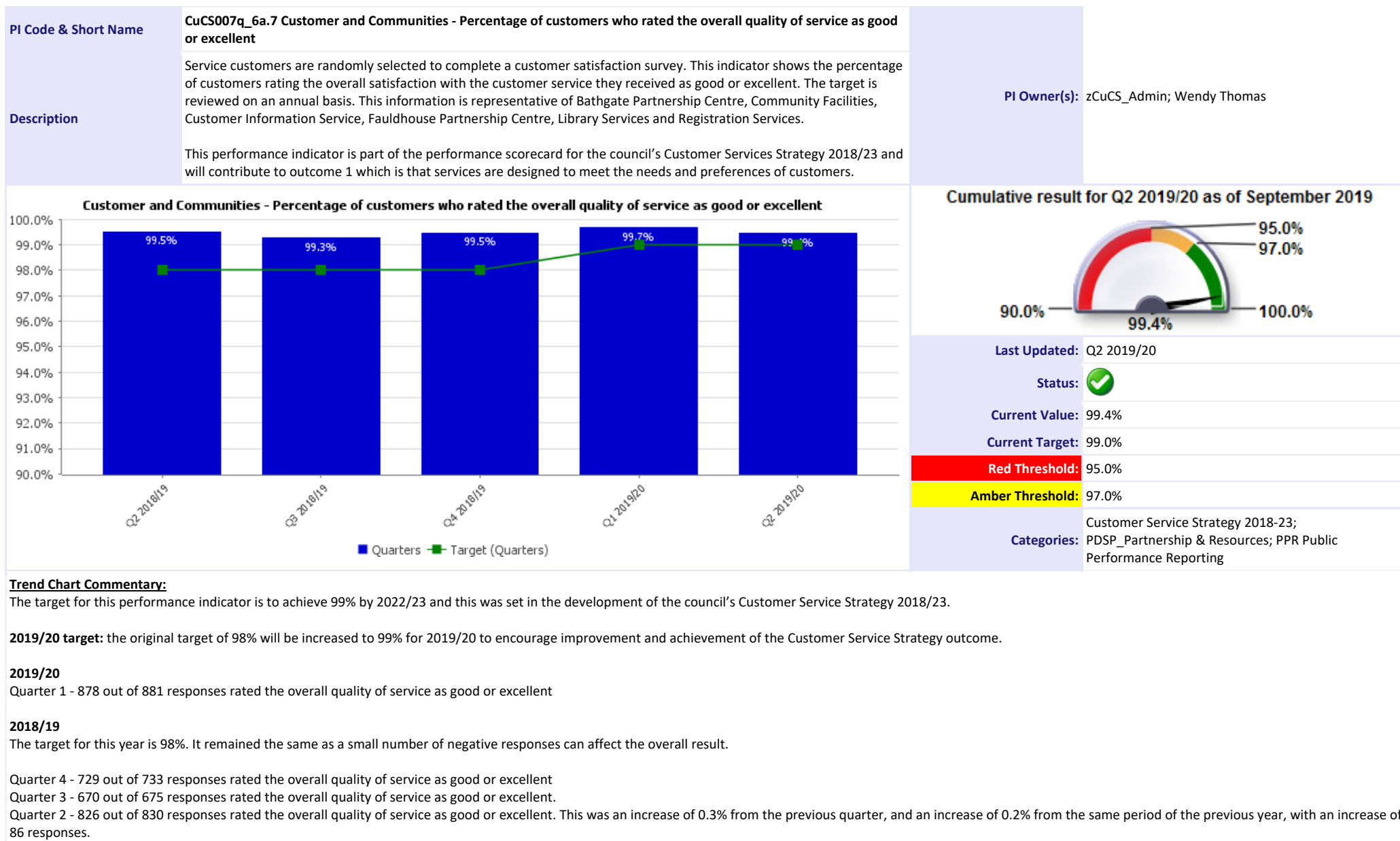
CSC is currently working with Link Housing Association to benchmark results for 1st point resolution.

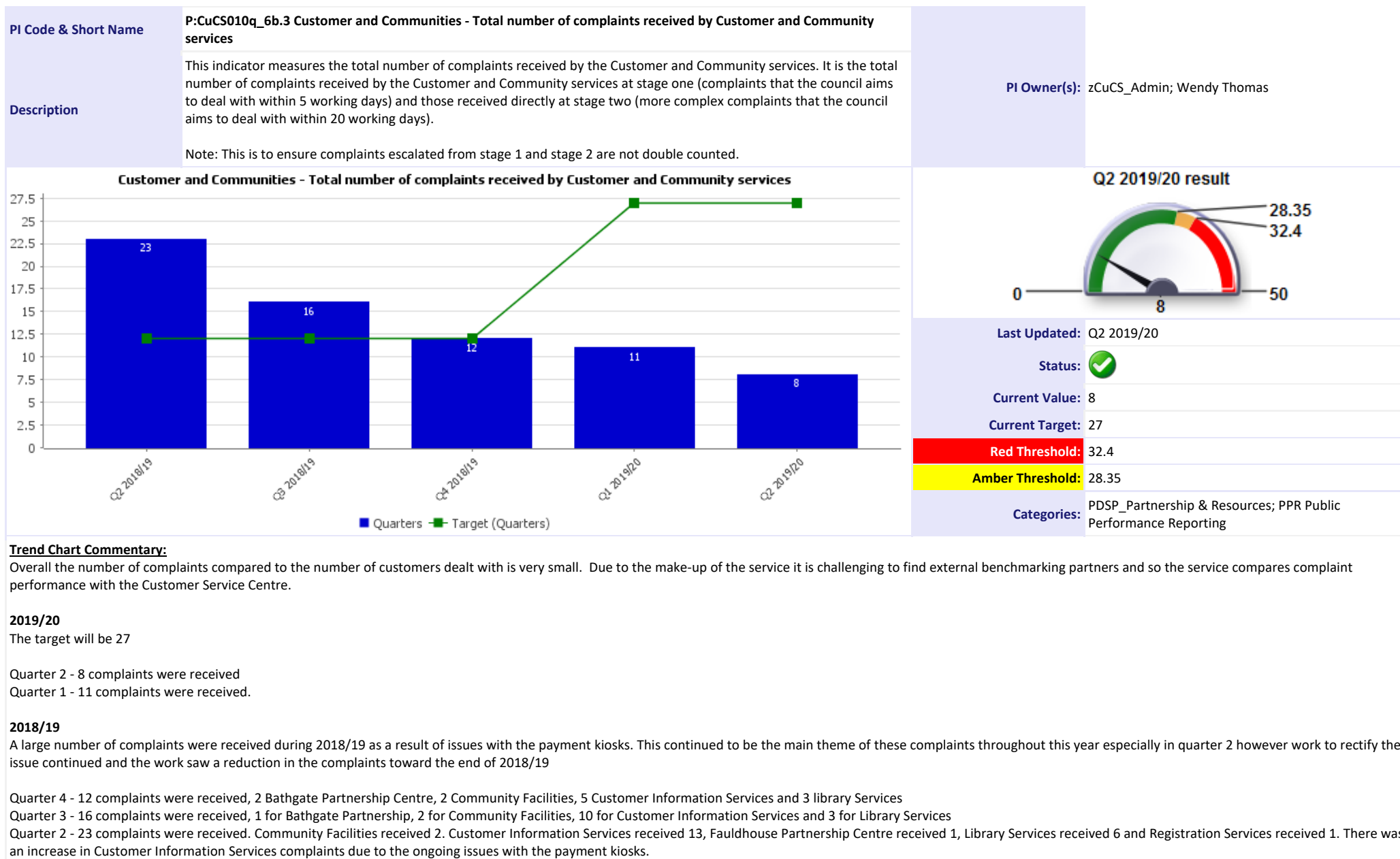


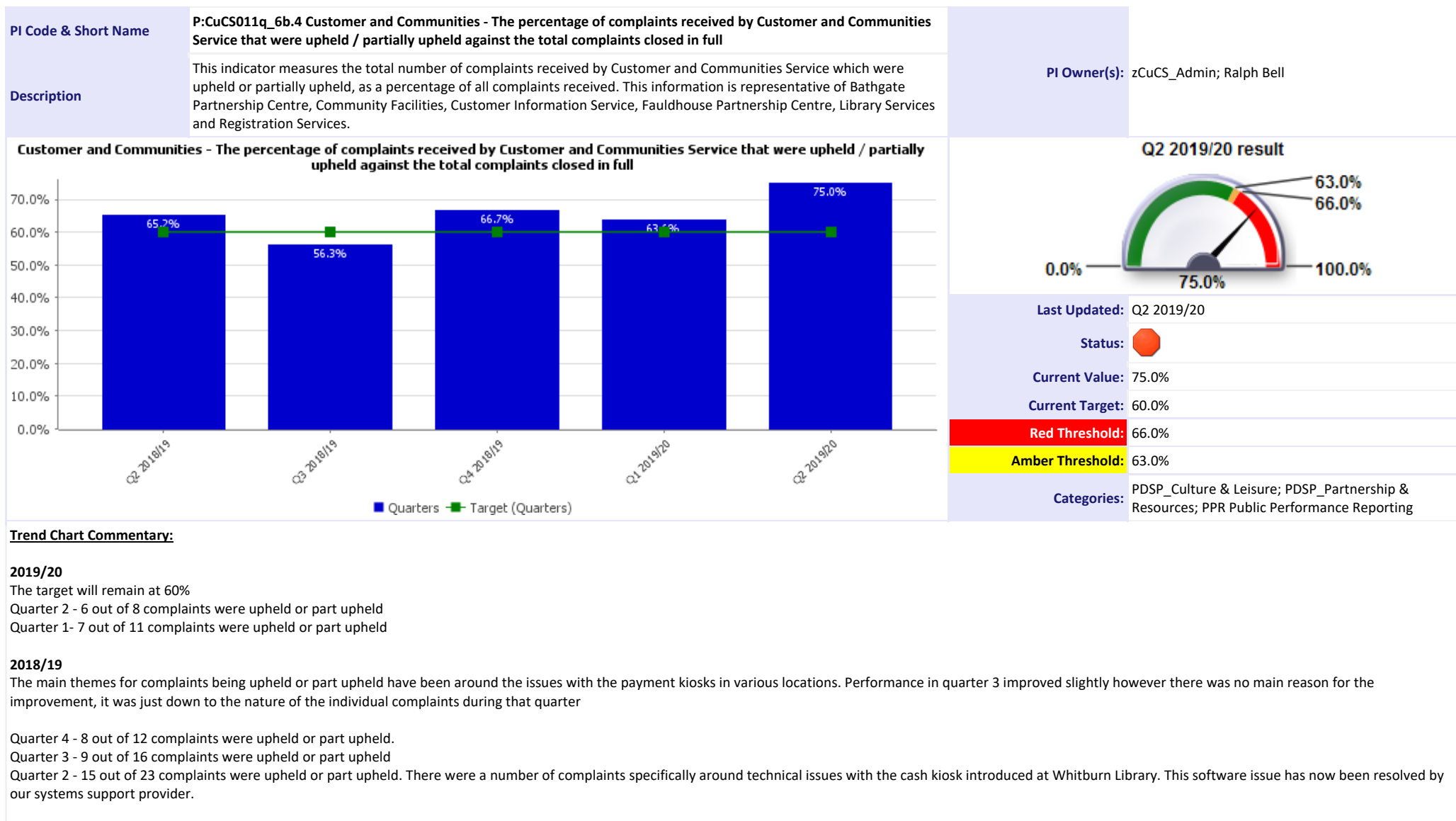


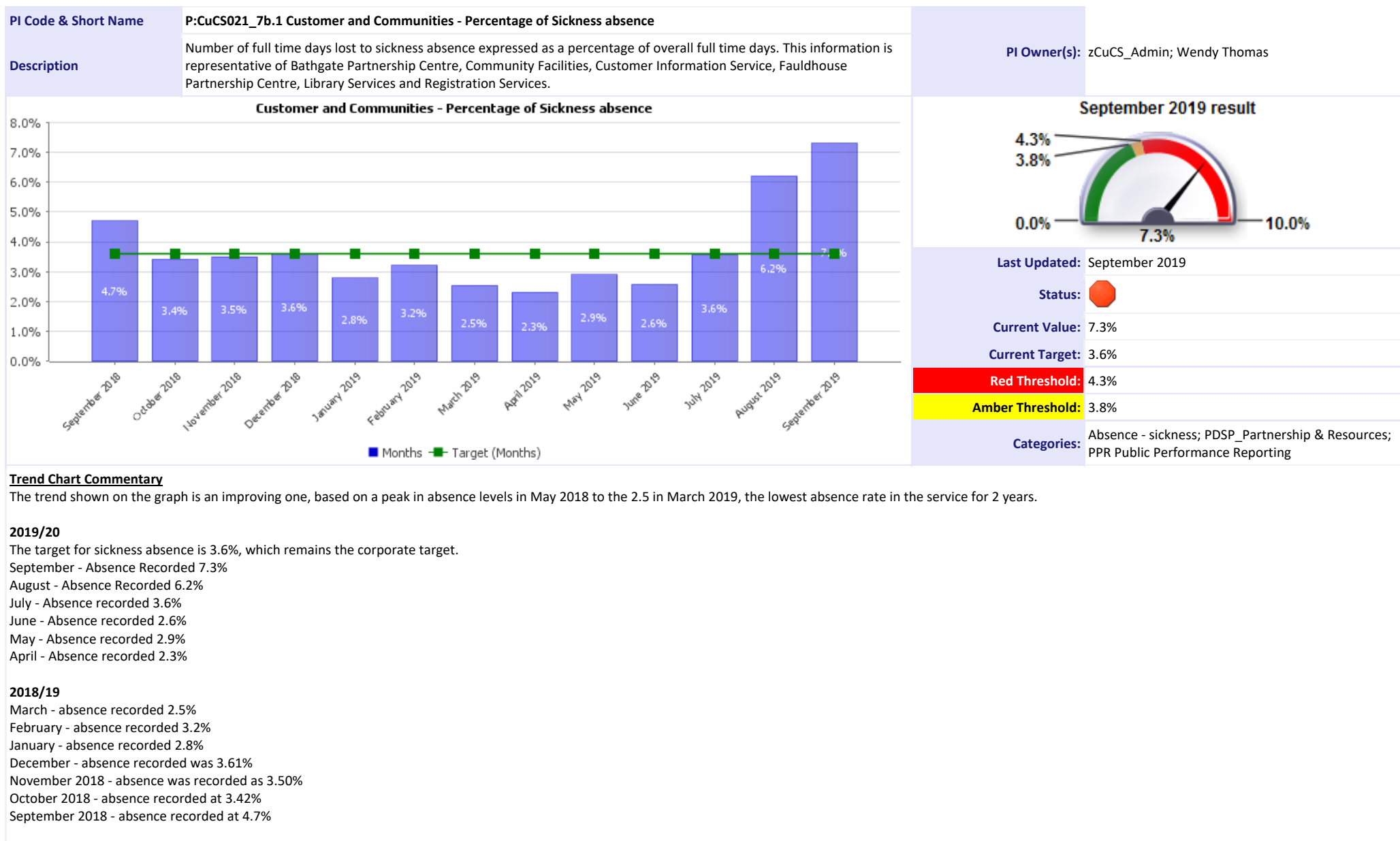


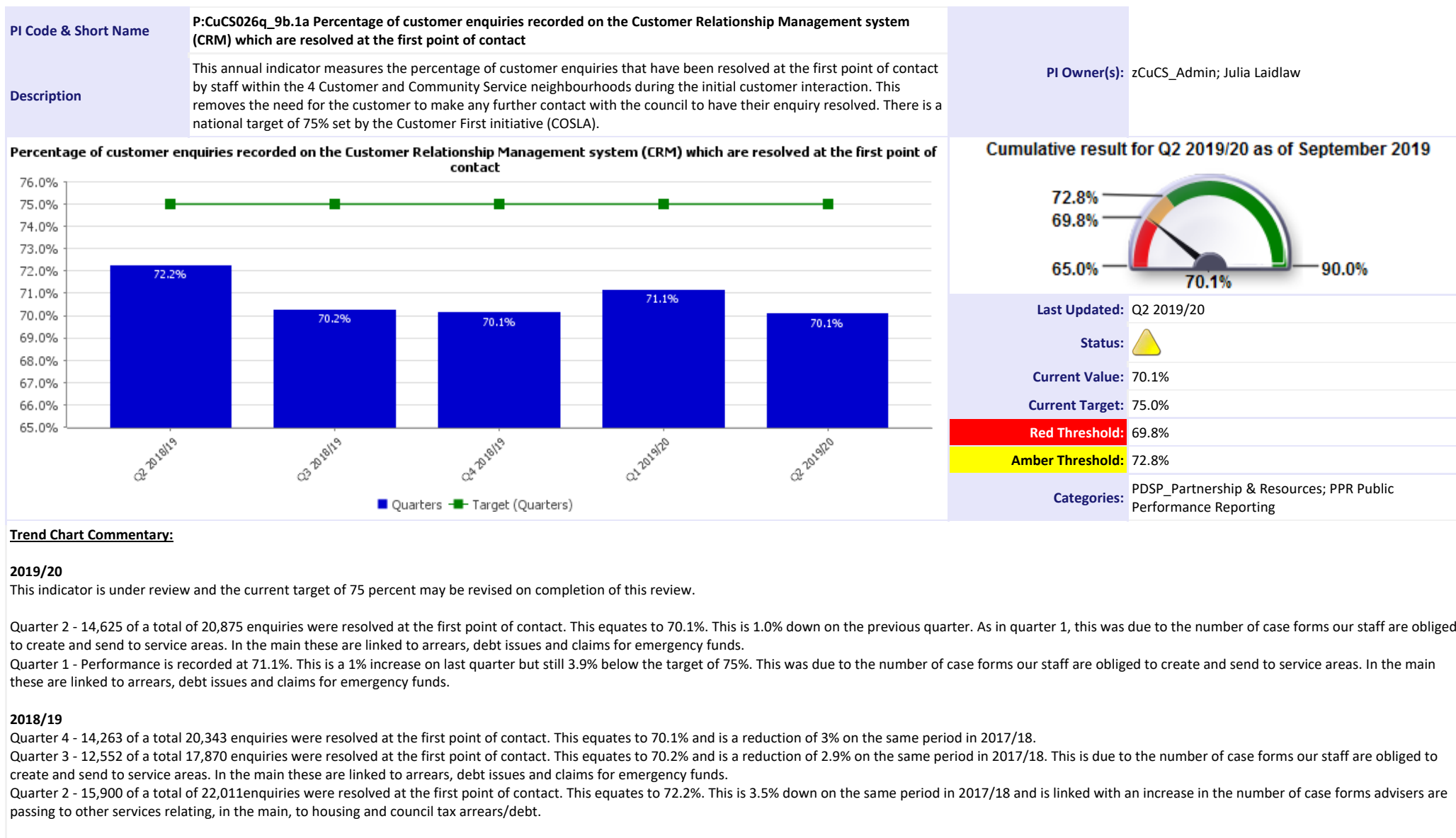


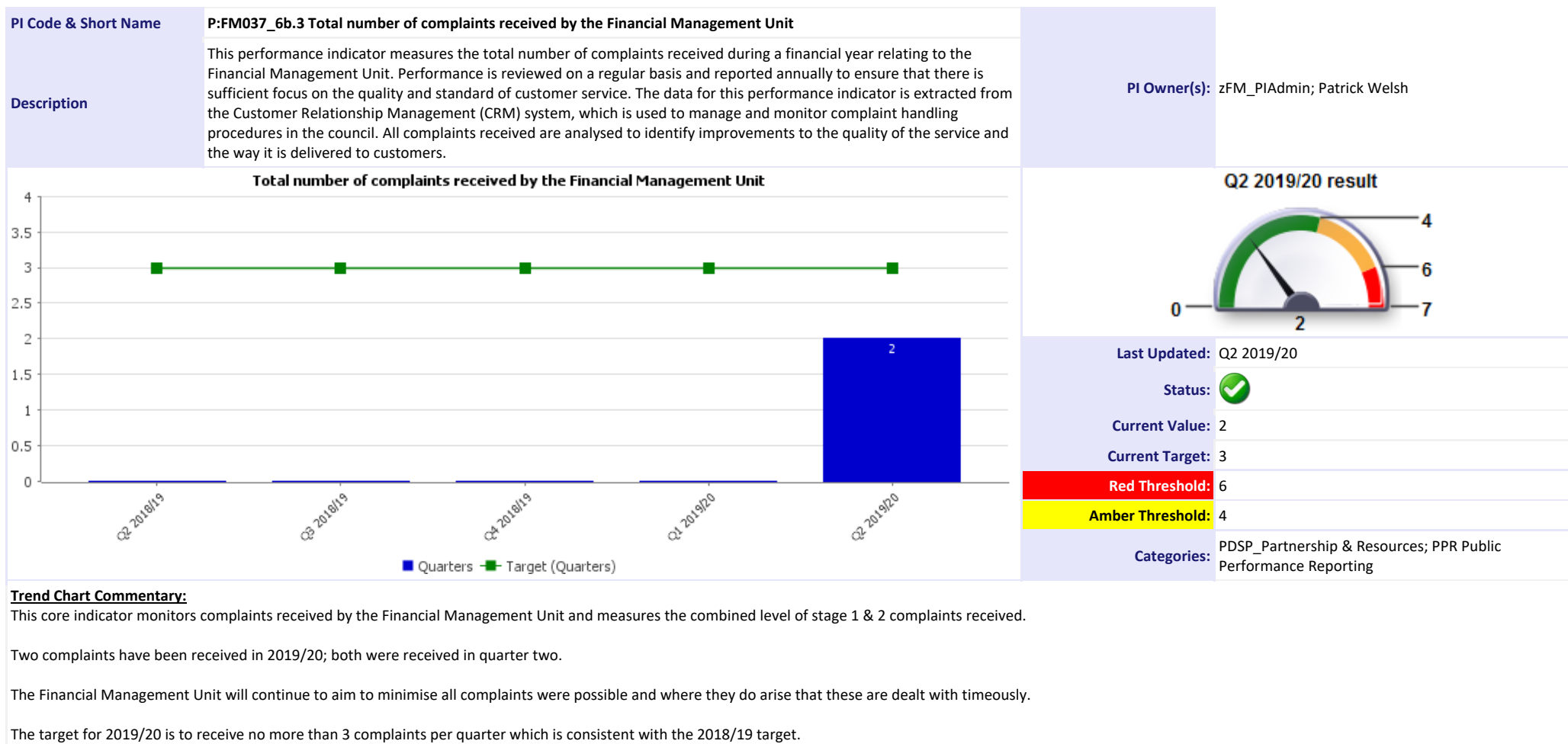


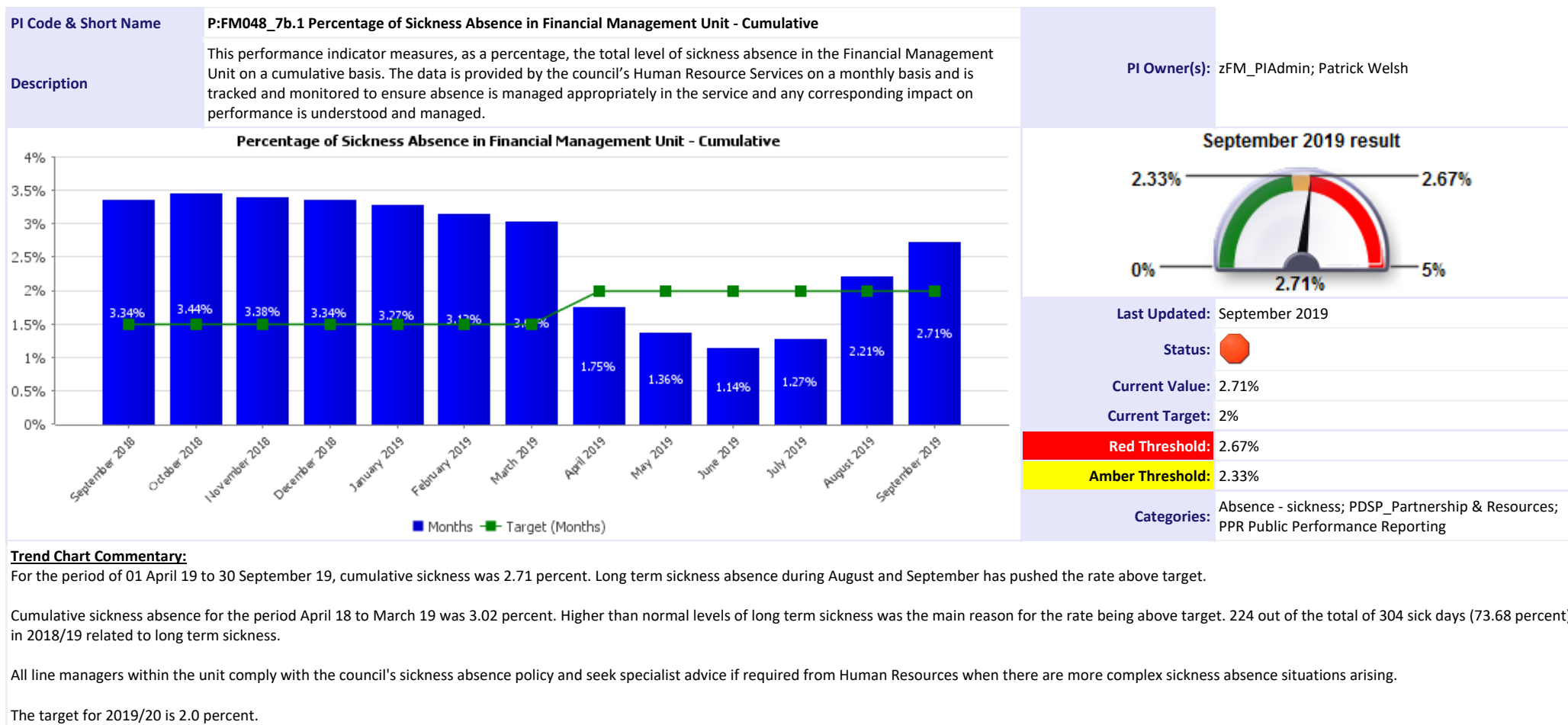










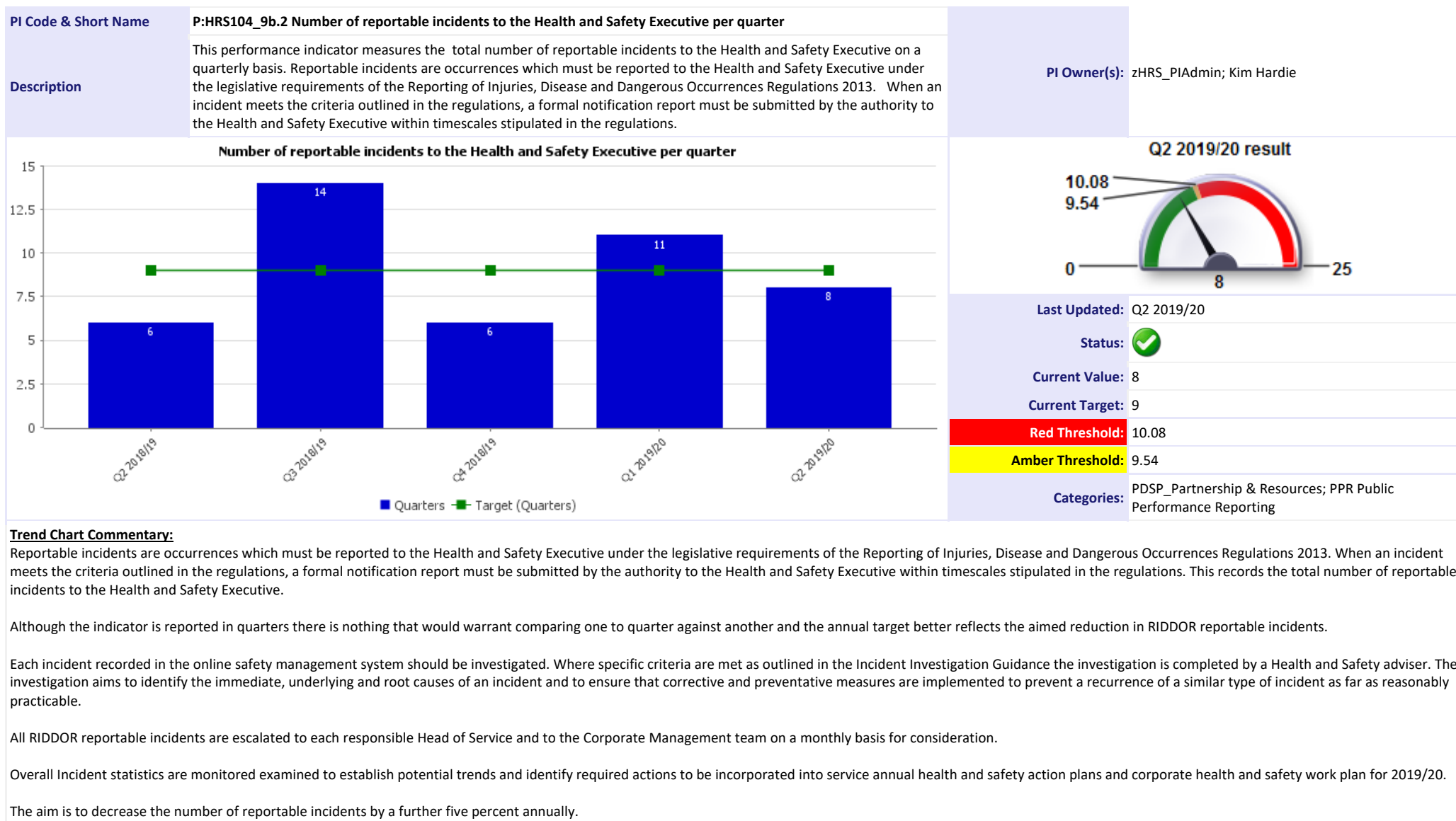


Trend Chart Commentary:
For the period of 01 April 19 to 30 September 19, cumulative sickness was 2.71 percent. Long term sickness absence during August and September has pushed the rate above target.

Cumulative sickness absence for the period April 18 to March 19 was 3.02 percent. Higher than normal levels of long term sickness was the main reason for the rate being above target. 224 out of the total of 304 sick days (73.68 percent) in 2018/19 related to long term sickness.

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 2019/20 is 2.0 percent.



Trend Chart Commentary:

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.

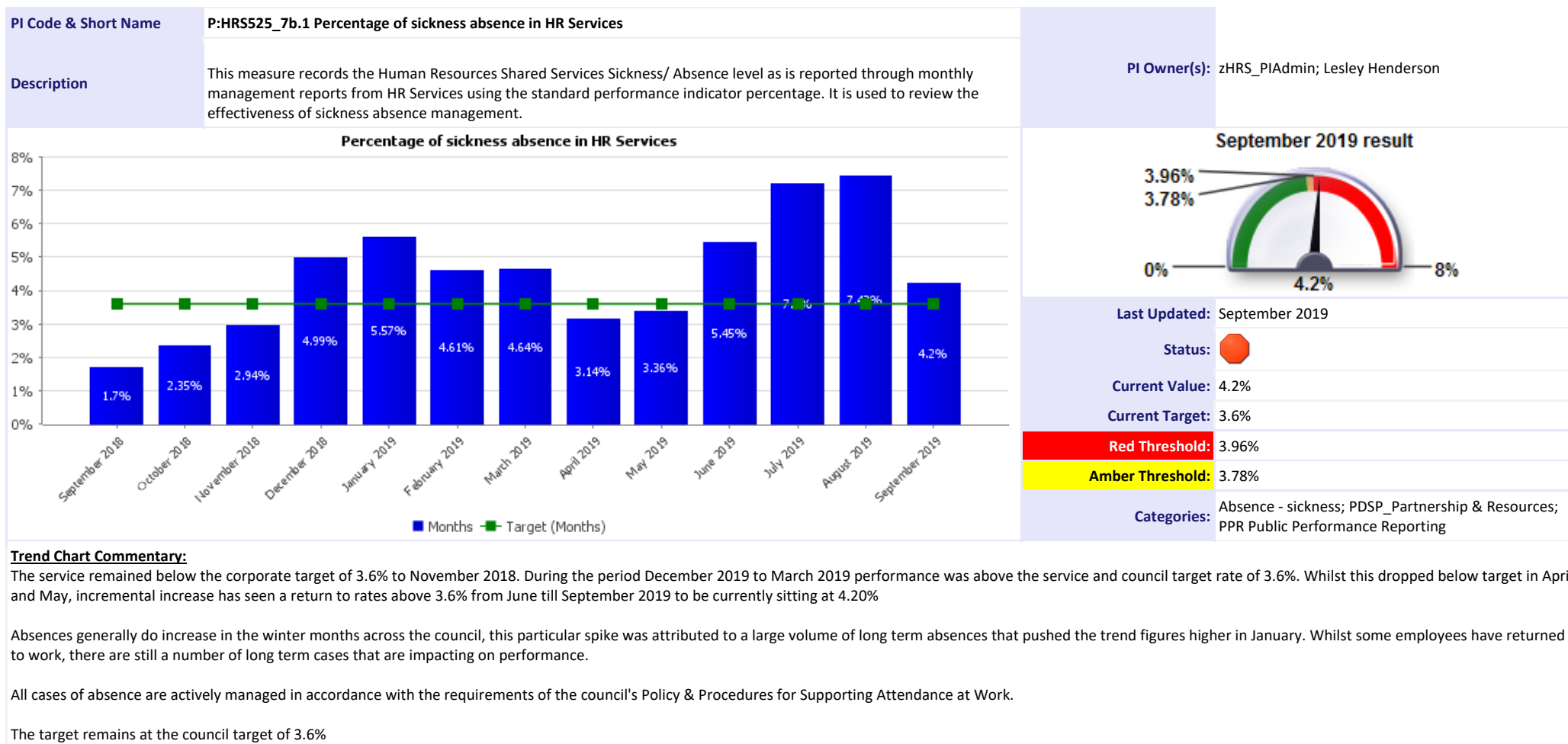
Although the indicator is reported in quarters there is nothing that would warrant comparing one to quarter against another and the annual target better reflects the aimed reduction in RIDDOR reportable incidents.

Each incident recorded in the online safety management system should be investigated. Where specific criteria are met as outlined in the Incident Investigation Guidance the investigation is completed by a Health and Safety adviser. The investigation aims to identify the immediate, underlying and root causes of an incident and to ensure that corrective and preventative measures are implemented to prevent a recurrence of a similar type of incident as far as reasonably practicable.

All RIDDOR reportable incidents are escalated to each responsible Head of Service and to the Corporate Management team on a monthly basis for consideration.

Overall Incident statistics are monitored examined to establish potential trends and identify required actions to be incorporated into service annual health and safety action plans and corporate health and safety work plan for 2019/20.

The aim is to decrease the number of reportable incidents by a further five percent annually.



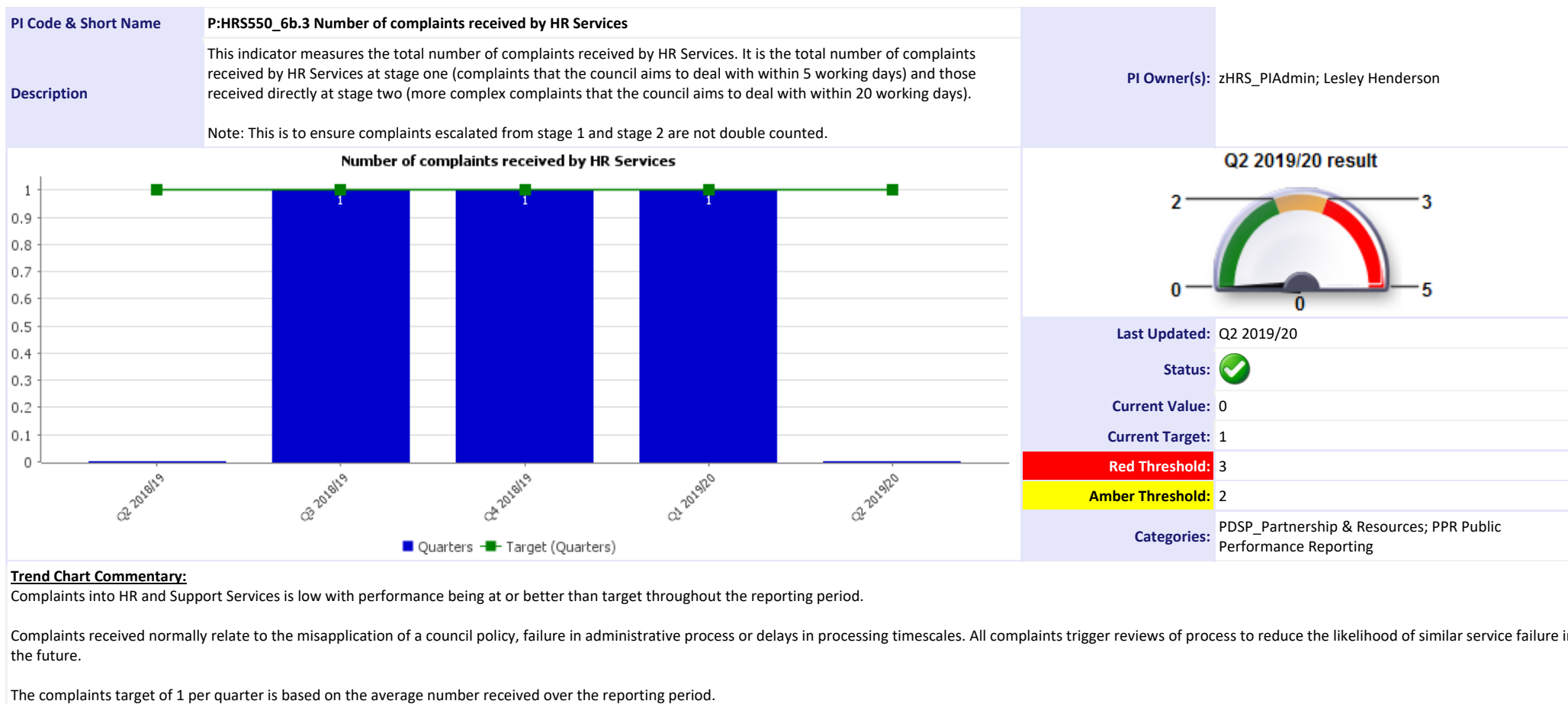
Trend Chart Commentary:

The service remained below the corporate target of 3.6% to November 2018. During the period December 2019 to March 2019 performance was above the service and council target rate of 3.6%. Whilst this dropped below target in April and May, incremental increase has seen a return to rates above 3.6% from June till September 2019 to be currently sitting at 4.20%

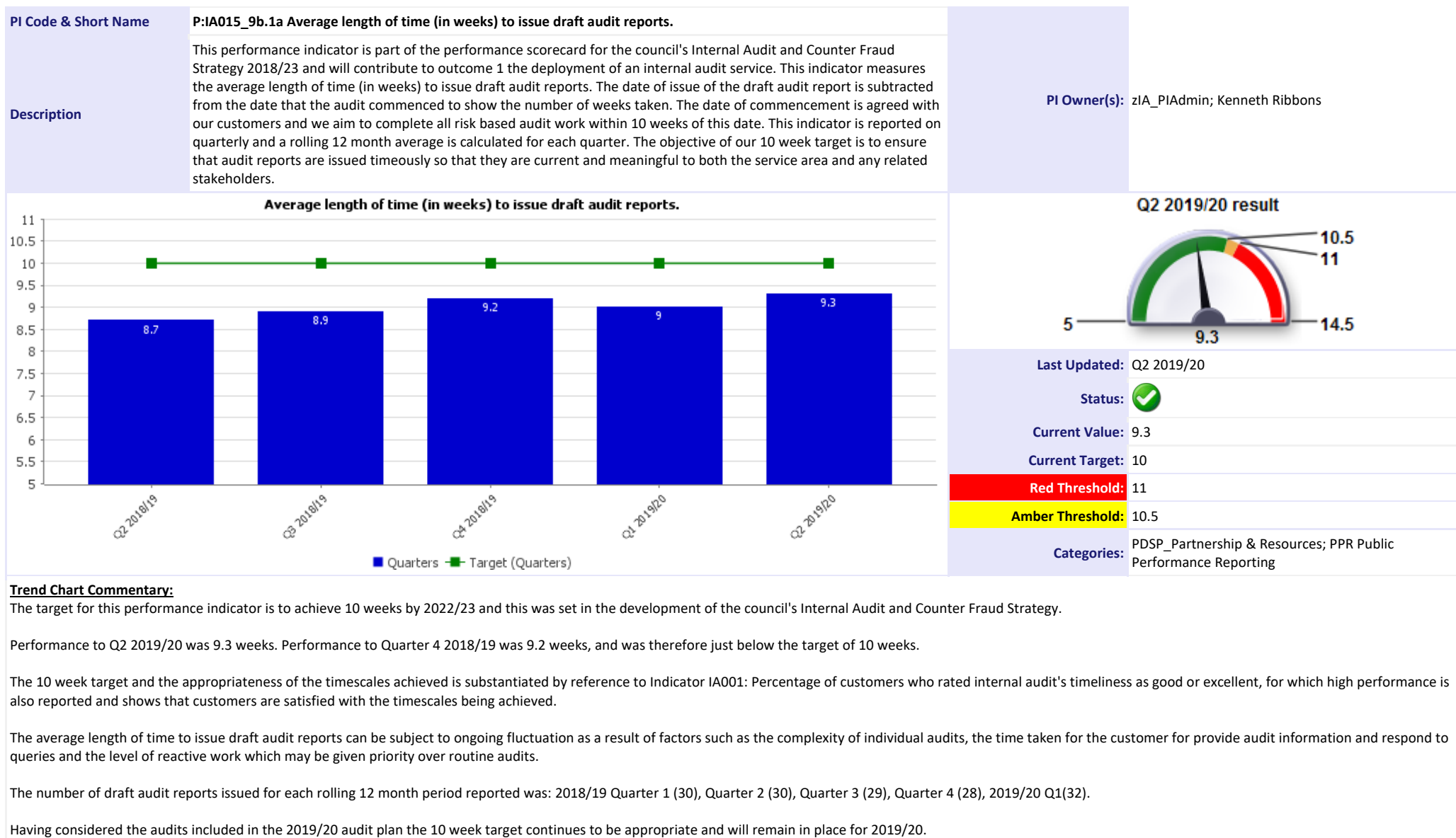
Absences generally do increase in the winter months across the council, this particular spike was attributed to a large volume of long term absences that pushed the trend figures higher in January. Whilst some employees have returned to work, there are still a number of long term cases that are impacting on performance.

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

The target remains at the council target of 3.6%



PI Code & Short Name	P:HRS554_6b.4 Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter													
Description	<p>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.</p>													
		PI Owner(s): zHRS_PIAAdmin; Lesley Henderson												
<p>Percentage of complaints by HR Services which were upheld/part upheld per quarter</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Chart Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Actual Performance (%)</th> <th>Target (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q3 2018/19</td> <td>100%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4 2018/19</td> <td>100%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1 2019/20</td> <td>100%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Quarter	Actual Performance (%)	Target (%)	Q3 2018/19	100%	25%	Q4 2018/19	100%	25%	Q1 2019/20	100%	25%	<p>Q2 2019/20 result N/A</p> <p>Last Updated: Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Status: ?</p> <p>Current Value: N/A</p> <p>Current Target: 25%</p> <p>Red Threshold: 27.5%</p> <p>Amber Threshold: 26.25%</p> <p>Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</p>
Quarter	Actual Performance (%)	Target (%)												
Q3 2018/19	100%	25%												
Q4 2018/19	100%	25%												
Q1 2019/20	100%	25%												
<p>Trend Chart Commentary: As a result of the low complaint numbers, an upheld complaint has a significant impact on the percentage of upheld complaints.</p> <p>2019/20 Quarter 2 - the service did not receive any complaints. Quarter 1 - the service received 1 complaint which was upheld.</p> <p>2018/19 Quarter 4 - the service received 1 complaint which was upheld. Quarter 3 - the service received 1 complaint which was upheld. Quarter 2 - the service did not receive any complaints.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Target: the service has always received low numbers of complaints which results in large fluctuations in the performance of this indicator, making target setting more challenging. Annually the service targets a total of 4 complaints or less and expects that around one quarter of those complaints will be upheld or partly upheld, therefore a target of 25 percent is applied throughout the year.</p>														



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.

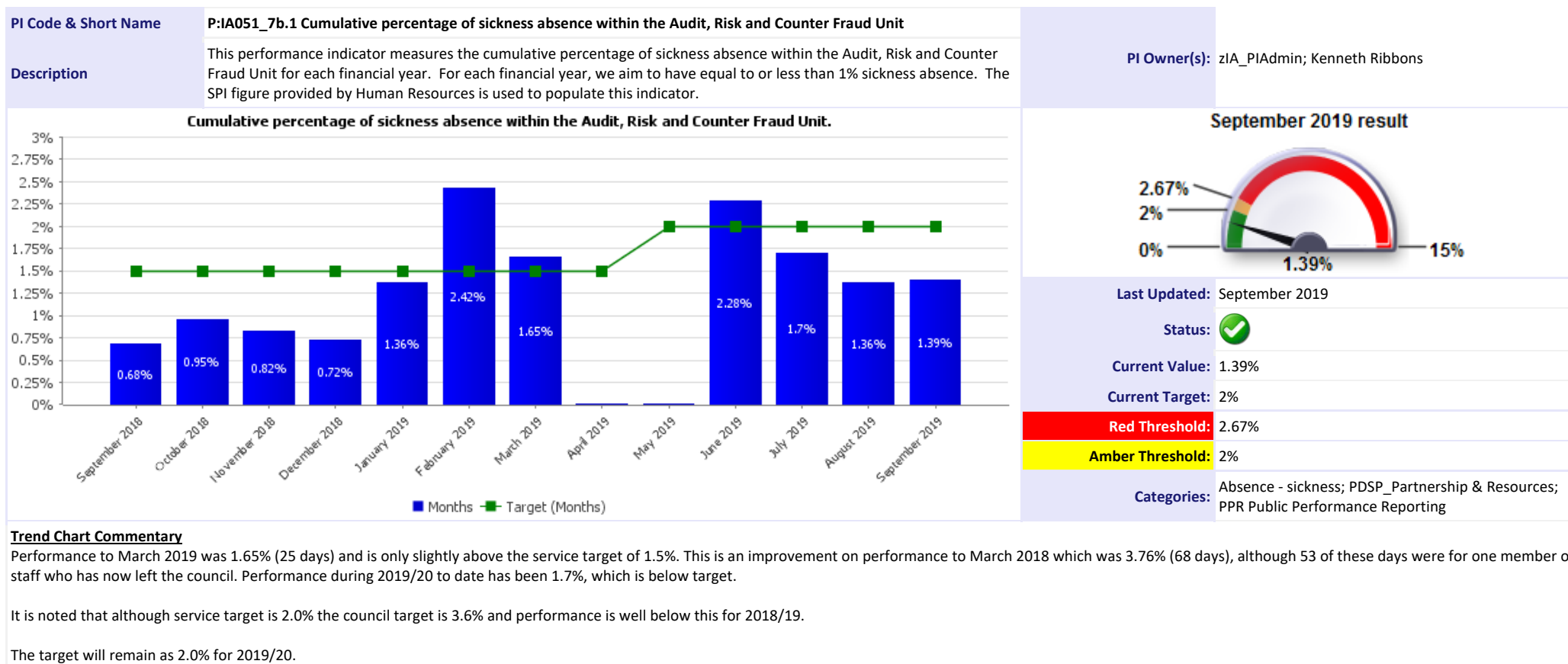
Performance to Q2 2019/20 was 9.3 weeks. Performance to Quarter 4 2018/19 was 9.2 weeks, and was therefore just below the target of 10 weeks.

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, the time taken for the customer for provide audit information and respond to queries 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: 2018/19 Quarter 1 (30), Quarter 2 (30), Quarter 3 (29), Quarter 4 (28), 2019/20 Q1(32).

Having considered the audits included in the 2019/20 audit plan the 10 week target continues to be appropriate and will remain in place for 2019/20.



PI Code & Short Name	P:IA066_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud	
Description	<p>This performance indicator measures the combined level of stage 1 and stage 2 complaints received by the service.</p> <p>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.</p>	PI Owner(s): zIA_PAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
<p>Total number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud</p> <p>0</p> <p>Q2 2018/19 Q3 2018/19 Q4 2018/19 Q1 2019/20 Q2 2019/20</p> <p>■ Quarters ■ Target (Quarters)</p>		<p>Q2 2019/20 result</p> <p>4 0 8 9</p> <p>0</p> <p>Last Updated: Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Status: </p> <p>Current Value: 0</p> <p>Current Target: 0</p> <p>Red Threshold: 8</p> <p>Amber Threshold: 4</p> <p>Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</p>
<p>Trend Chart Commentary:</p> <p>The service has had no complaint to date in 2019/20 and did not receive any complaints in 2018/19 or 2017/18.</p> <p>Target per quarter is set at 0 complaints.</p>		

PI Code & Short Name	P: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_PAdmin; Kenneth Ribbons
Description	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>The percentage of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud that were upheld or partially upheld against the total complaints closed in full.</p> <div></div>		<p>Q2 2019/20 result</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Last Updated: Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Status: ?</p> <p>Current Value: N/A</p> <p>Current Target: 0%</p> <p>Red Threshold: 0%</p> <p>Amber Threshold: 0%</p> <p>Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</p>
<p>■ Quarters ■ Target (Quarters)</p> <p>Trend Chart Commentary:</p> <p>The number of complaints received by Audit, Risk and Counter Fraud has been historically low. No complaints have been received in 2019/20 to date and no complaints were received in 2017/18 or 2018/19.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The target for 2019/20 will remain as 0.</p>		

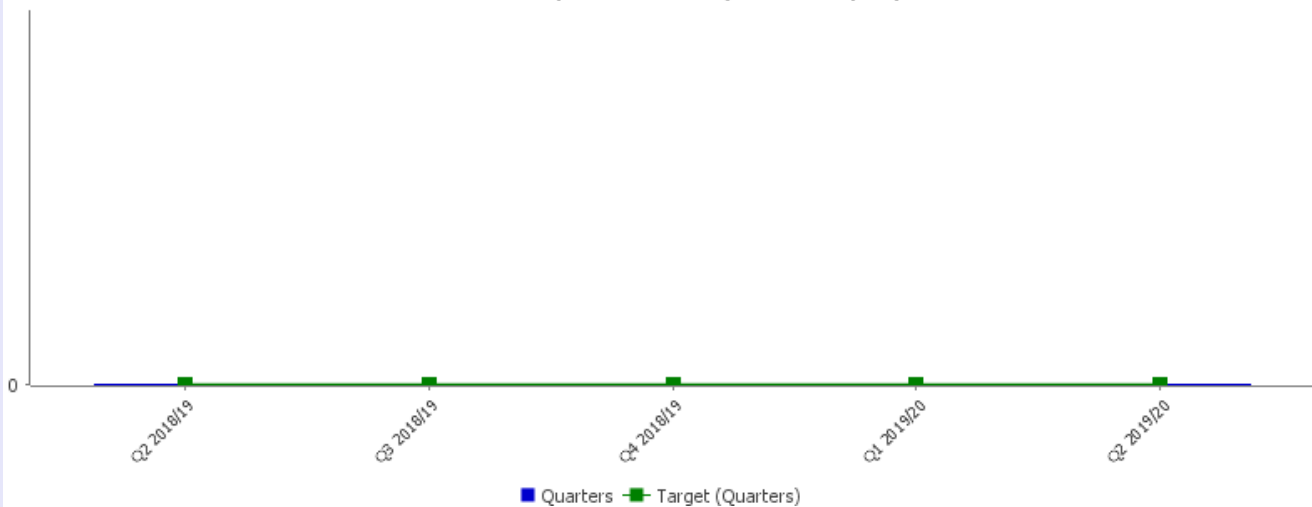




February 2019 – performance of 97 percent was an increase of 3 percent from the previous month but failed to meet target by 1%. Themes and issues are being raised at individual team meetings, one to ones and monthly service centre quality meetings.

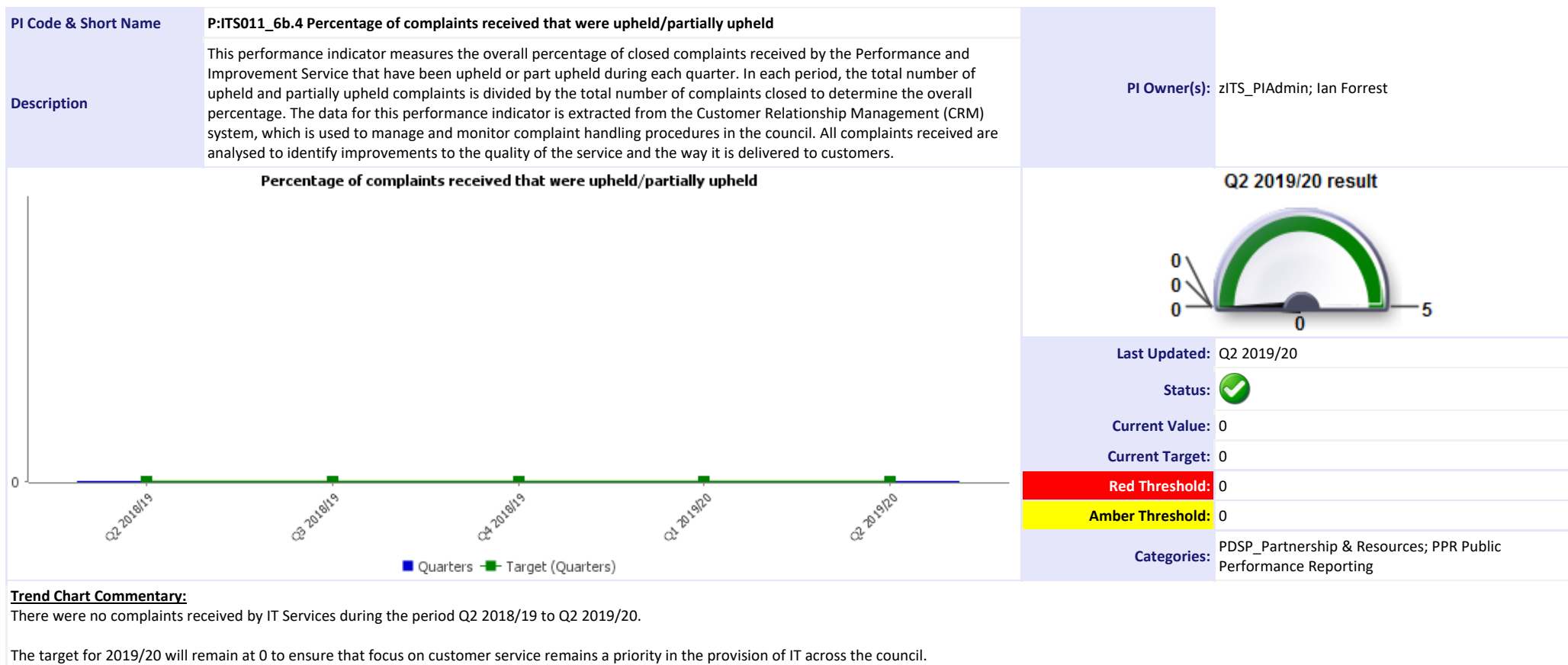
January 2019 – performance of 94 percent was a decrease by 4 percent from the previous month and failed to meet the target.

