



Strategy and Resources Committee Performance and Budget Summary 2023-24 Quarter 1 (April to June)

Summary: The quarterly performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor service delivery. It shows performance against relevant targets.

The report is a summary of the key performance indicators related to services covered by the Strategy and Resources Committee.

Report Author(s)

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Appendix	Title
1	Performance Reports to the other Service & Scrutiny Committees
2	Additional Data Plan

Council Key Priorities	Wards	Open / Exempt
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver more social housing,• Support our local economy,• Enhance the District's cultural offer,• Promote equality, inclusion and fairness	All	Open

Recommendations

That the Strategy and Resources Committee notes the Council Performance Summary (Quarter 1 2023-2024).

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New Look Performance Report

The Council is developing a new Performance Management Framework. The Strategy and Resources Committee will consider a report setting out the intended approach for all the Service and Scrutiny Committees during tonight's meeting.

This Quarter 1 report is provided in the new format.

This is part of the Council's transformation work and takes account of recommendations made following the LGA Peer Challenge conducted in February and research on local authority performance frameworks undertaken in recent months. The content will develop over time as the new framework is developed and implemented. Feedback from Councillors is welcome.

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Budget Variance Quarter 1 2023-24

Budget	£m				
	Q1 22-23	Q2 22-23	Q3 22-23	Q4* 22-23	Q1 23-24
Gross Expenditure Budget	39.6	39.6	39.6	39.6	40.0
Less Fees and Charges Budget and Government Grants	-23.5	-23.5	-23.5	-23.5	-22.9
Total Net General Fund budget	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.1	17.1
Total General Fund forecast	16.6	17.3	17.3	17.5	17.7
Forecast budget variance at the Year End (General Fund)	0.5	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.6
Housing Income (rents and charges)	-39.4	-39.4	-39.4	-39.4	-42.9
Housing Expenditure	37.2	37.2	37.2	37.2	40.9
Housing Revenue Account budget	-2.1	-2.1	-2.1	-2.1	-2.1
Housing Revenue Account forecast	-2.0	-0.9	-1.0	-0.8	-2.1
Forecast budget variance at the Year End (HRA)	0.1	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.0

* This is the position at the end of February 2023. The 2022/23 financial outturns have yet to be completed.

Note: The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) records expenditure and income associated with running the Council's housing stock and closely related services or facilities, which are provided primarily for the benefit of our housing tenants.

Q1 2023-24 Commentary: Principal reasons for variance to Budget by Directorate

Community and Place Delivery (Excluding Housing Revenue Account)	Lower Leisure contract utility costs than budget (£0.3m) and lower Pre-Application Planning Income £0.1m
Strategy Policy & Transformation	Commercial income shortfall £0.7m and higher software licence costs £0.1m
Customer, Business and Corporate Support and Non-Departmental Contingencies	N/A
Housing Revenue Account	N/A

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A Note on the Content in the Tables Below

The information presented in the tables below reflects the Quarter 1 data (for the period April to June 2023) and is a look back at the position at the end of that quarter.

This report also contains an 'Outlook RAG'. The purpose of this is to provide an indication of expected performance levels over the following quarter. This is based on estimates provided by service managers and helps to flag any risks to performance levels and prompt discussion about how these may be mitigated.

Section A shows performance against key performance indicators.

Section B shows the situation against the Council's priorities set out in the Council Plan 2023 - 2028

Section C shows informational reporting on aspects affecting the Committee's areas of responsibility, or environmental factors affecting our community.

An Additional Data Plan is provided at Appendix 2. This details other data that we are starting to collect for reporting to the Committee in November 2023.

Performance Information

The performance information colour coding relates to the measure's target or trend. For indicators with a target:

- **Green** is where a target is achieved;
- **Amber** is up to 10% worse than target;
- **Red** is worse than 10% from target.

For indicators with trend analysis: Green highlights an improved performance; Red a worse performance.

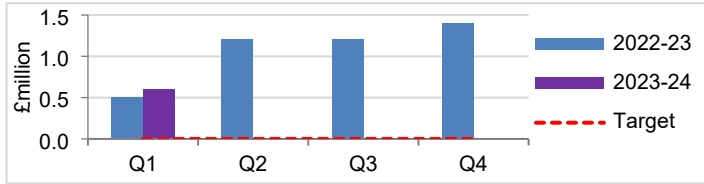
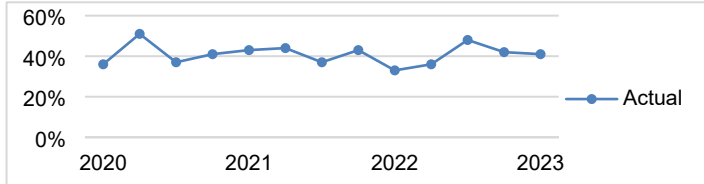
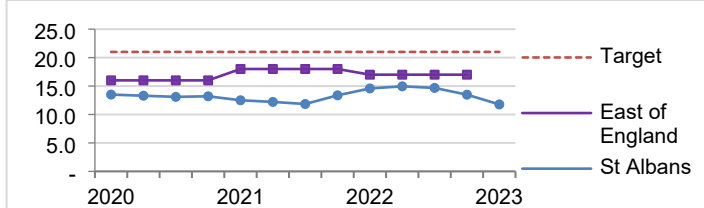
Contact: Jenny Swatton, Policy Officer (Economic Development & Projects)

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Section A – Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Service Area	Quarter	Actual	Target	Outlook RAG	Comments
Finance					
Forecast budget variance (overspend/underspend against budget) at the year-end for General Fund Assistant Director - Finance 	Q3 22-23 Q4 22-23 Q1 23-24	£1.2m £1.4m £0.6m	£0m £0m £0m	 Amber	See above.
Council Owned Buildings - Non Housing Revenue Account					
Reactive repairs as a percentage of all maintenance Assistant Director - Built Environment 	Q3 22-23 Q4 22-23 Q1 23-24	48% 42% 41%	Trend Trend Trend	 Amber	Reactive repairs can be more expensive than planned maintenance. While faults and repairs are not totally unavoidable, the lower the proportion of reactive repairs, the better.
Finance					
Days to process Housing Benefit new claims (12-month average) Revenues & Benefits Manager 	Q3 22-23