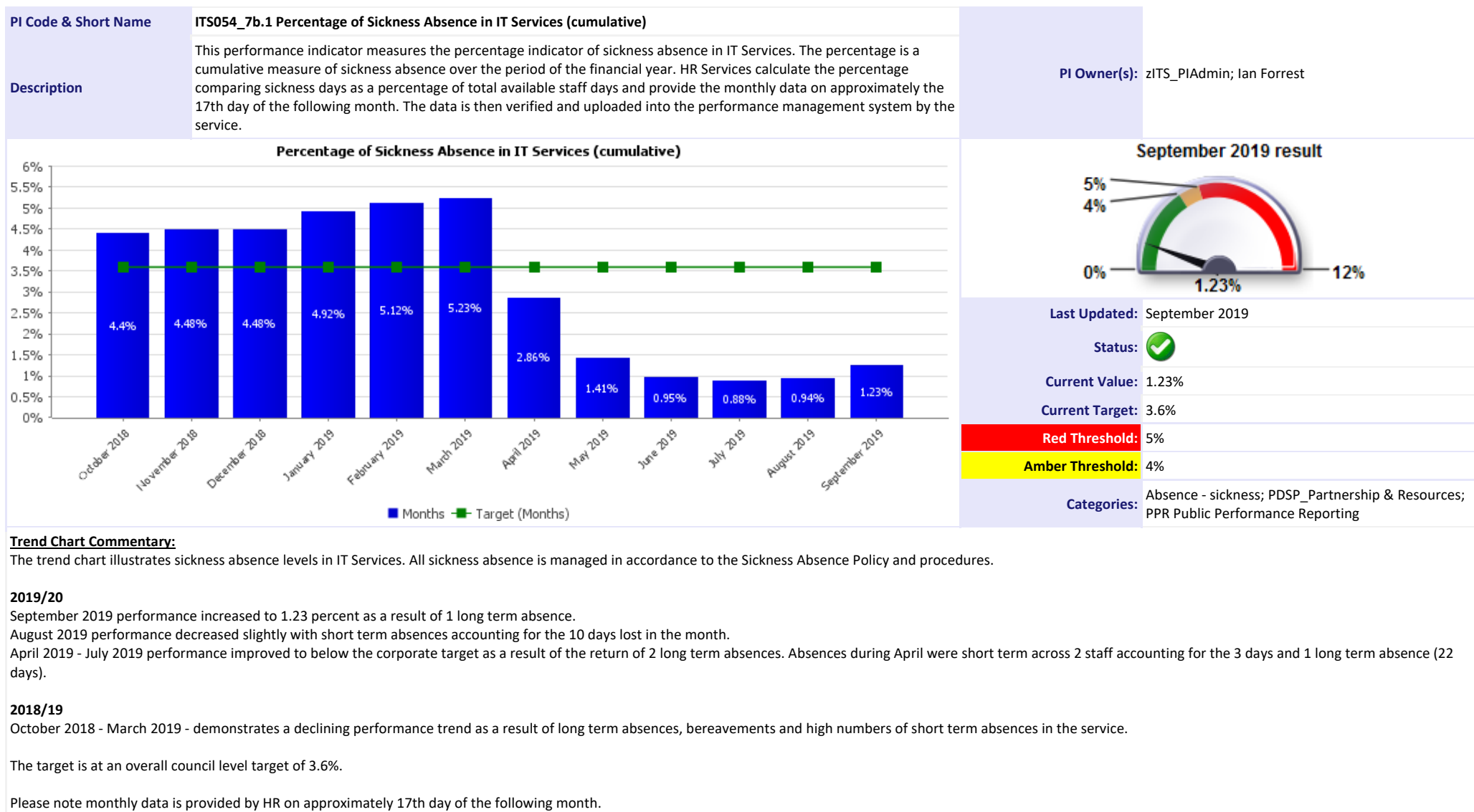
December 2018 – performance of 99 percent was achieved, an improvement of 2 percent from the previous month and a peak in service performance on the chart.

November 2018 – performance of 97 percent was a dip by 1 percent from the previous month.

October 2018 – performance of 98 percent was a dip by 1 percent from the previous month.

PI Code & Short Name	P:ITS010_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter		PI Owner(s): zITS_PAdmin; Ian Forrest														
Description	This performance indicator measures the total number of complaints received during each quarter relating to IT Services. Performance is reviewed on a regular basis and reported annually to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the quality and standard of customer service. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.																
<div>Total number of complaints received by IT Services per quarter</div> 			<div>Q2 2019/20 result</div>  <table><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>Q2 2019/20</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</td></tr></table>	Last Updated:	Q2 2019/20	Status:		Current Value:	0	Current Target:	0	Red Threshold:	0	Amber Threshold:	0	Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting
Last Updated:	Q2 2019/20																
Status:																	
Current Value:	0																
Current Target:	0																
Red Threshold:	0																
Amber Threshold:	0																
Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting																
<div>Trend Chart Commentary: The trend chart demonstrates for the last five quarters (2018-2019), that IT Services have received no official complaints.</div> <div>All complaints are logged via the council’s CRM system and reports produced to review any new calls.</div> <div>The target for 2019/20 will remain at 0 to ensure that focus on customer service remains a priority in the provision of IT across the council.</div>																	





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.

2019/20

September 2019 performance increased to 1.23 percent as a result of 1 long term absence.

August 2019 performance decreased slightly with short term absences accounting for the 10 days lost in the month.

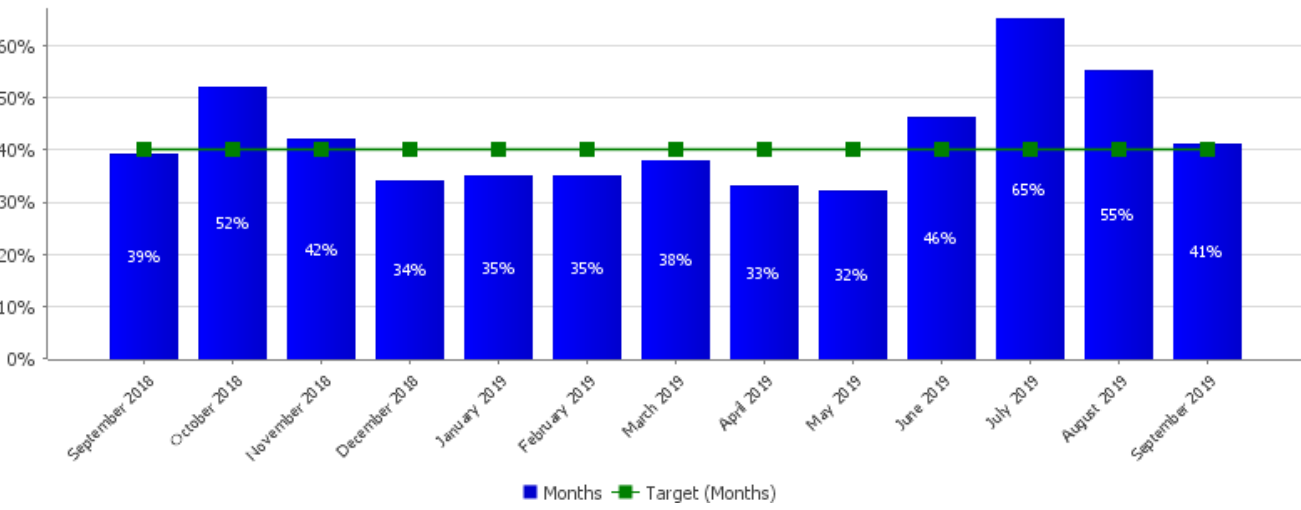
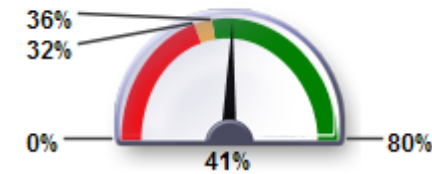
April 2019 - July 2019 performance improved to below the corporate target as a result of the return of 2 long term absences. Absences during April were short term across 2 staff accounting for the 3 days and 1 long term absence (22 days).

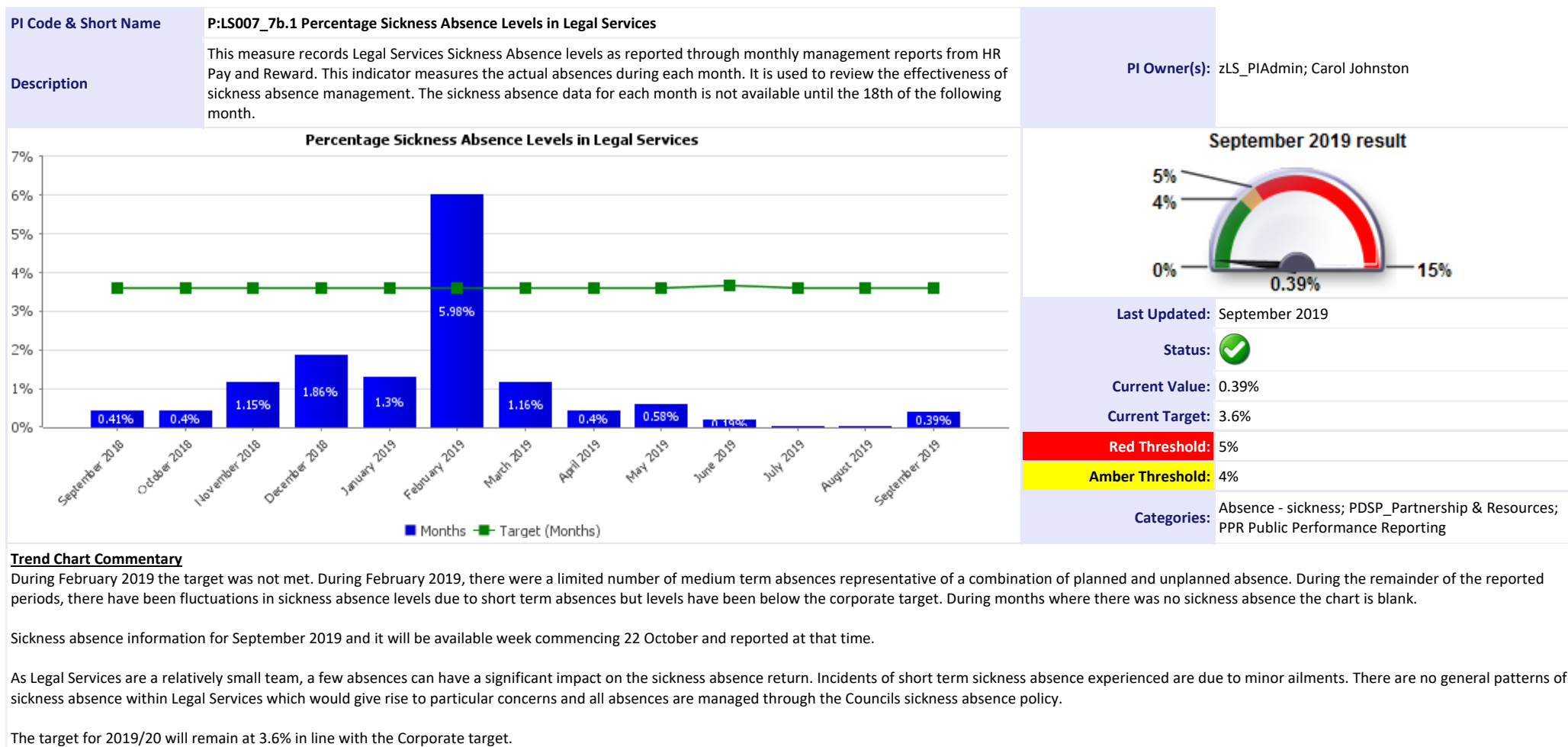
2018/19


October 2018 - March 2019 - demonstrates a declining performance trend as a result of long term absences, bereavements and high numbers of short term absences in the service.

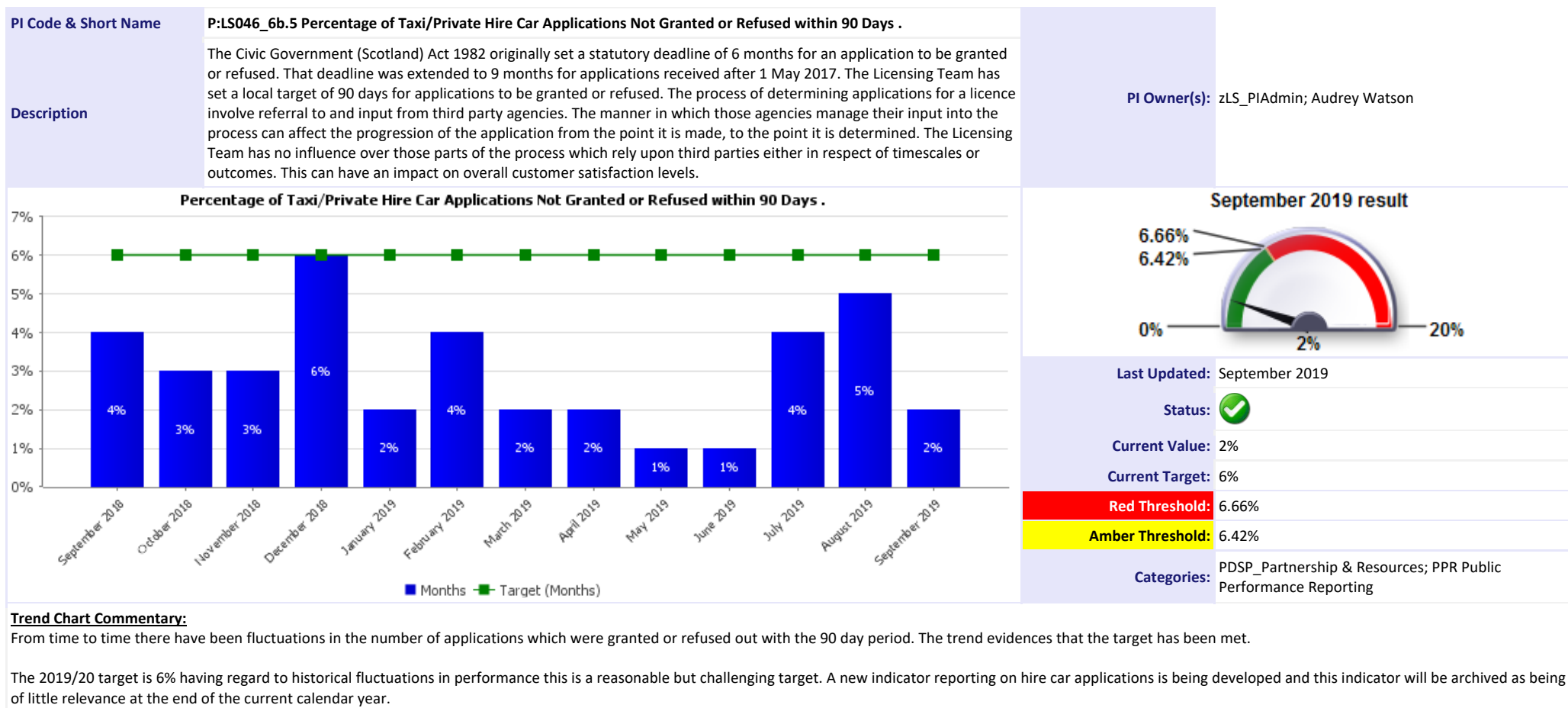
The target is at an overall council level target of 3.6%.



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

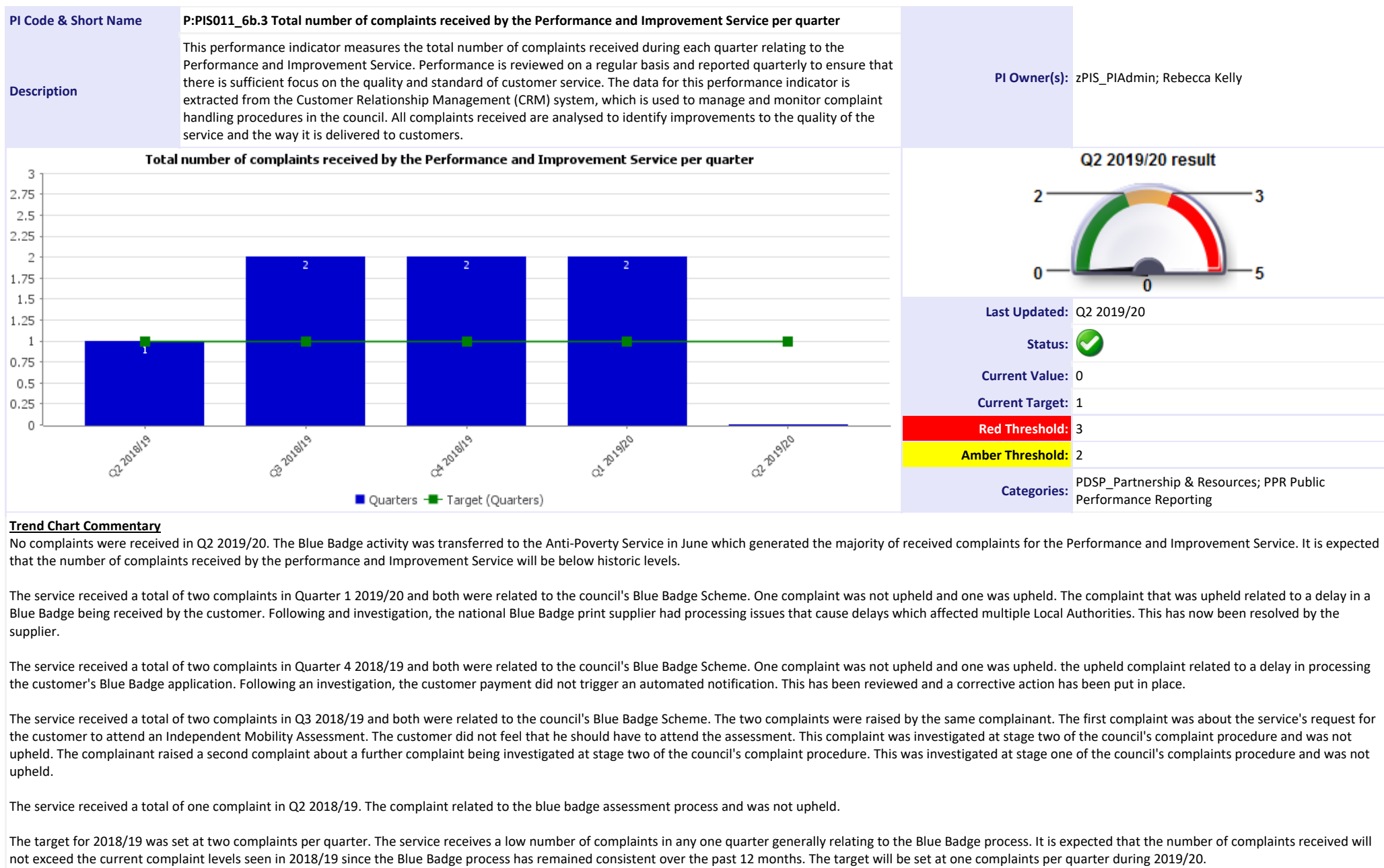
PI Code & Short Name	ITS079a_9b.1c Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact		PI Owner(s): zITS_PIAAdmin; Ian Forrest																																																								
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of IT incidents (faults) resolved within at 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. The data is extracted 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.																																																										
<div>Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact.</div>  <table><caption>Percentage of Faults Resolved at First Point of Contact Data</caption><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Percentage (%)</th><th>Target (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>September 2018</td><td>39%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>October 2018</td><td>52%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>November 2018</td><td>42%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>December 2018</td><td>34%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>January 2019</td><td>35%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>February 2019</td><td>35%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>March 2019</td><td>38%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>April 2019</td><td>33%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>May 2019</td><td>32%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>June 2019</td><td>46%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>July 2019</td><td>65%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>August 2019</td><td>55%</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>September 2019</td><td>41%</td><td>40%</td></tr></tbody></table>			Month	Percentage (%)	Target (%)	September 2018	39%	40%	October 2018	52%	40%	November 2018	42%	40%	December 2018	34%	40%	January 2019	35%	40%	February 2019	35%	40%	March 2019	38%	40%	April 2019	33%	40%	May 2019	32%	40%	June 2019	46%	40%	July 2019	65%	40%	August 2019	55%	40%	September 2019	41%	40%	<div>September 2019 result</div>  <table><tbody><tr><td>Last Updated:</td><td>September 2019</td></tr><tr><td>Status:</td><td>✓</td></tr><tr><td>Current Value:</td><td>41%</td></tr><tr><td>Current Target:</td><td>40%</td></tr><tr><td>Red Threshold:</td><td>32%</td></tr><tr><td>Amber Threshold:</td><td>36%</td></tr><tr><td>Categories:</td><td>PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</td></tr></tbody></table>	Last Updated:	September 2019	Status:	✓	Current Value:	41%	Current Target:	40%	Red Threshold:	32%	Amber Threshold:	36%	Categories:	PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting
Month	Percentage (%)	Target (%)																																																									
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<div>Trend Chart Commentary:</div> <p>Target: 40 percent, based on previous performance. The reasons for failing to meet the target have related to Education calls going straight to second line resolve and major incidents which could not be resolved at first line.</p> <div>2019/20</div> <p>September 2019 – achieved was 41%, which was dip from the previous months but still met the target.</p> <p>August 2019 – performance achieved was 55%. The trend chart demonstrates a vast improvement in performance over the last 3 months due to the removal of the high volume of snap protect calls that bypass the Service Desk and continues to exceed target even with the inclusion of education calls.</p> <p>July 2019 – performance achieved was 71%. Performance was extremely positive and remained above seasonal target. This is a typical trend when education customers on summer holiday.</p> <p>June 2019 – performance achieved was 46% against a target of 40%. Performance was impacted positively by the removal of snap protect calls that go directly to 2nd line but impacted negatively by the majority of calls logged by Education that go directly to 2nd Line.</p> <p>May 2019 – performance achieved was 32% and did not achieve target due to one major incident relating to CRM being unavailable which the service desk could not resolve and also by the majority of calls logged by Education going directly to 2nd Line.</p> <p>April 2019 – performance achieved was 33% and did not achieve target due to one major incident relating to the Council's Electronic Content Management System which the service desk could not resolve and also by the majority of calls logged by Education going directly to 2nd Line.</p> <div>2018/19</div> <p>January, February and March 2019 – performance did not achieve target as the majority of calls logged by Education went directly to 2nd Line. Performance was also impacted by staff absences on the service desk.</p> <p>October, November and December 2018 – performance dipped from a high of 52 percent in October to 34 percent by December, when the target was not met.</p> <p>September 2018 – performance was 39 percent, slightly below the target.</p>																																																											

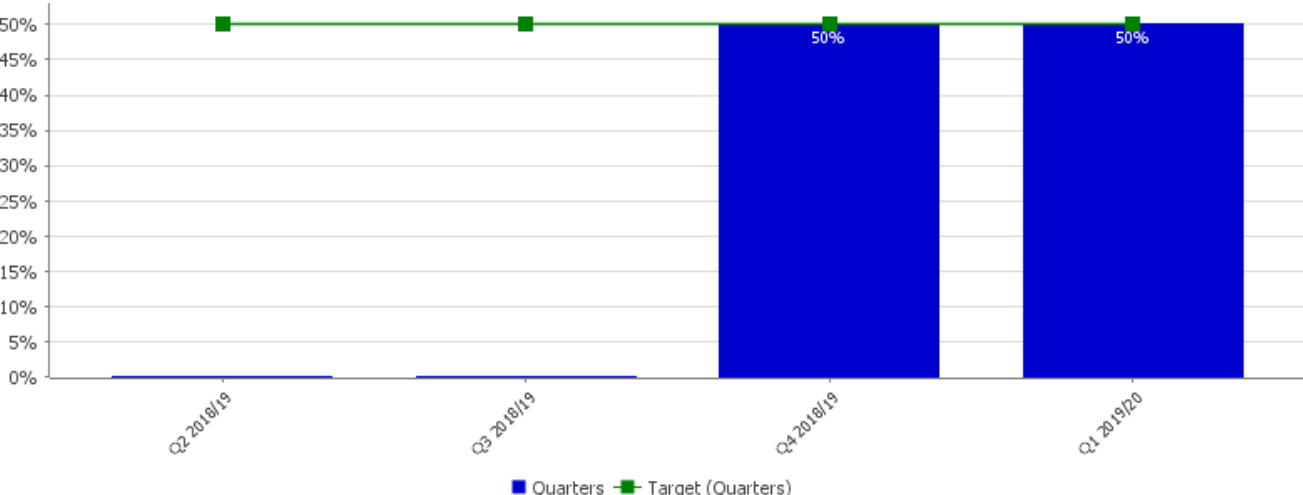



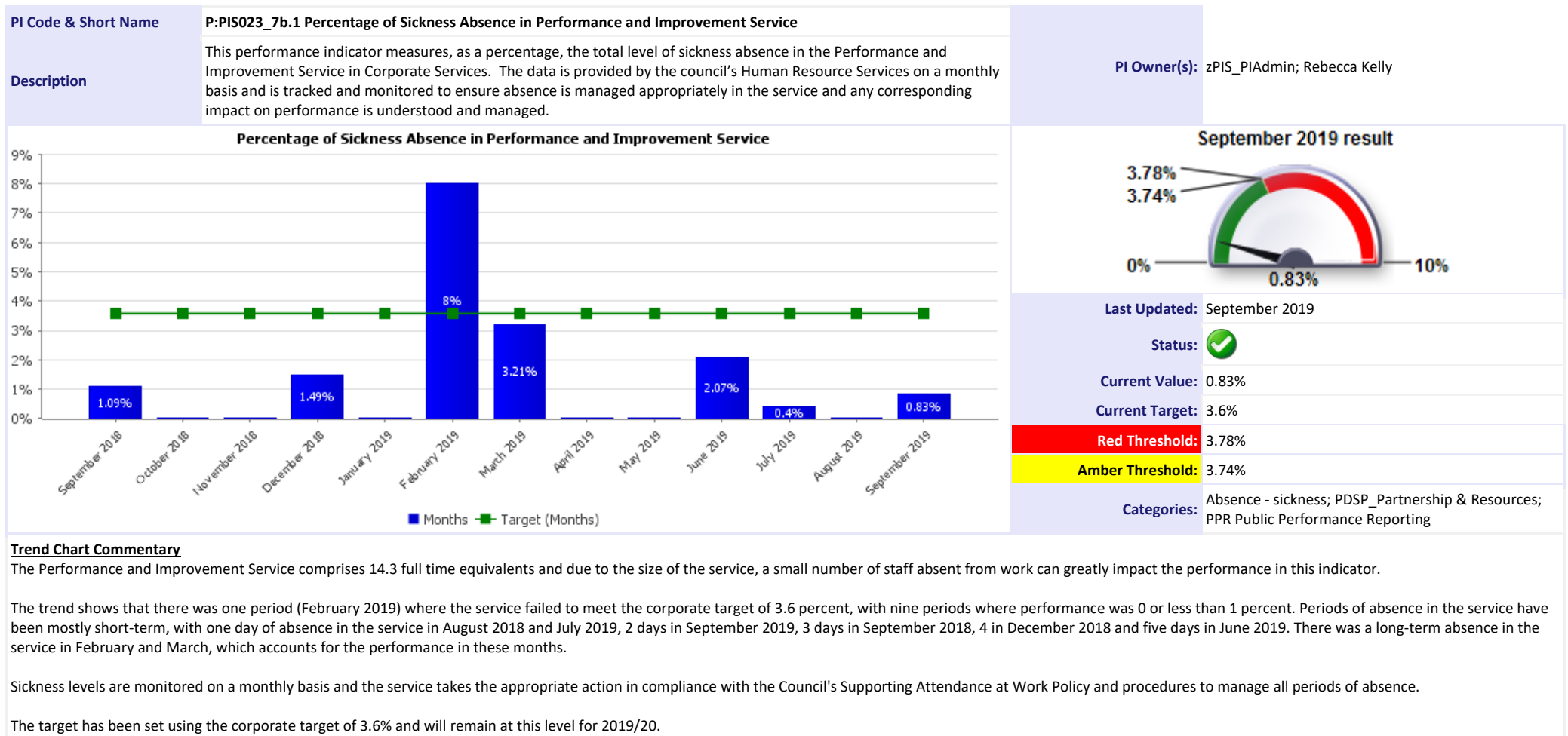
PI Code & Short Name	P:LS027_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld	
Description	<p>This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by Legal Services that have been upheld or part upheld during 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.</p> <p>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.</p>	PI Owner(s): zLS_PIAAdmin; Carol Johnston
<p>Percentage of all complaints closed quarterly by Legal Services that were upheld / partially upheld</p>  <p>■ Quarters ■ Target (Quarters)</p>		Q2 2019/20 result N/A
		Last Updated: Q2 2019/20
		Status: ?
		Current Value: N/A
		Current Target: 0%
		Red Threshold: 75%
		Amber Threshold: 50%
		Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting
<p>Trend Chart Commentary: The trend shows that Legal Services have had no upheld complaints during the reporting period to Q2 2019/20. 3 complaints were during Q2 2019/20.</p> <p>Complaints regarding the service can be made in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure, in addition to contacting the Service Manager or Head of Service directly.</p> <p>Where complaints are received, the service takes full advantage of the opportunity to reflect on its performance and identify areas for improvement to avoid similar complaints recurring.</p> <p>During periods where no complaints were received the chart will show as a blank.</p> <p>Following review of historical performance, the target for 2019/20 is 0%</p>		

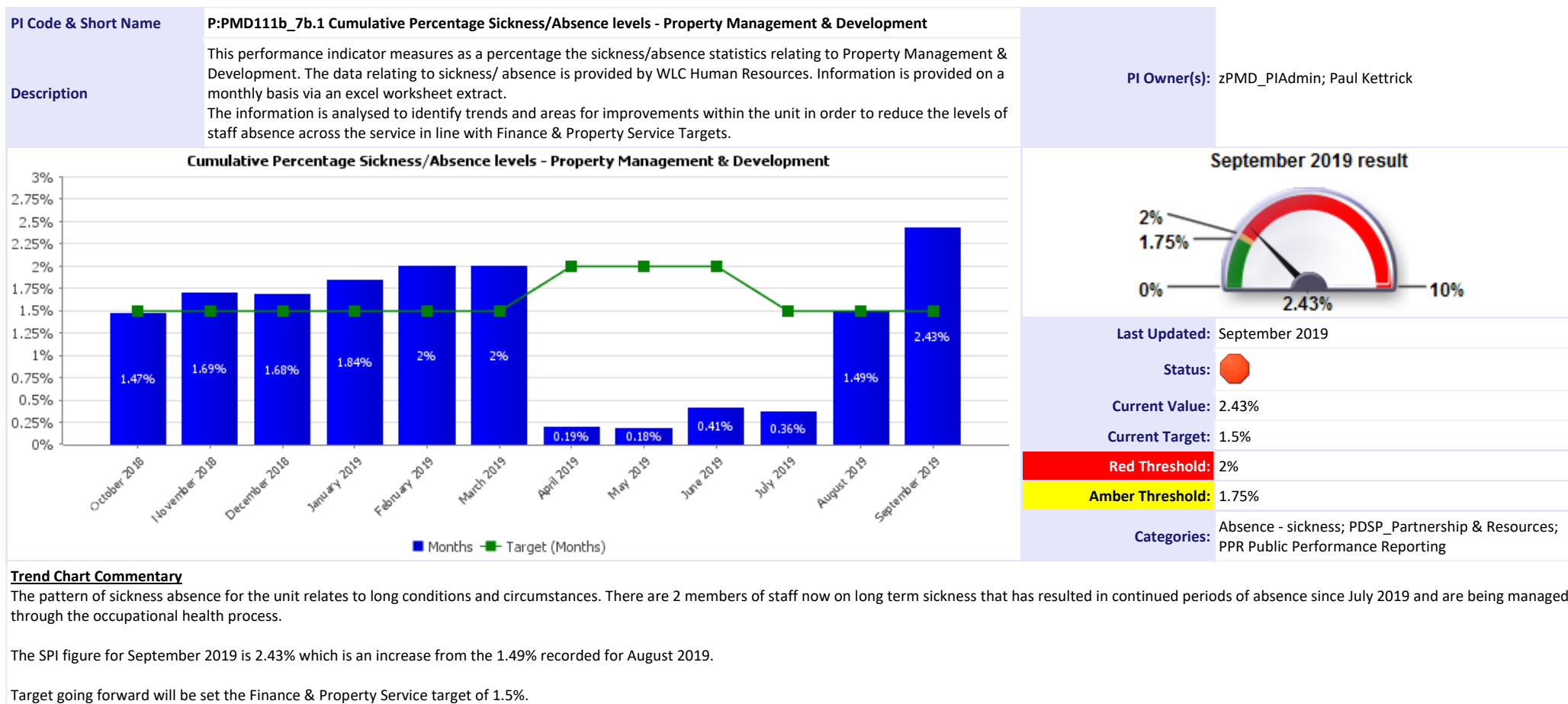


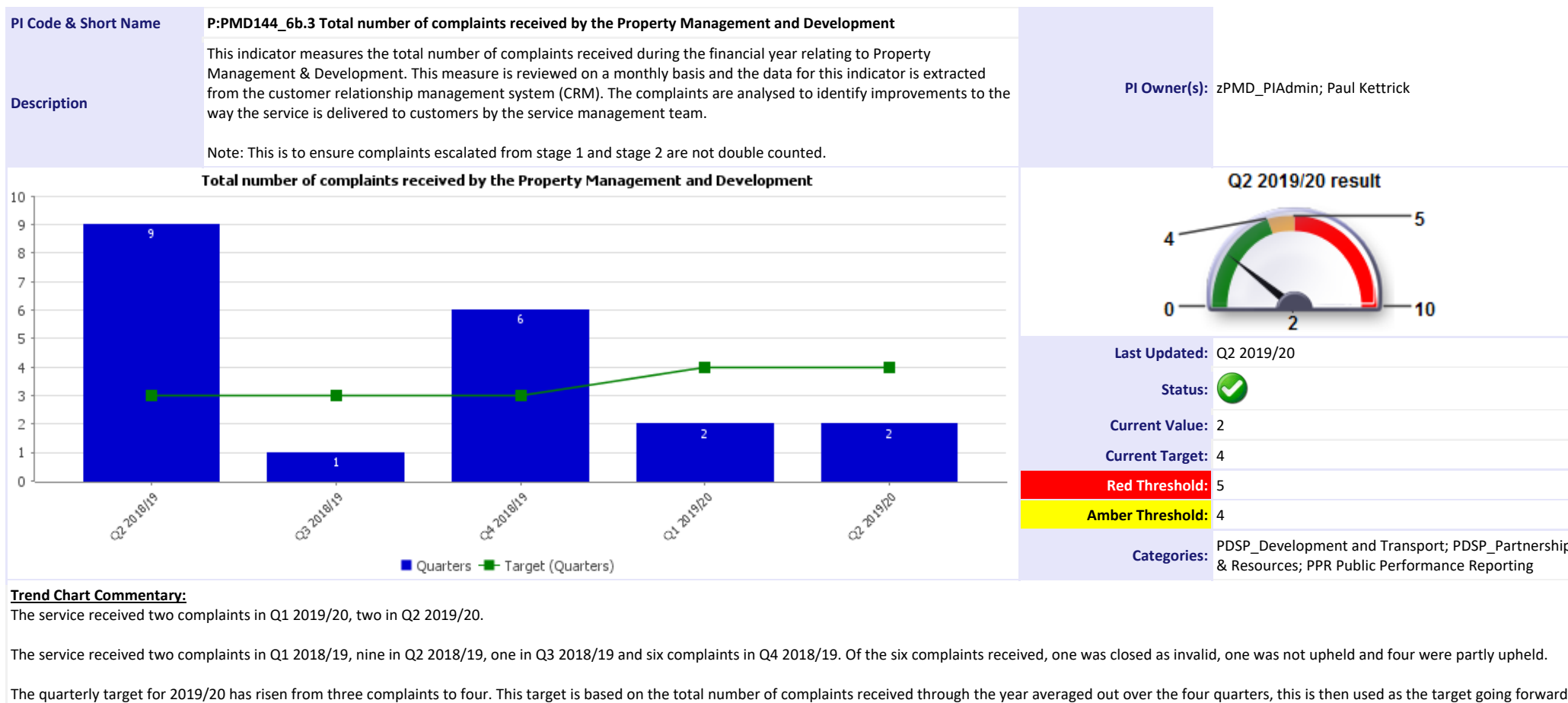
PI Code & Short Name	P:LS087_6b.3 Total number of complaints received by Legal Services	
Description	<p>This indicator measures the total number of complaints received by Legal Services. It is the total number of complaints received by Legal Services at stage one (complaints that the council aims to 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</p> <p>Note: This is to ensure complaints escalated from stage 1 and stage 2 are not double counted.</p>	PI Owner(s): zLS_PAdmin; Carol Johnston
<p>Total number of complaints received by Legal Services</p>  <p>■ Months ■ Target (Months)</p>		September 2019 result N/A
		Last Updated: September 2019
		Status: 
		Current Value: N/A
		Current Target: 2
		Red Threshold: 5
		Amber Threshold: 3
		Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting
<p><u>Trend Chart Commentary:</u> No complaints have been received during the reporting period to September 2019.</p> <p>Complaints regarding the service can be made in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure, in addition to contacting the Service Manager or Head of Service directly. Where complaints are received, the service takes full advantage of the opportunity to reflect on its performance and identify areas for improvement to avoid similar complaints recurring.</p> <p>The target is reviewed quarterly at service performance meetings.</p> <p>The target for 2019/20 remains at 2 having regard to historical performance.</p>		

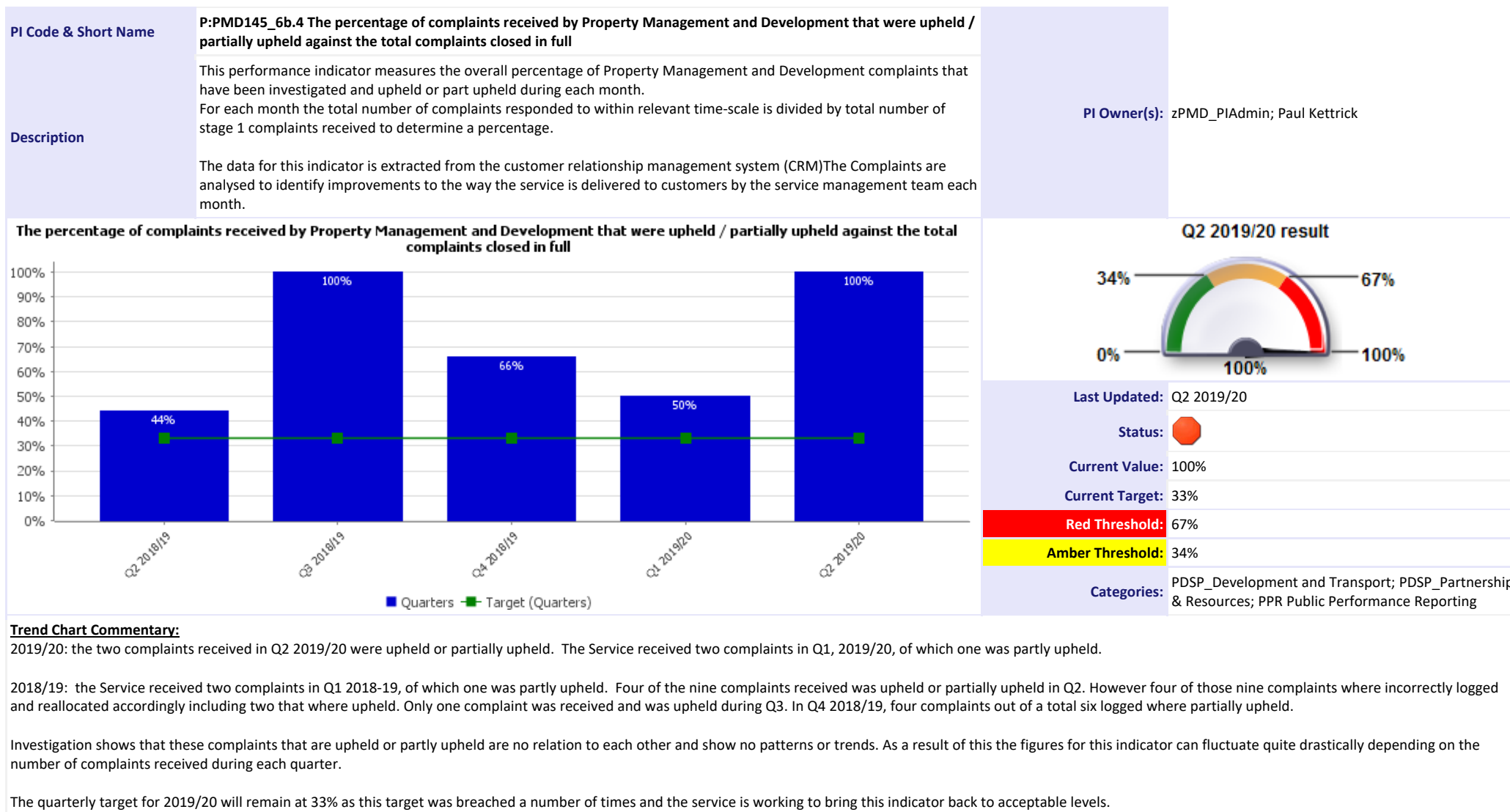


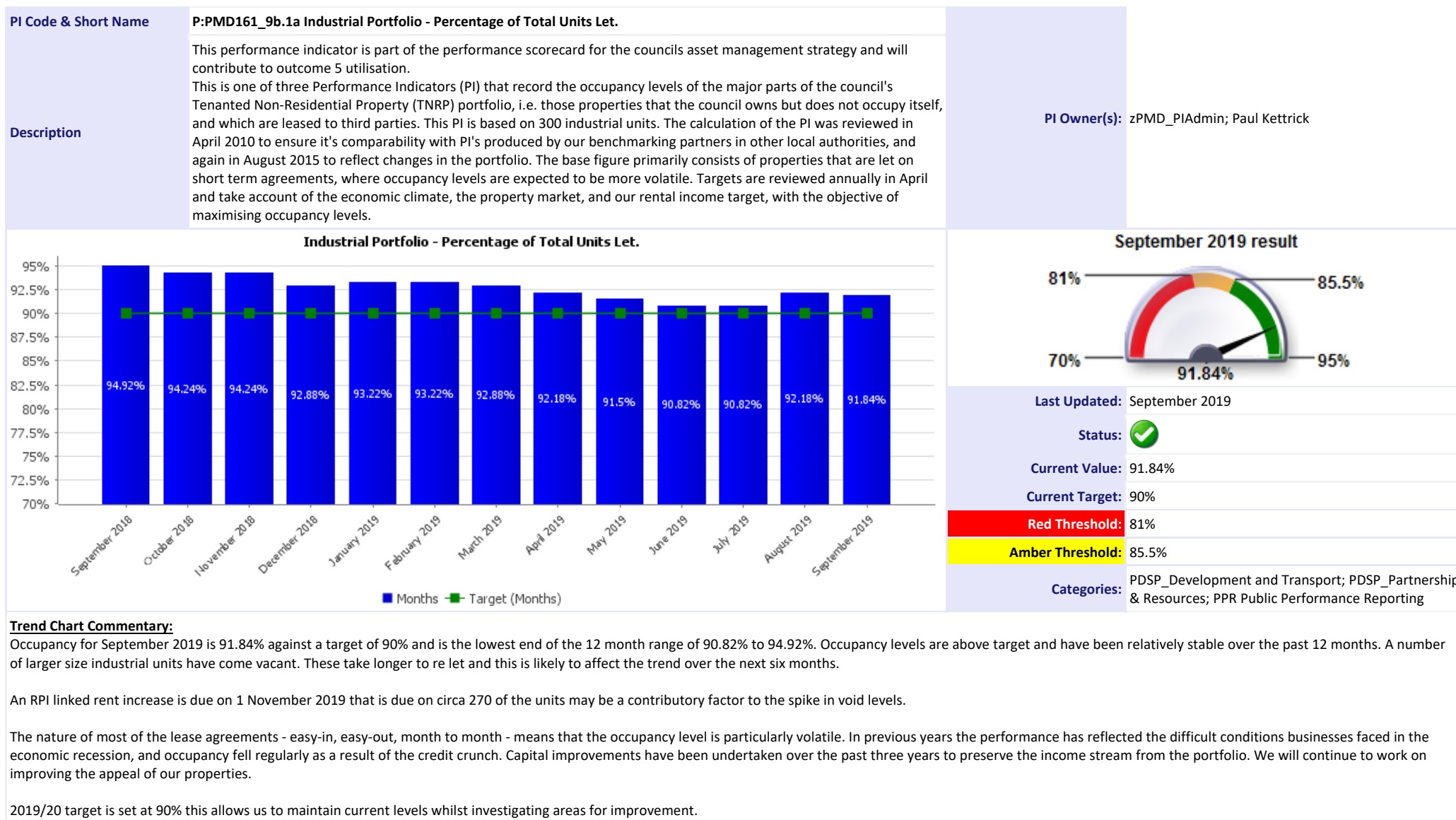
PI Code & Short Name	P:PIS013_6b.4 Percentage of all complaints closed by the Performance and Improvement Service that were upheld / partially upheld per quarter	PI Owner(s): zPIS_PIAAdmin; Rebecca Kelly
Description	This performance indicator measures the overall percentage of closed complaints received by the Performance and Improvement Service that have been upheld or part upheld during each quarter. In each period, the total number of upheld and partially upheld complaints is divided by the total number of complaints closed to determine the overall percentage. The data for this performance indicator is extracted from the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, which is used to manage and monitor complaint handling procedures in the council. All complaints received are analysed to identify improvements to the quality of the service and the way it is delivered to customers.	
<p>Percentage of all complaints closed by the Performance and Improvement Service that were upheld / partially upheld per quarter</p>  <p>■ Quarters ■ Target (Quarters)</p>		<p>Q2 2019/20 result</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Last Updated: Q2 2019/20</p> <p>Status: </p> <p>Current Value: N/A</p> <p>Current Target: 50%</p> <p>Red Threshold: 60%</p> <p>Amber Threshold: 50%</p> <p>Categories: PDSP_Partnership & Resources; PPR Public Performance Reporting</p>
<p>Trend Chart Commentary: The service typically receives a low number of complaints each quarter as much of the activity delivered is an enabler/support function. Where complaints were received, they typically related to administration of the Blue Badge scheme. This was transferred, along with administration of the National Entitlement Scheme, to the council's Anti-Poverty Service in quarter 2 of 2019/20.</p> <p>2019/20 The service received no complaints in Quarter 2 2019/20.</p> <p>The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 1 2019/20. One complaint was not upheld and one was upheld. The complaint that was upheld related to a delay in a Blue Badge being received by the customer. Following and investigation, the national Blue Badge print supplier had processing issues that cause delays which affected multiple Local Authorities. This has now been resolved by the supplier.</p> <p>2018/19 The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 4 2018/19. One complaint was not upheld and one was upheld. the upheld complaint related to a delay in processing the customer's Blue Badge application. Following an investigation, the customer payment did not trigger an automated notification. This has since been reviewed and a corrective action is now in place.</p> <p>The service received a total of two complaints in Quarter 3 2018/19. Both complaints were not upheld.</p> <p>The service received a total of one complaint in Quarter 2 2018/19. The complaint was not upheld.</p> <p>Target: the service has received low numbers of complaints which results in large fluctuations in the performance of this indicator, making target setting more challenging. Annually the service targets a total of 4 complaints or less and expects that around one half of those complaints will be upheld or partly upheld, therefore a target of 50 percent is applied throughout the year. All targets for complaints will be reviewed in Quarter 4 of 2019/20 following the transfer of Blue Badges and NEC to the Anti-Poverty Service in Q2 2019/20.</p>		











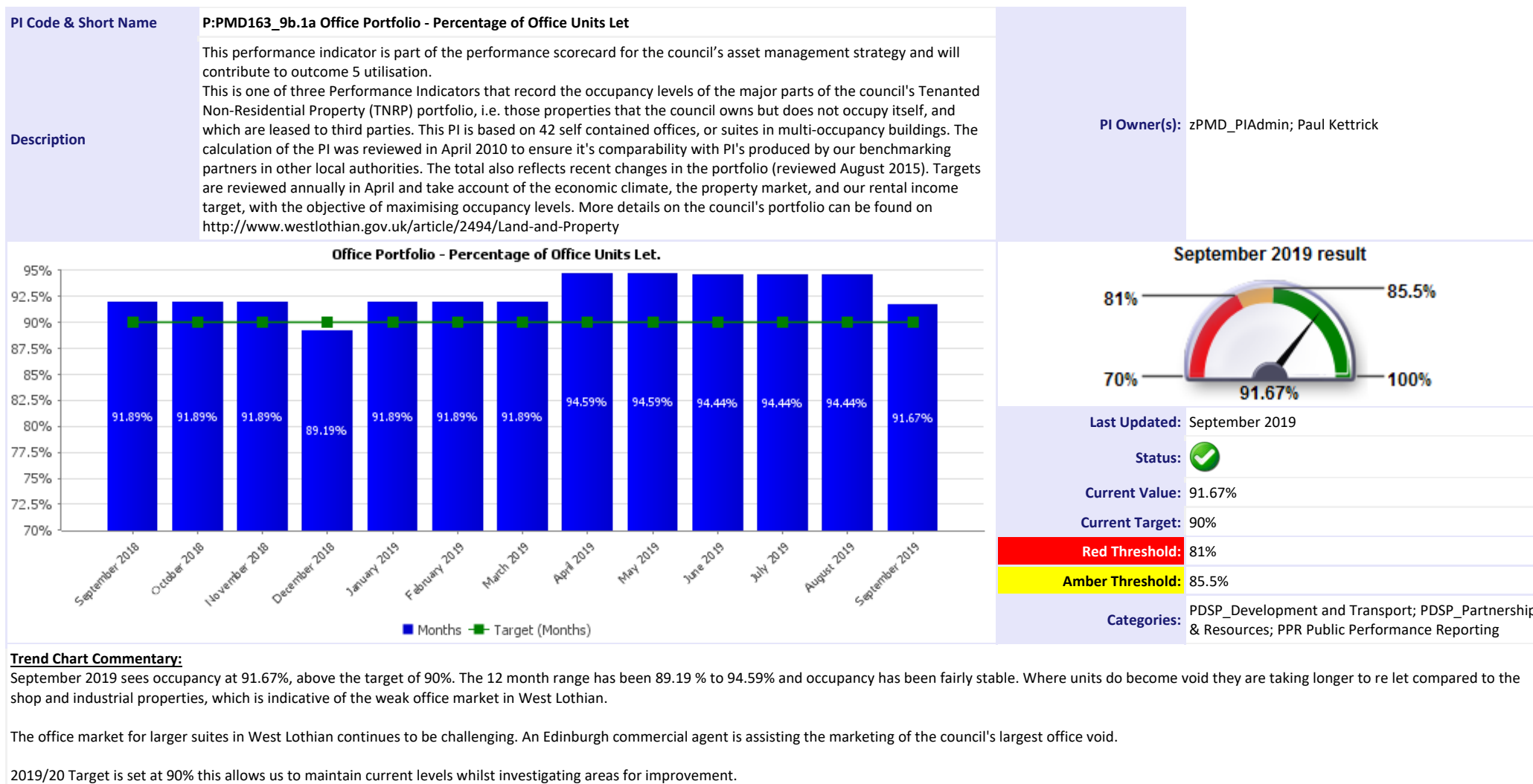
Trend Chart Commentary:

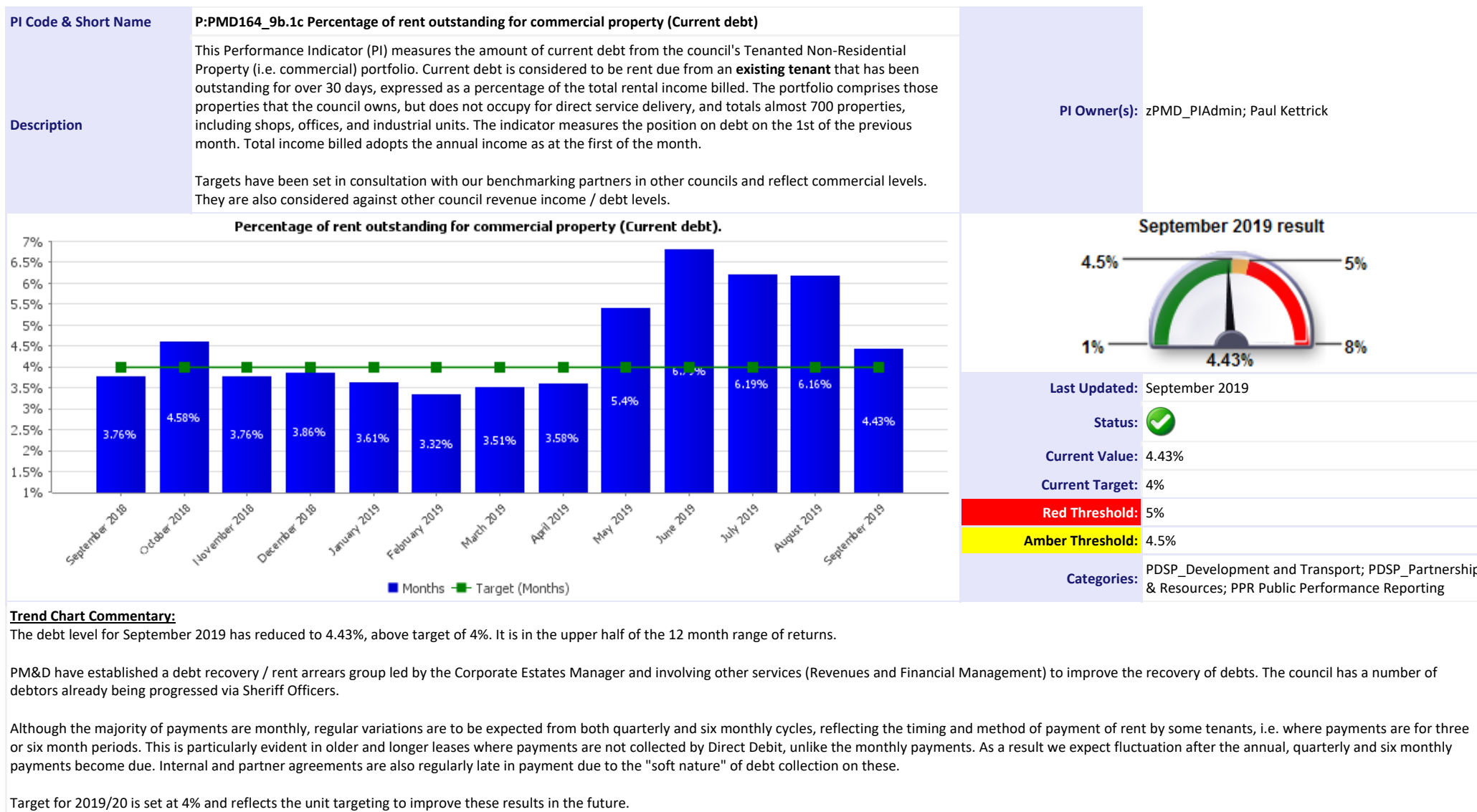
Occupancy for September 2019 is 91.84% against a target of 90% and is the lowest end of the 12 month range of 90.82% to 94.92%. Occupancy levels are above target and have been relatively stable over the past 12 months. A number of larger size industrial units have come vacant. These take longer to re let and this is likely to affect the trend over the next six months.

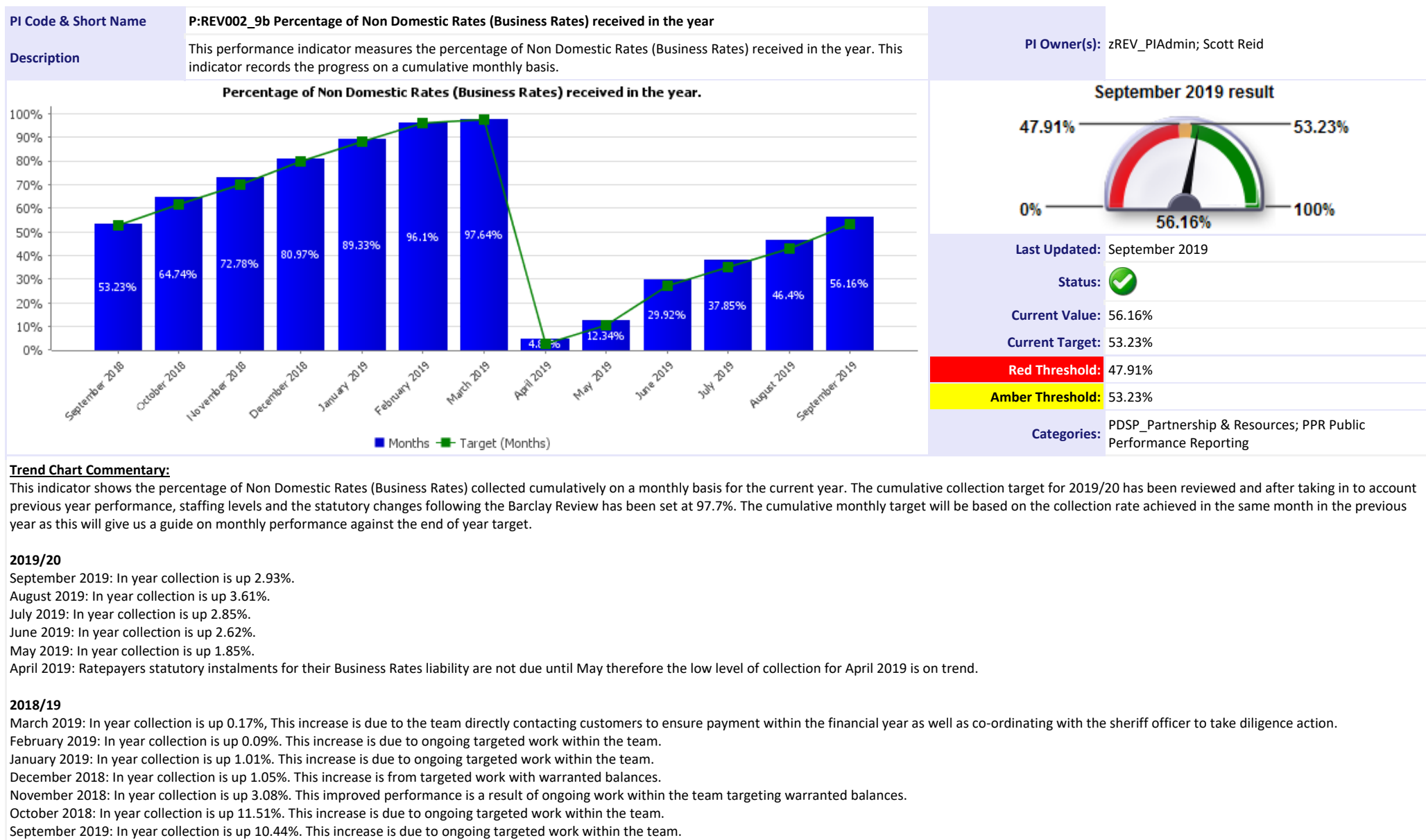
An RPI linked rent increase is due on 1 November 2019 that is due on circa 270 of the units may be a contributory factor to the spike in void levels.

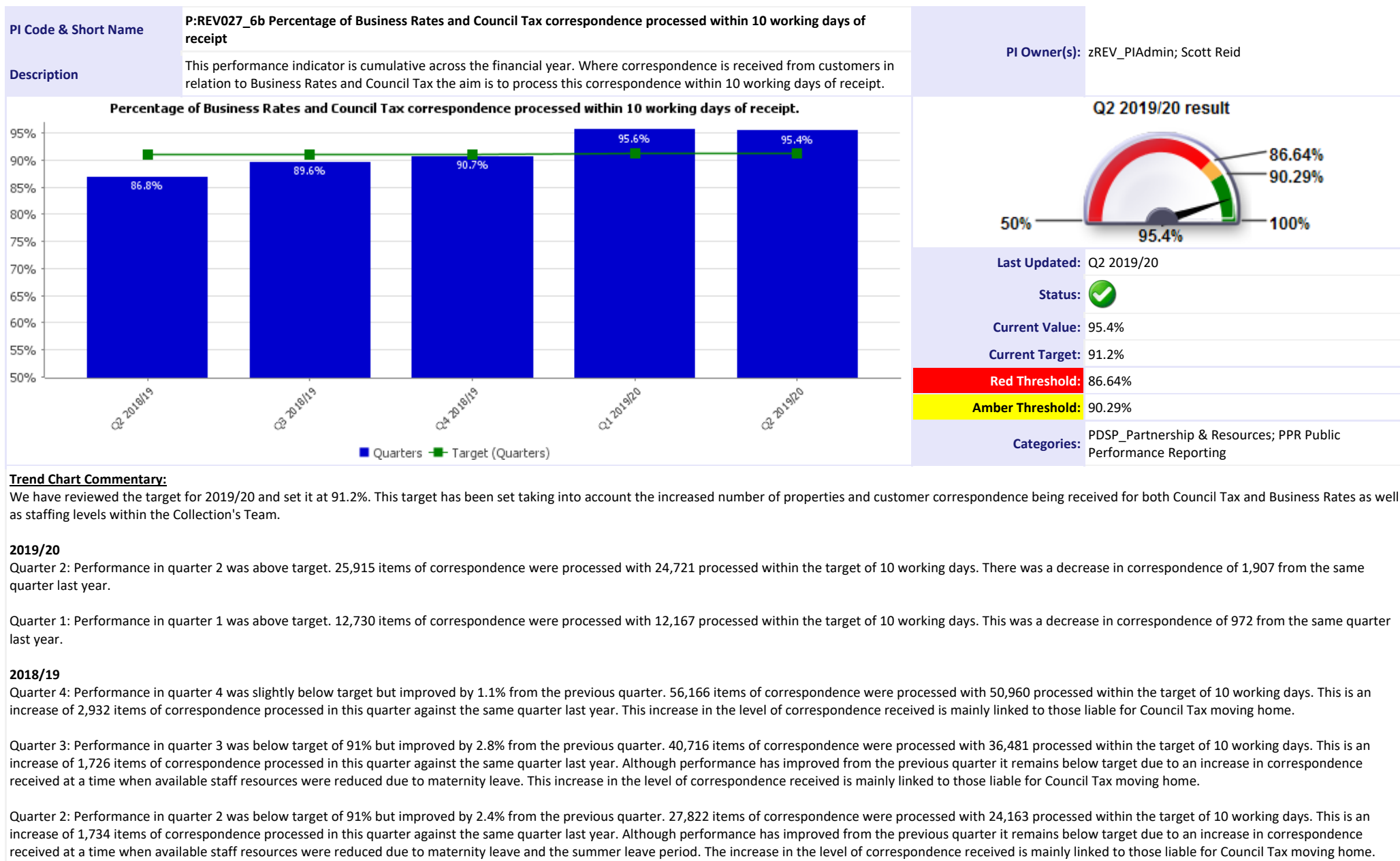
The nature of most of the lease agreements - easy-in, easy-out, month to month - means that the occupancy level is particularly volatile. In previous years the performance has reflected the difficult conditions businesses faced in the economic recession, and occupancy fell regularly as a result of the 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.

2019/20 target is set at 90% this allows us to maintain current levels whilst investigating areas for improvement.









Trend Chart Commentary:

We have reviewed the target for 2019/20 and set it at 91.2%. 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.

2019/20

Quarter 2: Performance in quarter 2 was above target. 25,915 items of correspondence were processed with 24,721 processed within the target of 10 working days. There was a decrease in correspondence of 1,907 from the same quarter last year.

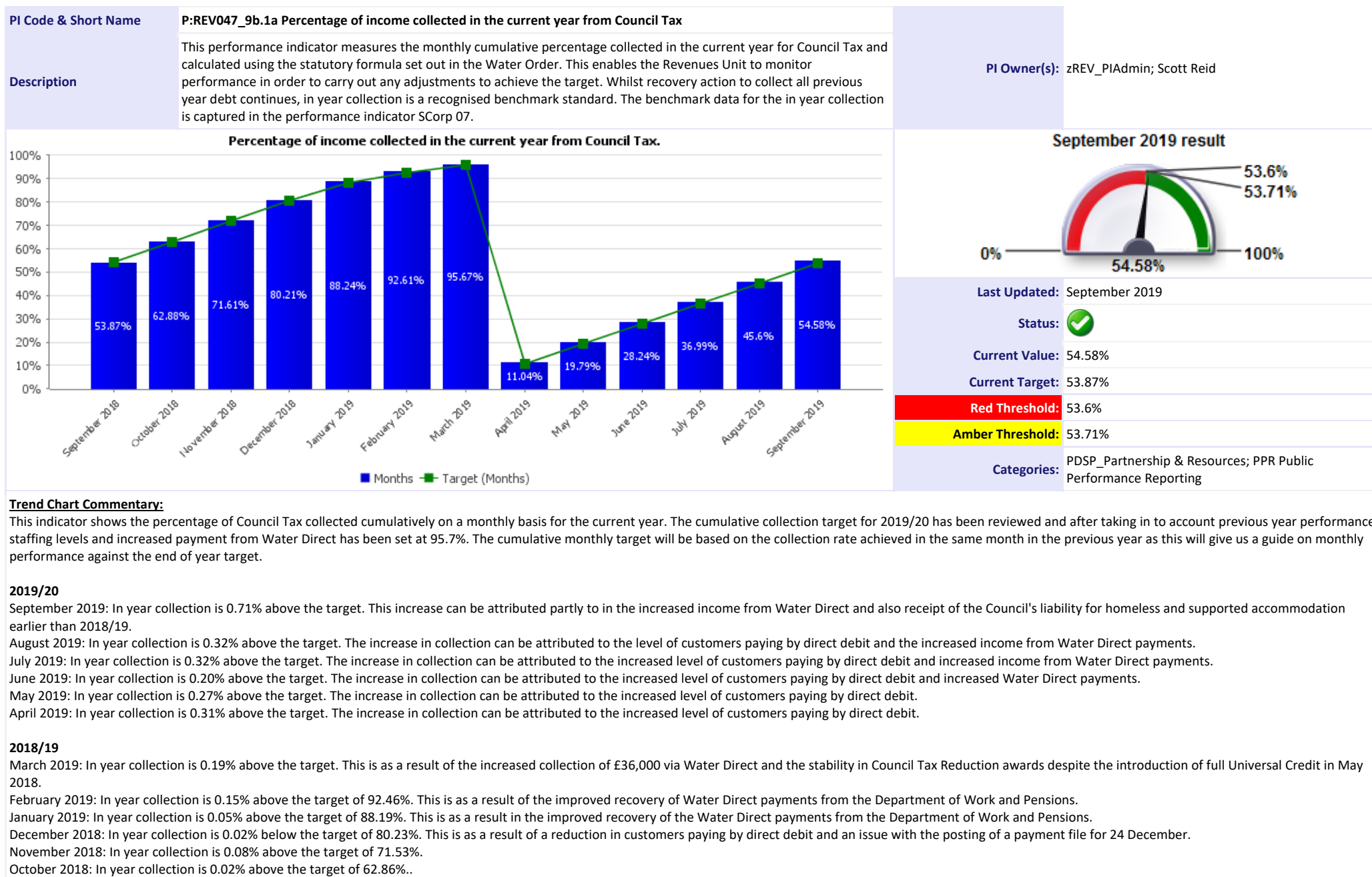
Quarter 1: Performance in quarter 1 was above target. 12,730 items of correspondence were processed with 12,167 processed within the target of 10 working days. This was a decrease in correspondence of 972 from the same quarter last year.

2018/19

Quarter 4: Performance in quarter 4 was slightly below target but improved by 1.1% from the previous quarter. 56,166 items of correspondence were processed with 50,960 processed within the target of 10 working days. This is an increase of 2,932 items of correspondence processed in this quarter against the same quarter last year. This increase in the level of correspondence received is mainly linked to those liable for Council Tax moving home.

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.



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 2019/20 has been reviewed and after taking in to account previous year performance, staffing levels and increased payment from Water Direct has been set at 95.7%. 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.

2019/20

September 2019: In year collection is 0.71% above the target. This increase can be attributed partly to in the increased income from Water Direct and also receipt of the Council's liability for homeless and supported accommodation earlier than 2018/19.

August 2019: In year collection is 0.32% above the target. The increase in collection can be attributed to the level of customers paying by direct debit and the increased income from Water Direct payments.

July 2019: In year collection is 0.32% above the target. The increase in collection can be attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit and increased income from Water Direct payments.

June 2019: In year collection is 0.20% above the target. The increase in collection can be attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit and increased Water Direct payments.

May 2019: In year collection is 0.27% above the target. The increase in collection can be attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.

April 2019: In year collection is 0.31% above the target. The increase in collection can be attributed to the increased level of customers paying by direct debit.

2018/19

March 2019: In year collection is 0.19% above the target. This is as a result of the increased collection of £36,000 via Water Direct and the stability in Council Tax Reduction awards despite the introduction of full Universal Credit in May 2018.

February 2019: In year collection is 0.15% above the target of 92.46%. This is as a result of the improved recovery of Water Direct payments from the Department of Work and Pensions.

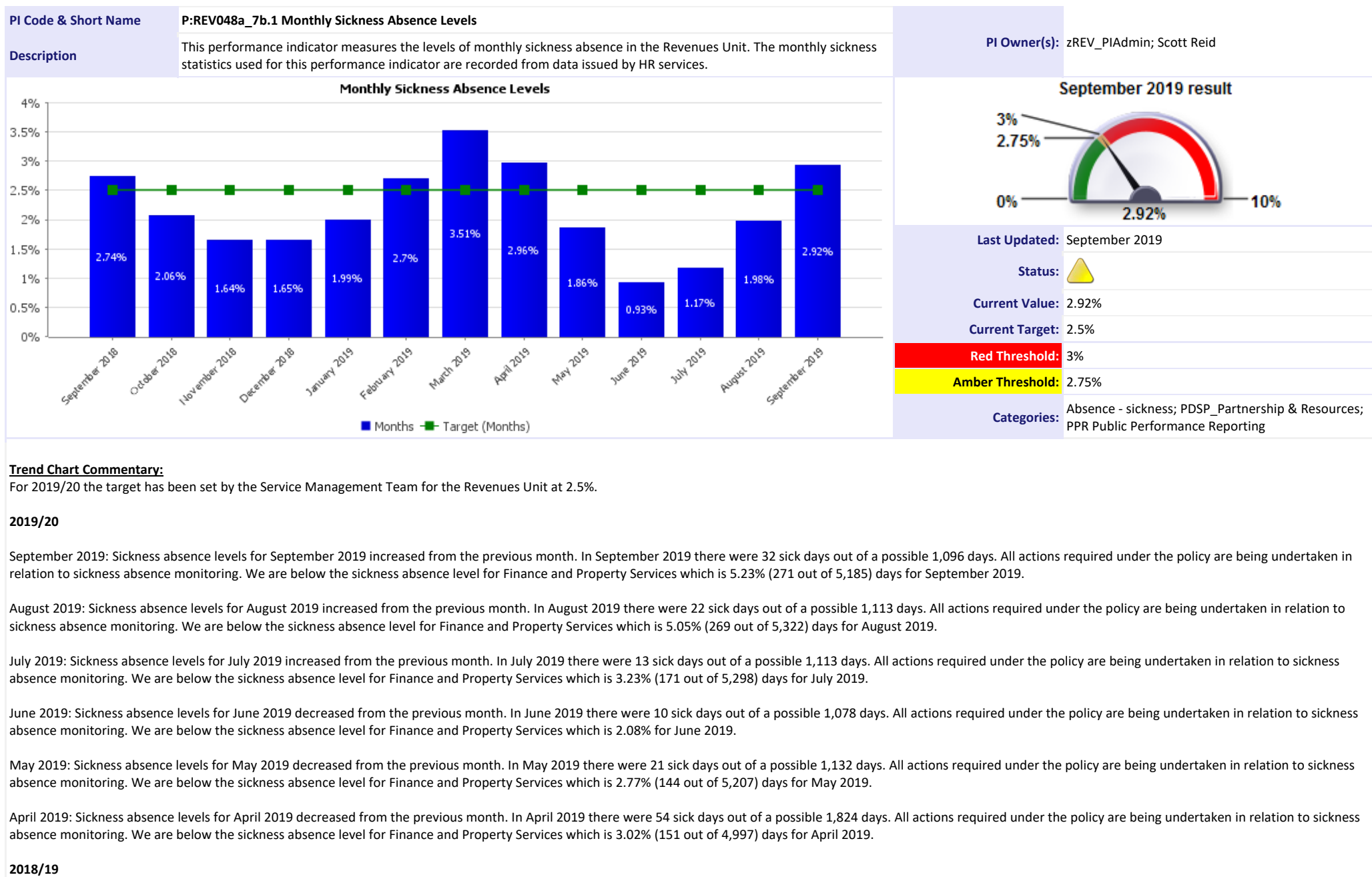
January 2019: In year collection is 0.05% above the target of 88.19%. This is as a result in the improved recovery of the Water Direct payments from the Department of Work and Pensions.

December 2018: In year collection is 0.02% below the target of 80.23%. This is as a result of a reduction in customers paying by direct debit and an issue with the posting of a payment file for 24 December.

November 2018: In year collection is 0.08% above the target of 71.53%.

October 2018: In year collection is 0.02% above the target of 62.86%..

September 2018: In year collection is 0.21% below the target of 54.08%. In comparison to last year there has been a drop in income from 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.



March 2019: Sickness absence levels for March 2019 increased from the previous month. In March 2019 there were 68 sick days out of a possible 1,938 days. 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 3.09% (166) days for March 2019.

February 2019: Sickness absence levels for February 2019 increased from the previous month. In February 2019 there were 50 sick days out of a possible 1,855 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 3.3% (160) days for February 2019.

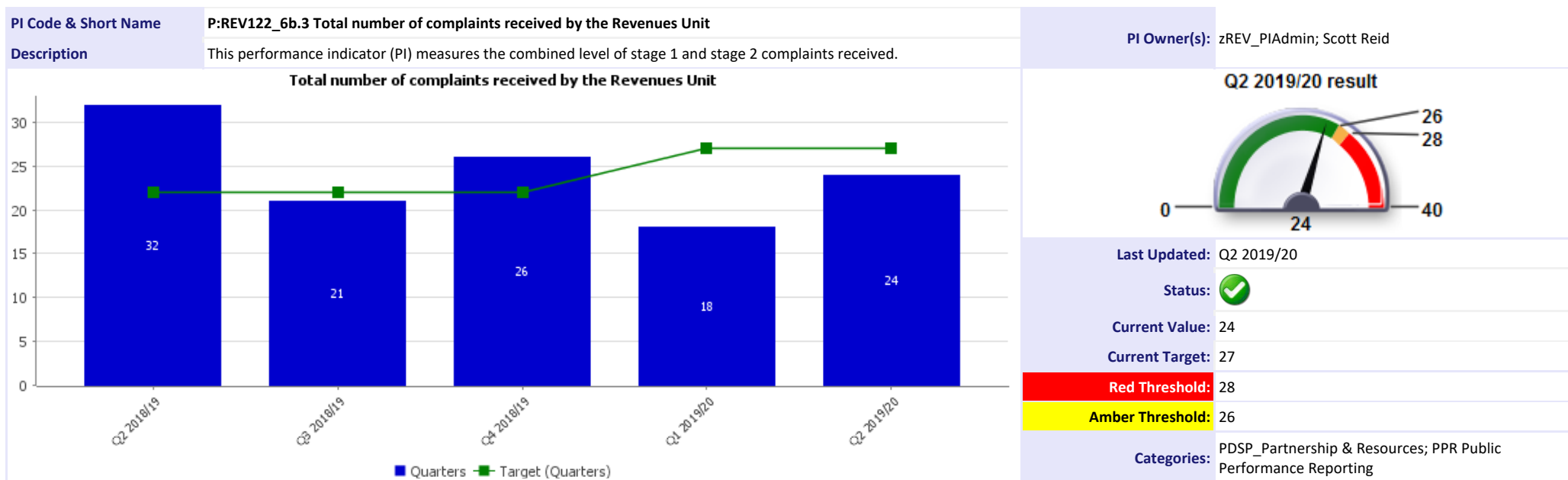
January 2019: Sickness absence levels for January 2019 increased slightly from the previous month. In January 2019 there were 39 sick days out of a possible 1,958 days. All actions required under the policy are being undertaken in relation to sickness absence monitoring. We are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 2.14% (115) days for January 2019.

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 are below the sickness absence level for Finance and Property Services which is 1.95% (105) days for December 2018.

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.



Trend Chart Commentary:

We have reviewed the target for 2019/20 and set it at 27 complaints received. This target has been set taking into account previous years' performance.

2019/20

Quarter 2: 24 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 in relation to incorrect processing of information. The number of complaints increased in this quarter with 75% of complaints not upheld.

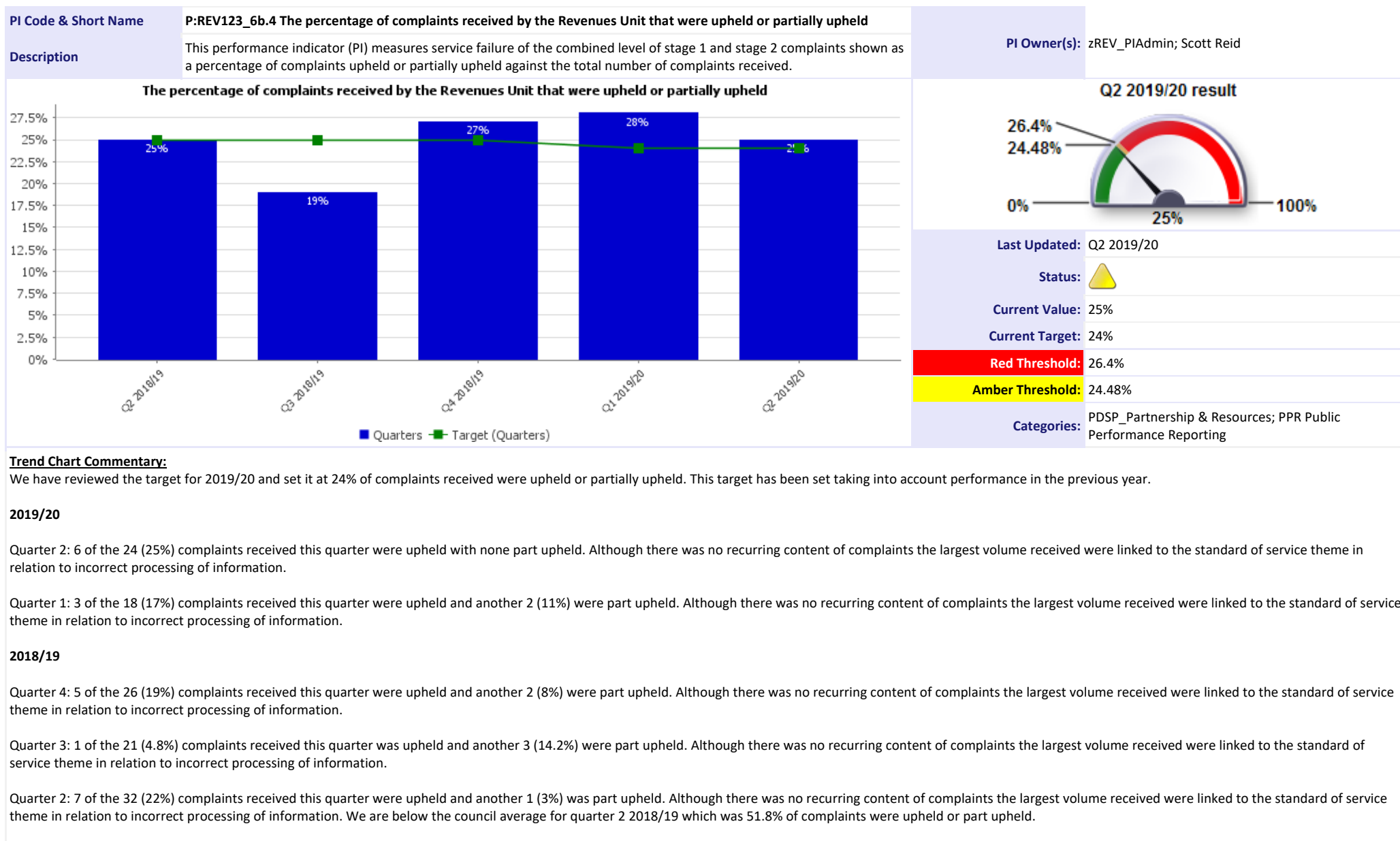
Quarter 1: 18 complaints were received during this quarter. Although there was no recurring content of complaints the largest volume received were linked to the standard of service theme in relation to incorrect processing of information. The number of complaints decreased in this quarter with 72% of complaints not upheld.

2018/19

Quarter 4: 26 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 increased in this quarter with 77% of complaints not upheld.

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.





PARTNERSHIP & RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

CUSTOMER INFORMATION SERVICE: REDUCTION IN OPENING HOURS

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING,CUSTOMER & BUILDING SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present for the Panels consideration, the measures aimed at reducing the opening hours at four locations, of the Customer information service to meet the approved budget savings.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

To note and consider the following recommendations which are intended to be submitted to Council Executive for approval:

1. Notes the findings of the review and the opportunities for development/efficiencies; and
2. Considers the recommendation to deliver the approved savings

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	
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 £39,000 budget saving in 2020/21 for the reduction in opening hours at four CIS offices.
VII.	Consideration at PDSP/Executive Committee required	West Lothian Council – Revenue Budget 2018/19 to 2022/23 13 February 2018 West Lothian Council – Revenue Budget 2019/20 to 2022/23 19 February 2019 The report is for consideration at PDSP

D. TERMS OF REPORT**D.1 Introduction**

At the council budget setting meeting on 13 February 2018, the proposal to reduce the opening times at four CIS offices by 3.5 hours per day to 10:00am – 3:00pm at Armadale, Blackburn, Broxburn and Whitburn was approved for financial year 2020/21. The desired outcome of this measure (Ref H3c) is to achieve a £39,000 saving, 1.5 FTE staffing reduction.

There are currently 10 offices where a dedicated Customer information service is offered. In addition to the 4 locations included in the proposal there are 6 offices located at West Calder, Carmondean, Linlithgow and Fauldhouse, which are all 'single staffed', and at Bathgate Partnership Centre and Arrochar House where staffing levels meets demand levels. There are no plans to change the current opening arrangements or staffing levels at these 6 offices.

D.2 Review of Current Staffing and Customer Usage

Armadale, Blackburn and Broxburn CIS offices are co-located within partnership centres with Whitburn partnership centre scheduled for summer 2020 opening. A review of the current service provision has identified variations in the opening hours across the 4 sites. Blackburn CIS also currently offers a later opening on Thursday evenings, with closing time extended to 7:00pm. The opening hours at each location for the CIS desks is set out below in Table 1.

Table 1 – Current opening hours

Location	Mon		Tue		Wed		Thu		Fri		Total Hours
	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	
Armadale	8:30 - 5:00	8.5	8:30 - 5:00	8.5	8:30 - 3:00	6.5	8:30 - 5:00	8.5	8:30 - 4:00	7.5	39.5
Blackburn	9:00 - 3:00	6	10:00 - 5:00	7	10:00 - 3:00	5	10:00 - 7:00	9	10:00 - 4:00	6	33
Broxburn	8:30 - 5:00	8.5	8:30 - 5:00	8.5	8:30 - 3:00	6.5	8:30 - 5:00	8.5	8:30 - 4:00	7.5	39.5
Whitburn	9:00 - 5:00	8	9:00 - 5:00	8	9:00 - 3:00	6	9:00 - 5:00	8	9:00 - 4:00	7	37
Totals		31		32		24		34		28	149

Staffing numbers also vary across the 4 locations with a total of 12 FTE. The deployment of those staff are primarily utilised on the CIS desks. The staffing allocation is shown below in Table 2

Table 2 – CIS Staffing Levels and Hours

Location	No of Staff	Staffing Hours	FTE
Armadale	4	110.5	3.07
Blackburn	3	88	2.44
Broxburn	5	130.5	3.63
Whitburn	4	104.5	2.90
Total	16	433.5	12.04

The numbers of enquiries per hour are shown on Appendix 1 for each location. An analysis of the number of enquires at the Blackburn CIS desk includes the 'late' night opening statistics for the year 2018/19. This indicates that only 2% of the transactions are taking place at Blackburn after 5:00pm in the evening. From the information analysed it is clear that there are periods where the demand on our resource fluctuates across all four locations.

Trends also indicate a steady decline in customers seeking face to face interaction across our CIS service as more customers move towards a digital offering. In 2013/14 there were 108,000 face to face interactions, this has reduced to 82,000 for the year 2018/19.

D.3 Proposal

- Revised Opening Hours**

Based on customer demand; based on the number of enquiries and peak usage periods over the 4 locations by day, it is proposed to revise the opening hours at the 4 facilities.

This would see Blackburn CIS move to a 5 hour working day, with the public service available during our peak period of 10:00-15:00. Armadale, Broxburn and Whitburn CIS offices would change to reflect their particular demand hours with each opening for 5 hours per day.

The analysis of peak customer traffic is set out in Appendix 2. Table 3 below indicates the proposed opening times

Table 3 Revised Opening Times

Location	Mon		Tue		Wed		Thu		Fri		Total Hours
	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	Time	Hrs	
Armadale	10:00 - 15:00	5	9:00 - 14:00	5	9:00 - 14:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	9:00 - 14:00	5	25 (-14.5)
Blackburn	10:00 - 15:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	25 (-8)

Broxburn	9:00 - 14:00	5	9:00 - 14:00	5	9:00 - 14:00	5	9:00 - 14:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	25 (-14.5)
Whitburn	10:00 - 15:00	5	12:00 - 17:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	10:00 - 15:00	5	25 (-12)
Totals		5		5		5		5		5	100 (-49)

The proposed opening times have a direct link to the revised Library proposals e.g. at Whitburn where a 'self-issue' day is proposed (11:00am - 5:00pm) on a Tuesday when the CIS function would be required to close the services. The reduction in opening hours will concentrate the customer interactions over the periods indicated above.

A targeted customer engagement questionnaire, as set out in Appendix 4, was used to aid in the completion of the Integrated Impact Assessment. The results of which, set out in Appendix 5, indicated a positive response from the majority of respondents to the alternative options that are available to customers: Alternative locations, alternative times, contact the Customer Service Centre and the use of digital technology. Of those respondents who did not wholly agree with the proposals the main reasons given were: Do not want the CIS hours to reduce.

- **Staffing**

The Customer Information Service was restructured in 2016 and became part of Customer and Community Services. As part of the remodelled service staff work in a variety of different areas of the business e.g. library, cash office, reception, customer information services and community centres providing a service that ensures the customer can get the service they require from whoever they approach.

The revised opening hours would result in a reduction of 49 hours per week, which would result in a reduction of 1.475 FTE, generating a saving of £40,000. The reduction will be managed through the council's workforce management arrangements. The allocation of the reduction is set out below in Table 4.

Table 4 Staffing Reductions

Location	Staffing Hours	FTE	Variance FTE
Armadale	100.00	2.77	-0.30
Blackburn	75.00	2.08	-0.36
Broxburn	115.50	3.21	-0.415
Whitburn	90.0	2.50	-0.4
Total	380.50	10.56	-1.475

- **Late night opening**

A review and possible pilot for late night opening was considered for all 4 locations, however analysis of the Blackburn office displays extremely low demand for this service with little take up in the community for the existing 7:00pm opening. This arrangement has been in place for several years. Of the 5,458 interactions at this office during 2018/19, 66 (2%) took place between 5:00pm and 7:00pm and 12 (0.3%) between 6:00pm and 7:00pm

D.4 Implications to Service delivery

The reduction in opening hours at the 4 locations will;

- Increase web/digital based activity.
- Increase CSC based activity.
- Concentrate the customer interactions over the shorter period.
- Potentially impact on waiting times.

Although there is a net reduction in FTE - staffing levels have been set that reflect the demand over the reduced opening period. Creating a more productive, efficient and effective use of the resource whilst addressing the potential increase in waiting times.

At Armadale, Broxburn and on the completion of the partnership centre at Whitburn, the officers at the CIS desks act as a *filtering* system for Housing Services at these locations. Direct access will be necessary during the 'unstaffed' hours or alternative methods of engagement developed for 'drop-in' tenants requiring direct intervention with their housing officer.

On the occasions when the library function is operating on a self-service basis out-with the opening periods of the CIS function it is proposed that a member of Customer and Community Services staff operate from the 'reception' desk to act as the filter for housing. Across the 4 locations this will total 14 hours.

At Armadale, Broxburn and Whitburn the CIS officers have the responsibility for the cash kiosks with regards to setting up the machines in the morning and unloading and cash reconciliation in the evenings. To minimise the impact on customers, all officers scheduled to work in the Libraries function at the three locations will be trained in this task. Kiosks will be available for cash and card payments during staffed hours and card only payments out with CIS and/or Library staffed periods.

E. CONCLUSION

The proposal achieves the savings identified in H3c – TYC Budget proposal. The concentration of resource, in a condensed window of access to this service will remove current levels of inefficiency currently experienced as demand fluctuates. It is anticipated that the reduction in operating hours will have a positive impact of increasing customer engagement via our digital platform.

Appendices/Attachments: 5

Appendix 1: Current Customer usage patterns

Appendix 2: Percentage current usage against proposed opening periods.

Appendix 3: Overview of Library and CIS hours at the 4 locations

Appendix 4: CIS Questionnaire

Appendix 5: Integrated Impact Assessment

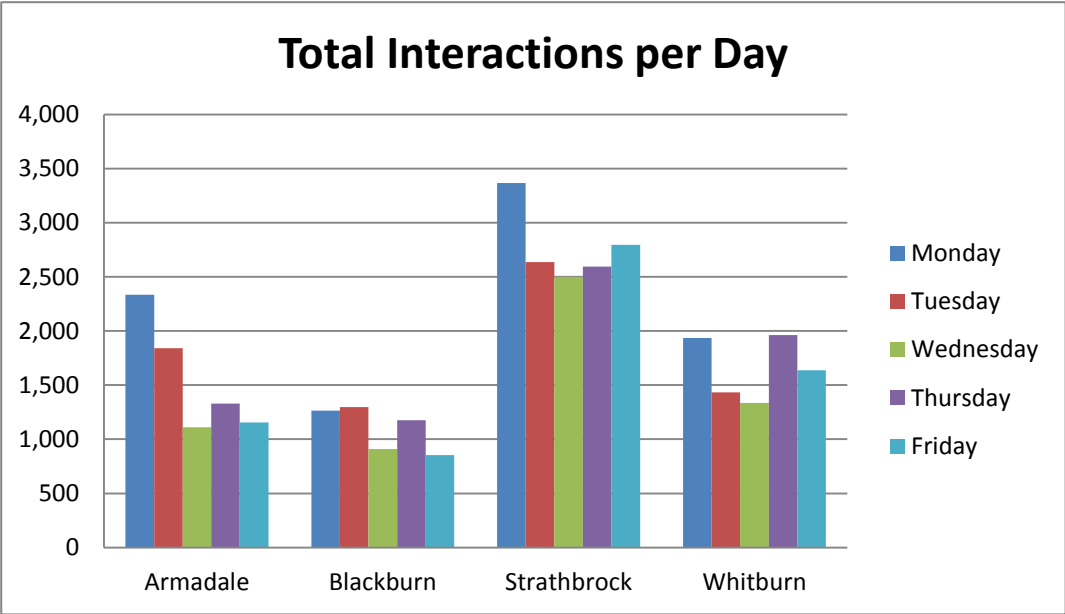
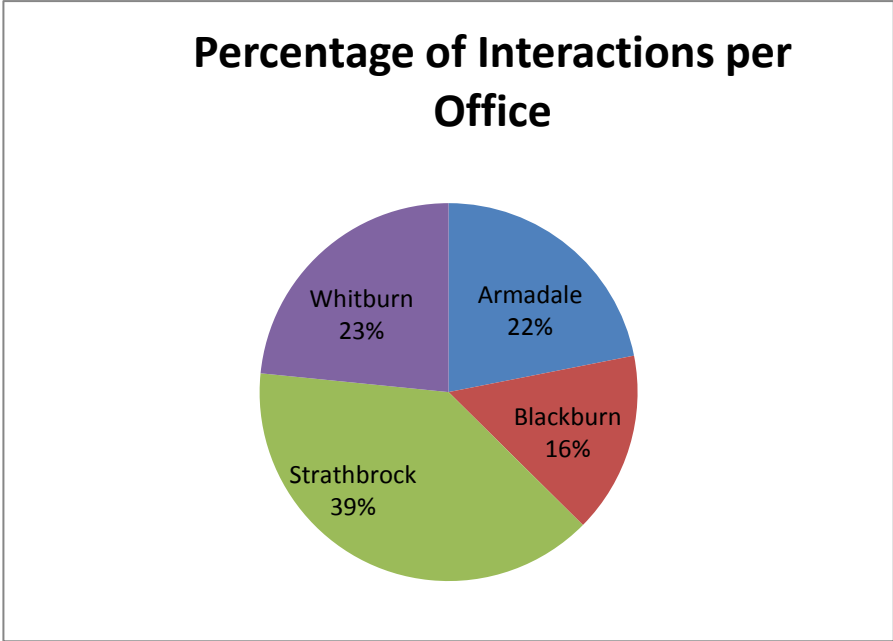
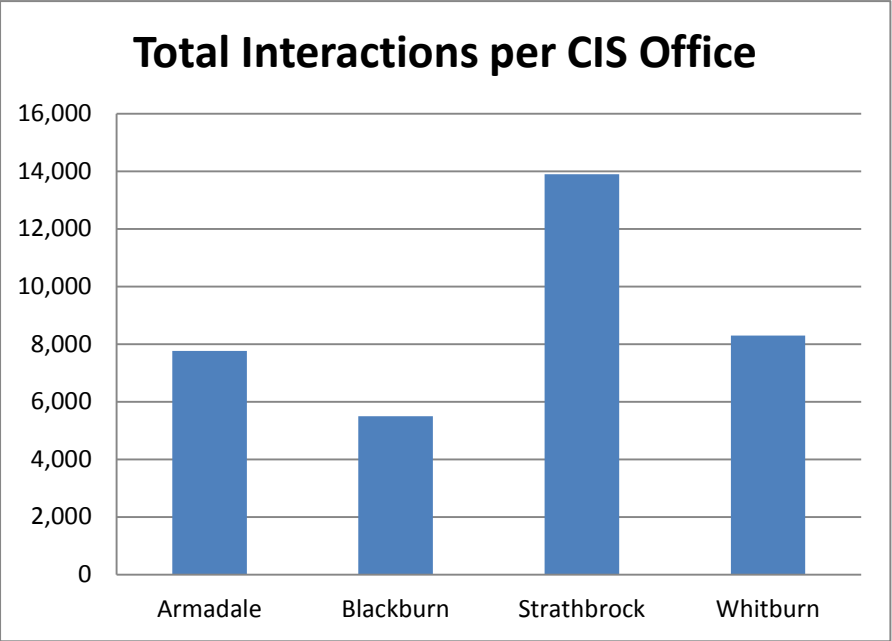
Contact Person: Ralph Bell

E mail: ralph.bell@westlothian.gov.uk

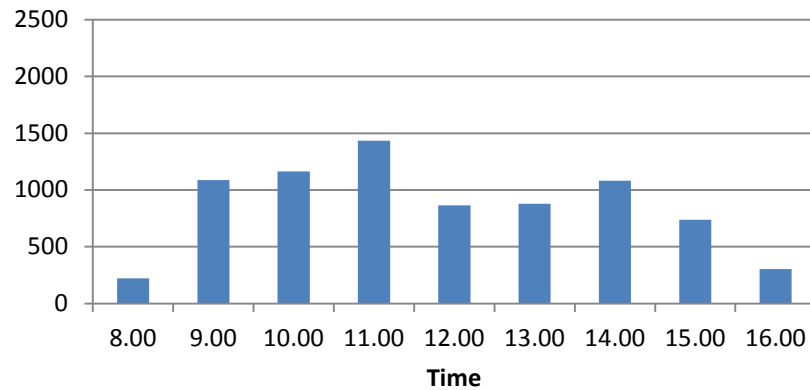
AnnMarie Carr

Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

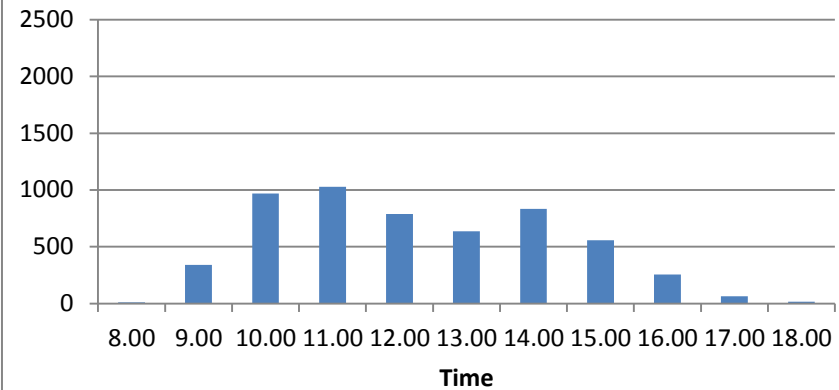
6 December 2019



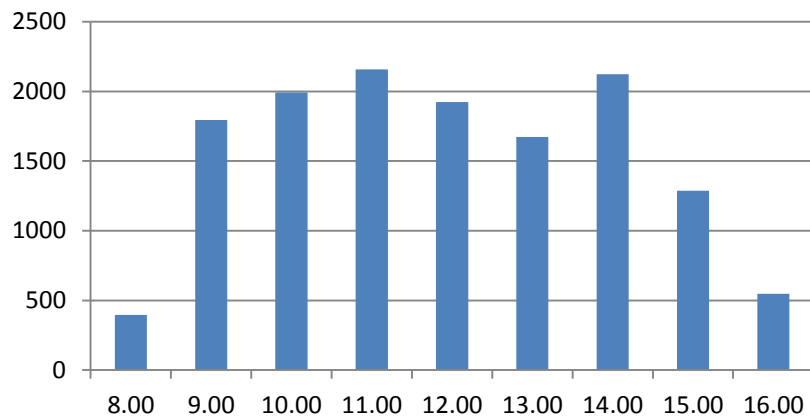
**Armadale CIS:
Interactions per Hour**



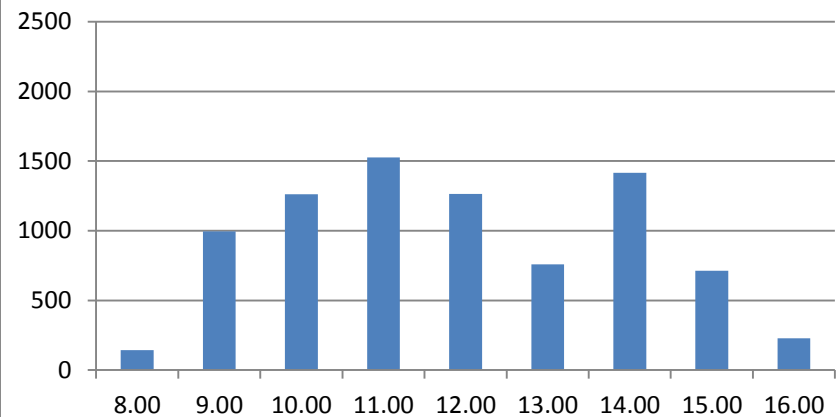
**Blackburn CIS:
Interactions per Hour**

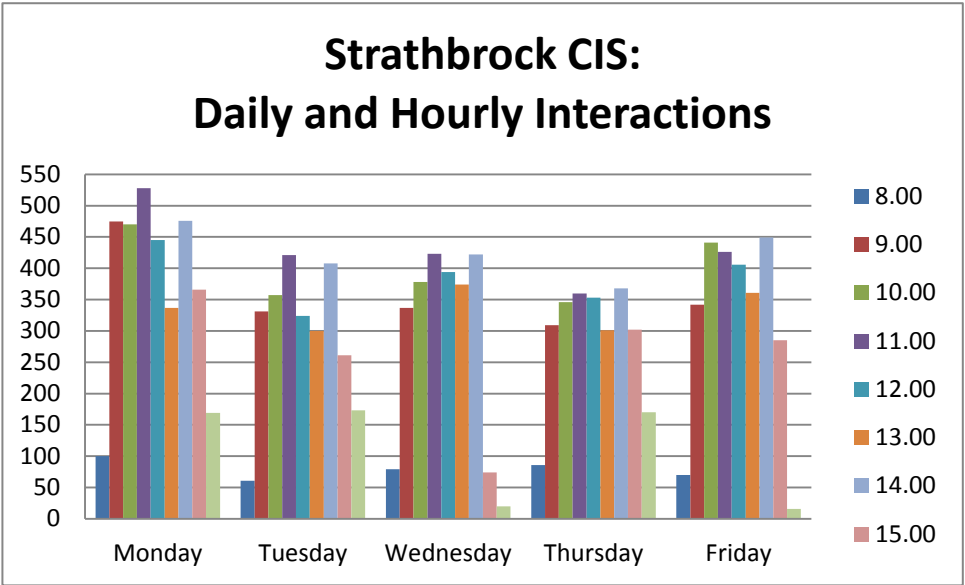
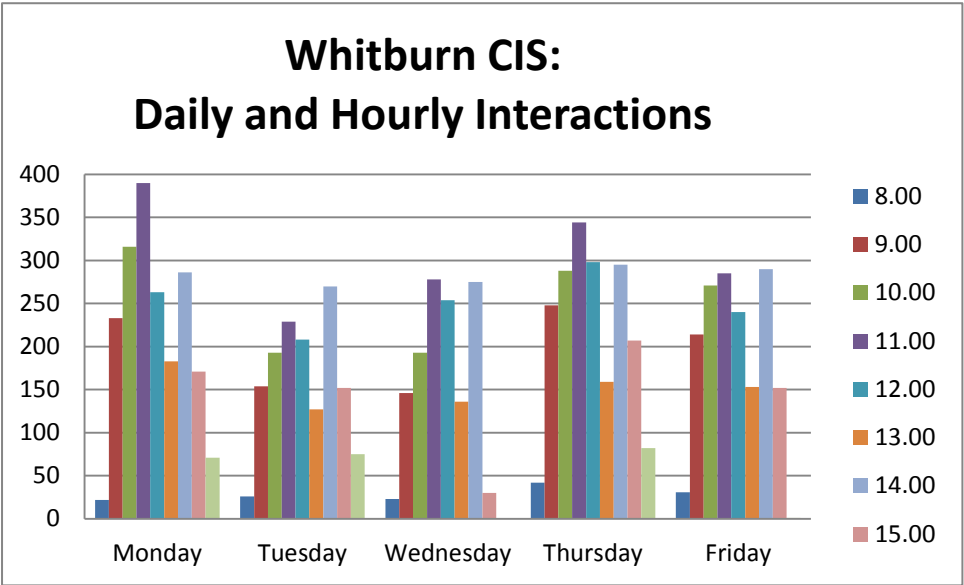
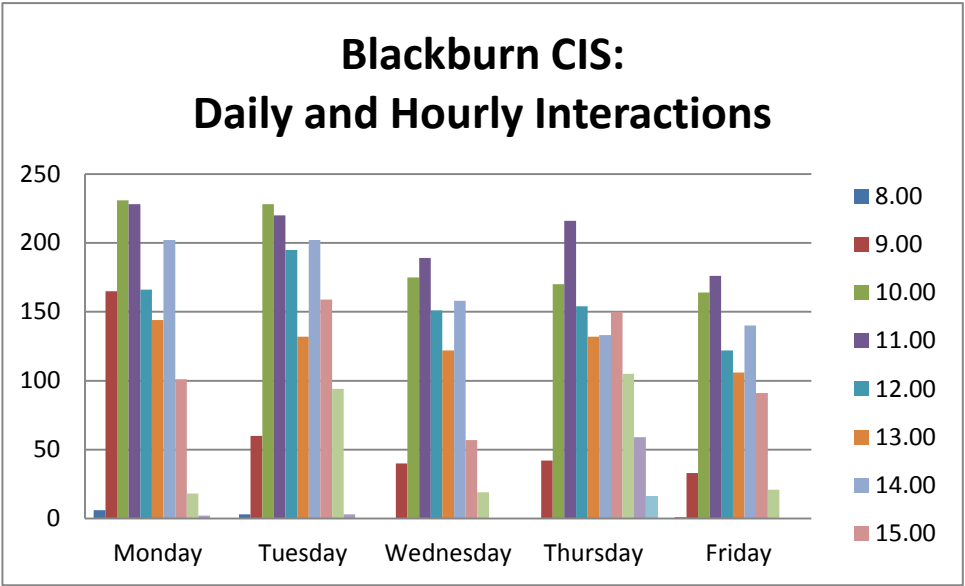
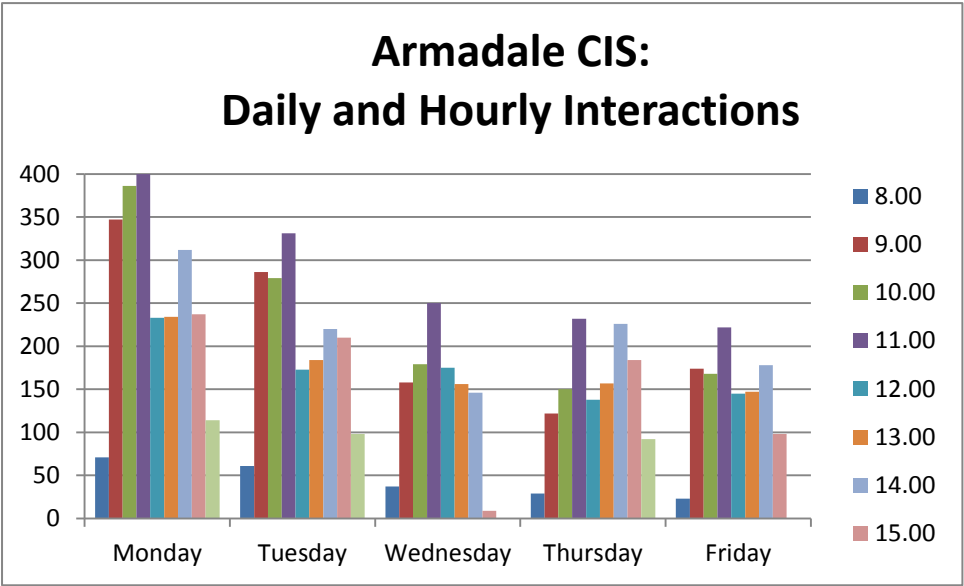


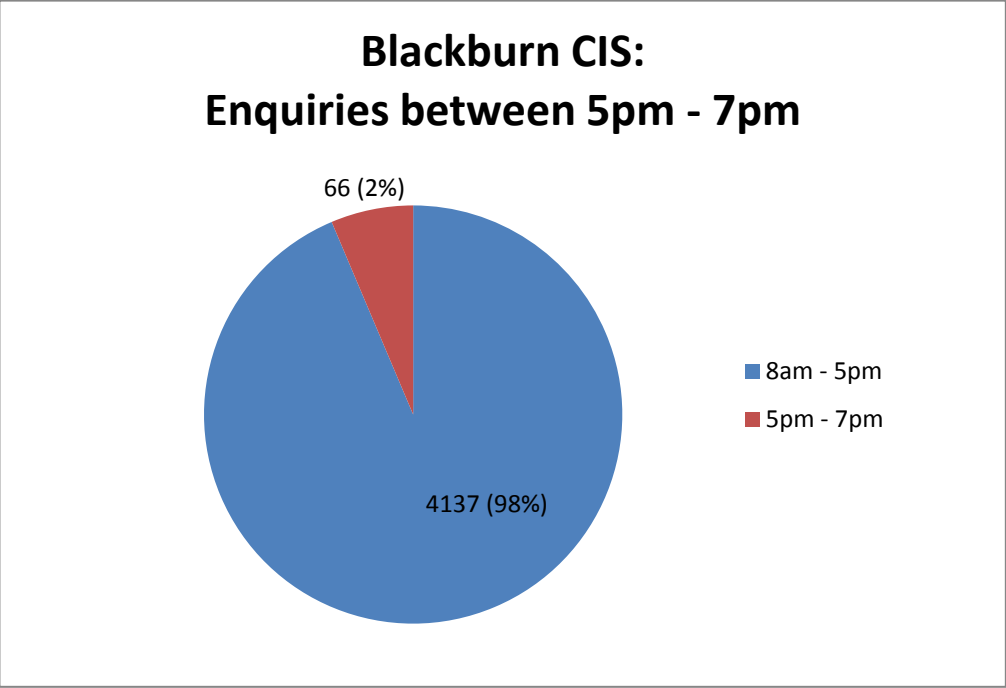
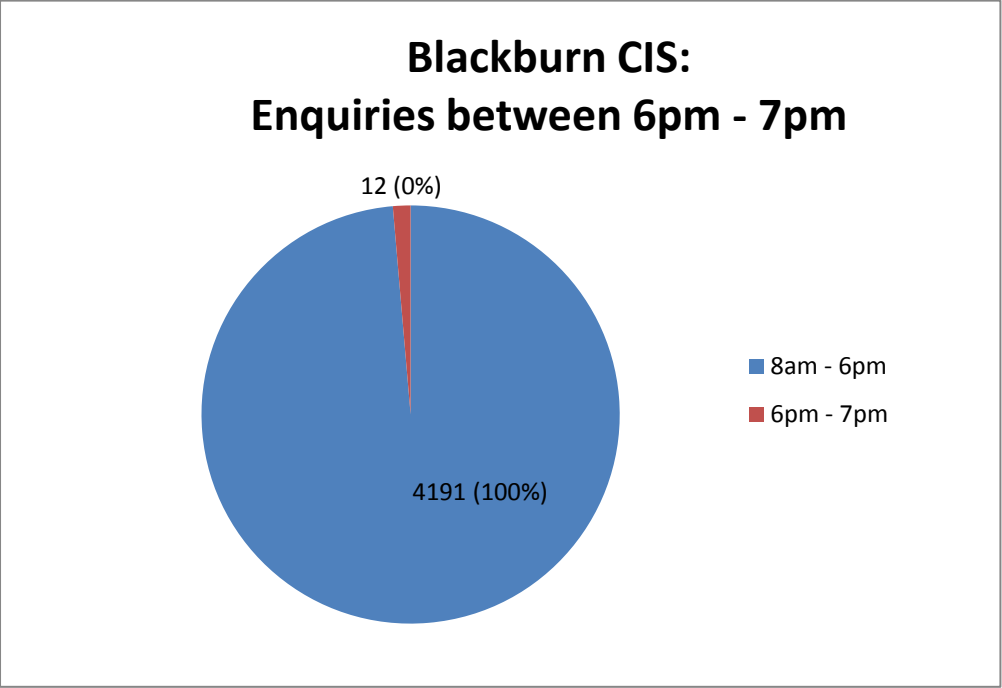
**Strathbrock CIS:
Interactions per Hour**



**Whitburn CIS:
Interactions per Hour**





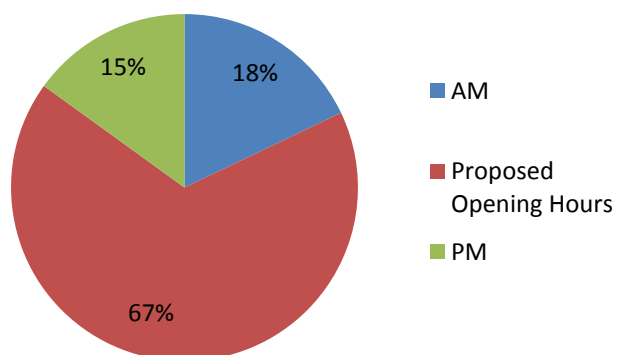


Percentage of interactions against proposed opening hours – 2018/19

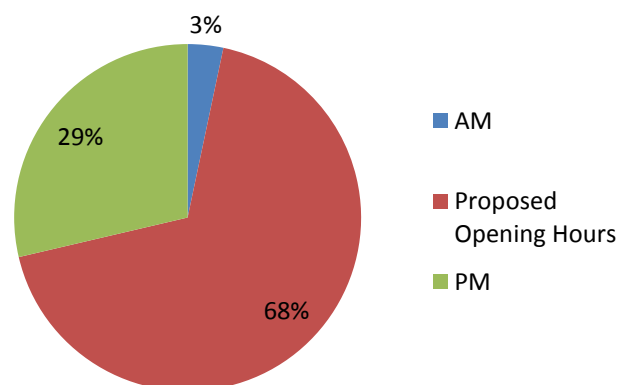
Armada

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
AM	418	AM	61	AM	37	AM	151	AM	23
Proposed	1565	Proposed	1253	Proposed	918	Proposed	903	Proposed	856
PM	351	PM	528	PM	155	PM	276	PM	276

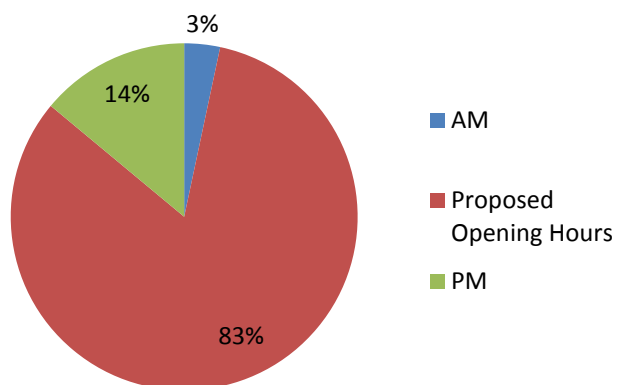
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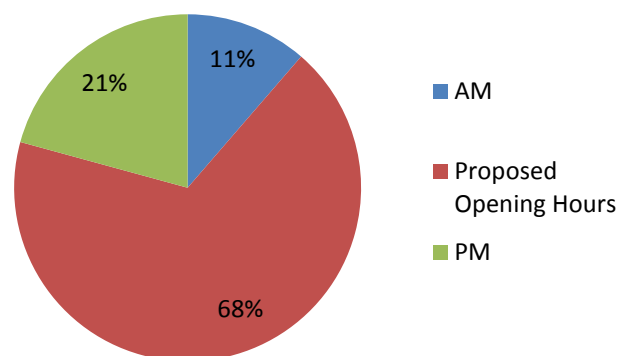
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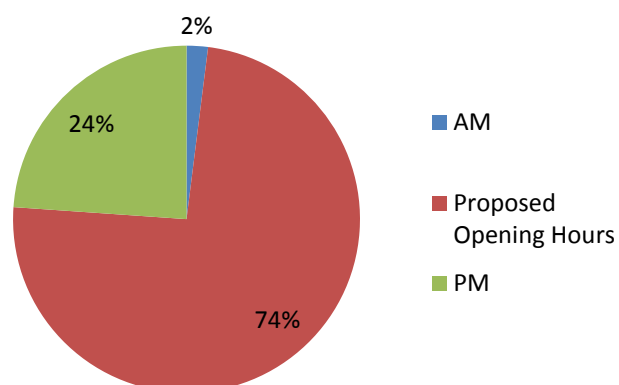
Armada - Wednesday



Armada - Thursday



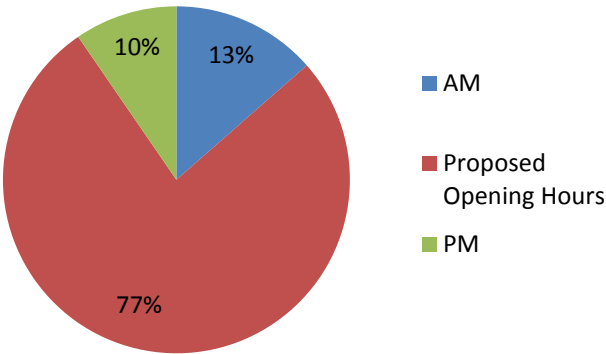
Armada - Friday



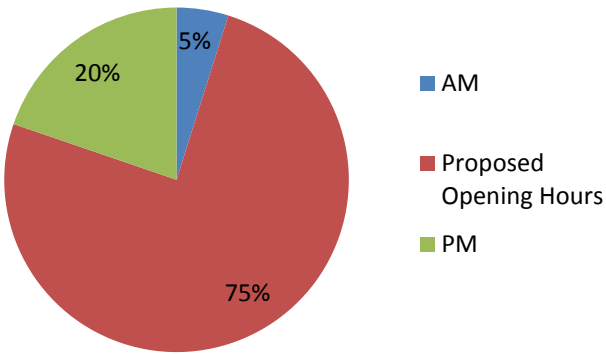
Blackburn

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
AM	171	AM	63	AM	40	AM	42	AM	34
Proposed	971	Proposed	977	Proposed	795	Proposed	805	Proposed	708
PM	121	PM	256	PM	76	PM	330	PM	112

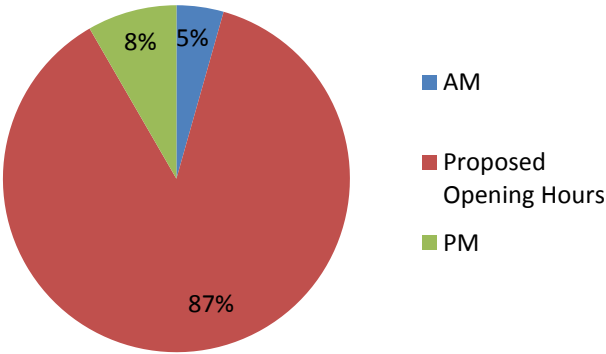
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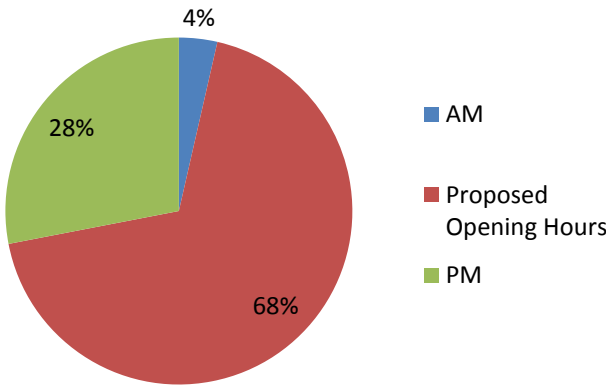
Blackburn - Tuesday



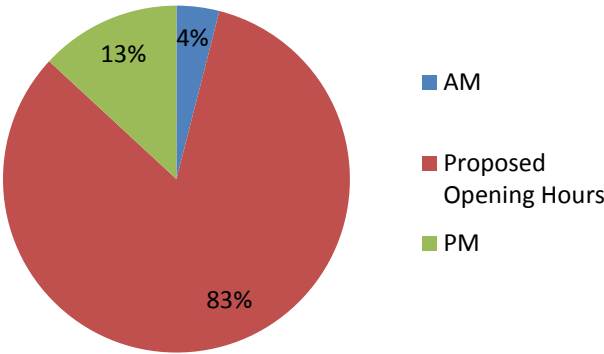
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Blackburn - Thursday



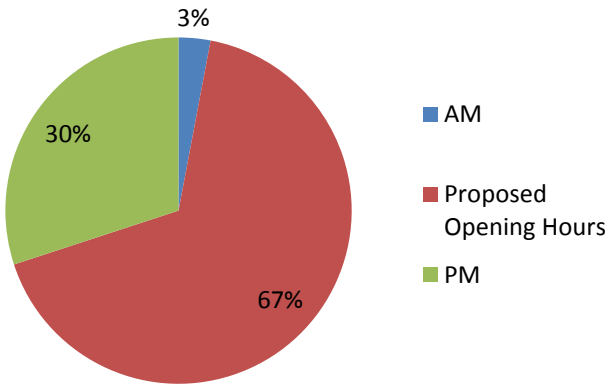
Blackburn - Friday



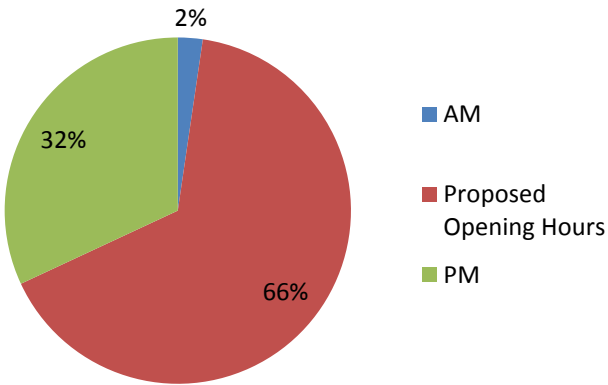
Strathbrock

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
AM	100	AM	61	AM	79	AM	86	AM	412
Proposed	2255	Proposed	1733	Proposed	1906	Proposed	1669	Proposed	2083
PM	1011	PM	842	PM	516	PM	840	PM	301

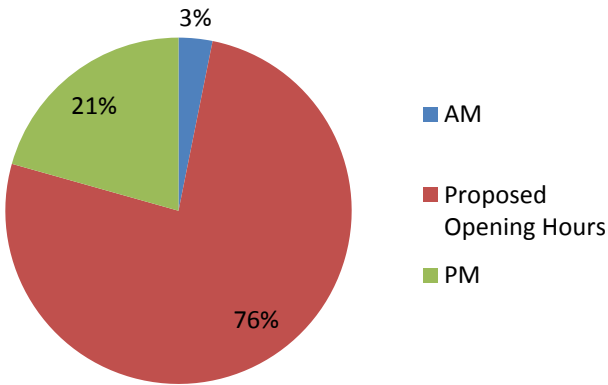
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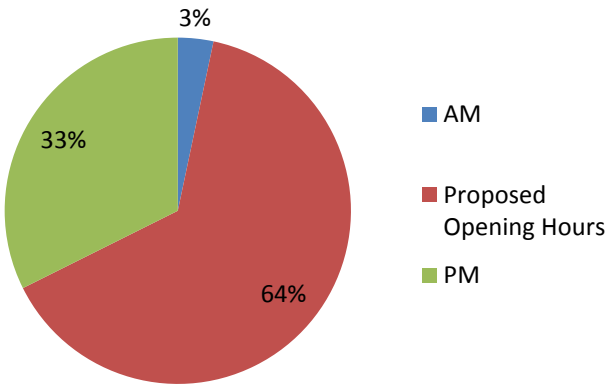
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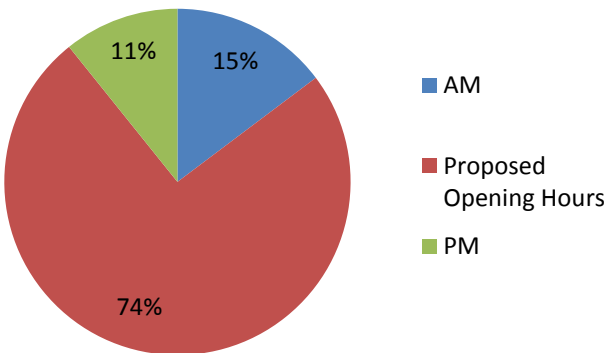
Strathbrock - Wednesday



Strathbrock - Thursday

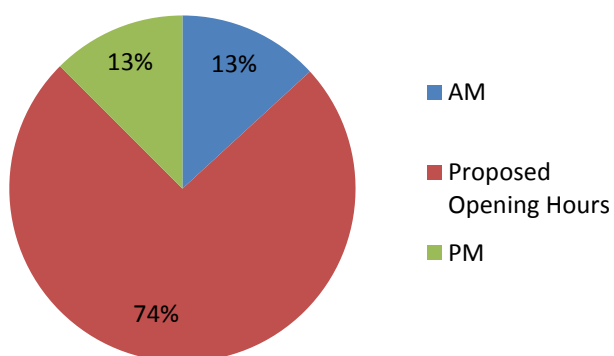
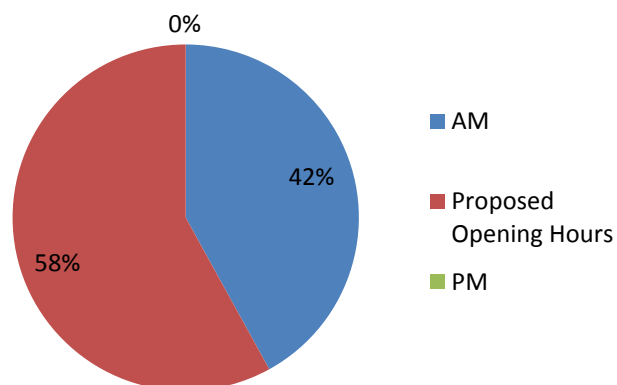
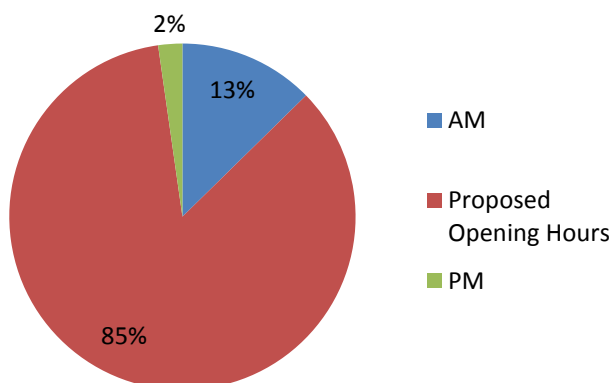
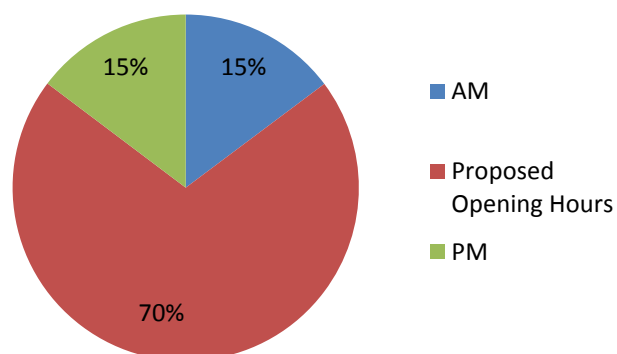
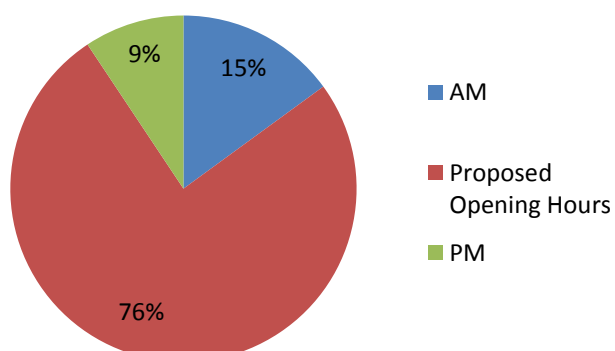


Strathbrock - Friday



Whitburn

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
AM	255	AM	602	AM	169	AM	290	AM	245
Proposed	1438	Proposed	832	Proposed	1136	Proposed	1384	Proposed	1239
PM	242	PM	0	PM	30	PM	289	PM	153

Whitburn - Monday**Whitburn - Tuesday****Whitburn - Wednesday****Whitburn - Thursday****Whitburn - Friday**

Armadale	Function	8:30am	9:00-10:00	10:00-11:00	11:00-12:00	12:00-1:00	1:00-2:00	2:00-3:00	3:00-4:00	4:00-5:00	5:00-6:00	6:00-7:00
MONDAY	Library			Self service								
	CIS Ops		Reception	Open					Reception			
TUESDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Open									
WEDNESDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Open									
THURSDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Reception	Open								
FRIDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Open									
SATURDAY	Library		Self service	Open								
	CIS Ops											

Reception

Filter for Housing Office - CIS Trained

Self service

Proposed self service

Blackburn	Function	8:30am	9:00-10:00	10:00-11:00	11:00-12:00	12:00-1:00	1:00-2:00	2:00-3:00	3:00-4:00	4:00-5:00	5:00-6:00	6:00-7:00
MONDAY	Library		Self Service									
	CIS Ops			Open								
TUESDAY	Library		Open									
	CIS Ops			Open								
WEDNESDAY	Library		Open									
	CIS Ops			Open								
THURSDAY	Library		Open									
	CIS Ops			Open								
FRIDAY	Library		Open									
	CIS Ops			Open								
SATURDAY	Library		Self service	Open								
	CIS Ops											

Reception

Filter for Housing Office - CIS Trained

Self service

Proposed self service

Broxburn	Function	8:30am	9:00-10:00	10:00-11:00	11:00-12:00	12:00-1:00	1:00-2:00	2:00-3:00	3:00-4:00	4:00-5:00	5:00-6:00	6:00-7:00
MONDAY	Library	Open										
	CIS Ops		Open									
TUESDAY	Library	Open										
	CIS Ops		Open									
WEDNESDAY	Library	Building Reception Only (Library unavailable)										
	CIS Ops		Open									
THURSDAY	Library	Open										
	CIS Ops		Open									
FRIDAY	Library	Open										
	CIS Ops			Open								
SATURDAY	Library		Self service	Open								

Reception

Filter for Housing Office - CIS Trained

Self service

Proposed self service

Whitburn	Function	8:30am	9:00-10:00	10:00-11:00	11:00-12:00	12:00-1:00	1:00-2:00	2:00-3:00	3:00-4:00	4:00-5:00	5:00-6:00	6:00-7:00
MONDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Reception	Open					Reception			
TUESDAY	Library				Self service							
	CIS Ops		Reception			Open						
WEDNESDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Reception	Open								
THURSDAY	Library			Open								
	CIS Ops		Reception	Open								
FRIDAY	Library				Open							
	CIS Ops		Reception	Open								
SATURDAY	Library		Self service	Open								

Reception Filter for Housing Office - CIS Trained

Self service Proposed self service

Customer Information Services (CIS) Opening Hours

CIS deals with face-to-face enquiries on all council services. There are 10 CIS offices in West Lothian, which are located in Libraries and Partnership Centres.

A reduction in opening hours at 4 West Lothian CIS offices is being proposed:

- Armadale Partnership Centre CIS
- Blackburn Partnership Centre CIS
- Strathbrock Partnership Centre CIS
- Whitburn CIS (located in Whitburn Library)

Under the proposals, the opening hours for the following 6 CIS offices will remain the same:

- Bathgate Partnership Centre CIS
- Carmondean Connected CIS
- Fauldhouse Partnership Centre CIS
- Linlithgow Partnership Centre CIS
- Livingston CIS (located in Arrochar House)
- West Calder CIS (located in West Calder Library)

The changes would come into effect on 30th March 2020.

Officers have evaluated the usage of each location to ensure the proposed opening times would allow the council to continue to deliver CIS when customer demand is at its highest. The reduction in hours would allow the council to deliver CIS more efficiently and within the limited financial resources available to the council.

The proposed opening hours can be viewed in your local CIS office.

Questionnaires should be completed/returned by **Thursday 14th November 2019**.

The following alternative ways to access Council Services will also remain available to customers:

MyWestLothian Portal:

The portal can be accessed using a PC or mobile device to:

- Report:
 - Missed bin collections.
 - Missing, stolen or damaged bins.
 - A broken street light.
 - Pothole or other road issue.
 - Grit bin issue.
- Request:
 - An additional, larger or new bin
 - A bulky uplift.
- View your bin collection details
- Populate forms with your details
- Avoid having to re-register with other local public sector services if you move to a new part of Scotland
- Log into the tenants self-service portal
- Self-access Council Tax and Housing Benefits accounts
- Pay for Council Tax, Rent and online school payments

Customer Service Centre: The Customer Service Centre is open from 8am until 10pm seven days a week, giving you easy access to highly trained advisers.

1. Which CIS office do you visit?
-----**2. If the CIS service is unavailable when you normally visit, would you:**

[Please tick all that apply]

- ☐ Use an alternative CIS office located within West Lothian that is open during your preferred visiting time.
- ☐ Visit your preferred CIS office on an alternative day or time
- ☐ Access the online portal MyWestLothian
- ☐ Call the Customer Service Centre for assistance
- ☐ None of the above.

3. How do you normally get to this building?

- ☐ On foot
- ☐ By car
- ☐ Public Transport
- ☐ Prefer not to say

4. Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness that reduces your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

- ☐ Yes - physical disability or mobility problem
- ☐ Yes - sensory impairment
- ☐ Learning disability
- ☐ Mental health problem
- ☐ Other physical or mental health condition
- ☐ Prefer not to say

5. What is your employment status?

- ☐ Employed full-time

- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Self employed
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Not working due to sickness/disability
- ☐ Looking after home and family
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say

6. Age Categories

- ☐ Under 17
- ☐ 17-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-59
- ☐ 60-64
- ☐ 65-74
- ☐ 75+

We welcome any comments below. Alternative suggestions put forward to deliver the service within the resources available will be carefully considered.

Further comments and queries can be emailed to: libraryandcis@westlothian.gov.uk

Comments	Alternative Suggestions

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Integrated Relevance Assessment Form

1. Details of proposal																						
Policy Title (include budget reference number if applicable)	Reduction in library opening hours (H3b); and Reduction in Customer Information Services (CIS) opening hours (H3c)																					
Service Area (detail which service area and section this relates to)	Housing, Customer and Building Services																					
Lead Officer (Name and job title)	Ann Marie Carr, Head of Housing, Customer & Building Services																					
Other Officers/Partners involved (list names, job titles and organisations if applicable)																						
Date relevance assessed	29/01/19																					
2. Does the council have control over how this policy will be implemented?																						
YES	X	NO																				
<p>3. The General Duty of the Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct • Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and • Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not <p>NB: In this section you must also consider the Human Rights Act and the key PANEL (Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment and Legality) principles of Human Rights – (further detail on what these are, are provided in the guidance document)</p> <p>Which groups of people do you think will be, or potentially could be, impacted upon by the implementation of this policy? You should consider employees, clients, customers and service users (Please tick below as appropriate)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Age - Older people, young people and children</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability - people with disabilities/long standing conditions</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender reassignment - Trans/Transgender Identity – anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Marriage or Civil Partnership – people who are married or in a civil partnership</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pregnancy and Maternity – woman who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Race - people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religion or Belief – people with different religions and beliefs including those with no beliefs</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sex - Gender Identity - women and men (girls and boys) and those who self-identify their gender</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexual Orientation – lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual/straight</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>					Age - Older people, young people and children	✓	Disability - people with disabilities/long standing conditions	✓	Gender reassignment - Trans/Transgender Identity – anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth		Marriage or Civil Partnership – people who are married or in a civil partnership		Pregnancy and Maternity – woman who are pregnant and/or on maternity leave		Race - people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and different racial backgrounds		Religion or Belief – people with different religions and beliefs including those with no beliefs		Sex - Gender Identity - women and men (girls and boys) and those who self-identify their gender		Sexual Orientation – lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual/straight	
Age - Older people, young people and children	✓																					
Disability - people with disabilities/long standing conditions	✓																					
Gender reassignment - Trans/Transgender Identity – anybody who's gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth																						
Marriage or Civil Partnership – people who are married or in a civil partnership																						
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Sex - Gender Identity - women and men (girls and boys) and those who self-identify their gender																						
Sexual Orientation – lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual/straight																						

4. Do you have evidence or reason to believe that this policy will or may impact on socio-economic inequalities? Consideration must be given particularly to children and families				
Socio-economic Disadvantage			Impact – please tick below as appropriate)	
Low Income/Income Poverty – cannot afford to maintain regular payments such as bills, food, clothing			✓	
Low and/or no wealth – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future			✓	
Material Deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies				
Area Deprivation – where you live (rural areas), where you work (accessibility of transport)				
Socioeconomic Background – social class i.e. parents education, employment and income			✓	
5. Integrated impact assessment required? (Two ticks (✓) above = full assessment necessary)				
YES	✓	NO		
6. Decision rationale – if you have ticked no above, use this section to evidence why a full IIA is not required				
<p>This proposal is one of the identified budget savings measures affiliated with Housing, Customer and Building Services as part of the Transforming Your Council consultation designed to deliver the required efficiencies to balance the service budget.</p> <p>This measure proposes a reduction in staffed hours in our Libraries and a reduction of information service opening hours in 4 locations.</p> <p>The reduction of Library staffed hours has been based on analysis of key performance information regarding the core hours of customer use, ensuring peak periods remain staffed, practicalities of self service and the reduction of hours across all libraries.</p> <p>The reduction of CIS opening hours project has been based on analysis of key performance information regarding the core hours of customer demand for face to face service. This ensures that the service targets resources in key locations at the time of peak footfall.</p> <p>A critical interdependency with any reduction in the service offering is balanced with the availability and support for customers to facilitate the shift to alternative means of accessing services. This means that successful delivery of Channel Shift and Digital Transformation (H5a) project is key to increasing the options for self-service for customers. Feedback from customers has consistently been that they wish to see more opportunity to conduct their business with the council at a time that suits them, and in a manner that is convenient to them. Therefore it is expected that the increased demand for self-service will see the customer desire for face to face transactions decline. This understanding if customer need enables opportunities for Library and Information Services to utilise a user centred service design approach to examine new ways of working and delivering services.</p> <p>Whilst the proposal is based on demand analysis, and the new options of service delivery should mean the impact is mitigated as far as possible, it is likely to be viewed initially as a negative move by the users and communities affected. It would justifiable therefore, to include a full Integrated Impact</p>				

Assessment (IIA) as part of this project to ensure the change in provisions considers the views of users, and that this is taken into consideration. It is planned that this work will be undertaken as part of the planned engagement with service users on the proposals for the new models of service delivery.

Signed by Lead Officer	Ralph Bell
Designation	Customer and Community Services Manager
Date	29/01/2019
Counter Signature (Head of Service or Depute Chief Executive responsible for the policy)	AnnMarie Carr
Date	29/01/2019

Full Integrated Impact Assessment Form

1. Details of proposal: Reduction in library opening hours (H3b); and Reduction in Customer Information Services (CIS) opening hours (H3c)	
Details of others involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Change Lead, Housing, Customer & Building Services • Customer & Communities Manager • Digital Transformation Manager
Date assessment conducted	20/11/2019
<p>2. Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the policy being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes) including the context within which it will operate.</p> <p>The proposed changes form part of the transformation programme for West Lothian Council to be delivered by Housing, Customer and Building Services. The proposals associated with this project will see the service move to a reduction in resourced library hours and reduction in opening hours of Armadale, Whitburn, Blackburn and Broxburn CIS locations.</p>	
3. Please outline any needs and/or barriers which equality groups (People with Protected Characteristics) may have in relation to this policy	
Age	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>Impact on older people and young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for reduction in access to library and CIS services • Potential for reduction in access to free PC/internet access <p>How do you know that</p> <p>A customer usage analysis was undertaken in the first quarter of 2018-19 to look at the usage of the service against the current opening hours. This analysis included data collection of book issues and public access pc usage for each opening hour at each facility.</p>
Disability	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for reduction in access to library and CIS services • Potential for reduction in access to free PC/Internet access • Potential loss of engagement with services using the library as a local meeting point/drop in advice shop due to reduction in hours <p>How do you know that</p> <p>A customer usage analysis was undertaken in the first quarter of 2018-19 to look at the usage of the service against the current opening hours. This analysis included data collection of book issues and public access pc usage for each opening hour at each facility.</p>
Gender Reassignment – Trans/Transgender Identity	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The measure as a whole is applicable to all equality groups irrespective of this protected characteristic.</p>

	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>There is little evidence at national or local level to indicate particular issues relating to gender identity and poverty, however reports such as Stonewall Scotland and 'Your Services, Your Say' indicate that a number of individuals who identify as trans may feel uncomfortable being open about their gender identity when accessing services so any specific issues or impact may be hidden.</p>
Marriage or Civil Partnership	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The measure as a whole is applicable to all equality groups irrespective of this protected characteristic.</p>
	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>No relevant evidence was found through research or consultation, that there may be hidden needs relating to this protected characteristic.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The measure as a whole is applicable to all equality groups irrespective of this protected characteristic.</p>
	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>No relevant evidence was found through research or consultation, that there may be hidden needs to this protected characteristic.</p>
Race	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>Potential reduction in hours could impact on access levels to specific language books; ESOL (English as a Second Language) classes which use library facilities in some locations; and reduce access to interpretation facilities.</p>
	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>The main issue identified locally is access to information and advice, particularly where a language barrier exists. In the 2011 national census, 6.3% of West Lothian's population were categorised as being Non White Scottish/British compared to a national average of 8.2%.</p>
Religion or Belief	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The measure as a whole is applicable to all equality groups irrespective of this protected characteristic.</p>
	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>No relevant evidence was found through research or consultation, that there may be hidden needs relating to this protected characteristic.</p>
Sex - Gender Identity	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The measure as a whole is applicable to all equality groups irrespective of this protected characteristic.</p>
	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>No relevant evidence was found through research or consultation, that there may be hidden needs relating to this protected characteristic.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The measure as a whole is applicable to all equality groups irrespective of this protected characteristic.</p>

	<p>How do you know that</p> <p>No relevant evidence was found through research or consultation, that there may be hidden needs relating to this protected characteristic however as already acknowledged in the Gender Reassignment - Trans/Transgender Identity section Stonewall Scotland and 'Your Services, Your Say' indicate that a number of individuals who identify as trans may feel uncomfortable being open about their gender identity when accessing services so any specific issues or impact may be hidden.</p>
<p>4. Please outline any needs and/or barriers which may affect vulnerable groups falling into poverty and disadvantage in relation to this policy</p> <p>Vulnerable groups may include the following;</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployed • Single parents and vulnerable families • People on benefits • Those involved in the criminal justice system • People in the most deprived communities (bottom 20 SIMD areas) • People who live in rural areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners • Looked After Children • Carers including young carers • People misusing services • Others e.g. veterans, students • Single adult households • People who have experienced the asylum system • Those leaving the care setting including children and young people and those with illness • Homeless people • People with low literacy/numeracy • People with lower educational qualifications • People in low paid work • People with one or more Protected Characteristic
<p>What effect/difference will the policy have on people</p> <p>The reduction in access to libraries and CIS services may impact on older people, young people, gender, and race. The impact on each of the identified groups should be mitigated once alternative options are fully implemented and will be monitored through implementation. If this position changes during implementation, and it becomes apparent that services to specific groups with protected characteristics will change, a further impact assessment will be required.</p>	
<p>How do you know that</p> <p>Equality data, research or other evidence used to inform this assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims of Service – Service Plan and details of actual Service Provision. • Public consultation ('Transforming Your Council') • Comments from Service Users – Questionnaire Oct/Nov 2019 	
<p>5. Action Plan</p> <p>What action/s will be taken, by whom and what is the timescale for completion</p>	
<p>Actioner Name</p> <p>Ralph Bell</p>	<p>Action Date</p> <p>April 2021</p>
<p>What is the issue</p> <p>Due to disability, illness or age there is a potential for reduction in access to both libraries and CIS facilities at specific periods.</p>	

What action will be taken

Digital options once fully implemented may mitigate any negative impact caused by the measure. The use and effectiveness of these options will be monitored as part of the management of the digital transformation project. Online options for both CIS and Library services

Progress against action

Alternative methods of service delivery have been explored in order to ensure that the negative impact of a reduction in staffed hours is mitigated. This has meant that the hours of closure have been agreed by analysis of which libraries have the lowest footfall, and matching the closure to this low demand. Digital delivery options are currently being progressed in customer services for libraries and information service, with increased usage of Bookmyne app each month, online services. There are plans to deliver room booking systems digitally via the public portal to further increase options.

Information has been developed to help increase awareness and build knowledge of digital services offered.

6. Details of consultation and involvement

Who will be or has been involved in the consultation process

- a. State which groups are involved in this process and describe their involvement.
- b. Describe any planned involvement saying when this will take place and who is responsible for managing the involvement process.
- c. Describe the results of the involvement and how you have taken this into account.

This proposed change is part of a wider programme of transformation planned by West Lothian Council to provide a balanced budget between the years 2018-19 and 2022-23. At the stage of planning, officer led proposals were developed by council officers, and formed the basis of the 'Transforming Your Council' consultation undertaken in October/November 2017. The consultation was distributed to an extensive number of stakeholders and community and representative groups. The consultation was available electronically via the council's website and was within all key council buildings to ensure broad accessibility. The consultation was also included in the printed council newspaper, Bulletin, and was delivered to every household and local business in West Lothian. The availability of the consultation and means to comment were also extensively posted via the council's social media channels throughout the consultation period. This involved a plan to target hard to reach groups or those who do not, or cannot easily engage with service or respond to surveys.

The number responses received by the close of the consultation period was 7,026 which generated over 45,000 comments from all respondents. A breakdown on the number of responses received from employees, individuals and organisations/groups was presented to the Culture and Leisure PDSP to summarise the responses to the proposals relevant to this committee are set out below:

Measure	Number of Comments	% to total comments
Service restructure of Adult Learning & Youth Services	1,189	31%
Modernised library and information services	798	21%
Review approach of delivery of culture and sports	977	26%
Empowering communities and reducing the number of community facilities	836	22%
Total	3,800	100%

This indicated the level of response as 798 individual comments regarding this measure. The results based on response to this measure provided assurance that of those responding, there is a significant proportion in support of the proposal, or made valid suggestions for consideration.

In addition a further engagement targeting groups and individuals utilising the services was conducted in October /November 2019. The proposals were mapped out for each library and CIS location, indicating opening hours (staffed & self-service), alternative staffed venues and digital alternatives.

748 responses were received from all 14 library locations and all 11 CIS offices throughout West Lothian. It should be noted that participants were able to provide multiple answers to the questions asked.

The targeted consultation with user groups/customers in all locations for library and CIS hours' reduction has indicated that the options available to customers would be utilised – different locations, days and times, alternative options of contact with the council through digital solutions and telephone options.

From the 100 answers to the question "If the CIS service is unavailable when you normally visit, would you..." 72% responded positively

Of the 658 answers to the question "If this library allowed you to check your own book out rather than a staff member doing it would you..." 79% responded positively

Of the 670 answers to the question "If this library was not open when you normally visit would you..." 66.6% indicated a positive response

Of the comments recorded for customers not entirely agreeing with the proposals, the most common were:

Transport difficulties to go to another library, Do not want the library/CIS hours to reduce, Theft of books, Social interaction and knowledge the staff provide.

7. Data and Information

What equality data, poverty data, research, information or other evidence has been used to inform this assessment?

(Information can include, for example, surveys, databases, focus groups, in-depth interviews, pilot projects, reviews of complaints made, user feedback, academic publications and consultants' reports)

- a. What information or other evidence has been used in the development of the policy?
- b. What does research, consultation and other data or information tell you about the impact of the policy? (Describe the information and the conclusions, and state where the information can be found).
 - (i) Quantitative (numbers, percentages, statistical data)
 - (ii) Qualitative – (written/spoken words, opinions, surveys)
- c. Describe any gaps in the available information, and record within section five (Action Plan Section), action you are taking in relation to this (e.g. new research, further analysis) and when this is planned.
- d. Give details of any existing local or national evidence which has been used to inform the development of your policy.

The officer research based the proposal to reduce hours based on analysis of customer demand, footfall in libraries and CIS centres, and highlighted that in keeping with the national trend, library usage is declining. The delivery of a library service is a statutory duty, and this service will continue to be provided. It is recognised that there are opportunities to modernise and reconfigure the manner in which libraries and CIS Services are delivered by responding to the demand for more self-service options and online facilities. This work also identified that peak demand for CIS services falls between 10am and 3pm; therefore it is reasonable to examine the possibility of aligning our service delivery to respond to this as a result of channel shift and increasing digital options that this face-to-face demand will decline. If customers respond positively to the new service changes, no negative impact is anticipated.

Benchmarking exercises has shown that of the 32 local authorities facing similar budget challenges, many of them are consulting or progressing measures to close, reduce or review library and customer service provision as part of similar transformation programmes.

8. Mitigating Actions

If the policy has a negative/adverse impact on a particular group/s, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.

Note: If the policy is unlawfully discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010 and/or is having a negative impact on poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage under the Fairer Scotland Duty, you MUST identify, how the policy can be amended or justified so the Council acts lawfully.

- a. How could you modify the policy to eliminate discrimination or to reduce any identified negative impacts? If necessary, consider other ways in which you could meet the aims and objectives.
- b. How could you modify the policy to create or maximise the positive aspects of the proposals and to increase equality and reduce poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage.
- c. Describe any modifications which you can make without further delay (for example, easy, few resource implications).
- d. If you propose to make any of the modifications shown above, describe any potential new negative impacts on other groups in society or on the ability to achieve the aims and how you will minimise these.
- e. Please describe the resource implications of any proposed modifications taking into account financial, people and property issues.

It is anticipated that this measure will have a positive impact on equality for those who are unable to travel to libraries and CIS services due to disability, illness or age, therefore the benefits may mitigate any negative impact once digital options are fully implemented - the use and effectiveness of these options will be monitored as part of the management of the digital transformation project. Targeted consultation with user groups/customers in all locations for library and CIS hours' reduction has indicated that the options available to customers would be utilised – different locations, days and times, alternative options of contact with the council through digital solutions and telephone options.

9. Monitoring and Review

- a. How will the implementation and impact of the policy be monitored, including implementation of any amendments? For example, what type of monitoring will there be? How frequent?
- b. What are the practical arrangements for monitoring? For example, who will put this in place? When will it start?
- c. How will results of monitoring be used to develop future policies?
- d. When is the policy due to be reviewed?
- e. Who is responsible for ensuring this happens?

Please detail below

The planning, implementation and reviewing of this measure will be managed along best practice in project management. An agile approach to the initial stages saw the brief evolve into alternative proposals quickly. The Service Design capability within the service has been utilised to develop customer journeys and will capture the user feedback. Stakeholder engagement and user centred input has resulted in discussions with staff, the views of customers/stakeholders. In terms of project governance, the Livingston North Partnership project has a dedicated project board, with proposals for libraries and information services being reported to the HCBS senior management team. Customer and Community Services will continue our programme of monitoring performance indicators for early identification of arising issues, concerns, or impact on performance.

The impact on each of the groups identified as having possible impact on equality should be mapped against the affected locations as the proposals develop. This will enable further mitigation of any impact to be assessed and implemented as user engagement and analysis of performance information becomes known.

The closure of the project will only be agreed following the review of the implementation of the measure, and a sufficient period of quality assurance to satisfy the project board that the customers or service performance has not been negatively impacted, and that any determined impact has been mitigated as far as possible.

Reason for Recommendation

Implement proposal taking account of mitigating actions as outlined in Section 8.

Signed by Lead Officer

Designation

Date

Counter Signature (Head of Service or Depute Chief Executive responsible for the policy)

Date



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PLANA GAIDHLIG COMHAIRLE LODAINN AN LAR/ WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to present for consideration a draft Gaelic Language Plan for West Lothian Council, in accordance with the terms of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

The report also seeks to advise the Panel on the council's public consultation exercise.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel note and provide comment on the draft Gaelic Language Plan for West Lothian Council which is intended to be presented to Council Executive for approval.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs providing equality of opportunities; developing employees; working in partnership
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 requires Local Authorities to develop a Gaelic Language Plan.
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)	Requirements to include additional signage to include Gaelic language on new and newly refurbished signs may incur additional costs, mainly associated with translation. There may also be a requirement for other resources, such as Education resources to be included as part of the council's plan. However various funding streams are available should the council wish to pursue these routes.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Policy and Resources PDSP
VIII	Other consultations	Public consultation completed Staff consultation completed

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 establishes the “Bòrd na Gaidhlig” (the “Bòrd”) to promote and facilitate the promotion of the use and understanding of the Gaelic language, Gaelic education and Gaelic culture and to advise on matters relating to the Gaelic language. The functions conferred on the Bòrd by the Act are stated as being with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.

The 2005 Act required the Bòrd to develop a national Gaelic language plan. The national plan was approved in June 2010.

Section 3 of the 2005 Act empowers the Bòrd to issue a notice to a public authority to require the development of a local Gaelic language plan, setting out the measures to be taken in relation to the use of the Gaelic language in connection with the exercise of the authority's functions. To date, West Lothian, Midlothian, East Lothian and Scottish Borders councils are the only Scottish councils not to have been required to implement a Gaelic Language Plan.

Gaelic Language Plan

D.2

The council received statutory notice in August 2017 to develop a Gaelic language plan.

The plan should be introduced incrementally and over a five year time span, to be renewed every five years. Initially the plan should look at the first steps the Council needs to take in order that we can move towards using Gaelic in communications and respond to any communications from Gaelic users.

In preparing a Gaelic language plan, the council must have regard to:-

- the most recent national Gaelic language plan
- the extent to which the persons in relation to whom the authority's functions are exercisable use the Gaelic language

- the potential for developing the use of the Gaelic language in connection with the exercise of those functions,
- any representations made to the authority in relation to the use of the Gaelic language in connection with the exercise of those functions, and
- any guidance given by the Scottish Ministers or the Bòrd.

The Bòrd are empowered to monitor implementation of the plan on an annual basis and recommend that a commitment to submit an annual monitoring report is included in local plans.

D.3 West Lothian Council Gaelic Language Plan development

The Bòrd's Language Plans Officer has met with council officers to have an informal discussion on the development of the plan. There is one Gaelic group based in West Lothian which meets regularly in Bathgate. They have been informed of the council's requirement to implement and have been consulted on the draft plan during the public consultation exercise referred to below.

A working group was established to develop the Council's Gaelic language plan, chaired by the Head of Corporate Services, with membership from HR Services, Operational Services, Education Services, Property Services, Customer Services and Corporate Communications.

A draft Gaelic language plan has been developed and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The actions contained in the plan recognise that the West Lothian Council area has not been one of Scotland's traditional Gaelic speaking areas, nor has a large number of people who speak Gaelic today. The plan is therefore proposing that the Council will pursue a pragmatic approach to help develop the Gaelic language. The actions have therefore focused on an incremental approach to the introduction of dual language signage, responses to communications in Gaelic where this is appropriate, to provide training to staff who require Gaelic language in order to undertake their duties and to enhance and develop the use of Gaelic language through education in schools.

The council is required to submit a draft plan to the Bòrd for comment and approval by 20 December 2019. Following approval the plan will be formally adopted and implemented by the council.

A draft Gaelic language plan has been developed and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The actions contained in the plan recognise that the West Lothian Council area has not been one of Scotland's traditional Gaelic speaking areas, nor has a large number of people who speak Gaelic today. The plan is therefore proposing that the Council will pursue a pragmatic approach to help develop the Gaelic language. The actions have therefore focused on an incremental approach to the introduction of dual language signage, responses to communications in Gaelic where this is appropriate, to provide training to staff who require Gaelic language in order to undertake their duties and to enhance and develop the use of Gaelic language through education in schools.

Public consultation:

The council was required to carry out a public consultation for a period of six weeks on the contents of the plan. The consultation ran from Monday 7 October until Wednesday 20 November.

138 responses were received.

The majority of the feedback focussed on the principle of a Gaelic Language Plan. The comments referring to the contents of the plan are summarised in Appendix 2.

No changes to the draft plan are proposed as a result of the comments provided.

CONCLUSION

The Council has received statutory notice to develop a Gaelic Language Plan.

The plan should be introduced incrementally and over a five year time span, to be renewed every five years.

A first draft of the council's Gaelic Language Plan has been developed and a public consultation on the plan has been carried out. The draft plan will be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills for their approval prior to the plan being implemented, prior to Council Executive approval

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 - Draft Gaelic Language Plan

Appendix 2 - Draft 2 – Public consultation results

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Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Friday 6 November 2019

DRAFT – Appendix 1
WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL
GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN
2019 – 2024

This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005

DRAFT FOREWORD

West Lothian Council is committed to the use and promotion of the Gaelic Language in recognition of its status as one of Scotland's national languages and its unique contribution to the richness and diversity of Scottish culture today. In taking this forward we recognise that our contribution will help to sustain and develop the Gaelic language and its place as a part of the Scottish way of life and within the nation's heritage.

The West Lothian Council area has not been one of Scotland's traditional Gaelic speaking areas. This is an opportunity to positively and incrementally grow the use of the language in West Lothian in a way that is proportionate. The council will develop an approach which supports and responds positively to this heritage and demographic.

This will include proposals to enhance the status of Gaelic across the area and promote the acquisition and learning of the language as well as encourage its increased use. The council's actions will aim to support the aspirations and objectives included in the *National Plan for Gaelic* and the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

Graham Hope
Chief Executive

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Summary

Chapter 1	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Gaelic Language Plan• West Lothian Council• Gaelic in West Lothian• Implementing the National Plan for Gaelic
Chapter 2	Commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy Implications for Gaelic: implementation of the National Gaelic Language Plan• Identity• Communications• Publications• Staffing
Chapter 3	Implementation and Monitoring

Summary

West Lothian Council recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity and cultural life. West Lothian Council is committed to the objectives set out in the *National Plan for Gaelic* and has put in place the necessary structures and initiatives to ensure that Gaelic has a sustainable future in Scotland.

Our Gaelic Language Plan aims to:

- Enhance the status of Gaelic
- Promote learning of Gaelic
- Encourage increased use of Gaelic

This document is West Lothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan prepared within the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. It sets out how we will use Gaelic in the operation of our functions, how we will enable the use of Gaelic when communicating with the public and key partners, and how we will promote and develop Gaelic.

This Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the 2005 Act, and having regard to the *National Gaelic Language Plan* and the *Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans*.

The key components of our Gaelic Language Plan are:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter provides the background and context relating to the preparation of Gaelic Language Plans under the 2005 Act and the structure of West Lothian Council's main areas of operation. It also provides a summary of the use of the Gaelic language in West Lothian.

It also shows how we intend promoting the use of Gaelic in service planning and delivery and how we will take account of Gaelic and our Gaelic Language Plan when drafting new policies and considering new strategies.

Chapter 2 – Core Commitments

This chapter sets out how West Lothian Council will use and enable the use of Gaelic in relation to our main business functions. It covers key areas of operation such as corporate identity, signage, communication with the public and the use of Gaelic on our website. This chapter sets out the level of Gaelic language provision which we are committed to providing in the lifetime of the Plan.

Chapter 3 – Implementation and Monitoring

This chapter sets out how the implementation of our Gaelic Language Plan will be taken forward, and how implementation and outcomes will be monitored.

1. INTRODUCTION

Gaelic Language Plan

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 (The Act) seeks to secure the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language.

The Act builds on and sits beside other measures to support the rights of ‘minority’ languages, including: the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992) and the Council of Europe’s European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (1992).

The Act established Bòrd na Gàidhlig as an executive non-departmental public body, responsible through Ministers to the Scottish Parliament with responsibility for promoting Gaelic development and providing advice to the Scottish Ministers on Gaelic issues. The Act requires Bòrd na Gàidhlig to prepare a National Gaelic Language Plan and gives it the power to request that public authorities, including local authorities, prepare and publish Gaelic Language Plans. This provision was designed to ensure that the public sector in Scotland plays its part in creating a sustainable future for Gaelic by raising its status and profile and creating practical opportunities for its use.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig provides public authorities with official notification of when they must prepare their Plan and details of the high level aims which should be met by the Plan. West Lothian Council received official notification from Bòrd na Gàidhlig in June 2018 that it has to prepare a statutory Gaelic Language Plan under the framework of the Act. The notification set out the corporate service aims and the high level aims the Plan should meet.

The four key Gaelic Language Planning categories that have informed the National Gaelic Language Plan are expected to influence all Gaelic Language Plans, namely:

- **Acquisition:** enabling people to develop speaking, reading and writing skills in Gaelic
- **Usage:** enabling the use of Gaelic in a range of social, formal and work settings
- **Status:** expanding visibility, audibility, recognition and respect for Gaelic
- **Corpus:** developing the quality, consistency and richness of the Gaelic language

Appendix 1 DRAFT

The Act requires public bodies to bring the preparation of their Gaelic Language Plan to the attention of all interested parties. West Lothian Council will consult publicly on the draft of its Gaelic Language Plan and will take into account representations made to it during the consultation process.

West Lothian Council's Gaelic Plan was submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval by 20 December 2019.

West Lothian

West Lothian has a population of around 181,000 and has one of the fastest growing and youngest populations in Scotland, reflecting the area's location and attractiveness as a place to invest, live, work and visit.

West Lothian is home to an extensive business base with almost 72,000 jobs in the area. **West Lothian Council**

West Lothian Council is a publicly accountable organisation.

West Lothian Council is one of 32 Scottish unitary local authorities, serving a community of over 175,000 citizens in central Scotland.



West Lothian Council's **mission statement** is -

"striving for excellence... working with and for our communities"

... and the following **values** demonstrate the practices West Lothian Council employees should adopt.

values - we are striving for excellence in:

- 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

West Lothian Council's priorities are:

1. Improving attainment and positive destinations for school children
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 council employs around 8,000 employees. Over 3,100 full time equivalent (FTE) staff (47% of the total) are employed in the education service, including teachers and support staff.

The council has 33 elected members across nine multi-member wards. Those members meet periodically at meetings of full council, and these take place approximately every six weeks. The area also has two Scottish Parliament constituencies Almond Valley and Linlithgow, and two parliamentary constituencies Livingston and Linlithgow and East Falkirk.

West Lothian Council operates from three main locations: West Lothian Civic Centre (Livingston), Whitehill Depot (Bathgate) and Kirkton Service Centre (Livingston). The Council has 242 operational properties including:

- 11 secondary schools
- 67 primary schools / early years centres
- 5 assisted special needs schools
- 8 partnership centres
- 3 children's residential care homes
- 3 care homes for the elderly
- 14 libraries
- 10 sports centres / swimming pools (operated by a Leisure Trust)
- 33 community centres/village halls

Gaelic in West Lothian

There is no evidence to suggest that Gaelic speakers are located in a particular area within West Lothian.

The 2011 census recorded that there are:

- 667 residents able to speak Gaelic – 0.4% of the population compared to 1.1% across Scotland.
- 1,179 residents with 'any Gaelic skill' (0.7% of the population) compared to the Scottish average of 1.7%.

Appendix 1 DRAFT

With 'any Gaelic skill' (age 3+) breakdown:

- Age 3-15 (71)
- Age 16-24 (105)
- Age 25-34 (185)
- Age 35-49 (347)
- Age 50-64 (279)
- Age 65+ (192)

	Gaelic Language skills in West Lothian		% change to 2011 & comparison with Scottish average
	2001	2011	
Residents able to speak Gaelic	573	667	(+16.4% change to 2011). The Scottish average is -1.8%
Residents who can read Gaelic	350	408	(+16.6% change to 2011). The Scottish average is -1.9%
Residents with 'any Gaelic skill'	1155	1179	(+2.1% change to 2011). The Scottish average is -5.8%
Gaelic literate speakers	276	354	(+28.3% change to 2011). The Scottish average is +2.8%

- Gaelic Medium Education is currently provided by West Lothian Council through a partnership arrangement with City of Edinburgh Council. This partnership arrangement supports delivering of high-quality GME for children and young people from West Lothian through effective use of resources across the Lothians. Children and young people attending GME travel to Parkside Primary or Gillespie's High School in Edinburgh. During academic sessions 2017-18 and 2018-19 four West Lothian pupils attended GME in the City of Edinburgh.
- There is over 40 Gaelic language library and reference books in libraries across schools and communities. There has been no requests for the council's existing stock of Gaelic books or resources within our libraries.
- There is no Gaelic adult learning courses in West Lothian

- The council offers a translation and interpretation service has and there has been no requests for Gaelic interpretation or translation services

Gaelic within West Lothian Council

The council does not hold data on the total number of Gaelic speaking staff within the organisation.

A staff survey was conducted in April 2019 to identify information relating to staff. 947 members of staff responded to the survey. This included:

1. *Number of staff that do not understand any Gaelic – 842*
2. *Number of staff who are Gaelic learners – 2*
3. *Number of staff who have expressed a desire to learn Gaelic - 437*
4. *Number of staff who can speak in Gaelic (basic words and phrases through to fluent) – 88*
5. *Number of staff who can speak in Gaelic comfortably and/or fluently - 5*

A commitment will be made to maintain viable data on the above.

Implementing the National Plan for Gaelic

West Lothian Council recognises that the various priority areas identified in the National Plan for Gaelic will be primarily implemented through our Gaelic Language Plan but that opportunities will arise to promote and develop the language through existing policy measures. West Lothian Council will examine policy commitments to identify areas where Gaelic can be pro-actively incorporated and the priorities of the National Plan for Gaelic initiated through additional methods. We see this development as corresponding to the normalisation principle which aims to include Gaelic as an everyday part of life in Scotland.

2. COMMITMENTS

In its statutory *Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans*, Bòrd na Gàidhlig notes that creating the right environment for the use of Gaelic in public life is one of the key components of language regeneration.

The council's high level aims included within our Statutory Notice are:

- **Using Gaelic**
- **Promoting Gaelic**
- **Learning Gaelic**

The Corporate Service Aims included within our Statutory Notice are:

Equal Respect

Gaelic language plan commitments to deliver to an equal standard in both Gaelic and English

Active Offer

Practical measures to ensure that staff and public are kept regularly informed of all opportunities that exist to use Gaelic in relation to the work of the public authority.

Third Parties:

Ensure that Arm's Length Executive Organisations and other contractors help deliver the public authority Gaelic language Plan

Normalisation

Gaelic Plan commitments are normalised within the structures of the public authority over time, with opportunities to grow Gaelic within existing budgets constantly assessed.

Corporate Parenting

That the authority is aware of the duties of a Corporate Parent to ensure that looked after children and young people and care leavers with Gaelic receive the same opportunities as those with other languages.

The Bòrd has identified four core areas of service delivery that it wishes public bodies to address when preparing Gaelic Language Plans:

Identity and Status including, corporate identity and signage and expanding visibility of Gaelic

Communications, including, reception, telephone, mail and e-mail, forms and complaints procedures

Publications, including, public relations and media, printed material and websites

Staffing, including recruitment and training.

Gaelic Language Acquisition and Usage: West Lothian Council recognises that action in each of these areas can help raise the visibility and profile of Gaelic and bring greater opportunity for Gaelic speakers to use the language.

The plan has been developed taking account of the small percentage of West Lothian residents who are Gaelic speakers and the limited demand made for information or communication in Gaelic. However the council has provided a commitment to better promote Gaelic language learning opportunities to staff and customers.

2.1 Policy Implications for Gaelic: implementation of the National Gaelic Language Plan

Gaelic Language Acquisition and Usage

The National Plan sets out a vision for Gaelic of a healthy, vibrant language increasingly used, valued and respected in a modern, multicultural and multilingual Scotland. The National Plan explains why, in order to achieve that vision, four key concepts of language development must be addressed: how people are enabled to acquire Gaelic; how they are enabled to use Gaelic; how the status of Gaelic can be enhanced; and how the Gaelic corpus can be developed.

The 2005 Act is structured to require public authorities that have been issued with a statutory notice by the Bòrd to develop a Gaelic Language Plan, to engage with the National Plan.

Education

West Lothian Council recognises and values the importance of the development of Gaelic language learning and of the rights of young people to access education in Scotland's native languages.

In terms of education, Gaelic is defined by two distinct approaches; Gaelic Medium Education (GME) and Gaelic Learner Education (GLE). Bòrd na Gaidhlig provides the following definitions in its Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education.

- GME from early years until the end of primary school is a form of immersion education. With this form of education, Gaelic is the sole language of learning, teaching and assessment in the first three years of primary school. From P4-P7 immersion education continues and English is introduced. From P4 onwards, Gaelic remains the predominant language of the classroom. The purpose being to ensure that children achieve equal fluency and literacy in both Gaelic and English whilst reaching expected attainment levels in all areas of the curriculum.
- GME in secondary education is typically offered as a subject, with some schools delivering a further proportion of the curriculum through the medium of Gaelic.
- GLE is distinct from GME in that it is delivered to pupils who are in English medium education and Gaelic is offered as an additional language.

Gaelic Medium Education (GME)

Gaelic Medium Education is currently provided by West Lothian Council through a partnership arrangement with City of Edinburgh Council. This partnership arrangement supports delivering of high-quality GME for children and young people from West Lothian through effective use of resources across the Lothians. Children and young people attending GME travel to Parkside Primary or Gillespie's High School in Edinburgh. During academic sessions 2017-18 and 2018-19 four West Lothian pupils attended GME in the City of Edinburgh.

Provision of GME is supported by West Lothian Council and information about its availability is provided to parents on the councils' website and on application. Further support and communication for parents wishing their children to access GME has been identified as an aim of the West Lothian Gaelic Language Plan and is included in the actions listed below. West Lothian Council will continue its dialogue with communities about GME with an invitation to Parent Councils to contribute to the draft Gaelic Language Plan consultation.

Parents have access to Gaelic Medium Playgroups in City of Edinburgh through partner providers at a range of locations in the city. More information is available via Cròileagan Dhùn Èideann's website here <http://www.gaelicplaygroup.com/> and this will be further promoted to West Lothian residents during the lifetime of the plan.

The demand for, and provision of, GME will be monitored on an ongoing basis by West Lothian Council in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council and this will be a key feature of ongoing strategic planning. West Lothian Council officers will also support the ongoing development of effective partnership working across the Forth Valley and West Lothian Regional Improvement Collaborative.

Gaelic Learner Education (GLE)

Gaelic Learner Education (GLE) provides young people with progressive opportunities to learn Gaelic language and experience Gaelic culture as part of the wider offer of languages in schools. GLE is an area which is currently undeveloped in West Lothian schools, but is planned through the Gaelic Language Plan. Opportunities for schools to engage with GLE will be developed in collaboration with key local and national partners including Bòrd na Gaidhlig, regional local authorities, higher and further education establishments, schools and parents.

A West Lothian Gaelic Education Steering group will be convened to support the strategic development of GLE in schools and this group will include key local authority officers, primary and secondary teachers, parents and local partners. West Lothian officers will seek advice and expertise of colleagues at Newbattle Abbey College, where professional development and engagement opportunities for schools, parents and adult learners are offered, in order to explore the scope to participate in existing programmes or to develop local alternatives. Teachers who have experience or an interest in Gaelic learning have been identified and local training opportunities will be developed and offered. West Lothian Council is also planning to work with other schools where GLE is currently being delivered (James Gillespie's High School, City of Edinburgh) to offer digital opportunities to open up Gaelic learning to learners across the region.

Awareness of Gaelic is included in cultural and educational provision as appropriate to the curriculum rationale and contexts for learning in individual schools. Through the Gaelic Language Plan there will be further exploration of how learning opportunities can be planned which raise awareness of Gaelic in primary and secondary schools through Curriculum for Excellence and community and cultural activities

A stock of Gaelic language books is available through West Lothian Library Services and 22 items are available in children's collections across West Lothian libraries. Requests for Gaelic items are infrequent however this may be due to a lack of awareness and so has been identified as an area for development in the Gaelic Language Plan.

Library services provide Bookbug bags in Gaelic at each stage:

- Baby (gifted by the health visitor at around 6 weeks)
- Toddler (gifted by the health visitor at around 18 months)
- Explorer (gifted by nurseries at 3)

Family Bag (gifted through schools in P1)

Gaelic Bookbug packs have been provided to the Bathgate Gaelic circle and there is scope to explore opportunities for Gaelic Bookbug sessions which has also been identified for future development in the Gaelic Language Plan.

Language Acquisition

West Lothian Council recognises that a sustainable future for Gaelic requires more people to learn the language and that attention requires to be focused on the home, education and adult learning as the key means of achieving this. We will take the following steps to help create a supportive environment for growing the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland.

- Gaelic in the Home
- Gaelic in Education
- Gaelic in Adult Learning

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Gaelic in the Home	This is currently undeveloped in West Lothian.	Signpost National Parent Body, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and other national organisations via the council's website. Further promote Gaelic resources such as Bookbug packs and online activities to encourage usage of Gaelic in the home. Explore Family Learning opportunities, initially through the Gaelic Circle group in	Raised awareness of the importance of the home in the acquisition and usage of Gaelic.	Education Services	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		Bathgate.			
Gaelic Learner Education (GLE)	<p>There is currently no GLE in West Lothian.</p> <p>Interested teachers / teachers with knowledge of Gaelic are being identified.</p>	<p>Establish a Gaelic steering group for education.</p> <p>Support schools with planning and development of GLE through provision of learning and teaching resources.</p> <p>Develop GLE opportunities as part of the 1+2 Languages approach.</p> <p>Promote opportunities for digital learning of Gaelic in secondary, including opportunities for regional SQA accredited courses (for example through the E-Sgoil or schools in Edinburgh).</p> <p>Explore opportunities for learner involvement in Gaelic cultural experiences.</p> <p>Offer professional learning opportunities for interested teachers / teachers with a</p>	<p>Increased support and opportunities for GLE at all levels.</p> <p>Increased number of learners experiencing GLE.</p> <p>Increased opportunities for professional learning in Gaelic for teachers and improve education</p>	Education Services	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		<p>knowledge of Gaelic (for example through adult learning opportunities and the Gaelic Learning in Primary School Consortium).</p> <p>Raise awareness across school communities of GLE through established communication channels (for example via 1+2 Twitter account, school Twitter accounts, school websites, council communications, etc.).</p>	staff awareness of Gaelic learning, resources and funding opportunities.		
Gaelic Medium Education (GME)	GME is currently provided through a partnership agreement with City of Edinburgh Council.	<p>Review existing information on GME provided on West Lothian Council's website to include broader information about GME provision at all levels.</p> <p>Communicate and promote pre-school age Gaelic Medium Playgroup opportunities through Early Learning and Childcare communication channels and via West Lothian Council's website.</p> <p>Track and monitor uptake of</p>	<p>Clear information on GME at all levels is easily available through West Lothian Council's website.</p> <p>Sustained or increased uptake of GME</p>	Education Services	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		<p>GME in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council.</p> <p>Work in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council to support and sustain current arrangements and to align planning around GME. Provide opportunities for dialogue with Parent Councils and wider parent body regarding Gaelic Language Plan and GME / GLE provision.</p>	<p>partnership provision with ongoing review of arrangements and capacity.</p> <p>Positive evaluation of GME arrangements and co-ordinated planning in place.</p>		
Gaelic in Adult Learning	There is currently no Gaelic Adult Learning provision in West Lothian	<p>Review opportunities to access funding to enable Gaelic adult learning opportunities to be offered across West Lothian.</p> <p>Determine demand for adult learning community classes (paid for) and offer as part of the community schools programme.</p> <p>Consider opportunities for digital Gaelic learning for adults.</p> <p>Work with partners/schools to</p>	<p>Adults in West Lothian have access to Gaelic language provision where there is a demand for this.</p> <p>Adults in West Lothian increase their Gaelic language skills where there is a demand for this.</p>	Adult Learning (Education Services)	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		support Family Learning in Gaelic.			
Working with Partners	<p>An Education Officer and 1+2 Languages Development Officer (with Gaelic as part of remit) are engaging with national organisations and local authorities to support Gaelic Language Planning and build networks.</p> <p>There is currently no Gaelic provision with local further education providers</p>	<p>Maintain dialogue and co-operation with East and Mid Lothian Councils in development, implementation and review of Gaelic Language Plan.</p> <p>Develop dialogue regarding Gaelic learning with partners in the Regional Improvement Collaborative and explore opportunities for joint working.</p> <p>Work in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council to sustain GME provision.</p> <p>Establish a Gaelic steering group for education including key stakeholders.</p> <p>Consult with local further education sector regarding Gaelic provision and seek expertise of colleagues at</p>	<p>Partnership working leads to strategic planning, increased collaboration and sharing effective practice in development of Gaelic learning.</p> <p>Opportunities are developed for adults to engage in Gaelic learning.</p>	Education Services	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
	or local businesses/tourism.	Newbattle Abbey College to explore development of local opportunities. Identify key local partners (for example from business or tourism) and explore potential for collaboration to support Gaelic learning and usage.			

Language Usage

The National Plan seeks to encourage greater use of Gaelic, to provide opportunities to use the language and to promote access to Gaelic forms of expression. There is not a large Gaelic speaking community in West Lothian, but where there are Gaelic speakers the Council will encourage its use, and seek to support them. For example, the Council will continue to offer Gaelic groups access to council controlled meeting accommodation free of charge, where this is possible. The council will continue to work with Gaelic groups and Management Committees to provide alternative accommodation, where required. The Council is working, through the tackling depopulation outcome in the SOA, to develop its tourism offer, and the National Plan will be used to inform this development.

West Lothian Council recognises that creating a sustainable future for Gaelic requires not only increasing the number of people able to speak the language, but increasing actual usage. We recognise the importance of enabling more people to use Gaelic as their preferred and normal mode of communication in an increasingly wide range of daily activities.

- Gaelic in Communities
- Gaelic in the Arts
- Gaelic in Tourism, Heritage and Recreation

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Gaelic in Communities	There is currently no Gaelic Adult Learning provision in West Lothian	<p>Review opportunities to access funding to enable Gaelic adult learning opportunities to be offered across West Lothian.</p> <p>Determine demand for adult learning community classes (paid for) and offer as part of the community schools programme.</p> <p>Consider opportunities for digital Gaelic learning for adults.</p> <p>Work with partners/schools to support Family Learning in Gaelic.</p>	<p>Adults in West Lothian have access to Gaelic language provision where there is a demand for this.</p> <p>Adults in West Lothian increase their Gaelic language skills where there is a demand for this.</p>	Adult Learning (Education Services)	December 2019 Ongoing
Gaelic in the Arts	<p>There is currently no routine consideration of the Gaelic language when programming Public and Visual Arts provision.</p> <p>There is currently no routine consideration of the Gaelic</p>	<p>On an annual basis, the Public Art Strategy Group will identify options to enhance the use of Gaelic in the council's Public and Visual Art programmes.</p> <p>The council will work with its partners who have responsibility for the operation of West Lothian's Performing Arts</p>	<p>The council can demonstrate inclusion of Gaelic language in its Public and Visual Art programmes.</p> <p>The council can demonstrate inclusion of Gaelic language and/or culture in key</p>	<p>Education Services (Culture and Sport)</p> <p>Education Services (Culture and Sport)</p>	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
	language when working with key delivery partners on programming the Performing Arts.	venues to encourage programming which incorporates the Gaelic language and/or culture.	delivery partners Performing Arts programmes		
Gaelic in Tourism, Heritage and Recreation	There is currently no routine consideration of the barriers to participating in physical activity for Gaelic language speakers	The partnership agreement with sportscotland for the delivery of Active Schools and Community Sports will include a commitment to considering the barriers to participation for Gaelic language speakers and this consideration will be given when developing annual programmes of activity on a school by school basis. Community sports clubs will also be encouraged to consider such barriers and be supported to identify approaches to overcome them.	Increased levels of participation in physical activity for Gaelic language speakers and in the number of community sports clubs whose plans identify approaches to overcome barriers for Gaelic language speakers	Education Services (Culture and Sport)	December 2019 Ongoing

Language Status

The National Plan seeks to increase the visibility of Gaelic, enhance its recognition and create a positive image for Gaelic in Scottish public life. In preparing this Gaelic Language Plan West Lothian Council is helping to raise the profile of the Gaelic language in the West Lothian area.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Language Status	There is currently no routine consideration of the Gaelic language when considering signage	Recognising the importance of Gaelic, the Council will seek to promote a positive image of Gaelic locally and increase the visibility of Gaelic, for example in new signage.	The council will demonstrate inclusion of Gaelic language and ensure that the language is more visible in West Lothian	Road Services Manager/Asset Manager	December 2019 Ongoing
Language Status	There is currently no routine consideration of consultation with Gaelic groups or promotion of the Gaelic language	The council will continue to consult with Gaelic groups in West Lothian on the development and progression of the Gaelic Language Plan. Gaelic will feature in the council's communications guidelines	West Lothian Council recognises that the status of a language is affected by its presence in the daily environment and the extent to which it is used, valued and perceived to be valued by those institutions which play an important role in our daily lives.	Customer Services Manager/Corporate Communications Manager	December 2019 Ongoing

Language Corpus

West Lothian Council recognises the need to strengthen the relevance and consistency of Gaelic, the importance of facilitating translation services and to promote research into the language.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/Indicator	Lead Officer/Service	Timescale
Language Corpus	There is currently no routine consideration of Gaelic language in the council's translation services.	The Council will adhere to the most recent Gaelic Orthographic conventions and place-names as advised by The Gaelic Place-names of Scotland	West Lothian Council recognises that the status of a language is used consistently, correctly and where most relevant	Asset Manager/Customer Services Manager/Roads Manager/Corporate Communications Manager	December 2019 Ongoing

2.2 Identity and Status

Rationale

The presence of Gaelic in the corporate identity and signs of a public authority enhances the visibility of the language, increases its status and makes an important statement about how Gaelic is valued and how it is given recognition. Developing the use of Gaelic through signage can also enrich the vocabulary of Gaelic users, raise public awareness of the language and contribute to its development. West Lothian Council recognises the importance of raising the visibility of Gaelic, increasing its status and creating a positive image of the language.

Summary of current practice:

West Lothian Council does currently have an agreed policy for the use of Gaelic in its corporate identity.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Corporate Identity	West Lothian Council's corporate identity does not include any Gaelic language elements	<p>We will review the Council's corporate identity and engage with stakeholders to identify how Gaelic language should be reflected in the Council's corporate identity. Guidelines will be disseminated across the organisation.</p> <p>A bilingual version of the council's logo and corporate letterhead will be developed and used on any Gaelic correspondence with equal respect to English. Guidelines</p>	<p>The Council's corporate guidelines will incorporate guidelines for the use of Gaelic language in the Council's corporate identity when appropriate to do so</p> <p>Should any communications be received or requested in Gaelic, a Gaelic version of the council's logo will</p>	Communications Manager	Year one ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		will be disseminated across the organisation.	be used on correspondence from the council (letterheads etc.).		
Signage	No council owned bilingual signage exists in West Lothian	<p>Gaelic will be included on West Lothian Council boundary signs and 'Welcome to West Lothian' signs when they are renewed</p> <p>When signage is being renewed or replaced at council-owned visitor locations (e.g. country parks and arts venues), the new signage shall include Gaelic.</p>	<p>Welcome signs at the main entry points into West Lothian will include Gaelic, demonstrating equal respect for Gaelic and English</p> <p>All new signage at council-owned visitor locations will include Gaelic, demonstrating equal respect for the Gaelic and English languages.</p>	<p>Road Services Manager</p> <p>Park & Woodlands Manager/Arts Manager</p>	Year one ongoing

2.3 Communications

West Lothian Council recognises the importance of creating opportunities for the practical use of Gaelic in a wide range of everyday situations and is committed to increasing its level of provision in this area.

Rationale

The use of Gaelic at the initial point of contact that members of the public have with a public authority increases the visible and audible presence of the language, and contributes to the sense that the use of Gaelic is possible and welcome. In addition to raising the profile of the language, it also creates opportunities for its practical use and encourages members of the public to use Gaelic in subsequent dealings with the public authority.

The use of Gaelic in interactions with the authority by mail, e-mail and by telephone is important in creating practical opportunities for the use of the language, and in contributing to the sense that its use is possible and welcome. The presence of Gaelic in a wide range of bilingual forms and Gaelic only forms can also greatly enhance the visibility and prestige of the language. The preparation of Gaelic versions of forms, applications and similar documents can also help the development of the language itself.

Summary of current practice

The council has a translation service contract in place. However West Lothian Council does currently have an agreed policy for the use of Gaelic in its corporate communications or customer service strategy.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Reception	The Council does not currently have any Gaelic provision in reception areas	The Council's Translation and Interpretation services includes provision of Gaelic	Customers coming into reception areas in Council offices will be engaged with appropriately no matter what language they speak	Customer Services Manager	December 2019

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		<p>Training for reception staff in how to meet customer needs and ensuring that the needs of people who speak languages other than English including the Gaelic language.</p> <p>Customers who speak Gaelic will be able to request translation in the Gaelic language</p>	<p>All customer services / contact centre staff will be aware of how to access support for communicating in Gaelic</p>		
Telephone	The Council does not currently have any provision for telephone call handling in Gaelic	<p>The Council's Translation and Interpretation services includes provision of Gaelic</p> <p>Training for customer services/ contact centre staff in how to meet customer needs and ensuring that the needs of people who speak languages other than English including the Gaelic language.</p> <p>Customers who speak Gaelic will be able to request translation in the Gaelic language</p>	<p>Customers contacting the Council by telephone will be engaged with appropriately no matter what language they speak</p> <p>All customer services / contact centre staff will be aware of how to access support for communicating in Gaelic</p>	Customer Services Manager	December 2019

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Mail and E:Mail	The Council does not currently have an agreed policy on how to respond to Gaelic mail and e:mail	<p>The Council's Translation and Interpretation services includes provision of Gaelic</p> <p>Any mail or e:mail received in Gaelic will be translated and responses will be provided in Gaelic</p> <p>The council will provide a commitment to actively publicise the council's Gaelic services, such as translation, to the public and stakeholders.</p>	<p>All staff will be made aware of the provision to translate mail and e:mail from and into Gaelic.</p> <p>Where appropriate, Gaelic translations will be included in external email and mail correspondence.</p>	Customer Services Manager & HR (equality)	December 2019
Forms (including complaints procedure and handling of complaints)	The Council does not currently have any forms in Gaelic	<p>The Council's Translation and Interpretation services include provision of Gaelic.</p> <p>The Council's website includes an accessibility and translation facility that includes Gaelic. All forms and documents on the Council's website, such as the Council's complaints procedure, can be translated into languages other than English, including Gaelic.</p> <p>Forms or complaints submitted</p>	All staff will be made aware of the website facility that allows all on-line forms to be translated into languages other than English, including Gaelic.	Customer Services Manager/Project and Systems Manager	December 2019 ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		<p>in languages other than English, including Gaelic, will be dealt with appropriately and if required in the relevant language.</p> <p>The council will provide a commitment to actively publicise the council's Gaelic services, such as translation, to the public and stakeholders.</p>			
Communications Guidelines	The Council does not currently have reference to or guidance on the use of Gaelic within its communications guidelines (West Lothian Way)	The Council's communications guidelines, "The West Lothian Way", will be updated to inform staff on how to respond to communications via mail and email in Gaelic.	Guidance will be in place on the council's Gaelic Language Plan and requirement to consider Gaelic in all communications with customers, where appropriate	Corporate Communications Manager	December 2019 ongoing
Website	The council does not currently have any website information aimed at a Gaelic audience	The council will develop a specific web page, with Gaelic content, setting out information relating to the council's Gaelic Language Plan	Provide Gaelic speaking customers with information without the need to translate the content	Corporate Communications Manager	December 2019 ongoing

2.4 Publications

West Lothian Council is committed to increasing the use of Gaelic in these areas where the subject matter is of most interest to the general public or relates specifically to Gaelic issues.

The use of Gaelic in a range of printed material can assist Gaelic development in a variety of ways. It helps increase the visibility of the language, it enhances Gaelic's status by being used in high profile publications and it can help develop new and enhance existing terminology. The use of Gaelic in the media helps demonstrate a public authority's commitment to making important information available through the medium of Gaelic, as well as enhancing the visibility and status of the language. As more people access information about public authorities through their websites, making provision for the use of Gaelic can significantly enhance the status and visibility of the language.

Summary of current practice

- West Lothian Council does not currently print material in Gaelic or issue any communications in Gaelic.
- West Lothian Council currently has no Gaelic content on its webpages and no reports relevant to Gaelic are published in the language.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Website	No content on the website is provided in Gaelic	Review the use of the translation facility. Ensure Gaelic function is fully operational via web translation Review word and PDF forms. Ensure that any documents and forms are available on the web as non PDFs thereby allowing them to be more easily	The council website has an accessibility and translation facility that enables the site and all documents on the site to be translated into Gaelic	Communications Manager	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		translated The council will provide a commitment to actively publicise the council's Gaelic services, such as translation services, to the public and stakeholders.			
Public Relations and Social Media	The Council does not currently have guidelines relating to the use of Gaelic in press releases and social media	Review the use of languages other than English, including Gaelic in press releases when requested. The Council's communications guidelines, "The West Lothian Way", will be updated accordingly.	All press releases will be provided in Gaelic when requested by news/media outlet. Guidelines will set out how the Council will use Gaelic in press releases relating to Gaelic subject matter	Communications Manager	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		<p>Social Media will be utilised to raise awareness of Gaelic activities.</p> <p>The council will promote the council's Gaelic Language Plan in the council's corporate publications (e.g. Bulletin)</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic activities (internal or external) will be promoted on council's Social Media channels and other available channels</p> <p>Promotion of the council's plan and responsibilities contained within the council's corporate newspaper and distributed to all homes</p>		
Printed material – Council documents and papers	<p>The Council does not have a policy relating to the use of Gaelic in printed material</p> <p>The Council's Translation and Interpretation</p>	<p>Ensure that guidelines are in place via the West Lothian Way to ensure that content is produced, as appropriate in Gaelic when appropriate to do so</p> <p>Materials that exist to reach a Gaelic audience will be produced in Gaelic online</p>	<p>Documents and printed material that are available on the Council's website can be translated using a new online facility</p> <p>Materials that exist to reach a Gaelic audience will be</p>	Customer Services Manager/Communications Manager/Education Services	December 2019 ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
	services includes provision of Gaelic	and print	produced in Gaelic online and print		
Printed material in libraries	There is over 40 Gaelic language library and reference books in libraries across schools and communities	The Library service will review its book purchasing policy and practice and source relevant books and printed resources in Gaelic to meet demand	Gaelic books and printed material will be available where there is demand	Customer Services Manager	December 2019 Ongoing
Public Exhibitions	The Council has not made any provision for Gaelic in any exhibitions it holds	The Museum and Library services will review their exhibitions policies and where relevant and where there is a demand will make provision for Gaelic in exhibitions	Where there is a demand, will make provision for Gaelic in exhibitions	Customer Services Manager	December 2019 Ongoing

2.5 Staffing

West Lothian Council recognises the importance of seeing Gaelic as an important job skill for some job roles. The council will identify all job roles where it is essential or desirable to learn Gaelic and enable those staff to develop their Gaelic skills.

Rationale

In order to deliver services through the medium of Gaelic, it is necessary to develop the requisite job skills and language skills of staff. The provision of language learning for staff helps promote adult Gaelic learning and promotes Gaelic as a useful skill in the workplace. The identification of jobs in which Gaelic is a designated skill will contribute greatly to the status of the language and to identifying it as a positive skill to acquire.

The use of Gaelic in advertising posts within the council also helps recognise that Gaelic should be used in public life and that Gaelic users have an important role to play within a public authority. Authorities should adopt and apply objective criteria to ensure appointments are made in each case on a fair and consistent basis, and reflect the identified skills needs of the post.

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
Recruitment	There are currently no jobs where speaking Gaelic is an occupational requirement.	If a job has an occupational requirement to speak Gaelic, the job advertisement will be in both English and Gaelic.	Bilingual advertisements for posts requiring Gaelic language will appear on myjobscotland and Gaelicteaching.com	HR	December 2019 Ongoing
Training	As there are currently no services provided through the	Employees will be made aware of the council's Gaelic Language Plan and will be provided with contact	The council's Gaelic Language Plan will be available on the intranet and staff will	HR	December 2019 Ongoing

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
	medium of Gaelic, there is no training provided for employees.	information should they wish to develop their own learning in Gaelic.	be directed to appropriate personal learning opportunities should they wish to pursue these		
Language Learning	As there are currently no services provided through the medium of Gaelic, there is no training provided for employees.	<p>Employees will be made aware of the council's Gaelic Language Plan and will be provided with contact information should they wish to develop their own learning in Gaelic.</p> <p>Should any staff member require to learn or improve their knowledge of Gaelic language to fulfil their work remit, then the council will consider language learning opportunities.</p> <p>2019 staff survey results suggested that there is a healthy interest amongst staff to learn Gaelic. As included as part of future Employee skills audits/questionnaires, the council will seek to include</p>	The council's Gaelic Language Plan will be available on the intranet and staff will be directed to appropriate personal learning opportunities should they wish to pursue these. The council will consider language learning opportunities for staff where this is required to fulfil work remit.	HR	December 2020

Function	Current Position	Proposed Action	Proposed Outcome/ Indicator	Lead Service/ Officer	Timescale
		questions relating to staff' Gaelic skills			
Policy development	Gaelic is not currently included as part of the council's Integrated Impact Assessment Process	The Council's Integrated Impact Assessment process will include screening questions relating to Gaelic and signposting those who are developing relevant new policies to the council's Gaelic Language Plan and the National Plan for Gaelic to ensure that policies are developed in line with these policies.	Ensure council policies are considered and in line with Gaelic Language Plan and national policies	HR	December 2019 ongoing

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Timetable

This Gaelic Language Plan will formally remain in force for a period of 5 years from this date or until a new plan has been put in place.

The plan will be publicised on the council's website and intranet so that employees can be made aware of the councils' duties under The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and what actions the council intends to take.

Publicising the Plan

West Lothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan will be published bilingually on its website. In addition, we shall:

- issue a press release announcing the plan
- make copies of the plan available in our public offices and reception areas
- make the plan known to employees via our Intranet
- distribute copies of the Plan to Gaelic organisations
- make copies available on request.

Administrative Arrangements for Implementing the National Gaelic Language Plan

This plan is the policy of West Lothian Council and has been endorsed both by our senior management team and Council members.

Overall Responsibility:

TBC - The Chief Executive and elected members will be responsible for ensuring that the Council delivers on the commitments set out in this plan.

Individual Staff members:

All employees will be provided with information on the content of the plan via the council intranet and developments will be notified via internal email and departmental meetings.

Services delivered by third parties:

All third party organisations which deliver services on behalf of the Council will be advised of the commitments within the Gaelic Language Plan.

Informing other organisations of the Plan

Partner organisations will be advised of the Council's commitments within this Gaelic Language Plan through the Community Planning Partnership.

Resourcing the Plan

West Lothian Council will resource the activities outlined through the budgets of responsible services.

Monitoring the Implementation of the Plan

Progress towards the delivery of the plan will be reported annually to the Policy and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel annually. These progress reports will then be submitted to Bòrd Na Gaidhlig.

Contact details

The senior officer with operational responsibility for overseeing preparation, delivery and monitoring of West Lothian Council's Gaelic Language Plan is:

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Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

Feedback provided specific to the content of the plan	Officer recommendation/feedback
<p>One glaring opportunity to meet the proposals under the banner of, "Gaelic in Tourism, Heritage and Recreation", would surely be to encourage and support the setting up of, and participation in, a local West Lothian Mod. Healthy competition could be engendered through schools/community groups/individuals participating in a variety of disciplines embracing the Gaelic language, music and traditions.</p> <p>Connections could be made then to similar groups further afield by visiting /competing at other local mods around the country and indeed at the Royal National Mod, held annually, where people come together from all over to celebrate and use the language and to promote its growth.</p> <p>Instead all that seems to have been considered are opportunities within sport!</p> <p>There are also people whose ancestors emigrated years ago, who have kept the language and Gaelic culture alive in their new homelands and who come to this country as tourists to try to trace their families' origins, who would appreciate being able to make connections to names and places written in the original language.</p> <p>I know of people who have contacted various council departments asking about the availability of Gaelic language classes and resources and have been told categorically that there were none, which is perhaps not surprising when I see from your proposals that there is a belief within the council that no provision for adult learning currently exists, when in fact there are two groups which meet regularly within the Partnership Centre in Bathgate-one, a beginners' class on a Tuesday and the other a conversation group which meets on Saturdays and which has been in existence in Bathgate for many years.</p> <p>I realise for some people it may seem like a waste of time/money to promote the growth of a language which some consider has outlived its usefulness, but there are others of us who would consider that Gaelic is the language</p>	<p>This is something that is not considered necessary to include in the plan at this stage on the basis of the commitment given in other areas of the plan. However it will be considered in future years should it be considered beneficial. The plan does include a commitment to explore opportunities for learner involvement in Gaelic cultural experiences.</p>

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

<p>which should have been ours from birth, but was kept from us because of the system of unfair punishments, meted out to our parents' generation in educational establishments, in Gaelic-speaking areas, which made our grandparents keep the language to themselves, to protect their children who were considered, erroneously, to be of lower intelligence purely because of the language they spoke.</p> <p>Many of us who were raised as Gaels, without the language, had to leave home to access a secondary education before going on to further education in the cities, as there were very limited employment opportunities where we began, and have been trying, as adults, to regain the language which effectively was stolen from us.</p> <p>I would also take issue with the belief stated that the council provides, ".....Gaelic groups access to meeting accommodation, free of charge", when I am given to believe that this is not the case currently.</p> <p>This in itself would be a great support, as would assistance with the training of suitable educators to pass on the language via a carefully thought-out and progressive course of study which would see learners be able to move through different levels systematically.</p> <p>While I understand that there will be some whose preferred method of learning Gaelic may be via digital platforms, could I ask that every consideration should be given to providing opportunities for people to come together to use the language, since it can really be best appreciated by interacting with others where the vibrancy and richness are best experienced?</p>	<p>This has been clarified in the plan (page 20). The council will continue to offer Gaelic groups access to council controlled meeting accommodation free of charge, where this is possible. The council will continue to work with Gaelic groups and Management Committees to provide alternative accommodation, where required.</p>
<p>I understand that there is now a Gaelic class up and running for adult learners and those interested in the language. West Lothian in general and Bathgate in particular has a long history in supporting highland culture viz Bathgate Highland Games, Boghall and Bathgate Pipe band. in recent years Gaelic as a language has come more to the fore, perhaps as Scotland as a nation has become more confident and self aware. Gaelic language is now being taught in schools in several areas of the country and perhaps it may not be too long before it is taught in West Lothian. There are many families in West Lothian who may not be Gaelic speaking themselves but whose</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning groups will be promoted via council platforms</p>

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

<p>parents and grandparents were native speakers and who consequently maintain a strong connection with the culture. The Gaelic circle which runs in Bathgate is well attended and I note that as well as encouraging Gaelic, for older participants it is a stimulating social activity which helps to avoid isolation.</p>	
<p>Gaelic in Adult Learning (page 19). Working with Partners (page20) A Beginner evening Class has been set up by the voluntary group An Cearcall Gàidhlig Bathgate (The Bathgate Gaelic Circle) with the help of a successful grant application through the National Lottery Community Fund. The class is held in Bathgate partnership centre and started 24 Sep 2019. It will run for 20 weeks and end in March 2020. There are 14 students on the register. The class was booked up very quickly and although we withdrew advertising, we ended up with a waiting list of 12 people. We hope that a similar class will run next session, (starting Sep 2020) but this will depend on funding. We would like this to be addressed urgently by Adult Learning (Education Services).</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning groups will be promoted via council platforms.</p> <p>The plan will determine demand for adult learning community classes and offer as part of the community schools programme</p>
<p>We in An Cearcall Gàidhlig (The Gaelic Circle) would be pleased to help in any way we can. Our remit is I suppose, Adult Learners. We are a voluntary group and meet every Saturday morning in the Partnership Centre to offer those who have learned some Gaelic an opportunity to develop their conversation and reading skills. Many absolute beginners have come to us expecting a class to teach from scratch but we do not have the resources to do this. They go away disappointed. We felt sad that West Lothian had nothing to offer them. What we have done this year is to establish a Gaelic Beginners evening class of twenty weekly lessons (Started 24 Sep). We were successful in our application to the National Lottery Community Fund for help in this. (We also applied to the West Lothian Development Fund, but cancelled this application when the successful National Lottery funding was announced.) We rent a room in the Partnership Centre and pay for the services of a professional tutor. The class has 14 students (max that tutor can handle), with a waiting list of about the same number. We hope that such a class can continue to be offered next session, but this</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning groups will be promoted via council platforms</p>

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

will be dependent on funding.	
I see in the report that school children are made aware of gaelic, there are books in the library and as signs come up for renewal then gaelic will be added. This is enough.	No response necessary
West Lothian Council is a council that always leads the way for other councils to follow, and to set up a platform for Gaelic to be accessible to everyone would be amazing. I for one would use any service provided by the council.	No response necessary
Please provide free Gaelic lessons for everyone	This is not considered necessary
I'm not sure that it's necessary to have all the signs or police cars duplicated in Gaelic , but learning, or having a knowledge of Gaelic, can be beneficial.	No response necessary
<p>I think a valuable area to investigate could be parent/carers and child classes, enabling families to learn together.</p> <p>Further provision for adult education classes would be greatly welcomed, at least with people I know.</p> <p>The addition of location signage in Gaelic that is more common on the West coast would be encouraging, but expanding that to more everyday signs in other public places may prove beneficial to expanding peoples' knowledge base (e.g. not simply translating town names, but things like 'train station', or 'bathroom', etc.)</p> <p>Related; the language website and app 'Duolingo' is aiming to begin a Scottish Gaelic course next summer, and using that as a tool to kickstart adult learning, perhaps with community meetings to practice what has been learned verbally with other speakers, may be an easy way to fulfill some of these objectives. While it would be beneficial to hire someone who is fluent in Gaelic to facilitate courses, I am aware that finding the right person for the job is not always easy, and having tools like this could enable community educators who aren't fluent but have transferable skills in facilitating groups (potentially ESOL workers?), and they could learn alongside the others taking the class.</p>	<p>This is included within the plan</p> <p>The plan will determine demand for adult learning community classes and offer as part of the community schools programme</p>
Would be great if Gaelic was learned in primary schools as opposed or in addition to foreign languages.	This is considered in the plan

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

<p>As a member of the local group An Cearcall Gàidhlig I can say that most of the Gaelic language plan is forward thinking and well thought out. However I had particular interest in the point made on page 21 regarding the provision of meeting places free of charge. The statement reads " The council will continue to offer Gaelic groups access to meeting accommodation free of charge" . I have been a member of An Cearcall Gàidhlig for over 15 years and to the best of my knowledge, the accommodation has never been free of charge. An Cearcall Gàidhlig is an affiliated group and pays an annual rent to West Lothian Council.</p> <p>Page 22 states that there is currently no Gaelic adult learning provision in West Lothian. An Cearcall Gàidhlig currently offers beginners level Gaelic. Most of the funding is from the National lottery community fund with a token gesture amount from the councillors disbursement fund. While this demonstrates that there is a demand for Gaelic adult education in West Lothian, in my view it has reduced a part of the national heritage to charitable status. Every year Bathgate hosts the Highland games with almost no mention of the language or the culture from which these events originated.</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning groups will be promoted via council platforms</p>
<p>I hope West Lothian Council also consider running Gaelic evening classes to encourage parents of the children to also learn the language.</p> <p>Well done West Lothian Council.</p>	<p>Adult learning is considered in the plan</p> <p>The plan will determine demand for adult learning community classes and offer as part of the community schools programme</p>
<p>I think the Gaidhlig language plan is brilliant, and great to see happening in West Lothian. One major concern would be is money... it is going to require a substantial amount of money to be placed into getting much of this plan off the ground with experienced staff being employed by the council, as that is what will be required in order to show that West Lothian Council is really committed to this, and ready to really make it happen. It really cannot be done on the cheap, or expect it to be done on the cheap. People will drive it forward - it will take money, commitment and drive to place forward together. Fear is in the current climate with budgets being slashed for everything in Education, this will not be well received by a lot of everyday people. With the proper drive and positive push to put across how important this is as part of our Scottish heritage, culture and the future of the language, I certainly hope</p>	<p>No response necessary</p>

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

it happens and will be great for the young people of West Lothian and also adults who involve themselves in anything that is planned.	
This is an excellent plan and I look forward to seeing and hearing Gaelic being used more frequently in West Lothian. Good luck!	No response necessary
Good points for action. Please consider telling people about the collection of Gaelic books in WL Libraries. The signage plan is great. Talk about available resources - we don't know enough about what is out there to support and develop Gaelic speaking in West Lothian and online.	Promotion of Gaelic learning will be carried out via council platforms
<p>I think there is a huge barrier for parents in West Lothian to be able to enrol their children into GME education. WLC provide financial contribution towards children's costs to the GME school in Edinburgh which is fair. However say both parents work full time - how can they be expected to take their children all the way through to Leith and back to West Lothian in time to start work in the morning, especially with the horrendous traffic? That is a big barrier for parents choosing to enrol their children and I would be interested what solution the council would think to be appropriate for this. It's all fair giving the child money to pay for public transport but is it safe to put a 5 year old on a train/bus by themselves to get to school?</p> <p>As a teacher I would like to see more emphasis on incorporating Gaelic into the schools via the 1+2 languages scheme. Currently I don't see any of this.</p>	The plan sets out plans to establish a Gaelic steering group for education. This includes support for schools with planning and development of GLE through provision of learning and teaching resources Develop GLE opportunities as part of the 1+2 Languages approach.
As the draft mentioned there are no adult Gaelic learning classes In West Lothian this is obviously something to address and one of the main problems that I had was having no one to converse with to hold on to what I had learned!	Promotion of Gaelic learning will be carried out via council platforms
I welcome this but would like to see a commitment to opening a Gaelic-medium unit in West Lothian so that children don't have to travel into Edinburgh.	This is not considered necessary however the plan sets out plans to establish a Gaelic steering group for education.
<p>I think the implementation of GLE is a good idea, I also think awareness of Gaelic should be enhanced through the arts e.g. screenings of Gaelic films, Gaelic bookbugs, and so on.</p> <p>I think it will be challenging to find qualified Gaelic speakers to run such events, so the use of e-learning is ideal.</p>	This is considered within the plan

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

<p>Affording this opportunity in whatever form, will open up so many opportunities for people who are unable to learn Gaelic on their own due a whole host of reasons (cost, transportation, etc.).</p> <p>This is a fantastic opportunity to increase the Gaelic speakers in West Lothian and help children understand why Gaelic is important to their futures and help their parents to understand this, too (because it is their parents that are the ones who are protesting this).</p> <p>Maybe if the council is able to put forth reasons as to why it is important to learn another language additionally to English, it will help the population to support this? There are a number of scientific studies that have been done, that demonstrate this. Speaking to the Gaelic Department at The University of Glasgow can also help put this into perspective (speak to Sheila Kidd, Síam Innes, Geraldine Parsons, or Thomas Clancy) - they will be able to put forth interesting points about the benefits of Gaelic and the opportunities that learning Gaelic can afford to people.</p> <p>Maybe work alongside nurseries, the Scottish Book Trust, Bookbugs (etc) to increase Gaelic in schools from a young age, too?</p>	
<p>Currently 1 class running in bathgate for adult beginners. Such a high demand for this class and it was free.</p> <p>More classes could be offered on other evenings to allow more adult learning.</p>	<p>The plan will determine demand for adult learning community classes and offer as part of the community schools programme</p>
<p>Are there/ will there be classes available in West Lothian to learn Gaelic, I think this is an excellent idea.</p>	

Appendix 2 – selection of feedback from public consultation relating to plan content

<p>I have been working with Armadale & Blackridge Management Committee to set up a music charity (Tutti Music). We are still in the early stages and are in the middle of applying for lottery funding. We have been given lets in kind from both Armadale & Blackridge Management Committees and have been donated £1000 from the Armadale management Committee to start classes while we apply for further funding. The project aims to offer local people the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and to encourage participation in the community through music. Community members will be afforded the chance to loan an instrument for leisure at home and given access to affordable tuition. The Tutti Music idea was inspired by Feis Bharraigh. A key Aim of Tutti Music is to promote inclusion and social cohesion within the community.</p> <p>We could work together to promote Gaelic through Music.</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning will be carried out via council platforms</p>
<p>I would hope that the cost involved in implementing this plan is proportionate to the number of Gaelic speaking residents and the number of individuals and families who have indicated a desire for the plan to be implemented. Otherwise it becomes a cost which is imposed on the majority of council tax payers.</p>	<p>No response necessary</p>
<p>Could be a great idea. Free Gaelic lessons for kids and adults should be first though. I would love to learn Gaelic and its something I've been dabbling in recently.</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning will be carried out via council platforms</p>
<p>I think this is a brilliant idea. It is our national language at the end of the day and I feel schools should also offer this. I personally would like to learn it also but the classes would have to be affordable.</p>	<p>Promotion of Gaelic learning will be carried out via council platforms</p>



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

CONSTRUCTION CHARTER

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to the Partnership and Resource Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel a draft Construction Charter for West Lothian Council.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes and provides comment on the content of the draft Construction Charter for West Lothian Council which is intended to be submitted to the Council Executive.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I	Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources.
II	Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	None
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	None
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	None
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None
VII	Consideration at PDSP	It is proposed to present the draft Construction Charter to Council Executive on 17 December 2019.

VIII Other consultations

Teaching and non teaching Unions; Heads of Service.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

The development of Construction Charters is a Unite initiative across the UK aimed at Local Authorities to encourage minimum standards, conditions and expectations for companies who tender for their construction contracts. Local Authorities are considering the implementing Charters independently, but in partnership with trade unions, when approached.

Some Local Authorities in Scotland, such as North Lanarkshire Council, City of Edinburgh Council and North Ayrshire, have already published charters. They don't all use the Unite wording but have been agreed wording in consultation with the Trade Union, to ensure that they don't say anything in breach of regulations or that the council could not enforce or implement.

Unite has now approached the Council with a view to the development of a West Lothian Council Construction Charter. They have provided a standard template with their preferred form of wording, which is attached at Appendix 1. This document proposes some principles that are already embedded in West Lothian Councils Corporate Procurement Strategy, through the Sustainable Procurement Duty, and are adopted into the contract tender documentation. For example, Fair Work Practices, Living Wage, Apprenticeships, Local Employment, Local SMEs, Trade Union Recognition and Community Benefits.

Having reviewed the terms of the Unite template, and the Charters which have been agreed with other Local Authorities, a draft Construction Charter for West Lothian Council has been developed and is attached at Appendix 2. It includes principles similar to those adopted by other local authorities and has been updated to include feedback from consultation that has already taken place with Service Areas.

It should be noted that the principles of the charter will only be enforceable to the extent permitted by law.

The Timescales proposed for implementation of a West Lothian Council Construction Charter are set out in table 1 below:

It is proposed to present the draft West Lothian Council Construction Charter to the Council Executive for approval.

E. CONCLUSION

The development of the West Lothian Council Construction Charter would reinforce the fair working practices which the Council is already adopting in its contract tender documentation.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

None

Appendices/Attachments: Two

Appendix 1 – Unite Construction Charter

Appendix 2- West Lothian Construction Charter

Contact Person: Angela Gray, Procurement Manager

Email: angela.gray@westlothian.gov.uk

Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Date of meeting: 6 December 2019

CONSTRUCTION CHARTER

As a Local Authority we are responsible for the procurement of a multitude of construction projects. It is therefore appropriate that we as a responsible client enter into this agreement and commit to working with the appropriate trade unions, in order to achieve the highest standards in respect of; direct employment status, health & Safety, standard of work, apprenticeship training and the implementation of appropriate nationally agreed terms and conditions of employment. The following shall be a requirement for all contractors and their supply chain engaged by this Authority: -

1. All parties recognise that the highest level of compliance with current HMRC regulations must be achieved where public funds are utilised. It is therefore a contractual requirement that all operatives are directly employed on a PAYE basis under a contract of employment. Furthermore the use of intermediary pay roll company will be prohibited on all contracts.
2. Health and Safety of workers on all of our construction projects is paramount. It is therefore a requirement that all contractors rigorously implement and adhere to our minimum standards for health and safety, as set out in our procurement documents. In addition we require all contractors to provide quality welfare facilities fit for purpose in accordance with the Construction Design and Management Regulation of 2015.
3. It is a recognised fact that the presence of trade union safety representatives significantly improves safety in the workplace. Contractors and their supply chain are required to work collaboratively with the appropriate trade unions to identify and implement reasonable real-world initiatives.
4. The Authority requires all projects to be completed to the highest standard, so as to meet the aspirations of the residents of this Authority. In order to achieve this it is recognised that it is necessary that all workers are competent and have the appropriate level of skill to carry out the work they are employed to do. To assist in the achievement of this goal the Authority's contractors and their supply chain will ensure they retain documented evidence that all workers are competent to carry out the work they have been employed to do. They will ensure that such evidence is retained in a way as to allow the Authority or its nominee's to audit the documentation. Possession of the recognised industry skills / grade card such as JIB or CSCS will be considered acceptable evidence
5. The Authority is mindful of the industry skills shortage and the need to address this through appropriate apprenticeships, including adult training in up skilling. The Authority's contractors and supply chain will in consultation with the Authority and other interested parties develop and implement a programme that addresses the skills shortage and provides training opportunities to local residents.

6. The Authority recognises the right of all construction workers to be employed under and to be protected by the appropriate national industry collective agreement. The Authority requires full compliance with all appropriate national agreements applicable to the construction industry.
7. All contractors and their supply chain will accept the right of any trade union that is a signatory to an appropriate national agreement, to appoint shop stewards, workplace health & safety representatives and Union Learning Reps. All trade union accredited representatives will be granted appropriate time and facilities to carry out their responsibilities.
8. The Authority, its contractors and their supply chain are committed to a fair and transparent recruitment policy. All contractors and their supply chain will actively ensure that the engagement of labour is based on the individual's ability to meet the needs of the project and the specific tasks for which they are recruited to undertake.
9. The Authority its contractors and their supply chain agree it's not acceptable for anyone to use or make reference to any form of blacklist.
10. The Authority recognises the benefit trade unions bring to the workplace and the rights of workers to hear from trade union representative. The Authority's contractors and their supply chain are required to allow access to nominated trade union officer from trade unions that are signatories to the appropriate national agreements. Access shall mean access to welfare facilities during working times so as to allow them to consult with their members and potential members.
11. All relevant construction contracts will be required to comply with the Sustainable Buying Standard for Highways and Construction Materials, which requires structural steel and other relevant materials to be covered by BES 6001 Responsible Sourcing of Construction Product certification, or equivalent.
12. The Scottish Future Trust's Non Profit Distributing (NPD) programme alternatively known as HUBCO's was developed to deliver infrastructure projects for the Scottish Government. As such, they must include proper local community benefits, in particular local jobs and apprenticeships and help local SME's develop the capacity to take on those infrastructural projects. The Scottish Government should work with Local Authority to produce strong and clear guidelines on Community Benefit Clauses for externally awarded contracts through HUBCOs and that those contracts uphold the working practices contained herein. Employment and skills.

Local Authority Chief Officer

UNITE the UNION

Name:

Name:

Signature:

Signature:

Date of signing:

Date of signing:

WEST LOTHIAN COUNCIL - CONSTRUCTION CHARTER

As a Local Authority we directly procure a wide range of construction projects. We promote and support the positive workforce practices set out in this charter on all construction projects which we procure.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety of all workers on our construction projects is paramount. We expect all contractors and sub-contractors to ensure that:

- Health and safety regulations and standards are rigorously implemented and adhered to. This includes safe systems of work to protect the public and construction workers alike, continuous safety improvements and ensure that behaviours are managed to drive a safety performance culture;
- Welfare facilities for construction workers are appropriate for the 21st century, including reasonable standards for toilets, amenities and drying facilities in accordance with the Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015.

Employment Standards

We require the highest standards of project delivery in order to ensure that the aspirations of the people of West Lothian are met and the projects serve our communities well in the years to come. Mindful of the construction industry skills shortages, we expect the industry to train the next generation of skilled workers for the future by:

- Carrying out appropriate checks, and retaining documentary evidence for audit purposes, so as to be able to demonstrate the skill level of their employees on any construction projects if required to do so;
- Complying with the employment and skills requirements set out in our tender documents;
- Engaging with hard to reach and under-represented groups through provision of employment, training and skills initiatives;
- Working with us to support initiatives aimed at promoting and improving opportunities in education and training of employers and employees engaged on all construction projects within our authority;
- Ensuring fair and transparent recruitment practice.

Employment Rights

This Council is a Living Wage employer and encourages all construction companies working on its contracts to adhere to that policy and to register with the Scottish Living Wage Accreditation Initiative.

This Council encourages direct employment by contractors and sub-contractors on a PAYE Class 1 National Insurance basis.

We expect that employees and workers have access to:

- Paid Holidays;
- Statutory Sick Pay;
- Auto-enrolment in a pension scheme.

We encourage contractors and sub-contractors to provide employees and workers with access to:

- A sickness benefit scheme;
- Accident Compensation;
- Death in service benefits.

Responsible Sourcing

This Council supports responsible sourcing to benefit society and the economy, while minimising damage to the environment. [Government Buying Standards \(GBS\)](#) are part of public procurement policy, with individual standards developed with input from across government, industry and wider stakeholders. The standards have been extensively reviewed with market research and analysis to establish criteria that take long-term cost effectiveness and market capacity into account.

Many of these buying standards will be embedded in our tender process through use of the [European Single Procurement Document Scotland \(ESPDS\)](#) and we encourage all contractors to source responsibly to support our aims.

Community Benefits

This Council considers [community benefits](#) for all regulated procurements to support in delivering our sustainable procurement duty. Community benefits can contribute to a range of national and local outcomes relating to employability, skills and tackling inequalities by focusing on under-represented groups. Many of our tender processes will include community benefits and we encourage contractors to consider how they can embed community benefits into their organisation.

Trade Unions

As an employer, West Lothian Councils policies fully support Trade Unions duties and activities. We believe that Trade Unions can play an important role in creating a safe and productive worksite and developing good industrial relations. We therefore encourage our contractors and sub-contractors, within the context of the contract let, to:

- Employ workers under recognised industry collective agreements;
- Promote the benefits of belonging to a recognised Trade Union;
- Recognise the role that on-site Shop Stewards can play in achieving and promoting good industrial relations;
- Invite Trade Unions to have input into the development of Health and Safety policy;
- Encourage the election of Health and Safety Representatives and support their role in helping to ensure a safe site;
- Provide equality of opportunity for all.

West Lothian Council looks forward to working with contractors to help support the aims set out in this Charter.

PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2019 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2019)

REPORT BY HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report on sickness absence rates during the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 and to provide an update on the ongoing application of the council's Policy & Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work.

B. RECOMMENDATION

That the Panel notes the content of the report.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	<p>Focusing on our customers' needs</p> <p>Being honest, open and accountable</p> <p>Providing equality of opportunities</p> <p>Developing employees</p> <p>Making best use of our resources</p> <p>Working in partnership</p>
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 2019/20 at the start of the first quarter of the year was lower than it has been in any of the last 3 years.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	National Outcome 15: Our Public Services are high quality, continually improving and responsive to local people's needs. Reduced sickness absence levels increase the efficiency and productivity of the council.
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	Sickness absence is managed within service budgets.

VII Consideration at PDSP	None
VIII Other consultations	Regular meetings take place with the trade unions on an ongoing basis to monitor the application of the policy.

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 period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019.

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 2019 to 30 September 2019 (2019/20) is set out at **Appendix 1** of this report together with the SPI performance indicators for the full years (2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19).

The SPI for September 2019 is 5.12% which compares with an SPI figure of 4.99% for September 2018. A total of 4,524 employees were absent from work for one or more days 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 2019 to 30 September 2019 is set out at **Appendix 2**.

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

Corporate Services (3.41%), Education Services (2.94%), and Planning & Economic Development (2.78%) are reporting below the Council target of 3.6%

Long –Term Absence (1 April 2019 – 30 September 2019)

Of the days lost due to sickness absence during this period, a significant proportion of those absences are attributable to long term absence which is defined in the policy as a period of continuous absence *‘in excess of 4 weeks.’*

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

- Of the total number of 2,176 days lost in CE Support, Finance and Property Services, 1,419 (65.21%) of those days were due to long-term absence and were accounted for by 51 employees.

- Of the total number of 13,686 days lost in Housing, Customer & Building Services, 11,011 (80.45%) were due to long-term absence and were accounted for by 263 employees.
- Of the total number of 26,378 days lost in Operational Services, 22,093 (83.76%) were due to long-term absence and were accounted for by 457 employees.
- Of the total number of 20,591 days lost in Social Policy 16,887 (82.01%) were due to long-term absence and were accounted by 362 employees.

The average percentage days lost due to long-term absence across the four services was 82.29%. The average percentage of sick days lost due to long-term absence across the council as a whole was 77.96%. The average length of long-term absence during the period was 62 days with the longest absence lasting 261 days.

Analysis of Categories of Absence (1 April 2019 – 30 September 2019)

Top four reported reasons for all absences, split by long term are as follows:

Level 1 Reasons	Days	Long Term %	All Absence%
Mental & Behavioural	29,621	35.21%	31.46%
Musculoskeletal	13,420	15.32%	14.25%
Surgery	8,642	10.27%	9.18%
Accidents, Injuries, Poisoning	8,768	10.06%	9.31%

Mental & Behavioural Level 2 Category

The main category for absences is Mental and Behavioural. A breakdown of all mental and behavioural absences recorded is set out below:

Mental & Behavioural	Days	Long Term %	All M&B Absences%
Stress	17,098	49.77%	57.72%
Anxiety	5,017	14.50%	16.94%
Depression	4,893	15.58%	16.52%
Not specified	1,588	4.66%	5.36%
Other psychiatric illness	566	1.66%	1.91%
Eating Disorder	137	0.30%	0.46%
Bipolar disorder	115	0.29%	0.39%
Insomnia	90	0.19%	0.30%
Self-harm	48	0.16%	0.16%
OCD	24	0.08%	0.08%
Behavioural disorder	23	0.08%	0.08%
Panic attacks	12	0.00%	0.04%
Alcoholism	10	0.00%	0.03%
Total	29,621	87.27%	100.00%

Given that 'Mental and behavioural' absences account for 31.46% of all absences and that there has been a 3% increase in that type of absence since September 2018, increased promotion of EAP services and other mental health supportive measures will be prioritised. In this regard, a wellbeing programme for education and awareness for all staff is currently being progressed with this objective in mind through the HR Programme Board.

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 30 September 2019, compared to the previously reported positions.

Table 1

	Counselling/ Informal Review Meeting	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Total at 30 September 2019	624	405	262	1291
Total at 30 September 2018	346	438	293	1077
Total at 30 September 2017	590	515	225	1330

A breakdown of live cases as at 30 September 2019 is set out in Table 2.

Table 2

	Counselling/ Informal Review Meeting	Stage 1	Stage 2	Total
Cases on going from 30 June 2019	440	353	242	1035
New cases since 30 June 2019	184	52	20	256
Total	624	405	262	1291

ii) Other Support Initiatives

HR Adviser Input – Management Meetings

During Quarter 2 (2019/20), the following functional areas were targeted for input and support from Human Resources Advisers;

Education (Teaching)
Education (Non –Teaching)
Care Homes
Facilities Management
Waste Services
NETS, Lands & Countryside
Roads & Transportation
Building Services

Out of the areas above, three (Education –Teaching, Education Non - Teaching and Care Homes) reported reductions in sickness absence levels as well as improved rates from the same period in 2018/19

Within the level of advisory resource available, Human Resources continue to provide as much ongoing support as possible to a number of Service Managers across those functional areas to develop action plans to address some of the issues and to help line managers manage staff absences in line with policy.

The expectation is that the impact of this support will be reflected in an improved SPI position going forward.

Employee Assistance Programme

Since 1 November 2018, a telephone based counselling service (Help EAP) has been in operation. Statistics from Quarter 2 (2019/20) show that 108 calls were handled resulting in 46 employees receiving mental health assessment and one individual being signposted to GP/NHS. Eleven employees were referred on for structured telephone counselling sessions with another sixteen being referred on for 'face to face' counselling. One user was referred for computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT).

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.

D.4 SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE AT WORK (1 September 2018 – 31 September 2019)

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

Since the introduction of the revised policy, managers have consulted Human Resources on 442 occasions, in regard to proposals to suspend application of the corporate trigger level for a limited period to take account of extenuating circumstances in individual cases (this includes extending periods of absence to which discretion has already been applied). Of those 442 requests, 408 (92.31%) have resulted in discretion being applied.

A breakdown of the general categories in respect of which requests for discretion have been considered are as follows:

Main Category	Discretion Applied	Discretion Not Applied
Assault	5	0
Bereavement	87	0
Carer Responsibilities	6	0
Industrial Injury	17	1
Medical Treatment	77	16
Personal Difficulties	13	12
Surgery	196	2
Trauma	7	3
Total	408	34

The policy provides for management decisions not to apply discretion to be reviewed by a more senior manager if requested by the employee concerned. The fact that no such requests have been made to date would infer that individuals largely feel that application of the policy is being applied in a fair and suitably compassionate manner.

E. CONCLUSION

As indicated earlier in this report, SPI sickness absence rates are lower than they were for the corresponding period in 2018/19. However it was determined by the Council Executive when approving the new policy on 26 June 2018 for implementation on 1 September 2019 that its impact on overall absence levels would be reviewed after 12 months. This review is currently being concluded and the outcome will be reported to the Panel in the early New Year based on an in depth analysis of performance across all council services.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

- Policy & Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work

Appendices/Attachments: 2

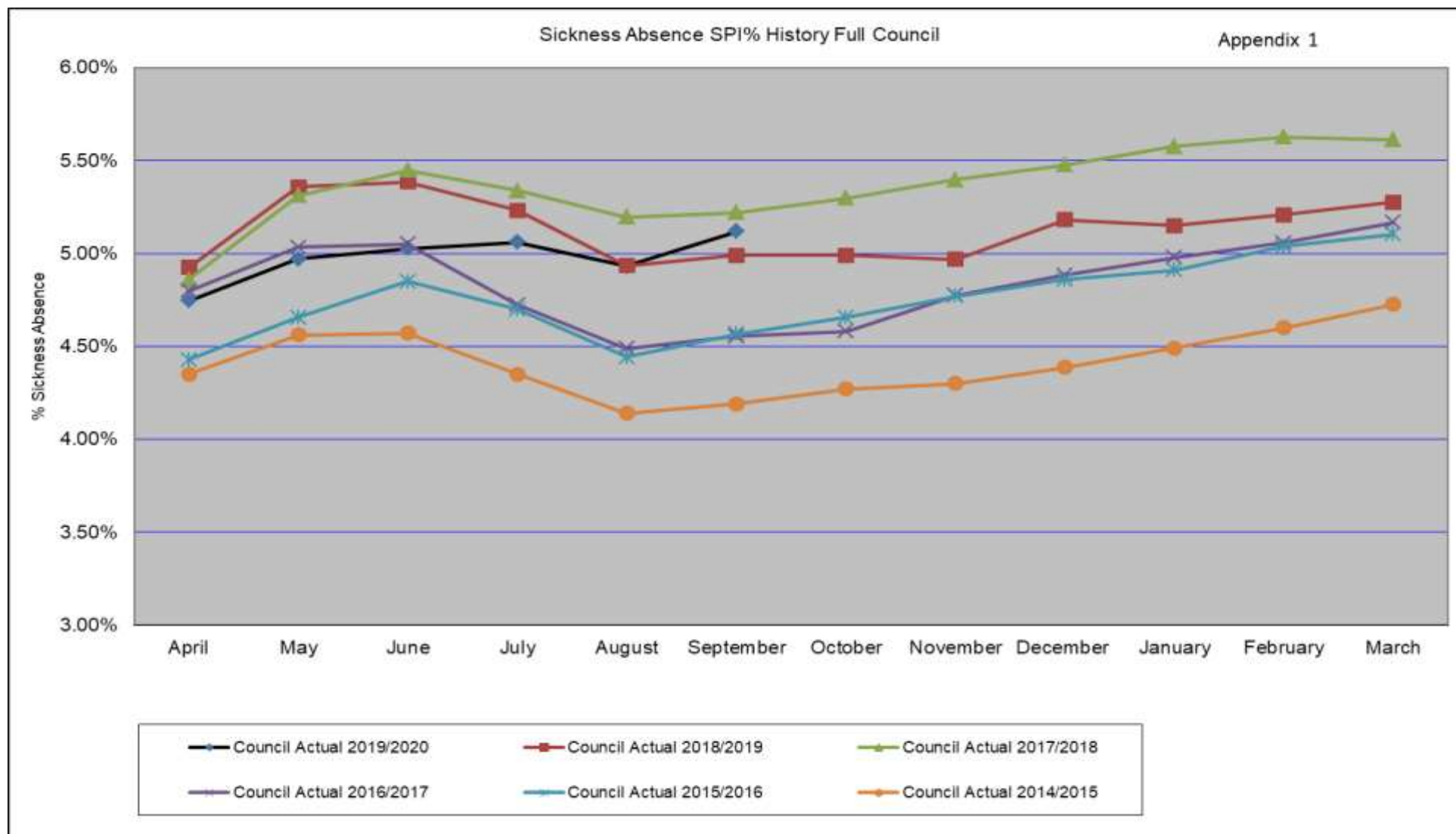
1. Sickness Absence SPI% History – Full Council
2. Sickness Absence SPI% all services – 2019/20

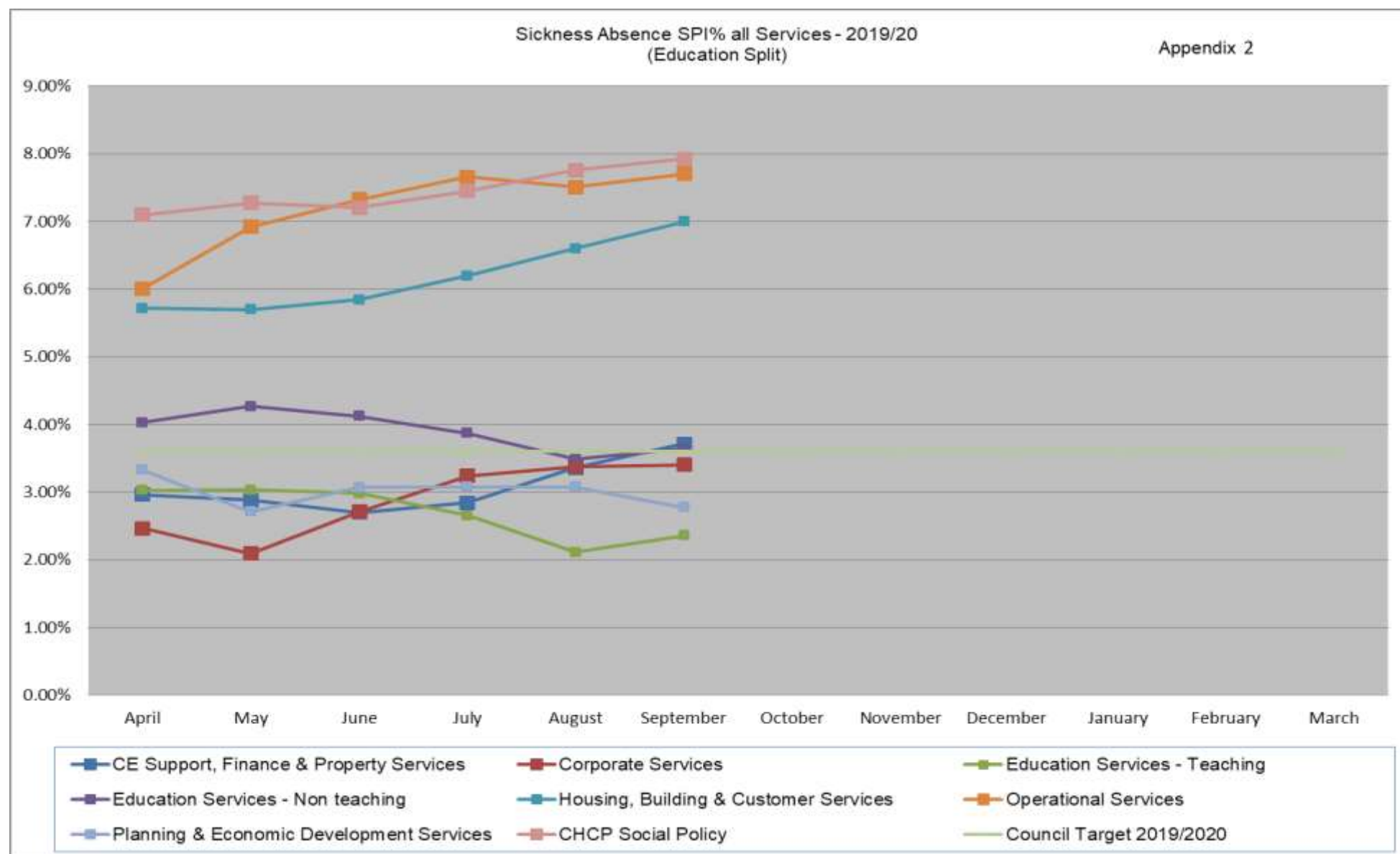
Contact Person: Fraser Mackenzie, HR Manager – Policy & Advice (01506 281422)

Julie Whitelaw

Head of Corporate Services

Date: 6 December 2019







PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

2019/20 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE – MONTH 6 MONITORING REPORT

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Panel with an update on the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources portfolio. .

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Notes the financial performance of the Partnership and Resources portfolio as at month 6;
2. Notes that the Partnership and Resources portfolio position at month 6 is part of the overall council budget position reported to Council Executive on 12 November 2019;
3. Notes any actions required to be taken by Heads of Service and budget holders to manage spend within available resources.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on customers' needs, being honest, open and accountable, making best use of resources, working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Section 95; Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, section 1-14.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	No implications at this stage.
IV Impact on performance and performance indicators	Effective budget management is an essential element of service performance. Additional financial reporting provides elected members with information to allow for proper scrutiny of performance of services.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The revenue budget provides resources necessary to help deliver the Single Outcome Agreement. Effective prioritisation of resources is essential to achieving key outcomes.
VI Resources – (Financial, Staffing and Property)	An underspend of £13,000 is the position for the Partnership and Resources portfolio revenue budget in 2019/20. There is net accelerated spend of £1.897 million on the capital programme for the portfolio area.

VII Consideration at PDSP

A financial performance report will be presented to the Panel twice yearly on an ongoing basis.

VIII Other Consultations

Depute Chief Executives, Head of Operational Services, Head of Corporate Services and Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services

D. TERMS OF REPORT**D.1 Introduction**

This report provides an update on the general fund revenue financial performance in respect of the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP) portfolio of services. The council's revenue budget is operationally managed at a Head of Service level, and the financial position included within this report formed part of the overall council position reported to Council Executive on 12 November 2019. This report also includes the position on the delivery of approved budget reduction measures relevant to the Partnership and Resources portfolio for 2019/20.

The budget monitoring process is undertaken in line with the council's budgetary control framework and procedures, which place particular focus on a risk based and pro-active approach to budget monitoring.

This report focuses on the financial performance of council services which further enhances the information presented to elected members to allow scrutiny of service and financial performance. The report contains reference to key performance measures for service areas which are contained within Service Management Plans and referenced in the 2017/18 Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data-set. LGBF data for 2018/19 will be collated by the Improvement Service and will be made available later in the financial year.

D.2 Financial Information for 2019/20 Month 6 Position

The table below summarises the position in relation to service expenditure for the portfolio area. As part of the monitoring exercise, a number of key risks and service pressures have been identified and these are noted in the narrative for the relevant service area.

Service	Budget £'000	Month 6 Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
GENERAL FUND REVENUE			
Chief Executive, Finance and Property Services			
Chief Executive and Elections	701	701	0
Revenues	2,523	2,473	(50)
Financial Management	2,060	2,005	(55)
Internal Audit & Risk	354	399	45
Anti-Poverty	3,741	3,741	0
Construction Services	0	0	0
Property Services	14,491	14,551	60
Total	23,870	23,870	0
Corporate Services			
Corporate Procurement	358	402	44
Information Technology	4,259	4,134	(125)
Performance & Improvement	812	824	12
Corporate Communications	437	413	(24)
Legal Services	854	880	26
Human Resources and Support Services	4,410	4,477	67
Total	11,130	11,130	0

Operational Services			
Facilities Management	8,666	8,992	326
Fleet Management	840	840	0
Total	9,506	9,832	326
Housing, Customer and Building Services			
Customer Service Centre	1,346	1,205	(141)
Customer & Community Services	2,772	2,746	(26)
Total	4,118	3,951	(167)
Joint Boards			
Joint Boards	1,155	1,155	0
Total	1,155	1,155	0
Non Service Expenditure			
Non Service Expenditure	41,566	41,394	(172)
Total	41,566	41,394	(172)
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE P&R PDSP	91,345	91,332	(13)
GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL			
Property	18,392	20,560	2,168
ICT	4,351	4,080	(271)
TOTAL GENERAL SERVICES CAPITAL P&R PDSP	22,743	24,640	1,897

D.3 Summary of Main Issues in Service Expenditure Budgets and Impact on Performance

D.3.1 General Fund Revenue – Chief Executive, Finance and Property Services

The revenue budget for Chief Executive, Finance and Property Services is currently forecast to break-even. There are emerging pressures within property costs which are being managed. Energy budgets are an ongoing challenge and there are a number of projects being undertaken to reduce the pressure with close monitoring being undertaken on a monthly basis. Property maintenance expenditure continues to be a risk, the new Concerto system has allowed for more transparency and better reporting opportunities.

The LGBF includes a number of key indicators that relate to Finance and Property Services including percentage of invoices paid within 30 days and the cost per dwelling of collecting council tax. The LGBF data shows that West Lothian's performance for 2017/18 was 95.2% of invoices were paid within 30 days and ranked 12th in Scotland. This is a small drop compared to 2016/17; however, internal data for 2018/19 indicates that performance has increased to above 96%. The data for council tax collection for 2017/18 indicates that West Lothian remains in the top six for lowest cost per dwelling of collecting council tax since 2013/14. West Lothian's cost of support services as a proportion of total council expenditure is ranked fifth lowest out of the 32 Scottish Local authorities.

D.3.2 General Fund Revenue – Corporate Services

A break-even position is forecast. Early delivery of 2020/21 approved savings within IT is offsetting pressures elsewhere within the service, in particular, occupational health costs.

In terms of available benchmarking information from LGBF, as noted above, West Lothian Council ranks fifth lowest in Scotland with regard to the cost of support services as a percentage of gross budget.

D.3.3 General Fund Revenue – Operational Services

Expenditure within Operational Services reporting to the Partnership and Resources portfolio relates to Facilities Management (facilities management within schools and building cleaning) and also the green fleet budgets.

Pressures within Facilities Management are largely due to staffing levels as a result of levels of sickness absence. The month 6 monitoring exercise indicates that staffing costs have started to reduce. However, there is a risk that overtime working to cover periods of absence to meet minimum staffing ratios may increase in the autumn and winter months. Mitigating actions have been identified and an action plan is being prepared, however, the pressure at this stage is not anticipated to be eliminated in full.

In terms of performance, the cost of cleaning and delivering a facilities management service will increase year on year, due to increases in the pay award for staffing and this is fully provided for within the council's approved budget. Benchmarking information, in particular through the LGBF is contained within support services and cost per pupil performance indicators.

Green fleet expenditure is anticipated to be within budgeted resources in the current financial year. The green fleets assists the council in delivering approved budget reductions in business mileage and this has largely been the case with year on year reductions being achieved.

D.3.4 General Fund Revenue – Housing, Customer and Building Services

Expenditure within Housing, Customer and Building Services relating to the Partnership and Resources portfolio includes Customer and Community Services and the Customer Service Centre. Within the Customer Service Centre, a net underspend of £141,000 is anticipated, due principally to staffing underspends as a result of vacant posts and turnover of staff. An underspend of £26,000 is forecast for Customer & Community Services. An under recovery of £36,000 in Registration income is anticipated due to a combination of falling numbers of marriages and the loss of the nationality checking workstream reported last year. Staff savings elsewhere in the Customer and Community Services budget are expected to fully offset this pressure.

Performance information for Customer and Community Services and for the Customer Service Centre indicates that, for the first 6 months of 2019/20, the percentage of customers who rated the overall quality of service as good or excellent was above target for both areas at 99.6% and 97.8% respectively.

D.3.5 General Fund Revenue – Joint Boards

A break-even position is forecast.

D.3.6 General Fund Revenue – Non Service Expenditure

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTR) is currently forecast to underspend by £172,000. There is ongoing pro-active work by officers on maximising take up, but, the roll-out of Universal Credit has resulted in a small reduction in the level of applications for CTR. An Improvement Group is regularly reviewing the processes, to ensure Council Tax collection is not adversely impacted.

In addition to the forecast position outlined in this report, following the completion of the appeals process for non-domestic rates (NDR) for a number of council properties, a net one off refund of approximately £400,000 has been identified relating to NDR payments made by the council in previous years. In addition, the Scottish Government has confirmed that the council will receive a one off payment in the current year of £140,000 under the Business Rates Incentivisation Scheme (BRIS) due to the council exceeding BRIS income targets in

2017/18. Reflecting the decision of Council on 24 September 2019 regarding available one off additional resources, taking into account high levels of uncertainty in the economy, Brexit and the level of public sector funding, Council Executive agreed on 12 November 2019 that the additional one off resources of £540,000 should be retained in the general fund balance until the outcome of the Scottish Budget and local government settlement is announced. The timing of this announcement is not clear due to the General Election on 12 December 2019.

D.3.7 General Fund Revenue – Monitoring of approved budget reductions

For the Partnership and Resources portfolio, savings in 2019/20 are anticipated to be fully delivered by the end of the financial year. At this stage, there are no significant issues that will impact on the delivery of current year savings. The operational delivery of the savings for future years is progressing well.

D.3.8 General Services Capital

The forecast position for Property and ICT asset categories is net accelerated spend of £1.897 million for the financial year. The Roads and Related Assets and Open Space Asset categories will be reported to the Environment PDSP on 11 February 2020.

Property

Projected outturn expenditure for property in 2019/20 is £20.560 million against a budget of £18.392 million. A number of projects are progressing more quickly than anticipated, resulting in accelerated spend and a number of projects have also identified budget pressures which require to be carefully monitored.

Work has been progressing well on site as part of the development of a new partnership centre for Whitburn, however, it has recently been established that an existing high voltage cable on the site will require to be diverted to enable construction of the foundations and subsequent structure for the new extension to the back of the building.

Due to the proximity of the cable to the proposed building, this has resulted in an estimated delay to the overall programme of five months with the anticipated completion date for the building now mid-January 2021. The work to divert the HV cable is now progressing on site and a revised detailed programme to completion is being prepared by the contractor. Officers are liaising daily with Scottish Power, the contractor and the project design team to attempt to reduce the overall delay by re-programming elements of the work and utilising off-site construction where appropriate without compromising on the quality of the finished building.

ICT

Projected outturn expenditure for ICT in 2019/20 is £4.080 million which represents slippage of £271,000 against budget. The Technology enabled care programme internal infrastructure project is reporting slippage of the full budget allocation of £130,000 this year, as a result of a review being carried out by the service to determine whether the receiving centre should be established in-house or provided externally. Slippage of £89,000 has been identified for the Social Care Administration (SWIFT) replacement programme with the service planning to commence the project in the final quarter of 2019/20.

The LGBF includes comparative information on operational buildings. West Lothian performs favourably compared to other Scottish local authorities, with a current ranking of second for the percentage of operational buildings assessed as suitable for their current use and second for the percentage of internal floor area of operational buildings assessed as being in satisfactory condition.

E. SUMMARISED BUDGET POSITION FOR 2019/20

The month 6 position is an underspend of £13,000 within the General Fund Revenue budget for the Partnership and Resources portfolio. The month 6 position was reported to Council Executive on 12 November 2019. Capital projects have accelerated spend of £1.897 million.

F. FUTURE BUDGET ISSUES AND RISKS

The Partnership and Resources PDSP considered updated financial planning assumptions for the three years 2020/21 to 2022/23 on 12 September 2019. It is proposed that any changes to the budget model and approved budget savings will be reported for consideration at the Council budget setting meeting in February 2020. In addition, as noted in the PDSP report, officers will continue to review and refine the budget model assumptions in line with established practice in advance of presenting an updated three year detailed revenue budget to Council in February 2020. As reported to the Partnership and Resources PDSP on 12 September 2019, the balance of savings still to be identified after taking account of an update to the financial model has increased to £6.730 million.

The significant level of approved savings, in addition to savings achieved in previous years and the impact of constrained funding, is resulting in an increased risk of overspends across council services and the ability to deliver approved budget reductions. In addition, there are recurring pressures of £1.738 million, as reported to Council Executive on 12 November 2019. Mitigating actions have been agreed and are being implemented to ensure these pressures are managed on a recurring basis.

The overall position reflects the very challenging financial context the council is now facing after many years of funding constraints and requirements to make significant savings with demand for services continuing to grow. There are considerable risks and uncertainties around various aspects of council spending, including the costs of demand led services especially in social care, the level of inflationary increases in budgeted expenditure and the waste recycling market. There are also major risks connected to the future level of UK and Scottish Government funding and of policy changes that impact on local government in Scotland.

Specifically for the Partnership and Resources portfolio, the key risks and uncertainties include the delivery of significant staffing savings which will require restructures and changes to the way staff operate. Sickness absence levels and above inflationary contractual price changes are risks that can affect services across the portfolio area and are monitored closely.

The council's risk based approach to budget monitoring will ensure that effective action is taken to manage risks during the course of the financial year. Officers will continue to provide updates on risks as part of the quarterly budget monitoring reporting to Council Executive at period 4, 6 and 9.

G. CONCLUSION

The forecast position for the Partnership and Resources portfolio is an underspend of £13,000. As noted, the position for the Partnership and Resources portfolio is part of the overall outturn forecast position for 2019/20 which was reported to Council Executive on 12 November 2019. There is net accelerated spend of £1.897 million on the capital programme for the portfolio area.

H. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

1. Council Executive 2019/20 General Fund Revenue Budget – Month 6 Monitoring Report – 12 November 2019
2. Local Government Benchmarking Framework

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Donald Forrest

Head of Finance and Property Services

Date: 6 December 2019



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCUTINY PANEL

PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT – PERFORMANCE UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report updates the Panel on the performance for Property Asset Management for 2018/19.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes:

1. The overall condition of Property Assets for 2018/19;
2. The overall suitability of Property Assets for 2018/19;
3. The overall performance of Property Assets;
4. The projects that have contributed to delivery of the council's property asset management priorities.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Being honest, open and accountable, making best use of our resources, working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The council is required to demonstrate best value through a structured framework for the management of its property assets. No environmental equality or health and safety issues have been identified.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Scottish specified performance indicators – Suitability and Condition.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The management of our property assets supports all council services and those delivered by partners. Local outcome improvement plan priorities supported include:

	<p>Outcome 1 – our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed;</p> <p>Outcome 2 - we are better educated and have access to increased and better quality learning and employment opportunities; and</p> <p>Outcome 8 – we make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment.</p>
VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	The property assets covered by the report are managed and operated in line with provisions of the approved Revenue Budget and the General Service ten year Capital Investment strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23.
VII Consideration at PDSP	This report is presented annually for consideration by the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP).
VIII Other consultations	None.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the current performance of the council's property assets. The council owns and manages property assets to support the delivery of services, including schools, community, operational, administrative and commercial properties. The estate extends to 244 properties comprising approximately 434,907m² (as at 1 April 2019).

The council's approved Corporate Asset Management Strategy for 2018/19 to 2027/28 included the need to manage our assets efficiently and effectively to support the delivery of our service and corporate priorities. In pursuit of this aim, it set out six performance measures which were compliance, condition, suitability, sufficiency, accessibility and sustainability.

D2 Property Asset Management Performance Measures

The Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) for 2018/19 to 2027/28 sets out the activity themes for the management of property assets and highlights a number of key performance measures. Key performance measures are outlined in Appendix 1 together with the respective results. The following two indicators are reported as part of the Scottish Specified Performance Indicators framework.

Condition – The percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition has improved to 96.31% for 2018/19 from 95% for 2017/18. In terms of gross internal floor area considered to be in satisfactory or better condition this has increased to 99.64% for 2018/19 from 99.35% in 2017/18.

During the previous five year PAMP the percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition improved from 87.3% in 2013/14 to 95% in 2017/18. In terms of Gross internal floor area considered to be in satisfactory or better condition, this also increased to 99% in 2017/18 from 95.7% in 2013/14 the current PAMP, which was approved in December 2018, outlines a number of activity themes that will be progressed to improved performance.

Suitability – The percentage of properties that are considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability remained at 93% in 2018/19 which is the same result as 2017/18.

During the previous five year PAMP the percentage considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability improved from 89% in 2013/14 to 93% in 2017/18. The current PAMP which was approved in December 2018 will continue to seek to improve suitability further.

D3 Property Asset Management Highlights

During 2018/19 a number of significant projects and planned improvements were undertaken and completed, including the following:

New West Calder High School

The most significant project was the completion of the new school which opened to pupils in August 2018. The school design has received a number of awards and is considered one of the most innovative and effective teaching environments in the UK. The school has been visited by local, national and international visitors looking to learn from our experiences.

Armadale Partnership Centre

The new Partnership Centre forms a central hub for the delivery of council services within the Armadale area, bringing together Library and Customer Information Services as well as the local Housing Office. The partnership centre also offers sport and community use halls, meeting rooms and a café.

Linlithgow Partnership Centre - Tam Dalyell House

The new partnership centre has a number of local services under one roof and has breathed new life into one of the town's most prominent and historic buildings (County Buildings). The relocated services include Libraries, Customer Information Services, the Local History Library, Trading Standards and Environmental Health. Partners include Linlithgow Heritage Trust, Linlithgow & District Community Day Centre and Police Scotland who have all relocated to the building. The building also provides public convenience facilities.

Science Lab upgrades

As part of the larger investment in science labs across the estate, Phase 1 works have been completed at Linlithgow Academy. Phase 2 works are due to be completed during 2019/20.

School Toilet Improvement Programme

A £2.5million investment programme in school toilets commenced during 2018/19 with initial schools benefitting including 'Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Blackburn and Stoneyburn Primary School.

School Roof and Ceiling Replacement Programme

Within the wider £6million programme of roof and ceiling works there was investment at Toronto, Howden St Andrews and St Ninian's Primary Schools in 2018/19.

Building Management Systems (BMS) Upgrade Programme

Works commenced on the first phase of the BMS upgrade programme that will provide the ability to remotely monitor and control the heating and lighting within the entire Education Estate helping to reduce energy consumption.

Civic Centre Window Film

Works are fully complete as part of an energy saving programme to install heat resistant film on all windows within West Lothian Civic Centre and have improved the ability to regulate temperature and energy usage within the building. This will be rolled out to other corporate properties in future years.

All these projects and the continued significant investment in planned improvements demonstrate the ongoing commitment to improving the performance of the councils property assets.

D4 Property Asset Management Plan – Activity Update

Within the approved Property Asset Management Plan for 2018/19 to 2027/28 there are activity themes that encapsulate projects and programmes to sustain and improve the performance of our property assets. These are outlined in Appendix 2.

D5 Future Investment

Key project and investment programme highlights for the coming years are as follows:

Winchburgh Schools

The construction of new denominational and non-denominational secondary schools, together with a new denominational primary school at Winchburgh, will support the growing population associated with the core development area. These schools are being delivered as a bundle of projects and will be the largest education investment by the council in a single location.

Learning Estate Investment Programme – Beattie Additional Support Needs (ASN) School

The council was successful in its initial submission for funding support to the Scottish Government for the replacement of Beattie ASN School. The project is one of eleven pilots being progressed that will be pathfinders for the new Learning Estate Investment Programme. The project will see the current school replaced with a new state of the art facility which will bring together a number of partners supporting our most vulnerable children who have severe and complex needs.

Learning Estate Investment Programme (Other Schools)

The council is currently developing business cases for submission to the Scottish Government for funding support for a number of primary schools as part of future phases of the Learning Estate Investment Programme. Within the approved capital programme for 2018/19 to 2027/28 £14.5million was allocated to support proposal including the replacement of Eastertoun, East Calder, Deans and St Josephs Whitburn primary schools. These positions will be reviewed as part of the emerging Learning Estates Strategy and Learning Estate Management Plan that will be presented for consideration in 2020.

School Estate Planned Improvements

Over £30million will be invested, including a number of significant investment programmes such as roof replacements, mechanical and electrical improvements, pupil toilet renovations, kitchen upgrades and window replacements. Schools which will benefit include St Ninians, Addiewell, Howden St Andrews, Greenrigg, Mid Calder, Croftmalloch and Winchburgh Primary Schools.

Additional Support Needs

In addition to Beattie School the council will embark on its largest investment in additional support needs schools, including a new Cedarbank School proposed to be located adjacent to James Young High School, a redeveloped Pinewood, Blackburn and reconfiguration and extension to Ogilvie schools.

New Whitburn Partnership Centre

This new £5million facility on the site of the existing Burgh Halls at the Cross, Whitburn will bring together Customer Information Services (CIS), Housing Services, Local Library and Museum. Accommodation to support community needs (i.e. hall and meeting rooms) will be provided together with office space to support service delivery in the Whitburn Community will also be provided. The investment is seen as a catalyst for the regeneration of the town centre.

Livingston North Partnership Centre

Located at the former Ability Centre the project will see the delivery of a new partnership centre for Livingston North. Existing Ability Centre Services, Library and Customer Information Services together with MacMillan support will be located in the building which will also provide a café and opportunities for greater community use.

Statutory Compliance

Investment of approximately £21million will be deployed on ensuring our property assets are safe and secure for our customers, visitors and members of staff. Works include management of asbestos, legionella, fire systems and gas safety.

General Operational Property Projects

Over £16.5million will be invested in the modernisation of general operational property assets with projects including the development of new homeless persons accommodation and a new sports pavilion at Watson Park, Armadale.

These significant investments reflect the council's commitment to investing in property assets to support the modernisation of service delivery; improving the built environment of our communities and working in partnership.

D6 Performance Indicators

A full list of all performance indicators, their trends and commentary is provided in Appendix 3. These cover the period April 2018 to March 2019 and in relevant instances include more relevant information. Where performance indicators cover beyond the performance report period, commentary is provided within the relevant commentary for the measure.

E. CONCLUSION

The Panel is invited to note the ongoing performance of our property assets, the achievements during 2018/19 and the improvement in performance.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2018/19 to 2027/28 approved by Council 13 February 2018

Property Asset Management Plan 2018/19 to 2027/28 approved by Council 18 December 2018

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix 1 – Property Asset Management Performance Measures

Appendix 2 – Property Asset Management Activity Theme Update Summary

Appendix 3 – Asset Management Performance 2018/23:- Performance Indicator Report

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Donald Forrest

Head of Finance and Property Services

Date: 6 December 2019

Appendix 1 – Property Asset Management Performance Measures

The following are key property asset management performance measures that demonstrate we are efficiently and effectively managing assets.

Condition – Ensuring that our property assets are maintained in a satisfactory or better condition to support service delivery.

This performance measure demonstrates that our property assets are being effectively maintained so they continue to support the delivery of services. By ensuring property assets are in satisfactory or better condition, we minimise the number of days properties are not available as a result of building failure.

- The percentage of properties in satisfactory or better condition has improved to 96.31% in 2018/19 from 95.04% in 2017/18.
- In terms of Gross Internal Floor Area considered to be in satisfactory condition or better, this has increased to 99.64% in 2018/19 from 99.35% in 2017/18.
- The number of school days lost due to building condition failure for 2018/19 was zero days. In 2017/18, 1.5 days were lost.

Condition continues to improve as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in planned improvements across our property portfolio and through the development of new property assets.

Suitability – Ensuring that our property assets are suitable to support the delivery of services

This performance measure demonstrates that our property assets are fit for purpose in terms of accommodation types and layout to support the delivery of services. By ensuring property assets are suitable, we can ensure the delivery of services is not impeded due to building constraints.

- The percentage of properties that are considered satisfactory or better in terms of suitability has remained at 93% in 2018/19, the same as 2017/18.
- In terms of Gross Internal Floor Area considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of suitability, the PI has remained the same at 95.5% in 2018/19 as in 2017/18.

Suitability continues to be sustained and improved over the longer term as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in planned improvements across our property portfolio and through the development of new property assets.

Sufficiency – Ensuring that our property assets are sufficient to support existing service delivery demands.

This performance measure demonstrates that our property assets are of sufficient size to support the delivery of services whilst not being underutilised. By ensuring property assets are sufficient we can ensure the delivery of services is not impeded due to building capacity constraints. This performance measure area primarily relates to the capacity of the school estate.

- The average percentage of school estate capacity occupied is 80%, for 2018/19, which is the same as the 80% recorded in 2017/18.

This indicates that the council's investment into school capacity is currently in line with the growing population from the new housing developments

Accessibility – Ensuring that our property assets are accessible as possible for all service users and staff.

This performance measure demonstrates the proportion of our property assets that are considered fully accessible for service users and staff.

- The percentage of properties that are considered fully accessible has increased to 76.7% for 2018/19, from 74.8% in 2017/18. The improvement in this performance measure is as a result of continued investment in improving accessibility across the portfolio. In 2004/05 when the indicator was originally measured, accessibility was 21.7%

Accessibility continues to improve as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in planned improvements across our property portfolio and through the development of new property assets.

Sustainability – Ensuring our property assets negative impact on the environment is minimised.

There is a trend of decreasing emissions from energy usage, which reflects the council's ongoing investment in renewables & energy efficiency.

- Total carbon emissions from property assets (CO2 tonnes) for 2018/19 are confirmed at 20,050 tonnes. This is a reduction from 24,672 tonnes in 2017/18.
- KWh of electricity and gas used per m² in the operation of our corporate property assets are 65.2 and 154.74 Kwh / per m² respectively in 2018/19. This has decreased from 70 and 161.02 Kwh / per m² respectively in 2017/18. It is worth noting that weather can have a major impact on gas in particular.

This demonstrates the commitment of the council to sustainability and minimising the impact on the environment through continued investment in energy reduction and efficiency works.

Appendix 2 – Property Asset Management Activity Theme Update Summary

School Estate Improvements

The Council successfully delivered the new West Calder High School at a cost of approx. £32million.

There was schools planned improvement investment of £2.326million over the 2018/19 period, incorporating works to the school estate across West Lothian.

Planned improvement works have been undertaken at schools around the estate, including St Andrews (Howden), Stoneyburn, St Ninian's, Toronto and Our Lady of Lourdes Primary Schools. The continued investment in planned improvements has achieved 100% of schools in satisfactory or better condition. In terms of satisfactory or better suitability, 97.6% of schools achieve this rating. The challenge going forward will be to sustain this performance with an ageing portfolio of schools.

Other projects that were progressed during 2018/19 included; completion of nurse replacements at Boghall, East Calder, Mid Calder and Torphichen primary schools, upgrades to the science lab at Linlithgow Academy and installation of LED lighting within a number of primary schools, and ongoing investment into the Early Learning and Childcare and Additional Support Needs strategy.

Service Support Accommodation

A further phase of the council corporate property modernisation programme was successfully delivered with the completion of Whitehill Service Centre that replaced a number of depots. This has followed the previous phases which involved the successful delivery of Kirkton Service Centre, partnership centres in East Calder, Armadale, Linlithgow, Bathgate, Broxburn (Strathbrock), Fauldhouse, Blackburn and West Lothian Civic Centre.

Non-Operational (Tenanted Non-Residential) Property Portfolio

The performance of the Non-Operational (Tenanted Non-Residential) Property Portfolio (TNRP) which incorporates the Commercial Property Portfolio is reported separately. In summary however, the TNRP continues to support Economic Development activity and generate income for the council.

Locality based service delivery

Partnership Centres are at the core of the councils' local service delivery with Strathbrock, Bathgate, Fauldhouse, Blackburn, East Calder and West Lothian Civic Centre already playing crucial roles and being highly regarded both operational and by our communities. Works were completed at Armadale which opened during 2018/19 and is now supporting service delivery. The new partnership centre at Whitburn continues to progress and will build upon this success and support the modernisation of local services and the community.

Risk Management and Compliance

Effective compliance and risk management is critical to the success of the Property Asset Management Plan. The council has approved Asbestos, Legionella, Electrical and Fire

Safety policies and has undertaken a wide range of works relating to these to ensure that the risks of compliance failures are mitigated as much as practically possible. The policies and procedures relating to compliance are under continuous review to ensure our properties are as safe as possible.

A comprehensive responsible persons' framework incorporating guidance for those involved has also been deployed across the Council. All maintenance and planned improvement works are prioritised based on the evaluation of risk.

The council has also invested in a new property asset management solution that provides systematic approach to the governance and realisation of all property information and works delivery processes for planned and reactive maintenance.

Resource Deployment and Financial Planning

Through established revenue and capital budget monitoring frameworks, the deployment of resource in the management, maintenance and improvement of our property assets is undertaken in a structured and effective manner. This ensures that resources are used efficiently and that decision making processes are robust and transparent.

Energy and Sustainability

Energy efficiency works and the installation of renewables continue to reduce our impact on the environment. A number of policies relating to energy efficiency and carbon emissions are being implemented whilst others continue to be developed. These are reported separately through the Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Management Plans.

Works have been ongoing to ensure an up to date IT infrastructure is in place to support the upgrade of the school estate to a modern Building Management System (BMS) that will provide centration of the heating and lighting controls for all education properties.

Asset Management Performance 2018/23 : - Performance Indicator Report

Data Label : OFFICIAL

Report Author: Matthew Fraser

Generated on: 28 November 2019 15:47

Corporate Strategy - Asset Management 2018/23



(a) Outcome 1 - Compliance

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart																																										
	P:CSg413_9b Percentage of Operational Properties & Domestic Common Area premises where an annual review of the asbestos register has taken place in the last 12 months	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	<div><p>Percentage of Operational Properties & Domestic Common Area premises where an annual review of the asbestos register has taken place in the last 12 months</p><table><thead><tr><th>Month</th><th>Percentage</th><th>Target</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>October 2018</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>November 2018</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>December 2018</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>January 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>February 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>March 2019</td><td>99%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>April 2019</td><td>78%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>May 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>June 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>July 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>August 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>September 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr><tr><td>October 2019</td><td>100%</td><td>100%</td></tr></tbody></table><p>■ Months ■ Target (Months)</p></div>	Month	Percentage	Target	October 2018	100%	100%	November 2018	100%	100%	December 2018	100%	100%	January 2019	100%	100%	February 2019	100%	100%	March 2019	99%	100%	April 2019	78%	100%	May 2019	100%	100%	June 2019	100%	100%	July 2019	100%	100%	August 2019	100%	100%	September 2019	100%	100%	October 2019	100%	100%
Month	Percentage	Target																																											
October 2018	100%	100%																																											
November 2018	100%	100%																																											
December 2018	100%	100%																																											
January 2019	100%	100%																																											
February 2019	100%	100%																																											
March 2019	99%	100%																																											
April 2019	78%	100%																																											
May 2019	100%	100%																																											
June 2019	100%	100%																																											
July 2019	100%	100%																																											
August 2019	100%	100%																																											
September 2019	100%	100%																																											
October 2019	100%	100%																																											

Trend Chart Commentary:

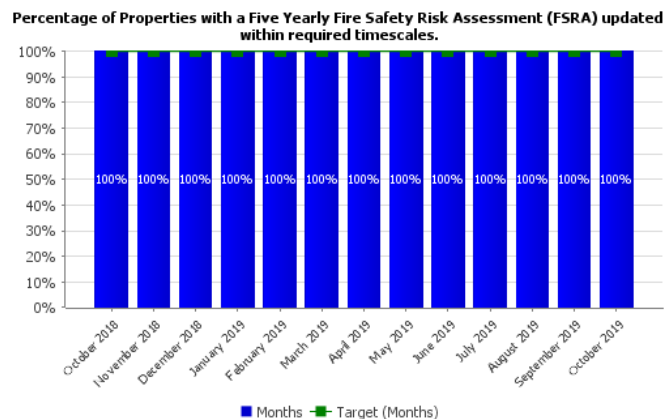
This performance indicator (PI) records the overall percentage of operational properties & domestic common areas where a review of the asbestos register has taken place in the last 12 months.

Targets were not met in April 2019 due to access issues at Addiewell Community Wing, Limefield Bowling Pavilion & Hopetoun Barrow Store. These missed reinspections were then captured in May 2019

The target for 2019/20 has been set at 100%.



P:CSg430_9b.1a Percentage of Properties with a Five Yearly Fire Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) updated within required timescales. .Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

From November 2018 to October 2019 the target was met. All five year Fire Safety Risk Assessments were undertaken in line with programme and due date.

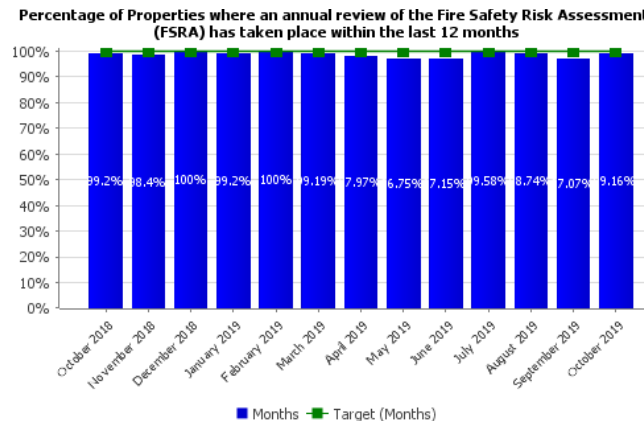
The purpose of this performance measure is to monitor the percentage of five yearly FSRA's which fall due to be updated on a monthly basis and are dealt with within required timescales.

Following review of performance, the target for 2019/20 remains at 100%.



P:CSg431_9b.1a.
Percentage of Properties
where an annual review of
the Fire Safety Risk
Assessment (FSRA) has
taken place within the last
12 months

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance has been consistently high achieving over 96% of annual FSRA returns over a twelve month period. The trend shows a slight decline in performance in the months of March to June 2019 which was due to sickness absence within Education Services, however this has been resolved and performance has stabilised.

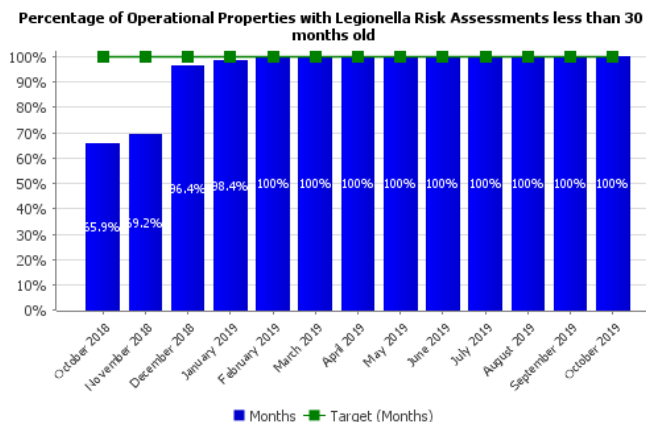
This performance indicator measures the percentage of Properties where an annual FSRA is due, reviewed and updated on a monthly basis. Any outstanding annual FSRA from previous months are escalated through the Property Compliance Working Group and Heads of Service. Construction Services continues to enter FSRA dates into individual calendars which notifies recipients 2 weeks before due date.

The total number of operational properties on the asset register for Fire Safety Risk Assessments is 237.

Following review of performance the target for 2019/20 remains at 100%.



P:CSg450_9b.1a Percentage of Operational Properties with Legionella Risk Assessments less than 30 months old .Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The council has a duty to manage Legionella in water systems in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice L8. This monthly indicator measures the number of risk assessments due to be undertaken within each month against the number completed.

Performance did not meet target from October to November 2018. The contractor's performance was not in accordance with the contract and resulted in a delay in carrying out a number of risk assessments. This ultimately led to the contract being terminated. A new contractor was appointed and the risk assessments were completed, reviewed and quality checked. All 240 risk assessments have now been reviewed and updated. A review of the risk assessment programme was undertaken to ensure numbers are evenly distributed throughout the next 24 month period 2019/20 & 2020/21.

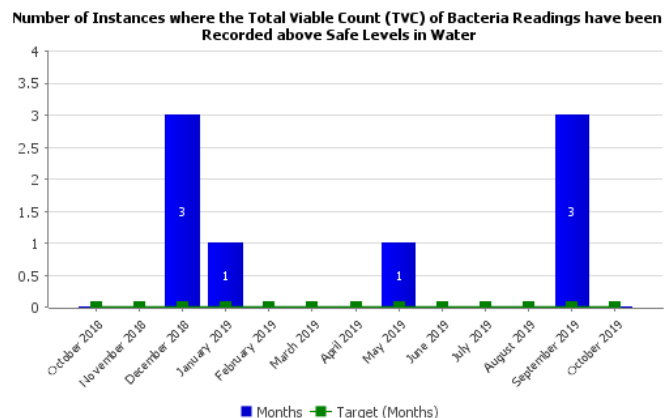
It is important to note that all water monitoring and flushing regimes continued to be undertaken in all operational properties in the period October – November 2018 to ensure there was no risk to building users.

Following review the target will remain at 100% for 2019/20



P:CSg451_9b.1a Number of Instances where the Total Viable Count (TVC) of Bacteria Readings have been Recorded above Safe Levels in Water

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This Performance Indicator monitors any instances where the Total Viable Count (TVC) of bacteria including Legionella is recorded above safe levels in water at all operational properties.

The trend reflects the rigorous monitoring regime in place across operational properties. However, there have been eight instances in the last twelve months where the TVC of bacteria has been recorded above safe levels as outlined below (all high levels related to swimming pools):


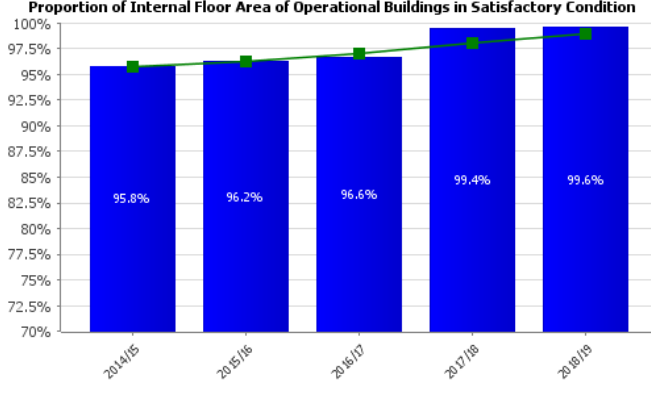
- Two related to St Kentigerns Academy and two at James Young High School when both pools were closed due to remedial work and there were no users of the pools at these times.
- Three were at Fauldhouse Partnership Centre and one was at St Margaret's Academy and all related to the use of hose reels. In each instance, remedial action was immediately taken and the bacteria readings were returned to normal.

Corporate Health & Safety also issued a safety alert to all premises with swimming pools to remind them of good practice.

Following review the target for 2019/20 remains at zero.



(b) Outcome 2 - Condition

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart												
	P:SCORPASSET02 Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	<div><p>Proportion of Internal Floor Area of Operational Buildings in Satisfactory Condition</p><table><thead><tr><th>Year</th><th>Proportion (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2014/15</td><td>95.8%</td></tr><tr><td>2015/16</td><td>96.2%</td></tr><tr><td>2016/17</td><td>96.6%</td></tr><tr><td>2017/18</td><td>99.4%</td></tr><tr><td>2018/19</td><td>99.6%</td></tr></tbody></table><p>■ Years ■ Target (Years) ● Benchmark</p></div>	Year	Proportion (%)	2014/15	95.8%	2015/16	96.2%	2016/17	96.6%	2017/18	99.4%	2018/19	99.6%
Year	Proportion (%)														
2014/15	95.8%														
2015/16	96.2%														
2016/17	96.6%														
2017/18	99.4%														
2018/19	99.6%														

Trend Chart Commentary:

The Performance Indicator is applicable to all the councils operational property assets and identifies the proportion of floor area that is considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of physical condition. Performance has improved from 99.4% in 2017/18 to 99.6% in 2018/19. Performance has also improved year on year as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and the rationalisation of accommodation used by services. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

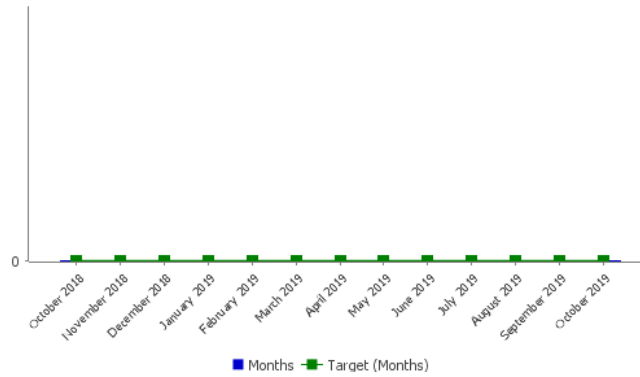
Ranking performance for 2018/19 will be available in January 2020. The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (2nd during 2017/18) for condition of its operational property assets as part of the Local Government Benchmarking Forum and CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group.

The target for 2019/20 is set at 99% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals.



P:CSg520_9b.1a Number of .Head of
Teaching Days lost at Finance and
schools due to utilities Property
failure (Supplies – gas, Services (D
electricity, water) excluding Forrest)
Public Private Partnership
schools

Number of Teaching Days lost at schools due to utilities failure (Supplies – gas, electricity, water) excluding Public Private Partnership schools



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance indicator measures the teaching days lost as a result of school closures due to utilities failure (gas, electricity, water).

During the last twelve months there have been no school days lost due to utility failure.

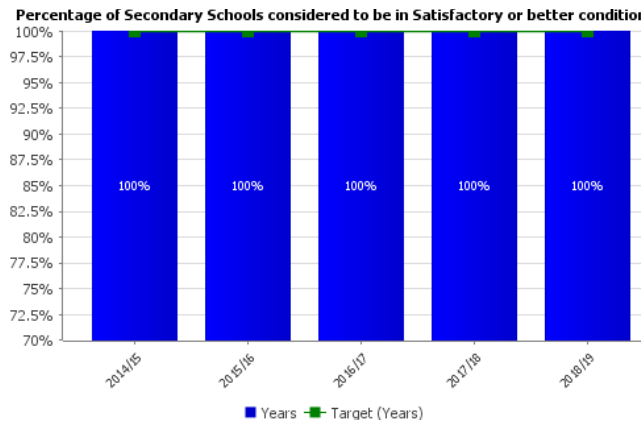
Following a review of performance, the target for 2019/20 remains at 0%.



P:PAMP203_9b.2

Percentage of Secondary Schools considered to be in Satisfactory or better condition.

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Secondary Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all secondary schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last five years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate and the rigorous application (where appropriate) of its PPP contracts which is applicable to part of the education estate. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

The target for 2019/20 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals.

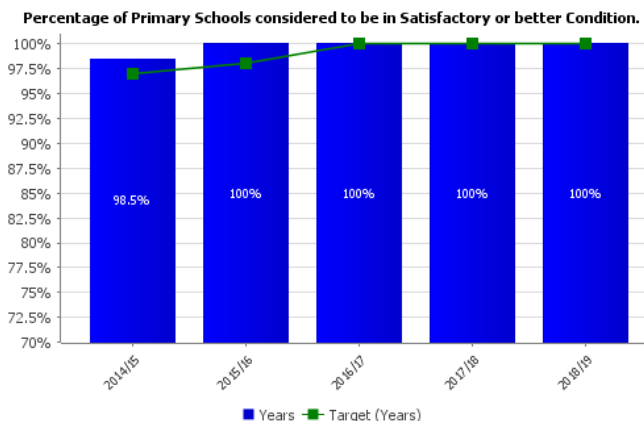
The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance. This was adopted for 2018/19 with no impact overall on the current performance.



P:PAMP204_9b.2

Percentage of Primary Schools considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition.

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Primary Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all primary schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last four years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate and the rigorous application (where appropriate) of its PPP contracts which is applicable to part of the education properties. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top three for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

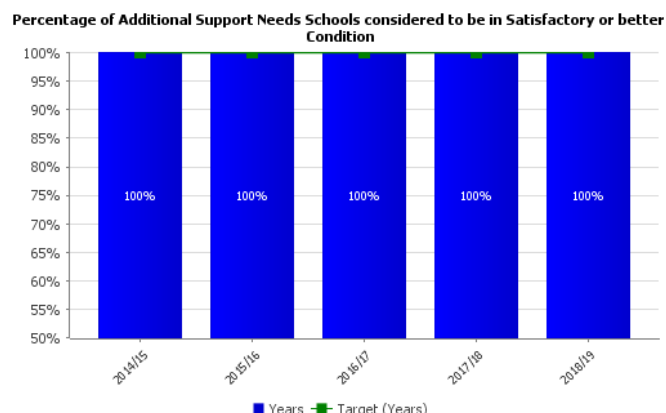
The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance. This was adopted for 2018/19 with no impact overall on the current performance.

The target for 2019/20 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals.



P:PAMP205_9b.2
Percentage of Additional
Support Needs Schools
considered to be in
Satisfactory or better
Condition

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all ASN schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last five years as a consequence of the council's commitment to investing in its School Estate. Condition is assessed using an established framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

The council's Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top three for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

The condition core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance. This was adopted for 2018/19 with no impact overall on the current performance.

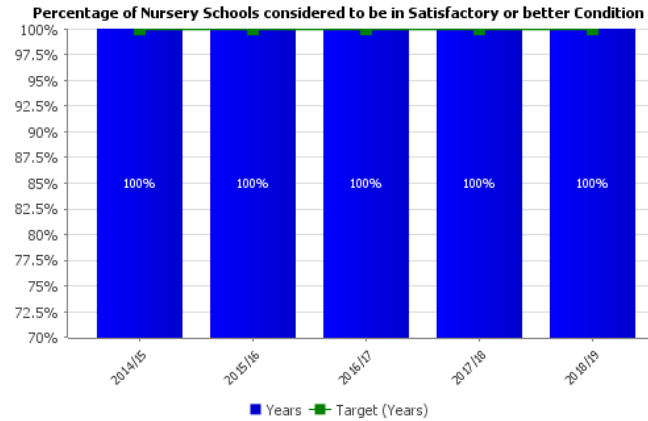
The target for 2019/20 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is recognised however, that over the longer term that the condition of the ASN estate requires significant investment to sustain performance and appropriate investment has been included in the General Service Capital Programme.



P:PAMP206_9b.2

Percentage of Nursery
Schools considered to be in
Satisfactory or better
Condition

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Nursery Schools identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show that all Nursery schools remain in satisfactory or better condition. Performance has remained at 100% for the last 4 years as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its School Estate. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for condition as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top 3 for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

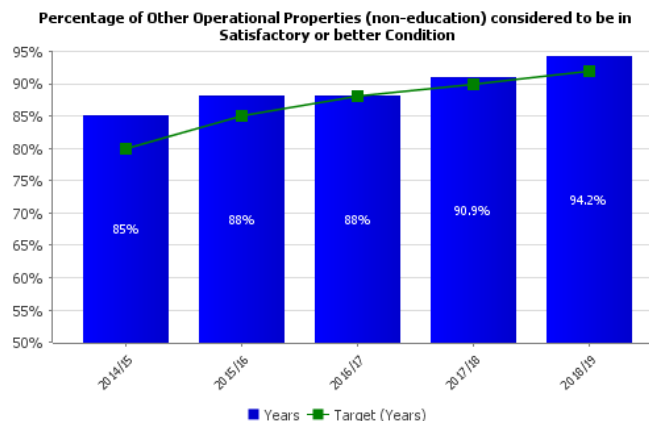
Target for 2019/20 is set at 100% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. It is therefore projected that the current level of performance will be maintained. Due to the expansion of early years a number of nursery schools will be subject to significant investment to increase capacity and therefore it is proposed to undertake condition improvement works at the same time thereby maximising investment and sustaining long term condition.



P:PAMP207_9b.2

Percentage of Other
Operational Properties
(non-education) considered
to be in Satisfactory or
better Condition

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for the councils operational (non education) property assets identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show improvement in condition across the operational estate with those considered to be in satisfactory or better condition increasing from 85% in 2014/15 to 94.2% in 2018/19. Performance has improved year on year as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and the rationalisation of accommodation used by services. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

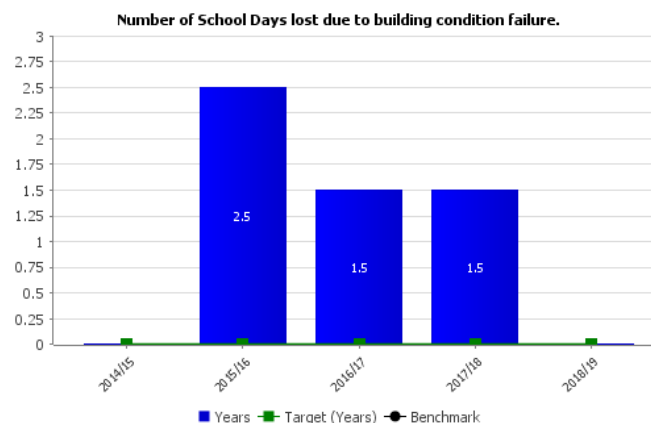
The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (currently 2nd) for condition of its operational property (excluding education) assets as part of the Local Government Benchmarking Forum and CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group.

Target for 2018/19 was set at 92% with a performance outturn of 94.2% with a based on condition assessments and investment proposals. It is projected that the current level of performance will be sustained. It is recognised that over the longer term that the condition of the operational estate will require significant investment to sustain performance or become more efficient through modernisation to allow greater investment on "core" properties with long terms service delivery requirements.

Target for 2019/20 is 94% reflecting projects being progressed and the aim of sustaining and where possible improving performance.



P:PAMP211_9b Number of School Days lost due to building condition failure. .Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This annual performance indicator shows that the number of school teaching days lost due to condition failure met the target of zero for 2018/19. Whilst the aim is to achieve zero days this target has not always been achieved due to unforeseen events such as burst pipes. The general trend however, shows improvement in reducing in the overall teaching days lost (From 2.5 in 2015/16 to zero in 2018/19). This reduction in days lost primarily relates to greater proactivity of maintenance (cyclical inspections and servicing, planning improvements and improve reactive repair response).

There is no benchmarking undertaken for this performance measure as other LA's who are involved in the CIPFA Scottish Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group do not collect this measure or are unwilling to publish.

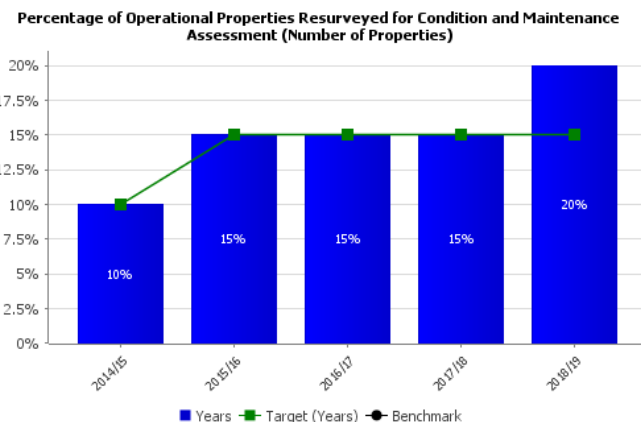
The target for 2019/20 will remain at zero with the aim of achieving no days lost due to building condition failure. This will remain the councils target going forward reflecting the high standards set for the management of our school estate.



P:PAMP213_6b.5

Percentage of Operational Properties Resurveyed for Condition and Maintenance Assessment (Percentage of Properties)

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

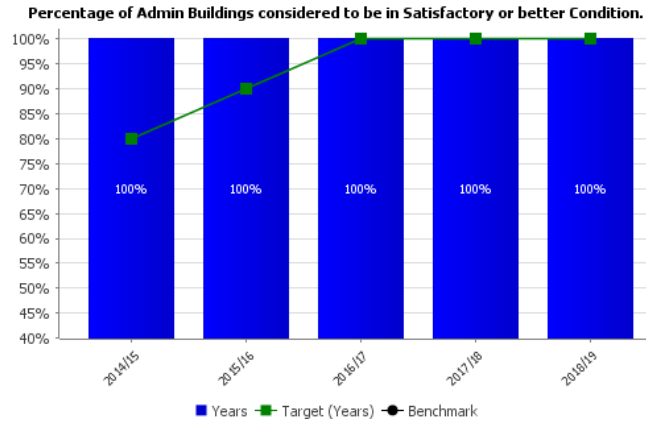
Condition is key priority performance measure within the councils Corporate Asset Management Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan. Condition is measured and reported annually. Each year every asset is subject to a condition and maintenance assessment that identifies maintenance requirements and considered risk elements for inclusion in short term investment requirements. In accordance with best practice and guidance all property assets should be subject to a full detailed condition survey to identify long term investment requirements and condition risks.

The council has adopted a risk based approach to condition and maintenance surveys to identify properties likely to benefit from planned improvements. Review on the core facts from the Scottish Government has been carried out and the council is in the process of developing a new quinquennial programme of detailed condition surveys in line with the new Scottish government guidance for 2019/20.

The target for 2019/20 will be raised to 20% to reflect the new quinquennial programme of assessment to comply with new Scottish Government Guidance.



P:PMD181_9b Percentage of Admin Buildings considered to be in Satisfactory or better Condition. Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:


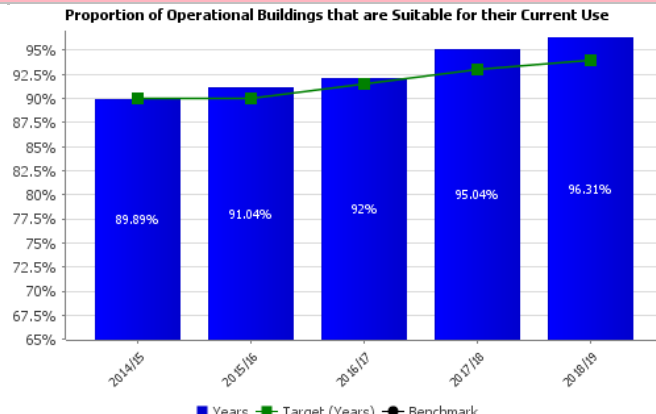
The performance indicator for the councils administrative office property assets identifies the physical condition of the building and its component parts. The indicator continues to show sustained condition across this part of the estate with those considered to be in satisfactory or better condition being sustained at 100%/. Performance will continue at this level as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and modernisation of office accommodation to support service needs. Condition is assessed using an establish framework of periodic assessments and surveys.

The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (currently 1st) for condition of its operational property (excluding education) assets as part of the Local Government Benchmarking Forum and CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group. The office accommodation portfolio is a sub-set of this.

The target for 2019/20 is 100% reflecting sustained performance and projects being progressed.



(c) Outcome 3 - Suitability

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart												
	P:SCORPASSET01 Proportion of Operational Buildings that are Suitable for their Current Use	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	<div><p>Proportion of Operational Buildings that are Suitable for their Current Use</p><table><thead><tr><th>Year</th><th>Proportion (%)</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2014/15</td><td>89.89%</td></tr><tr><td>2015/16</td><td>91.04%</td></tr><tr><td>2016/17</td><td>92%</td></tr><tr><td>2017/18</td><td>95.04%</td></tr><tr><td>2018/19</td><td>96.31%</td></tr></tbody></table><p>■ Years ■ Target (Years) ● Benchmark</p></div>	Year	Proportion (%)	2014/15	89.89%	2015/16	91.04%	2016/17	92%	2017/18	95.04%	2018/19	96.31%
Year	Proportion (%)														
2014/15	89.89%														
2015/16	91.04%														
2016/17	92%														
2017/18	95.04%														
2018/19	96.31%														

Trend Chart Commentary:

The Performance Indicator is applicable to all the council's operational property assets and seeks to identify the proportion of Operational Buildings that are suitable for their current use. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of the council's property assets has continued to improve for the last five years as a result of effective investment and property improvement programme and the replacement, closure and modernisation of property assets.

For 2018/19 performance has improved to 96.31% from 95.04% in 2017/18. Whilst performance has been sustained and improvements made to most buildings a range of investments have been undertaken that have improved those that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to members of properties within the estate.

The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19 – 2019/20. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2018/19 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals for the school estate as part of the General Services Capital Programme.

Ranking performance for 2018/19 will be made available in January 2020. The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile (second during 2017/18) for suitability of its operational property assets as part of the Local Government Benchmarking Forum and CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

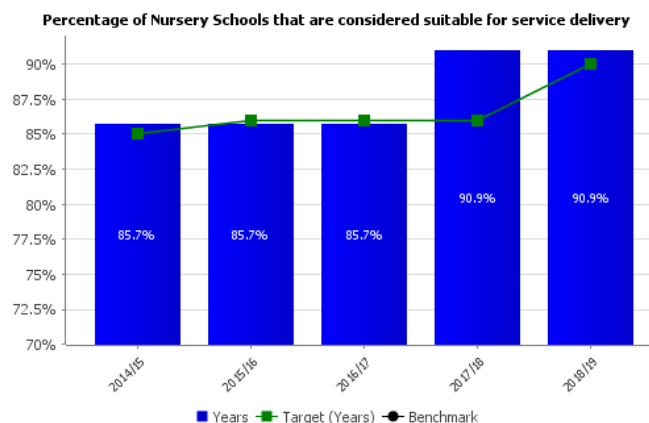
The target for 2019/20 is set at 96% based on existing suitability assessments and investment proposals



P:PAMP302_9b.2

Percentage of Nursery
Schools that are considered
suitable for service delivery

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Nursery Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment as satisfactorily to enable and support the delivery of the service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of nursery schools has been improved over the past five years and the assets generally perform well. Only one nursery school is not considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of suitability, this is Eastertoun Nursery School, Armadale due to access.

Whilst performance has been sustained a range of improvements have been undertaken that have improved those that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers.

The councils Education Property Assets are evaluated and reported for suitability as part of the Scottish Government School Estate Core Facts. Performance has been and is consistently in the upper quartile amongst all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is projected to continue based on current investment commitments. In addition the council has consistently been ranked in the top five for school estate condition as part of the CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group.

The target for 2019/20 is set at 90% based on existing condition assessments and investment proposals. Due to the expansion of early years a number of nursery schools will be subject to significant investment to increase capacity and therefore it is proposed to undertake improvement works at the same time thereby maximising investment and sustaining long term suitability.

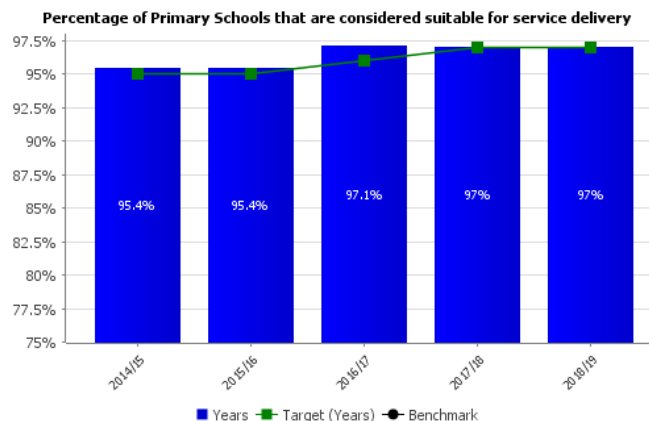
The suitability core fact has been subject to a review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19.



P:PAMP303_9b.2

Percentage of Primary
Schools that are considered
suitable for service delivery

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Primary Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment as satisfactorily to enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of Primary schools has been sustained for the last five years. Two primary schools are not considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of suitability, these are:

- 1.St Pauls Primary School, East Calder – access and internal layout are not considered satisfactory.
- 2.Seafield Primary School, Seafield – Storage and parking / access not considered satisfactory.

Whilst performance has been sustained and modest improvements made for primary school suitability generally a range of investments have been undertaken that have improved those that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers.

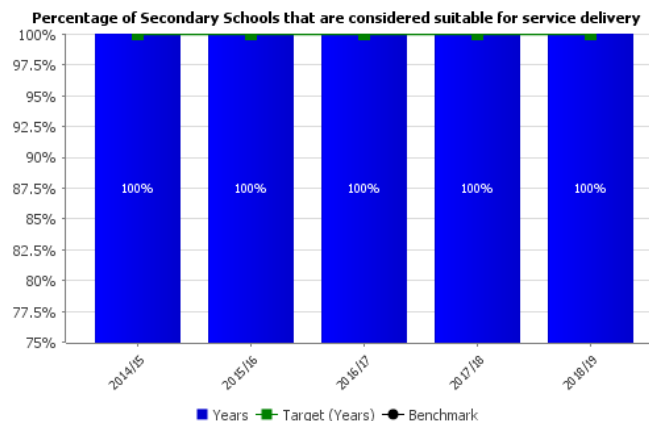
The target for 2019/20 is set at 97% based on existing suitability assessments and investment proposals.



P:PAMP304_9b.2

Percentage of Secondary
Schools that are considered
suitable for service delivery

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Secondary Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment as satisfactorily to enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of Primary schools has been sustained for the last five. All secondary schools are considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of suitability,

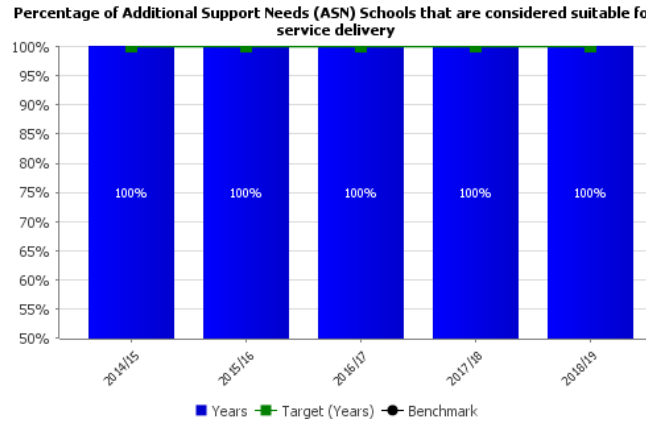
Whilst performance has been sustained, suitability improvements continue to be made where appropriate within the secondary school estate thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers.

The target for 2019/20 is set at 100% based on sustaining the existing suitability.



P:PAMP305_9b.2
Percentage of Additional
Support Needs (ASN)
Schools that are considered
suitable for service delivery

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools identifies the suitability of the building and its environment as satisfactorily to enable and support the delivery of service. The indicator continues to show that the suitability of ASN schools has been sustained for the last five years. All ASN schools are considered to be satisfactory or better in terms of suitability.

Whilst performance has been sustained a range of investments have been undertaken that have improved those ASN Schools that were already considered satisfactory or better thereby improving the overall quality and performance based on a floor area as opposed to property numbers. Significant investment in ASN schools will occur over the next few years with two new replacement schools, One refurbished and one being expanded and modernised.

The target for 2019/20 is set at 100% based on sustaining existing performance.

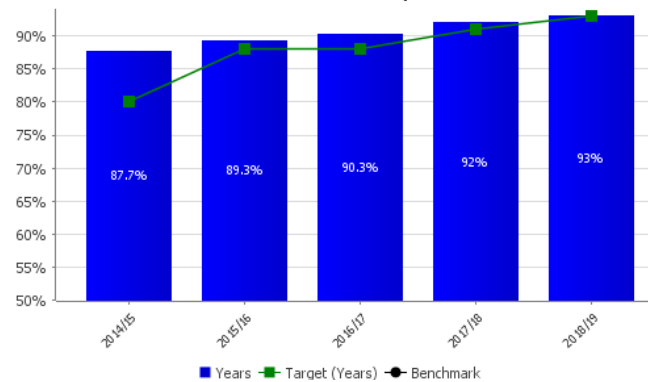


P:PAMP306_9b.2

Percentage of other
Operational Buildings (non-
education) that are
considered suitable for
service delivery

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)

Percentage of other Operational Buildings (non-education) that are considered suitable for service delivery



Trend Chart Commentary:

The performance indicator for the councils operational (non education) property assets identifies the suitability of buildings to support service delivery. The indicator continues to show improvement in suitability across the operational estate with those considered to be satisfactory or better increasing from 87.7% in 2014/15 to 93% in 2018/19. Performance has improved year on year as a consequence of the councils commitment to investing in its property assets and the rationalisation of accommodation of unsuitable property used by services.

The council has consistently been ranked in the upper quartile for suitability (currently 2nd) of its operational property (excluding education) assets as part of the Local Government Benchmarking Forum and CIPFA Asset Management Property Performance Benchmarking group which involves 21 other Scottish local authorities.

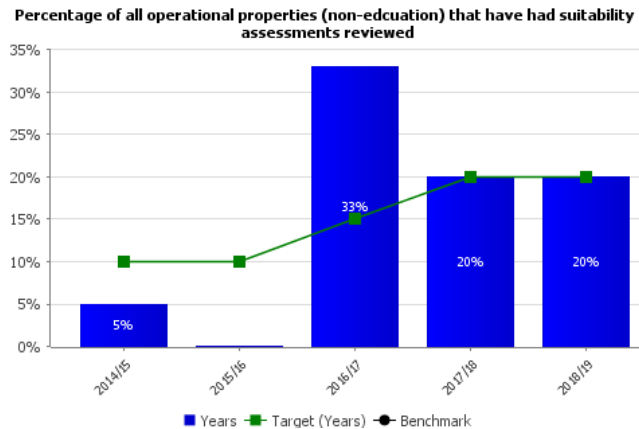
The target for 2019/20 is set at 93% based on existing suitability assessments and investment proposals. It is recognised however, that over the longer terms that the suitability of the operational estate will require significant investment to sustain performance or become more efficient through modernisation to allow greater investment on "core" properties with long terms service delivery requirements



P:PAMP308_6b.5

Percentage of all operational properties (non-education) that have had suitability assessments reviewed

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure demonstrates the ongoing review of property assets for suitability. Performance demonstrates that West Lothian Council continues to review the suitability of its properties on a minimum of a five yearly basis and uses the findings to prioritise works to those properties that can achieve satisfactory or better suitability. During 2018/19 approximately 50 properties had assessments undertaken.

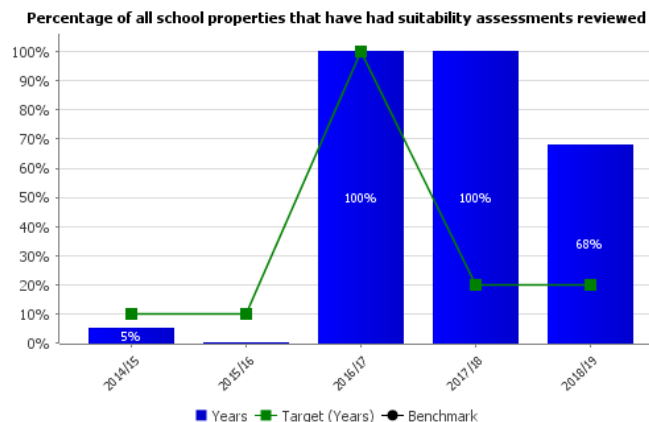
Further Suitability Assessments for 2019/20 may be required as part of the new Scottish Government Core Facts Review. Properties that were subject to investment have suitability assessments undertaken where works are considered to have potentially affected the suitability of a property. In addition to these a number of properties which are proposed to be subject to investment or declared surplus have assessments undertaken as part of the business case development or decision to dispose process.

The target for 2019/20 is 20% based on quinquennial programme.



P:PAMP309_6b.5
Percentage of all school
properties that have had
suitability assessments
reviewed

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure demonstrates the ongoing review of school estate property assets for suitability. Performance demonstrates that West Lothian Council continues to review the suitability of its properties.

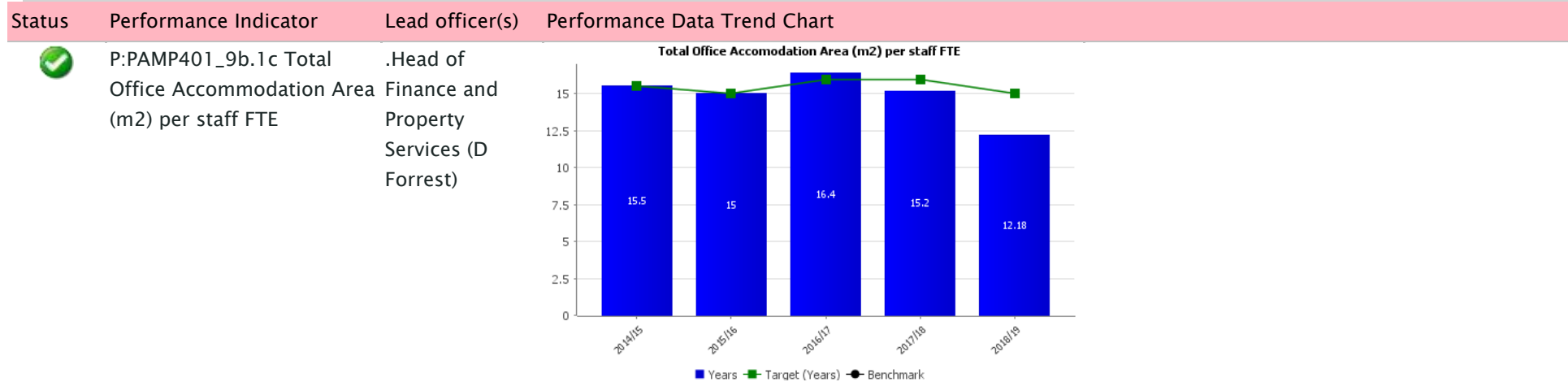
Formal Suitability Assessments for schools have been undertaken during 2018/19 as part of the Scottish Government review and adoption of new suitability assessment guidance.

A full refresh of Suitability Assessments has been carried out as part of the new Core Facts Guidance by the Scottish Government which requires for schools in particular that assessment of suitability is to be undertaken on a rolling five year programme or when there is a material change of circumstances. Currently 68% of all schools have been resurveyed based on the new guidance.

The target for 2019/20 is 20% in line with the new quinquennial programme.



(d) Outcome 4 - Sufficiency



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure illustrates the area per person within our Office Accommodation as expressed as a m2 per FTE. The current performance is 12.18 m2 per FTE for 2018/19 which is a decrease from 15.2 m2 per FTE for 2017/18.

The reduction from the 2017/18 to 2018/19 which seen a drop of 3m2 per FTE is a result of confirmed office modernisation projects and programmes and a review measure.. Current office/ Administrative properties include West Lothian Civic Centre, St Davids House and Arrochar House. (13,934 m2)

This performance indicator currently does not capture office areas within Partnership Centre buildings which has also contributed to the reduction in the outcome figure for 2018/19 as currently our surveys don't identify administrative/ operational or Non operational areas within each partnership centre building. Remeasuring / Calibration of floor areas within partnership centres to identify the total office area within each building will be carried out going forward with the outcome result likely to show an increase during 2019/20.

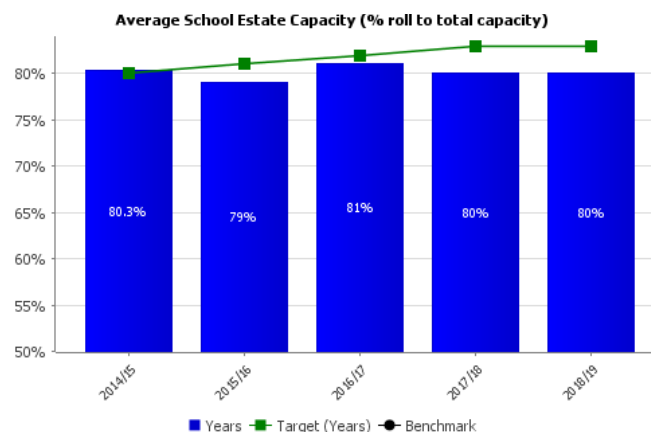
The long term trend will be to generally reduce the amount of space per staff member, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Office Modernisation Strategy. This indicator is benchmarked against another 21 local authorities as part of the CIPFA Scotland Benchmarking Group.

The target for 2019/20 is 15 square metres per FTE recognising the introduction of office accommodation within partnership centres as part of this indicator (remeasure and calibration required).



P:PAMP405_9b.1c Average
School Estate Capacity (%
roll to total capacity)

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:


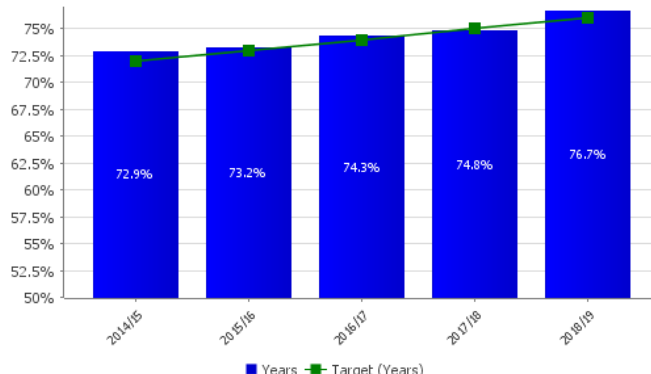
This performance indicator demonstrates utilisation of its school estate capacity to deliver curriculum activities – i.e. the percentage of the capacity to accommodate pupils that is used. The calculation is based on all primary and secondary school pupils attending as a percentage (the average school roll) against the capacity of the school. This is reported within the School Estate Core Facts.

The general trend for this performance measure is an increasing utilisation of the school estate which when reflected against an increasing school population means that we are accommodating more pupils without adding excessive space. Performance measure is calculated by using Base Audible Summary of School Roll Forecasts provided by Education Planning. Primary: 15602 out of 19921, Secondary: 11138 out of 13420. Totals: 26740/ 33341. This was provided in May 2019.

The target for 2019/20 is 83% to reflect increasing school roll. The long term trend sought will be to have ongoing improvement and maximise of utilisation for the coming years. Utilisation also needs to ensure that we don't exceed capacity at any school over a prolonged period of time.



(e) Outcome 5 - Accessibility

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart												
	P:PAMP501_9b.2 Percentage of all operational buildings from which the council delivers services that are fully accessible for disabled persons.	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	<p>Percentage of all operational buildings from which the council delivers services that are fully accessible for disabled persons.</p>  <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Percentage (%)</th></tr><tr><td>2014/15</td><td>72.9%</td></tr><tr><td>2015/16</td><td>73.2%</td></tr><tr><td>2016/17</td><td>74.3%</td></tr><tr><td>2017/18</td><td>74.8%</td></tr><tr><td>2018/19</td><td>76.7%</td></tr></table> <p>■ Years ■ Target (Years)</p>	Year	Percentage (%)	2014/15	72.9%	2015/16	73.2%	2016/17	74.3%	2017/18	74.8%	2018/19	76.7%
Year	Percentage (%)														
2014/15	72.9%														
2015/16	73.2%														
2016/17	74.3%														
2017/18	74.8%														
2018/19	76.7%														

Trend Chart Commentary:

Performance has continued to improve due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the operational property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council is increasing the accessibility of our operational properties to those members of the public with disabilities as a result of an effective investment.

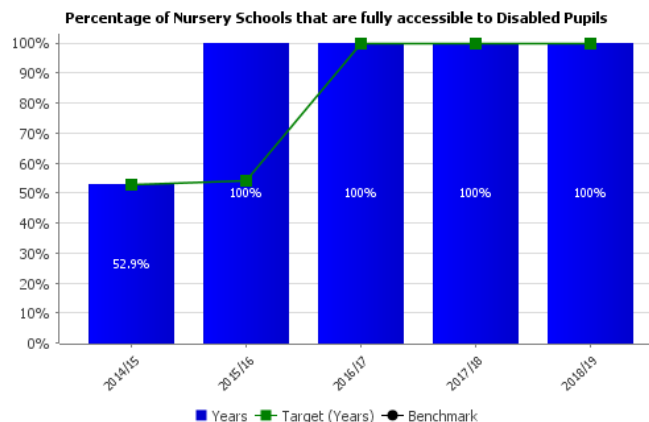
The target for 2018/19 was 76% with an out-turn of 76.7%. Performance is expected to improve for 2019/20 to a target of 78% reflecting investment in accessibility works together with the delivery of new and redeveloped properties. The performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities.

A review by the Scottish Government with the council participating in the development of the new statutory guidance which is proposed to be adopted during 2018/19. The council has been a pilot in the adoption of the new standards and therefore has recognised the potential impact in relation to target setting for 2019/20 onward. The impact is also reflected in Investment proposals as part of the General Services Capital Programme.



P:PAMP502_9b.2
Percentage of Nursery
Schools that are fully
accessible to Disabled
Pupils

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure illustrates the number of the councils Nursery School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 100% of our nursery schools are considered accessible.

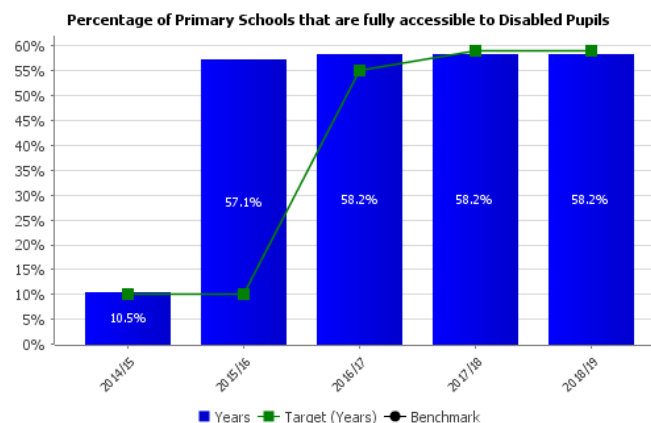
Performance has been sustained due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the nursery schools property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council has sustained the accessibility of our nursery properties to those members of the public with disabilities as a result of an effective investment. A significant investment during 2014/15 and 2015/16 saw an increase of over 40% in the performance of the nursery school estate to the current 100% level.

The target for 2019/20 is 100% representing a sustaining of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for Nursery Schools however, given results the council will be in the upper quartile.



P:PAMP503_9b.2
Percentage of Primary
Schools that are fully
accessible to Disabled
Pupils

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure illustrates the number of the councils Primary School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 58% of our primary schools are considered fully accessible.

Performance has been sustained due to the ongoing investment in pupils specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the primary schools property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council has over the longer term improved the accessibility of our primary school properties to those pupils with disabilities as a result of effective investment. Significant investment since 2012/13 has seen an increase in the performance of the primary school estate. The councils strategy is to have at least one fully accessible non-denominational and one fully accessible denominational primary school in each electoral ward and secondary school catchment area.

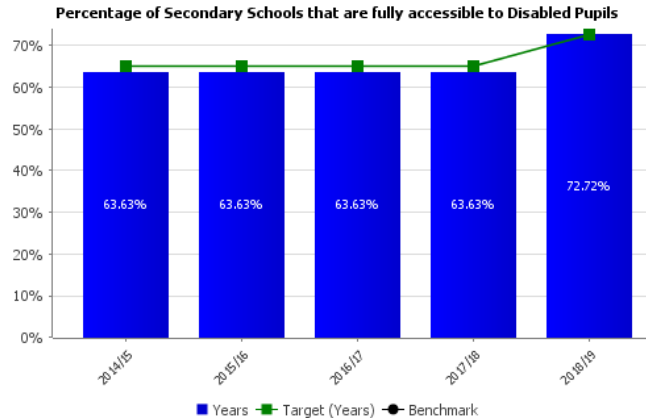
This performance indicator has remained static as no equalities / DDA assessments have been undertaken since 2016/17. It has been assumed that properties previously assessed remain compliant. Full assessment for all School Estate properties is required going forward as part of the new Core Facts review and changes to accessibility audits due to be implemented during 2019/20.

The target for 2019/20 is 59% representing a sustaining and modest improvement of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for Primary Schools.



P:PAMP504_9b.2
Percentage of Secondary
Schools that are fully
accessible to Disabled
Pupils

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure illustrates the number of the councils Secondary School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 72.72% of our Secondary schools are considered fully accessible.

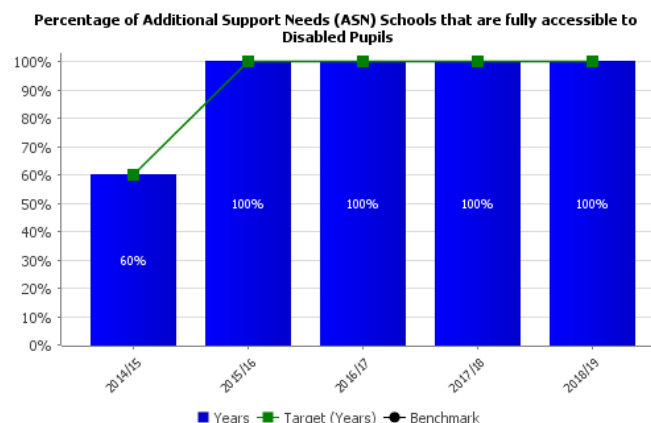
Performance has been sustained and whilst investment in pupil specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the secondary schools property portfolio there are 3 schools which are not fully accessible these are Broxburn (PPP), Whitburn (PPP) and Bathgate (PPP) This trend chart shows that the council is sustaining the accessibility of our secondary school properties to those pupils with disabilities. Due to the nature of PPP contracts the improvement of these schools for accessibility is prohibitively costly. Improvement has occurred for 2018/19 as a result of the new West Calder High School which is fully accessible.

The target for 2019/20 is 73% representing a sustaining of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for Secondary Schools.



P:PAMP505_9b Percentage of Additional Support Needs (ASN) Schools that are fully accessible to Disabled Pupils

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

This performance measure illustrates the number of the councils Additional Support Needs (ASN) School property assets as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment. Current performance is 100% of our ASN schools are considered accessible.

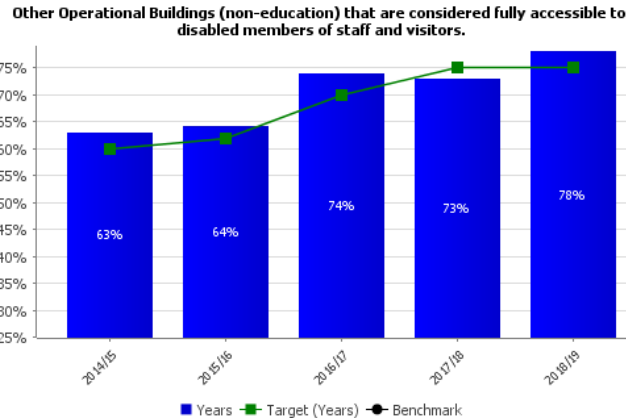
Performance has been sustained due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the ASN schools property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council has increased the accessibility of our ASN school properties to those pupils with disabilities as a result of an effective investment. A significant investment during 14/15 and 15/16 saw an increase of 40% in the performance of the ASN school estate.

The target for 2019/20 is 100% representing a sustaining of performance. The wider accessibility performance measure is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group. The council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities. No segmentation / breakdown is provided for ASN Schools however, given results the council will be in the upper quartile.



P:PAMP507_9b.2 Other
Operational Buildings (non-
education) that are
considered fully accessible
to disabled members of
staff and visitors.

.Head of
Finance and
Property
Services (D
Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:


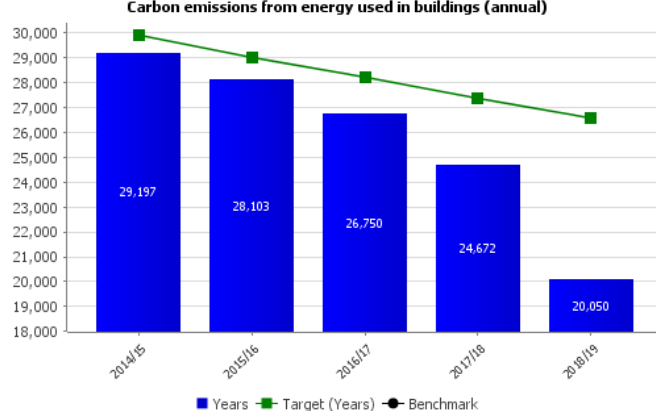
This performance measure aims to illustrate the number of the councils operational property assets (excluding schools) as a percentage that are considered accessible for persons who consider themselves disabled together with demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation for the impact on service delivery relating to the built environment.

Performance has continued to improve due to the ongoing investment in customer specific adaptations, general accessibility improvements and the modernisation of the operational (non-education) property portfolio. This trend chart shows that the council is increasing the accessibility of our operational properties to those members of the public with disabilities as a result of an effective investment.

The target for 2018/19 was 75% with an out-turn of 78%, this is an increase from 73% in 2017/18. The target for 2019/20 is 78% reflecting a number of projects that are currently in progress and investment in accessibility works. Non-Education assets are not segmented in terms of national benchmarking however, in relation to wider operational property (all asset) which is benchmarked as part of the CIPFA Scotland Property Asset Management Benchmarking Group the council is currently rated as 6th amongst 21 other Scottish Local Authorities



(f) Outcome 6 - Sustainability

Status	Performance Indicator	Lead officer(s)	Performance Data Trend Chart																		
	P:PMD191_9a.1 Carbon emissions from energy used in buildings (annual)	.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)	<div><p>Carbon emissions from energy used in buildings (annual)</p><table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Actual Emissions (tonnes)</th><th>Target (tonnes)</th></tr><tr><td>2014/15</td><td>29,197</td><td>29,197</td></tr><tr><td>2015/16</td><td>28,103</td><td>28,103</td></tr><tr><td>2016/17</td><td>26,750</td><td>26,750</td></tr><tr><td>2017/18</td><td>24,672</td><td>24,672</td></tr><tr><td>2018/19</td><td>20,050</td><td>26,590</td></tr></table><p>■ Years ■ Target (Years) ● Benchmark</p></div>	Year	Actual Emissions (tonnes)	Target (tonnes)	2014/15	29,197	29,197	2015/16	28,103	28,103	2016/17	26,750	26,750	2017/18	24,672	24,672	2018/19	20,050	26,590
Year	Actual Emissions (tonnes)	Target (tonnes)																			
2014/15	29,197	29,197																			
2015/16	28,103	28,103																			
2016/17	26,750	26,750																			
2017/18	24,672	24,672																			
2018/19	20,050	26,590																			

Trend Chart Commentary:

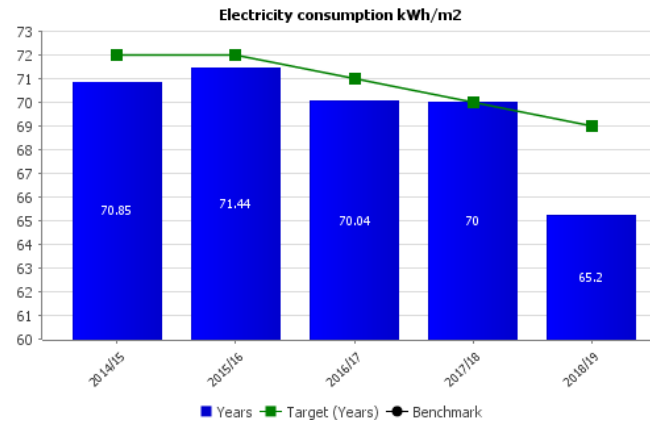
2018/19 shows a continued reduction in emissions from previous years because of continued energy efficiency measures and further reductions in emissions factors (particularly for electricity). It is anticipated that further reductions will be seen in 19/20 due to predicted lower emissions factors and other projects coming forward including our Non-domestic Energy Efficiency Framework measures which has seen significant investment in energy efficiency measures across the property portfolio.

Target for 2018/19 was 26,590 tonnes with outturn of 20,050 tonnes. Targets reflect the 2013/14 baseline figure and annual reduction of 2.9% set out in the council's approved Carbon Management Plan and Climate Change Strategy. Targets will be reviewed as part of the wider carbon management plan, review and reflect the councils declaration of a climate emergency. Data will be updated following completion of the carbon reporting process (including internal audit) in October 2020.



P:PMD192_9a Electricity consumption kWh/m2

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

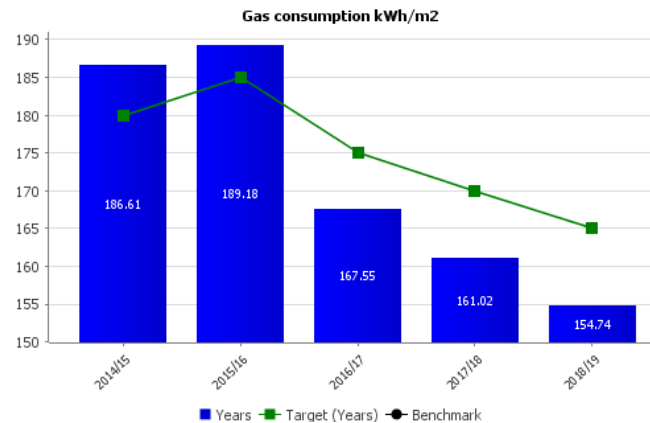
2018/19 saw a further reduction to 65.22kWh/m2 which is above target for the year.

Target for 19/20 is 67kWh/m2. Further improvements to buildings including upgrading of lighting to LED and introduction of more efficient equipment and controls are key contributors to reductions.



P:PMD193_9a Gas consumption kWh/m2

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

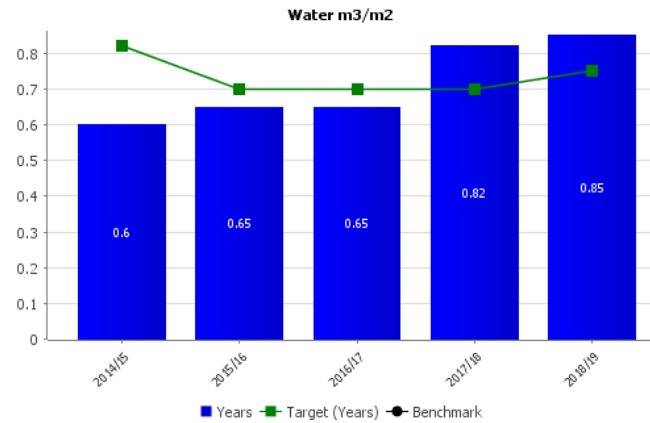
Figure for 2018/19 is 154.74kWh.m2 against the target of 165 and is a continued reduction from previous years.

Further projects are being taken forward in 2019/20 to reduce gas consumption including a number of boiler replacements and other measures.

Target for 2019/20 is 160 kWh/m2. Outcome will be partly dependant on winter weather conditions and temperatures (degree days).



P:PMD195_9a Water m3/m2 .Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



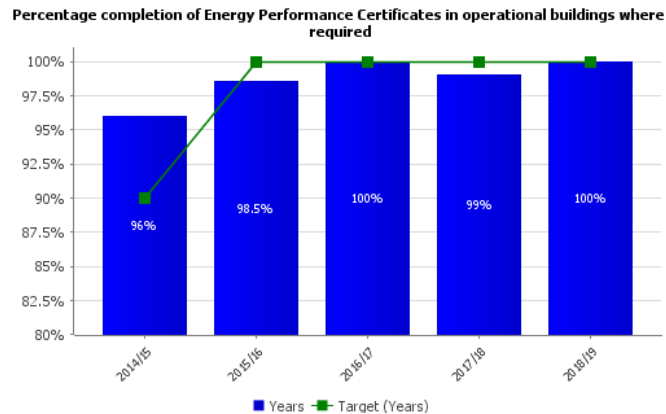
Trend Chart Commentary:

Data shows that water consumption has increased from 0.82m3/m2 to 0.85m3/m2 in 2018/19. There are a number of factors influencing this, including unexpectedly high consumption at a number of sites (some of which were alerted to and been resolved throughout the year). We continually review with our water provider (Wave) to identify sites where there are high consumption issues with a view to targeting resources to improve this. In addition, supplier data has been improved in 2018/19, with consumption data available for more buildings. Target for 19/20 is 0.75m3/m2



P:PMD196_9b Percentage completion of Energy Performance Certificates in operational buildings where required

.Head of Finance and Property Services (D Forrest)



Trend Chart Commentary:

Changes to the EPC requirements have meant that a higher number of buildings must have a certificate displayed. All publicly accessible buildings with a floor space of more than 250m2 must now be included.

Following a comprehensive audit in 2015/16, all EPC's were completed in early 2017 which took the council to 100% compliance.

In 2018/19, 100% compliance was again achieved. 2019/20 sees the start of renewals for those sites where certificates were first produced in 2009. The renewal process is underway, and a further procurement exercise will be carried out to complete. Target for 2019/20 is for 100% compliance by year end.



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

FOOD POVERTY UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to inform the Partnership and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel of the progress being made to support low income households which are experiencing food insecurity to access help, advice and food.

The report also informs the Panel on the progress being made in response to the motion agreed at Council on 14 May 2019, namely that the Anti-Poverty service:

1. Convenes a Food Summit, bringing together council members, council officers, the public sector, the third sector and the business community to look at the issues of food poverty in West Lothian and potential solutions.
2. Maps the issues of food insecurity and available support resources within West Lothian.
3. Develops a food action plan in conjunction with community partners to work towards a hunger free West Lothian.
4. Align/incorporates the food action plan with the existing Anti-Poverty Strategy and Food Growing Strategy.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that that the panel notes the intention to take the paper to Council Executive to update and seek approval of:

1. the activity undertaken by council services in West Lothian (appendix 1) to support households which are experiencing the impact of food insecurity;
2. the intention to submit a separate report on early years meals and snacks and school holiday food programme to the Education PDSP in December 2019;
3. the range of support provided by partners analysed at ward level (appendix 2) and the intention to create an interactive map to help increase access and help;
4. the intention to host a 'Food With Dignity' conference in Spring 2020 to consider the issue of food hunger and to develop a local food action plan;
5. the allocation of anti-poverty time limited funding of £150,000 to focus on creating a food network and to move from crisis intervention to longer term intervention; and
6. the intention to align the proposed local food action plan with the Community Planning Partnership's Anti-Poverty Strategy and the proposed Food Growing Strategy.

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)	Corporate Plan 2018/19-2022/23 and Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-23
III	Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None.
IV	Impact on performance and performance Indicators	Actions taken to address food insecurity will impact on a number of performance indicators.
V	Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	Outcome 6 – We live longer healthier lives. Outcome 7 – We have tackled significant inequalities in West Lothian society. Outcome 8 – We have improved the life chances for people at risk. Outcome 13 – We take a pride in a strong, fair and inclusive society.
VI	Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	None.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	None.
VIII	Other consultations	Individual council services have been consulted and contributed to Appendix 1. The Anti-Poverty Practitioners Group, Third Sector partners, Experts By Experience Panel and stakeholders have contributed to Appendix 2.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

Food insecurity is a wide description which is used when people are worried about not having enough food for themselves and their families. 'Food poverty' is often used to describe the more extreme occasions when lack of food results in people going hungry because of little or no resources. There is no universal definition of food poverty however the most widely accepted is:

"Food poverty is the inability to consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food that is useful for health in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so."

In January 2019, the UK Government's Environmental Audit Committee published a report on food insecurity which stated that 'food insecurity is a significant and

growing issue in the UK with figures showing that levels are among the worst, if not the worst in Europe, especially for children'. Evidence suggested that some groups are more vulnerable to food insecurity than others, including:

- the unemployed
- those in the lowest income quartile
- people with disabilities or illnesses
- families with children, and single parents

Food poverty is a symptom of wider poverty and disadvantage, which in turn is embedded in the way we organise our society and our economy. Many of the levers required to tackle food insecurity do not lie locally. There is significant evidence to suggest that the causes of poverty and therefore hunger and food insecurity are: low incomes and rising living costs, Universal Credit and the benefits system and budget constraints on local services.

D2 **Position in Scotland**

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act received royal assent in July 2015. It identified that central and local government need to help communities work together and release the potential to create a more prosperous and fairer Scotland. The Act's purpose is to empower community bodies through the ownership or control of land and buildings and by strengthening their voices in decisions about public services. There are eleven topics covered by the Act: Part Nine is concerned with allotments. The Act updates and simplifies legislation on allotments. There is a requirement for local authorities to develop a food growing strategy for their area, including identifying land that may be used as allotment sites and identifying other areas of land that could be used by a community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers.

The Scottish Government committed to monitoring household food insecurity in 2016, following recommendations from an Independent Short-Life Working Group on Food Poverty. Three priority questions from the UN Food Insecurity Experience Scale were included in the 2017 and 2018 Scottish Health Surveys, and will be included in the 2019 Scottish Health Survey. The 2018 Scottish Health Survey showed that 9% of adults experienced food insecurity in the preceding 12 months, defined as worrying about running out of food due to lack of money or other resources. From March 2019 onwards, food insecurity will be measured in the UK-wide Family Resources Survey, with the first data published in March 2021.

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 set out ambitious targets for the Scottish Government to significantly reduce child poverty in Scotland by 2030, with interim targets set for 2023. The Act also placed a duty on local authorities to work together with health boards to develop, produce and deliver a Local Child Poverty Action Report. The report is expected to describe actions taken to address child poverty, including work underway and plans for new actions to reduce child poverty. The report should centre activity on the drivers of poverty as set out by the Scottish Government which fall into three main categories:

- income from employment,
- cost of living and,
- income from social security benefits.

In 2018, the Scottish Government published a Good Food Nation Bill. One of the key aims of the Bill is to ensure that everyone in Scotland has ready access to healthy, nutritious food they need and which tackles both the symptoms and the causes of food insecurity and food poverty. It builds on the work of the Independent Short Life Working Group on Food Poverty which published a report in 2016 entitled 'Dignity: Ending Hunger in Scotland Together'. It proposed that the approach to food poverty and food insecurity in Scotland is based on a 'right to food' which is underpinned by law.

D3 Position in West Lothian

The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) approved an anti-poverty strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23 in 2018. The strategy's overall purpose is to minimise the impact of poverty on the people of West Lothian and reduce the differences in income and life chances between different parts of the community. The strategy was refreshed to take into account the changing nature of poverty, notably the effects of social security changes and government economic measures, and to consider the challenges which partners, stakeholders and those experiencing poverty face now and in the near future. There are eight interlinked outcomes with an annual action plan focussing on activity which will contribute to the overall outcomes. All eight outcomes link with the Corporate Plan which sets West Lothian Council's strategic direction, and identifies the priorities for the years between 2018/19 and 2022/23 and links with the strategic outcomes of the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2013 to 2023.

In June 2019, NHS Lothian and West Lothian Council co-produced its first Local Child Poverty Action Report (LCPAR). The LCPAR focusses on work being taken under the three main drivers of poverty: income from employment, cost of living and income from social security benefits. The wider work of the anti-poverty strategy's action plan, which also impacts on the drivers of poverty, is included as an appendix to that report.

A key feature of both the Anti-Poverty Strategy and the LCPAR is the lived experience of children and adult poverty which is rarely captured by quantitative data. Qualitative material such as testimonials, case studies, qualitative research helps shed light on the lived experience of people living with and working with poverty. Whilst poverty is fundamentally about a lack of income, it is recognised that food poverty and insecurity has a particular stigma attached to it. Any response will need to ensure that those who have experience of low income are involved in developing actions.

West Lothian Council supports all forms of community food growing from allotments and community gardens to community planters and fruit trees in public spaces. The council's Allotments Strategy helps address the growing need for allotments and to improve the delivery of services to members of the community, by facilitating and enabling communities to actively manage and participate in allotment gardening. The strategy provides a mechanism to deliver long term, sustainable improvements to existing and new allotment gardens across West Lothian. Currently there are seven allotment sites in West Lothian many of which are privately run and seven community gardens. Work is underway to draft a West Lothian Food Growing Strategy which is due to be published in Spring 2020. It is important that future activity incorporates and aligns to the actions contained in the proposed Food Growing Strategy.

There are clear links between research on the symptoms and causes of poverty, national policies and the local context. The expertise of local practitioners and the

lived experience of those on low incomes is interwoven through the anti-poverty's annual action plan which helps services target resources on those most in need. There is a growing understanding that food insecurity is a symptom of poverty and of having little or no money. A solution will need to involve not just access to food but other forms of support if households are to be 'helped up not just helped out'. Partners agree that there is a need to move from a crisis intervention (acute food insecurity) to longer term interventions (chronic food insecurity) to support people to be able to eat regularly in order to keep good health.

Mapping of Food Insecurity

In 2017, independent, qualitative research was undertaken to identify the extent of food insecurity and to better understand why people access food banks. The research conducted 44 in-depth interviews with local residents in West Lothian. The research evidenced:

- Over two-thirds of the participants have cause to worry about not having enough food (70%) or the quality of food (61%) they consume.
- Participants were aware of the need to make benefits or wages last until the next payment day but that was often difficult due to receiving a lower income than expected. For example, delay in benefit payments, lower wages and unanticipated expenses. The rise of zero hours contracts for people in low paid and insecure employment makes budgeting very difficult as there is no regular income.
- Of those who had experienced food poverty or food insecurity, nearly all had given up other things to pay for food.
- Participants were aware of the local food bank and, whilst some had used it, it was only in a crisis.

There has been a rise in food bank usage and, in West Lothian in 2018/19 the West Lothian Food Bank issued 2,925 three-day emergency food packs to 5,885 local people in crisis. This is a 41% increase on the previous year. Households accessing the food bank can do so three times in a six month period. For those needing to access more than three times, this is at the discretion of the food bank and is embedded into the 'Four or More' project. The project is a partnership with the Advice Shop and provides one-to-one support from a named advisor to help resolve any outstanding benefit entitlement issues, debt and housing concerns. It is clear that for many the food bank provides a lifeline when in a crisis situation however, food insecurity will continue to persist, and longer term interventions need to be in place to support people whilst they work towards financial resilience.

Over the last three months, a mapping exercise of food provision in West Lothian has been undertaken. This has covered three areas:

- Help and support through council activity (appendix 1)
- Help and support available in local communities (appendix 2)
- Interviews with community food providers within the Fauldhouse and Breich Valley area to gain insight into what support and help is needed

Analysis evidences that activity has been developed in response to local need. All the food providers have delivered projects which encompass a dignified response to food insecurity, namely:

1. Involve people with direct experience
2. Recognise the social value of food
3. Provide opportunities to contribute
4. Give people the power to choose

Local projects have based their activities on providing longer term intervention, embedded other support into the provision, tried to reduce food waste and make projects sustainable through income generation. These principles should be cascaded to other groups interested in developing food activities.

D4 Proposals

The mapping exercise has highlighted areas where additional activity would support the development of longer term interventions:

- Our Experts by Experience Panel felt strongly that an interactive map highlighting food provision along with support should be developed to improve access for those in need and to aid key staff to be able to signpost.
- Partners have shown a willingness to work together to develop a food poverty action plan, to form a food network and to create community food hubs.
- There is recognition that the social value of food is a hook to engage with marginalised and vulnerable groups. The 'Big Lunch' should be extended across West Lothian as a way to focus on food insecurity, engage with vulnerable households and lessen isolation.
- Opportunities to learn about nutrition, healthy eating and practical cooking skills would build confidence and skills for adults and children. To build on the good practice already delivered by a range of partners.
- Helping the most vulnerable with starter kits would support good eating habits.
- Ensuring that financial advice and other forms of support are embedded in projects and activities.
- The Anti-Poverty Task Force will host a 'Food with Dignity' conference in March 2020 to share good practice, develop a local food action plan and seek participants to form a food network.

£150,000 anti-poverty time limited funds will be utilised to reduce food insecurity in West Lothian. The proposed time limited funding supports the actions contained in the motion to council on 14 May 2019 and the interventions identified from the mapping exercise, namely:

Work with the third sector through the provision of funding to support a Development Worker to create and develop a food network across West Lothian and to support and build capacity within the third sector.

£90,000

Funding to develop the Big Lunch activity at community level to support local initiatives, create an interactive map to aid access to advice and support and host a Food with Dignity Conference in spring 2020

£20,000

Provide practical support in the form of starter packs to those accessing the Scottish Welfare Fund

£40,000

The aim of the network and capacity building is to ensure sustainability of food provision across the council area.

E CONCLUSION

There is evidence at both a national and local level of the increase in poverty and, as a consequence, a rise in hunger and food insecurity. Many of the levers for

reducing poverty lie with the Scottish and UK government. West Lothian Council has a range of services which are supporting the most vulnerable households. Working with its community planning partners on projects which take a rights based approach to ensure food with dignity, which involve those with a lived experience of low income and, which are developed based on local need is the planned approach. There is a willingness to work together on a local food action plan, to form a food network, to share resources, reduce waste and make projects sustainable through income generation. Evidence of the drivers of poverty has meant that specific groups need more direct support and time limited funding will be able to develop targeted responses.

F BACKGROUND REFERENCES

West Lothian Anti-Poverty Strategy 2018 to 2023

Appendices/Attachments:

Appendix One: West Lothian Council

Appendix Two: West Lothian Wards

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Donald Forrest

Head of Finance and Property Services

6 December 2019

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Appendix One: West Lothian Council

Planning and Environmental Health

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) makes reference to “*supporting delivery of accessible retailing development*” however, it does not provide any guidance on the proximity of shops to housing other than applying a town centre first policy where uses which attract significant numbers of people, including retail and commercial leisure, offices, community and cultural facilities should, in the first instance, be directed towards town centres.

SPP goes on to state that the spatial strategies set out in development plans should “*support development in locations that allow walkable access to local amenities and are also accessible by cycling and public transport*”. Walkable distance is not defined in SPP but could be taken to be 400 – 500 metres.

When new housing developments are proposed it would generally be a market decision as to whether or not to include shops and would also depend on the scale of development proposed. For example, the core development areas at Winchburgh, Armadale and Calderwood were the subject of master plans which included shops and other community facilities.

The Local Development Plan (2018) has a general planning policy (ENV 15) on the provision of allotments:

To reflect the increased need for allotments and to improve the delivery of services to the public by facilitating and enabling communities to actively manage and participate in allotment gardening, the council prepared the West Lothian Allotment Strategy in 2011. With the enactment of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act and the ongoing roll-out of its secondary legislation, the council has chosen to wait until these new legal provisions are in place before revising its Allotment Strategy which will be incorporated with the Food Growing Strategy. There are a number of private allotment sites which are safeguarded for community gardening/allotment use. The West Lothian Allotment Strategy 2011 and its review will inform the location of community growing spaces. Community growing spaces will be supported where there is no detriment to the existing recreational use or natural heritage, biodiversity or landscape provisions and adjacent uses and the proposals can be shown to be self-sustaining and free of additional revenue implications for the council.

The draft Food Growing Strategy is due in Spring 2020 and work is underway to incorporate actions which will improve food insecurity.

Food Service Plan: There are specific legal obligations placed on local authorities in regard to delivering food safety official controls. In order to follow the recommendations of the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) and the obligations on competent authorities contained in Regulation (EC) 882/2004, West Lothian Council is required to develop and approve an annual food service plan. The structure of the food service plan is determined by the guidance contained within the Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. Safe food and drink is something which the vast majority take for granted. The safety of this fundamental human need relies on a competent, trustworthy and properly regulated and managed supply. Environmental Health ensures businesses comply with food safety standards covering hygiene and labelling / composition standards within food. They will carry out routine inspections on a risk rated basis, but will also respond to concerns and complaints about food safety standards. There are currently 1627 food premises within West Lothian which requires to be inspected; the routine inspection plan covers approximately 750-800 premises per year. The service also provides a link to different sources of healthy food options on the web pages and sign posts businesses with information. It encourages participation in Healthy Living Awards. 24 businesses in West Lothian hold the Eatsafe

award for hygiene standards.

Town Centre Capital Grant 2019/20: In February 2019 the Scottish Government announced a new ring fenced capital fund of £50 million for a Town Centre Fund for 2019/20. The allocation of this fund was based on Scotland's Town Partnership working definition of a town being a place with a population of 1,000 or more, which equates to 484 towns across Scotland, 23 for West Lothian. This resulted in an allocation of £1.826 million to West Lothian.

The grants should fund investments which deliver against the themes of the Town Centre Action Plan to put the health of town centres at the heart of proportionate and best value decision making, seeking to deliver the best local outcomes, alignment of policies, targeting of available resources to priority town centre sites, and encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity. Applications were completed by 31 August 2019 and thereafter funding was approved by Local Area Committees and Council Executive.

Council Buildings: The council has a wide range of operational property. There is a list of properties that have some form of kitchen facility ranging from basic nursery kitchens to full production kitchens. There are over 160 properties with some form of cooking resource.

FairTrade: West Lothian is a Fairtrade Zone with four Fairtrade Towns (Bathgate, Linlithgow, Livingston, Whitburn). The county also has a Fairtrade Village, in Uphall and a mini Fairtrade Zone in Fauldhouse and Breich Valley.

The council has supported each West Lothian Fairtrade group through the process of both gaining their Fairtrade status, and maintaining it once it has been achieved. A Directory of Fairtrade in West Lothian is now available. The directory highlights the retailers, cafes and restaurants selling Fairtrade products in West Lothian.

Education

Breakfast Clubs: All primary schools have breakfast clubs which are free to all pupils. Secondary pupils who are entitled to free school meals also get a free breakfast using the cashless system. It is difficult to make year on year comparisons as the number of trading days for each year are different. In 2018/19 there were 838,611 breakfasts (Prim 648,260; Secondary 142,900; Special 47,451). This is an increase of 9.1% from 2017/18.

Early Learning Childcare Expansion: The ELC Expansion team are working with colleagues in Operational Services in relation to the provision of meals in early years from August 2020. The standard does not require a hot/cooked meal to be provided. ELC children who currently qualify for free school meals are provided a meal/packed lunch from the school meal service during term time. A number of settings are open for the first time during school holiday periods. Work is being undertaken to consider how to progress before the additional production capacity is in place for 2020. Consideration of providing a free snack is on the work plan.

School Meals: Families on low income may qualify for free school meals and milk. There is an on-line form to complete and customers may need to send evidence of the benefit award to support the application. If it is known that the family is already in receipt of a qualifying benefit, they will be contacted direct. Assessment is within seven days, schools are notified and families will receive confirmation by email. All children in P1, 2 and 3 receive free school meals. Children who attend one of the early learning and childcare establishments for full day provision, and are eligible for free school meals, will be provided with lunch on the days their child attends. Free school meals are provided to all pupils who attend: Beattie School Campus, Cedarbank School, Pinewood School, Connolly School Campus and Ogilvie School Campus. Pupils attending any of West Lothian's autism resources will also receive

free school meals. In 2018/19 there were 3,266 applications for free school meals and milk and 86% were awarded.

School Holiday Lunch Clubs: The funding for the holiday lunch clubs was initially £200,000 per year for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 financial years, then a further £200,000 was granted in the 2017/18 year to allow expansion. Underspend has meant that the programme is continuing to deliver the clubs with the remaining funds.

The overall objective of the project is to provide a nutritious meal (preferably hot) during the school holidays to improve the health and wellbeing of children living in low income households. The project aims to increase nourishment, reduce hunger and maintain learning through offering a range of activities which link into education outcomes. Delivery is planned through identification of areas with highest levels of free school meal and school clothing grant on school roll and works with partners who know and understand their community and will target low income families.

A small steering group has been set up and is meeting regularly to improve co-ordination, support community groups to set clubs and to ensure that resources are targeted at the 20% most deprived SIMD data zones. Improvements have been made to increase access: these have included an on-line form to apply for a place, targeted publicity and marketing, widening the partnership with community groups, incorporating opportunities for family support workers to tap into this resource. In summer 2019, 26 venues offered clubs with 14,534 meals served. The steering group is looking into ways to ensure that the holiday lunch club programme continues to work effectively with partners to deliver high quality meals and activities to those who need it most.

A separate paper will be presented in December to the Education PDSP on early years and snacks and the school holiday lunch programme.

The Young Scot National Entitlement Card is available free of charge to everyone aged 11- 25 living in Scotland. It can be used to obtain discounts, rewards, proof of age, travel. There are 21,963 card holders in West Lothian. With approximately 20% using them to obtain rewards. Although the reward user data is not an absolute measure of how young people are engaging with services or Young Scot but it is a good indicator and they are evenly spread across the 10 SMID deciles. There are 92 different discounts being offered either on or off line however there is no information on how many young people are taking up these offers. Discounts include: Co-op, Scotmid, various food outlets etc.

Adult Learning: Cooking by Numbers is a six week course which engages adults in learning to increase their independence and to help improve their health. The course is aimed at adults who are unemployed, who need to improve their literacy and numeracy skills and are interested in learning about healthy cooking and eating. Cooking by Numbers give participants knowledge of cooking jargon, improves communication skills, and helps them to identify and use measures. Built into the exercises each week are measuring tasks for solid and liquid foodstuffs as well as length, width or breadth. Learners can achieve a core skills qualification in Using Numbers: Measuring, by completing the coursework and sitting an assessment. We would expect to see an improvement in their knowledge of healthy eating and cooking as well as an improvement in numeracy from their pre-course level.

Health Issues in the Community is a training programme aimed at increasing community capacity, increasing community participation, and establishing/consolidating community development approaches to tackling inequalities in health. It is ideally suited to help equip local people for the real challenges that they face in developing community responses to health issues and becoming more active citizens. It is an accredited course which takes an in depth look at poverty, and inequality and how this impacts on the health and prospects of

communities. A programme has recently been delivered in Blackburn Partnership Centre.

Anti-Poverty

Scottish Welfare Fund: On behalf of the Scottish Government, the benefits team administers the Scottish Welfare Fund. There are two types of grants: Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants. Crisis Grants are provided where an individual is in a financial emergency and their health and safety is at risk. Community Care Grants are provided to assist qualifying individuals establish or maintain a settled home. Since the start of the Scottish Welfare Fund in 2013/14 West Lothian Council's budget has increased by only £1084 from £1,066,391 to £1,067,475 in 2019/20. The budget to administer the Scottish Welfare Fund does not meet the cost. Funding in 2013/14 was £175,470 compared to £157,814 in 2019/20. West Lothian Council tops up the administration funding from its core budget. The year on year increase in demand has resulted in grants for both Crisis and Community Care being awarded on high priority since March 2018. This means that those that qualify for either grant are only provided with minimal support. West Lothian Council's average Crisis Grant award is £72 and £570 for a Community Care Grant award.

Crisis Grants In 2018/19 there were 7993 applications for a crisis grant. The total number of Crisis Grant awards made across all categories was 4577. The total number of awards made for food was 4526 totalling £233,057. This means that 99% of the applications made for a Crisis Grant include a request for the fund to provide financial support to buy food.

Community Care Grants In 2018/19 there was 2741 applications for a community care grant. The total number of applications that resulted in a Community Care Grant being awarded across all categories was 1308. The total number of household items granted as a result of these awards was 5613: 1736 of these items related to cooking. Items awarded include: cooker; pots and pans; crockery; kitchen utensils; cutlery; microwave. The value of these 1,736 cooking related household items was £126,061.

Given that the Scottish Welfare Fund is at high level, additional resource to be considered for those who are homeless and/or in temporary tenancies to supply a starter pack to help with food insecurity.

The Scottish Welfare Fund is under considerable pressure and £80,000 of one-off funding was agreed by Council Executive on 22 October 2019.

Time Limited Funding: In October 2018, Council Executive agreed time funding to support anti-poverty initiatives.

Community Fridges: community food projects have been able to apply for start-up funding for a community fridge. The fridge complements existing food provision through building capacity to offer perishable goods whilst reducing food waste. Seven fridges have been provided to date. There are community fridges in Ladywell, Riverside, Polbeth and West Lothian Food Banks.

West Lothian Food Bank: The food bank has been supported to move to a new central distribution warehouse. A part-time development worker has been funded to support the Food Bank with compliance, governance and sustainability plans. The Food Bank has a new Board, a five year business plan, an updated website and publicity plan. Successful funding application has meant the employment of a full time warehouse manager, a part time development assistant and a shop assistant. The Food Bank has recently moved into larger shop premises in Whitburn and has a successful on-line presence which is generating income. The Food Bank has introduced an on-line referral system to support front line workers to refer. There are now kettle boxes, overnight bags and this Christmas there will be a 'reverse advent calendar' promotion in order that Christmas Hampers can be given out

over the festive period. All volunteers will be given training in first level budgeting advice to better support those in crisis and to feel confident in referring to more specialist advice. The Food Bank is now aiming to increase footfall at its distribution locations and will be offering soup and a roll, alongside fresh, seasonal fruit and vegetables to augment the dried and ambient goods in the food parcel.

The Big Lunch is a national campaign run by the Eden Project. It aims to bring communities and groups of people together through food to less isolation and loneliness, support community development and to help improve health outcomes. Polbeth community hub received funding to pilot a Big Lunch event which coincided with the launch of their community fridge. 65 people turned up to enjoy a cooked meal, enjoy activities and meet workers from key services in a friendly, informal way. Evaluation has shown that this is an effective, low cost way to engage with those who are considered to be 'hard to reach'.

Support to develop and deliver The Big Lunch in a range of settings with community partners should be considered.

Money Advice

Nearly all of the partners and services signpost those in crisis to help and support however it is not known how many customers follow through on this. There needs to be a change of approach to 'active referring'. Referral to advice needs to be embedded all along the customer journey with check points, nudges and reminders built in to the system. Ensuring that those who are facing food insuecirty are supported to access the financial support is the best way to promote dignity and choice.

Consideration of a food co-ordinator post to develop and deliver a local food action plan which incorporates money advice, benefit entitlement and support.

Housing, Building and Customer services

The service has recently transformed how it works with the Homeless Housing Network Group (HHNG) in engaging with service users. In May, it held the first Big Lunch event in Blackburn Partnership Centre in conjunction with The Larder Cook School, which is a social enterprise based in Livingston which aims to support vulnerable people in West Lothian by providing nutritious food and offer people training opportunities in the catering industry. 16 people from some of the surrounding hotels turned up and were provided with a delicious 2 course meal. The Advice Shop was also present to offer ad hoc support and advice to anyone who needed it. The feedback provided by those who attended was fantastic and the day was a real success. This was followed up by another event in June which was equally successful.

As a result, a Big Lunch has been hosted on a regular basis throughout the remainder of 2019. The Larder has agreed to continue to support the events by providing the catering. It is hoped that these events will continue to be of value to homeless clients and help reduce the isolation that being in emergency / temporary accommodation can bring. The existing members of the HHNG and the staff who have been supporting the group all agree that this method of engaging with service users to reduce social isolation, increase engagement between support services and customers and increase access to advice and other forms of support in a much more meaningful and worthwhile way than previous formats.

Welcome Packs: a new initiative in partnership with West Lothian Food Bank will be launched in autumn 2019. The aim is to provide a welcome pack for homeless and temporary tenancy tenants. The welcome pack would be taken to the customer by their Housing Officer, offering an opportunity to engage with the new tenant, give advice, support and build up a relationship with the new tenant. The Welcome Pack will have a range of tinned and dried goods, store cupboard essentials, tea, coffee, and some basic equipment.

It is anticipated that there will be 300-400 packs given out during the one year pilot.

Social Policy

Through the Health & Social Care Partnership there is a range of health initiatives: Healthy Eating Awards, breastfeeding, maternal health & nutrition, healthy weight. Social policy is responsible for over 1000 meals being delivered in a range of settings including Housing With Care and assisted living developments: Almondvale Gardens, Brucefield House, Colinshiel Court, Cunnigar House, Dickson Court, Holmes Gardens, Norvell Lodge and Rosemount Gardens which also has a café/restaurant open to the public.

Operational Services

Facilities Management: School Meals are offered on a weekly rotation. On line there is information on the menu options for each day, plus recommendations for packed lunches and healthy recipe ideas to use at home. The cost is £2.11 for primary and £2.27 for secondary school pupils. There were 2,489,364 meals served in the 2018/19: Primary 1,575,867 and secondary 913,497. There were a total of 4162 pupils receiving free school meals: 1790 in primary 4 to primary 7 and 2372 in secondary schools. There were 1,282,636 free schools meals in 2017/18. All primary schools have achieved the Soil Association's Bronze Food For Life Award which recognises councils that are serving school meals made from fresh ingredients, using free-range eggs and high-welfare meat, and free from genetically modified ingredients and undesirable additives.

Waste Education team carry out talks and activities on all types of recycling including food waste. In the first 3 quarters of 2019 the team has engaged with over 1300 people at gala days, council events, community groups and schools. Participation in food waste recycling is encouraged, but members of the public are also urged to reduce their food waste.

The team has free recipe cards, measuring spoons, seeds for mixed herbs and rice and spaghetti portion measures to encourage people to cook at home. At events there are beeswax wrap craft sessions. This alternative to cling film helps keep food fresh for longer but is also reusable.

The team offer visits to the recycling plant where West Lothian's food waste is processed so that groups can see first-hand what is involved and have found this to be a good way to encourage recycling.

In the near future, there are Love Food Hate Waste workshops planned: giving practical hints and tips on how to reduce food waste and will make a 'Waste Free Lunch Loan Box' available for school groups to borrow focusing on having the correct portion sizes and reducing packaging waste from food.

The WLC website gives information on what food can be recycled as well as information for restaurants on the Zero Waste Scotland campaign 'good to go' which encourages people to ask to take left overs home from restaurant meals. The website also links to the Love Food Hate Waste website which contains a huge amount of information, advice and downloadable content for schools, businesses and the general public.

WLC is changing the way it collects food waste. From October 2019 food and garden waste will be collected together in the brown bin, it is hoped that this will streamline the recycling service in West Lothian, making it easier to recycle food waste and increase participation in the service.

Appendix 2

Armadale and Blackridge

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact number	Website address
Community meals	'Food for All' project Free to attend Open to all Online referral	The Larder Cook School	Armadale Partnership Centre 7 North Street Armadale EH48 3QB	Thurs 4-5.30pm	01506 282278	www.thelardercookschool.org.uk/armadale
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Voucher obtained by local referring partners	West Lothian Food Bank	Armadale Partnership Centre 7 North Street Armadale EH48 3QB	Thurs 4pm-6pm	01501 229307	www.westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Community garden		Beechbrae Community Garden and Wood	Beechbrae Wood Heights Rd, Blackridge EH48 3SW	Friday 1-3 pm		http://beechbrae.co.uk/beechbrae-garden/
Community garden		Dale Hub	Unit 26 Bathville Business Centre Armadale Industrial Estate Armadale EH48 2ND		01501 733248	https://www.fcdwl.org/our-projects/the-dale-hub/
Community fridge/pantry				Mon-Fri 10-4 pm		
Nutrition and cooking classes				Wed 1-2.45pm		
Food events throughout the year		Mayfield Community House	198 Mayfield Dr, Armadale, Bathgate EH48 2JL		01501 733248	

Whitburn and Blackburn

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact number	Website address
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	West Lothian Food Bank Whitburn distribution point	Pentecostal Church Reveston Lane Whitburn EH47 8HJ	Mon & Wednesdays 1.30pm-3.30pm Fri 1.30pm-4.30pm	01501 229307	www.westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	Blackburn Parish Church	41 East Main Street, Blackburn EH47 7QR	Tues 14:00 – 16:00	01501 229307	
Community garden	Open to all. Opportunity to develop gardening skills/get qualification	Community Action Blackburn	Blackburn Partnership Centre	Tuesday 9.30-2.45		
Healthy eating		Blackburn Family Centre	Trindleyknowe Building, Bathgate Road, Blackburn	Tues 9-11		http://www.blackburnfamilycentre.co.uk
Community garden	Partnership with Inclusion and Wellbeing Service	Whitburn CDT	Blaeberryhill Park Whitburn		01501 748708	http://whitburncdt.org.uk/
Edible verges		Redway Place Park				

Fauldhouse and Breich Valley

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact number	Website address
Community meals	Brunch Club Seniors Set Menu Over 65 year olds only 1 course £1.50 2 courses £2.50 3 courses £3.50	West Calder Community Centre	Dickson St, West Calder EH55 8DZ	Every day 8.30am to 2pm	01506 872931	www.westcalder.org/brunch-club-opens/
Emergency Food Provision		West Calder Community Centre	Dickson Street West Calder EH55 8DZ	Wednesday 2.30-4.30 pm		www.westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Community fridge/pantry	Open to all FREE or make a donation	Polbeth HUB	Polbeth HUB Polbeth Road Polbeth EH55 8SD	Mon-Fri 10am -3pm	01506 536123	https://www.facebook.com/PolbethCommunityHub/
Community meals	Family Food with Fun Pupils of St Mary's Primary School and their parents/siblings only FREE	St Mary's Primary School/Polbeth HUB	10 Polbeth Road, Polbeth EH55 8SR	4 sessions per term	01506 871520	wlstmaryspolps@westlothian.org.uk
Community meals	Soup Tuesday Open to all 50p per bowl	Polbeth HUB	Polbeth HUB Polbeth Road Polbeth EH55 8SD	Every Tuesday 12.00 noon	01506 536123	https://www.facebook.com/PolbethCommunityHub/
Community garden		Polbeth & West Calder Community Garden	Parkhead Farm, Limefield Road, West Calder EH55 8BQ	Mon/Wed/Fri 10am -1pm	07706120889	http://polbethandwestcaldergarden.weebly.com/
Other	£65-£130 per year	Harburn Allotment	Off B7008 West Calder EH55 8RX			https://www.foodbevg.com/GB/West-Calder/1548787888712873/Harburn-Allotments

Other		West Calder Allotments	Behind Northfield Cottages West Calder EH55 8EE			
Community meals	Lunch Club	Salvation Army	2 Blackfaulds Place Fauldhouse EH47 9AS	Every Thursday 12.30pm	01501 771720	https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/fauldhouse
community fridge/pantry	Pennies Pantry £1 per person or £2 per family per month to join All items less than £1	West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network and Stoneyburn and Bents Future Vision Group	75 Main Street, Stoneyburn, EH47 8BY	Wednesdays 1pm – 3.30pm and Fridays 9.30am – 12.30pm	01501 771775	https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Community/Pennies-Pantry-399997124131018/
community meals	Stoneyburn Lunch Club Open to anyone aged 65+ or with a disability £1.70 per day. Meals subsidised by Social Work Dep		75 Main Street, Stoneyburn	Tuesdays and Thursdays 11.30am – 1.30pm	01501 762515	https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/8196/Stoneyburn-Lunch-Club
community fridge/pantry	Pennies Pantry £1 per person or £2 per family per month to join All items less than £1	West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network	Fauldhouse Partnership Centre	Mondays 1.30- 3.30		
community meals		West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network	Stoneyburn Community centre/Addiewell community wing		01501 771775	http://wlfin.org.uk/our-projects.html
Nutrition cooking classes		West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network	Holiday times		01501 771775	http://wlfin.org.uk/our-projects.html

Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact	Website address
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	West Lothian Food Bank	Broxburn Parish Church, Church St, Broxburn EH52 5EL	Tue & Thurs 12.30pm - 2.30pm	01506 337560	www.westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Food growing	Auldcathie Growing Area	Winchburgh Growing Group	Auldcathie District Park Winchburgh			https://www.winchburghcgg.co.uk/ Email: admin@WinchburghCGG.co.uk
	Edible planters Open to all FREE		Various locations throughout Winchburgh			
Food growing		Winchburgh Allotments	Craigton Place Winchburgh Broxburn EH52 6RW			
Nutrition / Cooking classes	Cook and Craft Club	Broxburn Family Centre	1-3 Henderson Place Broxburn EH52 6EY	Wednesday 9.15am – 11.30am	01506 857158	https://www.fcdwl.org/our-projects/broxburn-family-centre/

Bathgate

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact	Website address
Emergency food provision	Foodbank Bathgate residents only FREE	Bathgate High Church	Gideon St, Bathgate EH48 4HB	Tues 10am - 12noon	01506 650517	www.bathgatehigh.com/community/food-bank
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	West Lothian Foodbank	St. Columba's Episcopal Church 79 Glasgow Road Bathgate EH48 2AJ	Tues 2.30-4.30pm	01501 229307	https://westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
			Boghall Church of Scotland Elizabeth Drive Boghall eh48 1SH	Thurs 1pm -3pm		
Community Fridge	Pennies Pantry £1 per person or £2 per family per month to join All items less than £1	West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network/ Boghall Drop in Centre	Boghall Drop In Centre, Marina Drive, Boghall, Bathgate, EH48 1SR		01506 283201	www.bdic.org.uk
Community garden	Community fruit orchard/growing area in public park	Friends of Kirkton Park				
Community garden	development of garden on wasteground near school	Youth Action Project/ Southdale primary				
Community meals	Open to young people/parents café/cooking classes	Children 1st	Chill Out Zone 7 Gardners Lane Bathgate		01506 652436	

Livingston North

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact	Website address
Community pantry Community Meals	Suggested donation Food/drink for young people attending	The Vennie	Knightsridge Adventure Project Knightsridge East Road Livingston EH54 8RA	Tuesday 2-4 pm	01506 432 094	https://www.thevennie.co.uk/
Community meals	£2 minimum charge for a 2 course meal	Oasis Christian Centre	Fells Rigg, Livingston	Thurs 12.30-2.00 pm	01506 497012	http://www.oasischristiancentre-livingston.org.uk/
Food growing	Allotment	Deans Meadow Allotment	Hardie Road Deans Livingston EH54 8JY			https://deansmeadow.wordpress.com/
Food growing	Allotment	Killandean Allotments	Kirkton Campus Off Simpson Parkway Livingston EH54 7BH			https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/foodgrowing
Emergency Food Provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	West Lothian Foodbank	Livingston Old Parish Church, 4a Main Street Deans, EH54 8BE	Tuesday 12.30-2.30		https://westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/

Livingston South

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact	Website address
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	West Lothian Foodbank	Dedridge Baptist Church 24 Quentin Rise, Dedridge, Livingston EH54 6NS	Mon, Wed & Fri 12.30pm - 2.30pm	01501 229307	https://westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Community meals	£2.50 charge	Dedridge Baptist Church	24 Quentin Rise, Dedridge, Livingston EH54 6NS	Thurs 12.30- 2.00	01506 414797	www.dedridgebaptistchurch.org.uk
Community garden		Murieston Community Garden	Adjacent to Murieston Water			https://murieston.communitycouncil.org.uk/education/community-garden-project/
Community garden	Variable opening hours/pre-arranged visits/events or open days only	Crofthead Farm Community Centre	Templar Rise Dedridge EH54 6DG		01506 775991	https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/org/public-profile/62593
Community meals	Lunch club £3 charge	Ladywell Neighbourhood Network	28 Heatherbank Ladywell Livingston	Monday 12.30	01506 437746	http://www.ladywellnn.co.uk/
Food growing	Growing Together Gardening Group			1st & 3rd Tuesday 10-12		
Cooking classes	Community cafes, cook school and training academy	The Larder Cook School	6 Brewster Square, Livingston EH54 9JP		01506 412819	www.thelarderschool.org.uk
Community fridge/pantry	Low cost groceries	Lanthorn Community Shop	Kenilworth Rise, Livingston EH54 6JL	Wednesday from 11.15am	01506 777707	https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/6398/Lanthorn-Community-Centre
Community meals	Free soup and roll, open to all West Lothian College students	West Lothian College	Almondvale Crescent, Livingston, West Lothian EH54 7EP	Mon- Fri 11am – 1pm	01506 427701	https://www.westlothiansa.co.uk/2019/01/23/free-soup-and-roll-for-all-west-lothian-college-students-2018-19/

East Livingston and East Calder

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact	Website address
Community fridge/pantry	Riverside Community Fridge Open to all FREE	Almond Housing Association	Riverside Community Wing 44 Etive Walk, Craigshill, Livingston EH54 5AB		01506 431430	https://www.almondha.org.uk/introducing-the-riverside-community-fridge/
Community meals	Open to all FREE	Kirknewton & East Calder Parish Church	Station Road Kirknewton EH27 8BJ	1st and 3rd Thursdays at 11.30 am at East Calder church hall		http://knec4jesus.org.uk/index.php
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required FREE	West Lothian Foodbank	St. Andrew's RC Parish Church 126 Victoria Street Craigshill Livingston EH54 5BJ	Tuesdays 4pm- 6pm	01501 229307	https://westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Community Meals	3 course meal, bingo and quiz £5.50	Craigshill Good Neighbourhood Network		Tuesday 1.00-3.00 pm	01506 442093	https://www.craigshillgoodneighbournetwork.co.uk/activities

Linlithgow

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Address	Opening Times	Contact	Website address
Emergency food provision	Limited to 3x vouchers in 6 months Referral required	West Lothian Foodbank	St Micheals Parish Chruch Kirkgate, Linlithgow EH49 7AL	Tues & Fri 10.30pm - 12.30pm	01501 229307	https://westlothian.foodbank.org.uk/locations/
Food growing	Allotment	Oakwell Allotments	Oakwell Allotments Nr Park Bistro Linlithgow EH49 6NB			https://linlithgowallotments.org.uk/
Food growing	Allotment	Bridgend Allotments	Bridgend Allotments Auldhill Road Bridgend EH49 6NE			https://www.westlothian.gov.uk/foodgrowing
Food growing	Allotment	Rouken Glen Allotments	Rouken Glen Allotments Rouken Glen Garden Centre Linlithgow EH49 7LZ			https://www.facebook.com/rouken-glengardencentrelinlithgow/
Community garden	Community orchard at Excite leisure/ Beechwood/ Vennel & lochside	Transition Linlithgow	Unit 5 Braehead Business Units Braehead Road Linlithgow EH49 6EP		015065 844182	https://www.transitionlinlithgow.org.uk/gardening-group.html
Community meals	First Step Café	First Step	Longcroft Hall Linlithgow EH49 7BH	Tues 12 – 2pm	firststepdevelopment@gmail.com	https://mylinlithgow.com/directory/listing/community-groups/first-step-cafe/

NHS Lothian

Project Name	Aim	Activities	Target group
Breastfeeding Support (Programme for Government funding)	To reduce the drop off in breastfeeding rates within the first 2 weeks of life (as per CPP target) and up to 8 weeks.	Proactive breastfeeding support is offered to new parents after birth. Peer support for breastfeeding is available within the wards at St John's Hospital who make contact with parents before leaving hospital and continue to support in the community.	New parents
Infant Feeding Advisor (Health Improvement Funding)	Supports community services to maintain UNICEF accreditation	The post holder is increasing amount of breastfeeding welcome scheme with a focus on regeneration areas by carrying out training of community staff, orientation of staff to appropriate policy and supporting practical skills.	Community staff
Kids n' kin: Kidzeco (Health Improvement Funding)	Reduce food inequalities in the early years.	This project has just started. Main focus is on weaning in the early years. Project will provide support and advice on weaning including reducing the cost, appropriate timing (reduces health problems such as diabetes and obesity in later life) practical activities on making your own baby food, finger food and reducing food waste. The project is also developing an ante natal group which will also cover: finance, infant feeding, health walks, baby box, bonding with baby, sleep/bathing demonstration.	Families (including extended family) with pre-school children.

West Lothian Wide

Type of Initiative	Details	Organisation	Website address
Food distribution	Delivers groceries and fresh food to the elderly who can no longer manage independently through age, ill health, frailty or disability.	The Food Train	https://www.thefoodtrain.co.uk/index.php/contact-us/local-branches
Food sharing	Local neighbourhood food-sharing project that connects people who love cooking, and who are happy to share an extra portion of home cooked food, with an older neighbour who would appreciate a freshly prepared meal and a friendly chat.	Meal Makers	https://www.mealmakers.org.uk/Home/About
Community meals	<p>Food For All West Lothian: The project offers weekly dining experiences for individuals and families, who have been impacted by welfare reform, are on low incomes, isolated and who are experiencing food insecurity. Ingredients are mainly sourced from local supermarkets via the Fare Share Cloud to prepare healthy and nutritious meals.</p> <p>A weekly dining experience is available and the plan is to expand to a range of venues across West Lothian with a target of supporting 300 people, provide over 1000 meals and serve 50 dining events within a 12 month period.</p> <p>Diners are referred to Food for All from a range of local partners. To date there have been 45 dining experiences serving 875 people.</p> <p>The Larder provide skills and employability training to young people experiencing barriers to enter into the hospitality industry. Work experience and qualifications are gained through working in community cafes: Armadale, Broxburn (Strathbrock), Fauldhouse, Calderwood, Livingston</p>	The Larder Cook School	https://www.thelardercookschool.org.uk/food-for-all-project
Food distribution	<p>FareShare Central & South East Scotland is run by Cyrenians Good Food Programme, a social enterprise with a mission to bring good food to people experiencing disadvantage, isolation, poverty or homelessness. It is a national network redistributing surplus food from producers and suppliers (like supermarkets and bakeries) to organisations working with vulnerable people (such as residential homeless projects and community youth groups).</p> <p>FareShare works with supermarkets and local providers: currently these include: Cyrenians Farm and Community Shop, Polbeth Community Hub, Donaldsons trust, the Larder School, Deans Under 5 community centre, Addiwell Prison Visitor Centre, Knightsride Adventure Project</p>	Cyrenians FareShare	https://cyrenians.scot/community-and-food/good-food/fareshare/

Food distribution	Local Supermarkets: As well as distributing surplus food via FareShare, providing collection points for West Lothian Food Banks, nearly all the local supermarkets have arrangements with organisations locally to come and get perishable goods coming to the end of their shelf life	Local supermarkets	
Community meals	Contact the Elderly: charity which organises tea parties for elderly people in volunteer's homes - particular focus on 75+	Contact the Elderly	https://www.contact-the-elderly.org.uk/
Community meals	Dementia Cafes: running in a number of locations in West Lothian providing, tea, coffee, homebaking	Alzheimer Scotland	https://www.alzscot.org/
Food growing	A large number of schools have containers/gardens/growing projects	Local schools	
Community meals	Nearly all the churches have regular coffee mornings with home baking	Local churches	
Nutrition/ cooking classes	A number of initiatives related to food: healthy weight, wean the weans, get cooking and maternal and infant nutrition	West Lothian Social and Health Care Partnership	http://www.westlothianhcp.org.uk/
National Initiatives	Big Dig, Big Lunch, Menu for Change, Love Food, Hate Waste are all available and could be used in a local context		
National Initiative	<p>Best Start Foods is paid to help you buy healthy foods for you and your baby:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plain cow's milk • first infant formula • fresh, frozen or tinned fruit or vegetables • fresh or dried pulses like lentils, beans, peas and barley • fresh eggs <p>Amounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £17 every 4 weeks during pregnancy • £34 every 4 weeks from your child being born up until they're a 1 year old • £17 every 4 weeks between the ages of 1 and 3 	Social Security Scotland	https://www.mygov.scot/best-start-grant-best-start-foods/
Nutrition/ cooking	Courses via assisted programmes to help students gain key life skills	West Lothian College	https://www.west-lothian.ac.uk/

classes	including healthy eating and living independently. Professional cookery courses, Food science and technology, evening class provision offering a range of cooking opportunities including cake craft, healthy cooking, REHIS certificate		
Food distribution	Similar to the Food Bank except this is a Pet Food Bank. No referral needed.		https://en-gb.facebook.com/pages/category/Community/West-Lothian-Pet-Food-Bank-175895469436762/
Education Establishments	There are food larders/food sharing in a number of schools in west Lothian. Food is usually for the families of those attending the school		



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 notes:

1. The results of the horizon scan for the UK, Scotland, West Lothian and West Lothian Council;
2. That there have been no changes to the 2020/21 to 2022/23 budget model since the previous update provided in September 2019 and that the council's estimated budget gap for the three years to 2022/23 is £6.730 million;
3. That officers are undertaking a detailed review of the budget model, in advance of the detailed three year revenue budgets being presented to Council, to take account of changes in circumstances and updated forecasts;

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) | <p>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.</p> <p>Leaving EU membership could have significant implications for West Lothian, the local economy, communities and the council.</p> |
| 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)	<p>Scottish Government grant funding is not sufficient to meet increasing costs and demand for services.</p> <p>Based on agreed budget assumptions, the council faces a significant revenue budget gap of £37.859 million over the three year period 2020/21 to 2022/23. Taking into account assumed changes, total savings measures would become £31.129 million. This leaves an estimated budget gap of £6.730 million for 2020/21 to 2022/23.</p>
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.

This report provides an update on key developments and potential implications following the UK referendum vote to leave the EU in 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. 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 was 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.

The UK had been scheduled to leave the European Union on 29 March 2019. However at a meeting of the European Council on 10 April 2019, the UK and EU27 agreed to extend Article 50 until 31 October 2019.

On 17 October, a Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration on the framework for the future relationship between the UK and the EU was agreed, setting out a broad partnership

with a free trade agreement at its core. On 22 October, the UK House of Commons approved the second reading of the Bill which is intended to implement the agreement in UK law. On 28 October 2020, the UK's EU membership was extended by up to a further three months to 31 January 2020.

The 2019 United Kingdom general election will be held under the provisions of the Early Parliamentary General Election Act 2019 on Thursday 12 December 2019 and it is likely that there will be no further developments in relation to EU membership until the formation of a UK government after the election.

UK Economic Update

Debt and Borrowing

The most recent forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) on 13 March 2019 provided updated borrowing forecasts. The OBR forecast public sector net borrowing of £41.9 billion for 2017/18, then £22.8 billion in 2018/19, £29.3 billion in 2019/20, £21.2 billion in 2020/21 and £17.6 billion in 2021/22. Public sector net borrowing has fallen over the past decade, from its post-crisis peak of 9.9 per cent of GDP (£153.1 billion) in 2009-10 to 1.1 per cent of GDP (£22.8 billion) in 2018/19 on our latest forecast.

Public Sector Net Debt is expected to fall from 84.7% of GDP in 2017/18 to 83.3% of GDP in 2018/19 before falling further to 74.9% in 2021/22.

Updated forecasts for public sector net borrowing and debt will be produced by the OBR in due course.

Economic Growth

The most recent update from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in October 2019 was the World Economic Outlook. Growth estimates have been revised down for the UK with the IMF expecting growth to slow from 1.4% in 2018 to 1.2% in 2019, and increase to 1.4% in 2020. The projection reflects the combination of a negative impact from weaker global growth and ongoing Brexit uncertainty and a positive impact from higher public spending announced in the recent Spending Review. The economy contracted in the second quarter, and recent indicators point to weak growth in the third quarter. The forecast assumes an orderly exit from the European Union followed by a gradual transition to the new regime.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released economic growth figures on 30 September 2019 with growth estimating to have fallen by 0.2% in Quarter 2 (April to June) 2019, unrevised from the previous estimate. When compared with the same quarter a year ago, UK GDP increased by 1.3% to Quarter 2 2019; down from 2.1% to Quarter 1 (January to March) 2019. Services provided the only positive contribution to growth in the output approach to GDP, with growth slowing to 0.1% in the latest quarter.

In November 2019, the Bank of England increased its UK growth forecast from 1.0% in 2019 Quarter 4 to 1.6% in 2020 Quarter 4, 1.8% in 2021 Quarter 4 and 2.1% in 2022 Quarter 4. Their forecast for UK growth shows it remains a little below potential in the near term.

Exports and Inward Investment

In the immediate wake of the EU referendum in 2016, 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 12 November 2019, the pound was \$1.28 against the dollar and €1.16

against the euro.

The British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) published its Quarterly Economic Survey in October 2019. The latest survey found that UK economic conditions weakened in the third quarter amid a significant deterioration in manufacturing sector activity. In the manufacturing sector, there was a marked downward shift in many indicators in the third quarter. The balance of firms reporting increased domestic sales was at its weakest since Quarter 4 2011 and domestic orders entered negative territory for the first time in seven years, indicating more businesses saw a decrease than increase. The balance of firms reporting increased export sales dropped to its lowest level since Quarter 4 2015 and the balance for export orders went negative and stood at its lowest level since Quarter 3 2009.

Inflation

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), was 1.7% in the year to September 2019, unchanged from August 2019. The largest downward contributions to change in the 12 month inflation rate, between August and September 2019, came from motor fuels, second-hand cars, and electricity, gas and other fuels. These downward movements were offset by upward movements from furniture, household appliances, hotel overnight stays, and from recreation and culture items.

The price of goods sold by UK manufacturers, the Producer Price Inflation, was 1.2% in the year to September 2019, down from 1.7% in August 2019. The growth rate of prices for materials and fuels used in the manufacturing process was negative 2.8% on the year to September 2019, down from negative 0.9% in August 2019. Clothing, textiles and leather products provided the largest upward contribution to the annual rate of output inflation. Crude oil provided the largest downward contribution to the annual rate of input inflation.

The Bank of England November 2019 Inflation Report stated that CPI inflation has been close to 2% in recent months, averaging at 1.8% during 2019 Quarter 3. Over the past year or so, inflation has fallen, accounted for by weaker goods price inflation, which in turn has been driven partly by the fading impact from sterling's past depreciation. In contrast, core services price inflation has increased. That is consistent with a rise in domestic price pressures, and is likely to reflect the gradual pass-through of the strong pickup in pay growth over the past few years.

Interest Rates

The Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted by a majority of seven to two, to maintain Bank Rate at 0.75% on 6 November 2019. Monetary policy could respond in either direction to changes in the economic outlook in order to ensure a sustainable return of inflation to the 2% target. The Committee will, among other factors, monitor closely the responses of companies and households to Brexit developments as well as the prospects for a recovery in global growth. If global growth fails to stabilise or if Brexit uncertainties remain entrenched, monetary policy may need to reinforce the expected recovery in UK GDP growth and inflation. Further ahead, provided these risks do not materialise and the economy recovers broadly in line with the MPC's latest projections, some modest tightening of policy, at a gradual pace and to a limited extent, may be needed to maintain inflation sustainably at the target.

Unemployment

The latest figures published on 15 October 2019 show the UK unemployment rate was estimated at 3.9% over the period June 2019 to August 2019, this is lower than a year earlier (4.0%) but 0.1 percentage points higher than the previous quarter. There were an estimated 32. This annual increase was driven mainly by women (up 202,000 on the year), those aged 50 years and over (up 287,000 on the year) and full-time workers (up 263,000 on the year).

In March 2019, the OBR updated their Economic and Fiscal Outlook. This shows the 2017 unemployment forecast as 4.4%, with forecasts of 4.1% in 2018, 4.1% in 2019, 4.1% in 2020 and 4.1% in 2021.

House Prices

The latest ONS House Price Index published on 16 October 2019 showed that in the year to August 2019 average house prices in the UK increased by 1.3%, up from 0.8% in July 2019 but remain below the increases seen this time last year. Over the past three years, there has been a general slowdown 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 contracted by 0.3% in quarter two of 2019, with annual growth slipping to 0.7%. It is estimated that based upon forecasts prior to the EU referendum, the economy is around 2% smaller (equivalent to £3 billion) than it could potentially have been. Consumer confidence and risk appetite amongst businesses remains weak. Business investment in the UK has now been negative in five of the past six quarters. UK growth is faster than in Scotland, it is also well below trend at 1.2%

Unemployment

The Scottish Government's latest Labour Market Briefing was published in October 2019. This showed that between June 2019 and August 2019, the unemployment rate was 4.1%, with 112,000 people unemployed. There were 2.636 million people employed, meaning the rate of employment is 74.3%.

House Prices

House prices in Scotland increased by 1.6% in the year to August 2019, up from 1.5% in the year to July 2019, with the average house price in Scotland now £155,000.

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 2.8% for September 2019 which is lower than the Scottish rate (3.2%) and the same as the British rate (2.8%). It is slightly higher than the rate in September 2018 (2.1%). Youth unemployment figures for September were 705 (4.9%) compared with 695 (4.8%) in June 2019.

House Completions

The number of house completions in September 2019 was 82. This is a slight decrease in the figure from September 2018 which was 88. The 2019/20 third quarter completions were 266 compared to 257 in 2018/19.

D.5 HORIZON SCAN – WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

Economic implications of the decision to leave the EU remain highly uncertain and may not be clear for some time. Brexit affects the future funding of public services through the impact it has on the overall economy as public finances, such as tax receipts, are highly sensitive to economic performance.

In addition, whilst the council only has funding confirmed for 2019/20, it is clear from forecasts and commentators that public sector funding is likely to remain constrained. The constrained financial outlook in the Scottish Government's MTFs and the commitments to health funding, all suggest that non protected areas, such as local government, will continue to receive constrained core funding settlements.

As the council has an approved financial plan for the period to 2022/23, 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 2020/21 to 2022/23.

D.6 BUDGET PLANNING SCENARIO AND CHANGES TO THE BUDGET MODEL

The updated revenue financial plan for 2019/20 to 2022/23 was approved by Council on 19 February 2019. As outlined in the last quarterly horizon scan report to Partnership and Resources PDSP in September 2019, a number of potential changes to the agreed budget reduction measures are proposed for budget assumption purposes and will be incorporated in the revenue budget report to Council in early 2020.

The overall forecast budget gap is £37.859 million. After applying revised revenue budget savings of £30.532 million and updated eligibility and contribution savings of £597,000, this leaves a balance to be found of £6.730 million. Officers continue to monitor announcements and other information to review and refine the council's budget model assumptions.

The Settlement and Distribution Group (SDG) is an officer group that considers how funding is allocated across local government and is focused on ensuring that as far as possible allocations are based on robust formulas and indicators. The SDG have recently recognised that the distribution methodology for some funding streams is no longer fit for future and there was unanimous agreement that there should be a review of some indicators to ensure the formula remains appropriate. On that basis they have proposed changes to distribution of former ring fenced grants and funding streams that were allocated based on expenditure rather than distribution formula. These changes have had an impact on funding allocations for 2019/20 and will continue to create volatility in the settlement for 2020/21. There will be winners and losers for each change, however based on the changes it is anticipated that this may have an adverse impact on the 2020/21 budget settlement for the council. Officers are awaiting information on the date of the

Scottish Budget and the Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) and, given the uncertainty over the content and timing of the UK and Scottish budgets, officers will continue to liaise closely with COSLA on any developments and report on these to elected members.

D.7 HORIZON SCAN BUDGET MODEL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

There are a number of risks and uncertainties in the long term financial assumptions underlying the budget model. These include the risk that the increase in costs associated with demand led services, such as social care, is greater than assumed and the emergence of policy or legislative changes by the UK or Scottish governments which restrict the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally.

The nature of forecasting means it is challenging to identify with any certainty expenditure pressures and income. In addition, there are more general risks and uncertainties which will continue to be monitored. Some of the more general risks and uncertainties are:

- Economic growth being less than forecast resulting in further public spending reductions.
- Funding not being provided to fully cover the costs of introducing new legislation.
- Policy changes by the UK or Scottish governments which restrict the council's flexibility to decide how to deliver services locally.
- Ring fencing of grant funding, constraining how local authorities allocate resources.
- Changes to local government remits with uncertainty for service provision and funding.

In addition there continues to be a high degree of uncertainty around the UK's position in the EU. At this point it is difficult to assess what impact the various permutations could have for the council specifically and for public funding more widely, however the council continues to keep all potential scenarios under review.

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. The UK, Scottish, West Lothian and council position will continue to 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. In particular, officers are closely monitoring any developments around the timing and content of the UK and Scottish Budgets and the Local Government Finance Settlement, and how these could impact on the council's financial position.

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

19 November 2019



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

SOCIAL SECURITY, BENEFITS AND WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

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; 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.• 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 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 including the introduction of Universal Credit (UC). The full UK wide roll out of Universal Credit has been subject to significant alteration to timescales resulting in the estimated completion date now being December 2023. West Lothian went live with UC Full Service on 16 May 2018.

Scottish Government's new Social Security Scotland agency will take over the administration of a number of welfare benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions. It is expected that the transfer will be complete by 2024. Details of the welfare benefits are noted under section D.6 of this report.

D.2 Discretionary Housing Payment Fund

On 1 April 2017 funding and responsibility for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) transferred to Scottish Government while local authorities continue to administer the payments. The 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. The Scottish Government reimburse councils for the full amount to mitigate the impact of the bedroom tax.

In 2018/19 total DHP awarded was **£2,433,097**

Funding arrangements for DHP for 2019/20 consist of three main categories, 'bedroom tax mitigation', 'other DHPs' and 'DHP administration'.

The funding for 'bedroom tax mitigation' follows the same approach as in 2018/19 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 2019/20, as calculated by the Scottish Government, is £2,093,955. 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 2019/20.

Funding across Scotland for the category 'other DHPs' is the same as in 2018/19, however the allocation across local authorities and the three streams of funding,

Core, Benefit Cap and Local Housing Allowance varied. West Lothian's allocation for 'other DHPs' for 2019/2010 is detailed below;

Core DHP	£45,633
Local Housing Allowance	£42,257
Benefit Cap	£209,218
Total	£297,108

DHP spend to 1 November 2019 is summarised as follows:

	Number of Awards	Spend to date £
Benefit Cap	104	108,876
Bedroom Tax	4018	1,459,897
Local Housing Allowance /Combination	352	93,984
Total	4474	1,662,757

Funding for administrative costs, based on the number of claimants affected by the bedroom tax, local housing allowance and benefit cap, is £43,472 for 2019/20.

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.

In 2018/19 total spend in West Lothian for Scottish Welfare Fund was **£1,081,000**.

The Scottish Government confirmed SWF funding for 2019/20 is 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 does not cover the costs of providing this service.

Priority levels have remained at high for both Community Care and Crisis Grants from April 2019. At the Council Executive meeting on 22 October 2019 an additional £80,000 of council funding was allocated to the SWF; this has meant that the priority level has been reduced to medium and will be reviewed monthly throughout the remainder of the financial year.

The 2019/20 SWF spend to 30 September 2019 is summarised as follows:

	Number of Awards	Expenditure £'000
Crisis Grants	2329	167
Community Care Grants	682	381
Total	3011	548

D.4 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction

The administration of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction is a key function of the Anti-Poverty Service. Despite the ongoing roll out of Universal Credit 10,957

households are currently in receipt of Housing Benefit and 14,551 households are currently in receipt of Council Tax Reduction.

New claims for Housing Benefit in 2018/19 were processed on average within 13 days of receipt. Department for Work and Pensions statistics show this as the best performance achieved by a Scottish local authority with the Scottish average days to process being 20 days.

Housing Benefit audit requirements outlines that processes are subject to a robust checking regime to ensure accuracy of decision making. A total of 1565 checks of Housing Benefit payment were performed in 2018/19, an accuracy rate of 97% was achieved.

D.5 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 does impact on 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 roll out timetable for Universal Credit migration will be delivered slowly and carefully with limited numbers. The process will start in July 2019 as planned with up to 10,000 claimants, 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 completed by the end of 2023.

Although UC is a reserved matter, in June 2017 the Scottish Government laid 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, as at May 2019 1395 households in West Lothian had utilised this flexibility. and:
- Giving the option of paying the Housing Support (rent) element direct to the landlord, to minimise rent arrears, as at May 2019 758 households in West Lothian had utilised this flexibility.

The latest UC Official Statistics published by the DWP on 16 July 2019 state that, as at June 2019 a total of 6688 people in West Lothian are on UC. This shows an increase of 884 from the position reported in March 2019. 4,949 of these UC claimants are not in employment with 1,739 in employment.

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

The Scotland Act, includes provision 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 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.

The Scottish Government is 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 within current local partners' offices. In West Lothian, discussions are underway to co-locate within the Bathgate Partnership Centre. It is envisaged that the Social Security local team will have a base in the Partnership Centre but will look to offer drop-in sessions and appointments across the county. Social Security are working towards having new staff recruited by January 2020 and thereafter propose to start delivering from summer 2020 onwards.

The latest published statistics from the Social Security agency, published in September 2019, provided the following update:

Carer's Allowance Supplement – Since launching in September 2018, 235,405 Carer's Allowance Supplement payments have been made to 91,550 carers giving a total expenditure since launch of £52.5 million.

Best Start Grant - From December 2018 to June 2019 43,260 awards have been made, 15,480 Pregnancy and Baby Payments, 17,235 Early Learning Payments and 10,185 School Age payments totalling £12.9 million.

D.7 Working age benefits freeze to end

Work and Pensions Secretary Therese Coffey announced that the freeze on working age benefits, including Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowance, will end from April 2020. No official confirmation has been received from the Department for Work and Pensions due to pre-election period constraints this is unlikely to be received until after Thursday 12th December.

Analysis by the Resolution Foundation published on 16th October 2019 identified that working age benefits will increase by 1.7%.

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, continue to be addressed.

The results of this work will 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
22 July 2019



PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KEEP SAFE INITIATIVE

REPORT BY HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROPERTY SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Panel with an update on the implementation of the Keep Safe Initiative at a range of council facilities across West Lothian.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel notes the progress made by officers working in partnership with Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity to implement the Keep Safe Initiative at a range of council facilities across West Lothian.

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)	None.
VII	Consideration at PDSP	Partnership and Resources PDSP on 1 February 2019.

VIII Other consultations

Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

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 the 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.

Partnership and Resources PDSP on 1 February 2019 subsequently noted that officers would work with partners in Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity to explore opportunities for establishing Keep Safe Places at the following council locations:

- 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

D.2 CURRENT POSITION

Police Scotland has provided training to public-facing council staff at the above locations and, with the exception of East Calder Partnership Centre and the West Lothian Civic Centre, each of those buildings has now been confirmed as an approved Keep Safe Place.

East Calder Partnership Centre has different opening hours and access arrangements from the other named council buildings. It was therefore considered inappropriate to promote that location as a designated Safe Place when unrestricted public access is not continuously available.

Training is currently being arranged for staff at the West Lothian Civic Centre and it is envisaged that this location will be confirmed as an approved Keep Safe location by 31 December 2019.

The opportunity has been taken to train council staff at the Almondbank Centre in Craigshill, Livingston and that building has now been added to the original list as an additional Keep Safe location.

The introduction of the Keep Safe Initiative has been welcomed by staff, however initial feedback indicates that use of the scheme by members of the public has thus far been limited. A general lack of awareness of the project has been cited as a major contributory factor. Officers have therefore undertaken to work with Police Scotland and the I Am Me Charity to better promote the initiative at each Keep Safe location and across our communities generally.

Representatives from West Lothian Leisure have also confirmed their support for the Keep Safe Initiative and have undertaken to work with Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity to establish Keep Safe Places at suitable Xcite locations. For operational reasons, implementation of that exercise was deferred whilst West Lothian Leisure finalised its new business plan during 2019. It is however anticipated that Keep Safe Places will be established at suitable Xcite locations early in 2020.

E. CONCLUSION

The Keep Safe initiative can make a significant difference to the lives of vulnerable members of our community in times of need and distress. In support of that initiative, officers have worked in partnership with Police Scotland and the I Am Me charity to establish approved Keep Safe Places at seven key council locations across the county. The West Lothian Civic Centre will be added to that list by 31 December 2019.

Officers will continue to work with our partners to publicise and promote this initiative as widely as possible to raise awareness and encourage greater use across our communities.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Keep Safe Initiative - West Lothian Council 22 January 2019

Keep Safe Initiative - Partnership and Resources PDSP 1 February 2019

Appendices/Attachments: None

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Donald Forrest, Head of Finance and Property Services

Date of meeting: 6 December 2019

**PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL
WORKPLAN TO 7 FEBRUARY 2020**

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
1.	Code of Conduct Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually December 2020
2.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board Annual Report	Chief Executive	Annually 3 April 2020
3.	West Lothian Development Trust Annual Report	Head of Planning, Economic Development & Regeneration	Annually 3 April 2020
4.	Annual Complaints Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Annually August 2020
5.	Biannual Welfare Reform update	Head of Finance and Property Services	Bi-annually 5 June 2020 December 2020
6.	Quarterly Performance Report	Depute Chief Executive, Corporate, Operational and Housing Services	Quarterly 7 February 2020 5 June 2020 August 2020 December 2020
7.	Horizon Scan Report	Head of Finance and Property Services	Quarterly 7 February 2020 5 June 2020 August 2020 December 2020
8.	Quarterly Sickness Absence Update	Head of Corporate Services	Quarterly 7 February 2020 5 June 2020 August 2020 December 2020
9.	Review of decision-making arrangements - TBC	Chief Executive	7 February 2020
10.	Polling Scheme Review	Chief Executive	7 February 2020
11.	Family Leave for Elected Members	Chief Executive / Head of Corporate Services	7 February 2020
12.	Supporting Attendance Policy	Head of Corporate Services	7 February 2020
13.	Draft funding conditions for the award of capital grants to	Head of Finance and Property Services	7 February 2020

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

	Agenda Item	Lead Officer	P&R PDSP Date / Month
	community groups		
14.	Drug and Alcohol Policy	Head of Corporate Services	7 February 2020
15.	CIPFA Financial Management Code	Head of Finance and Property	7 February 2020
16.	ATMs in West Lothian	Head of Finance and Property	7 February 2020
17.	Income and Concessions	Head of Finance and Property	7 February 2020
18.	Lothian Valuation Joint Board minutes	Chief Executive	As available

Graham Hope
Chief Executive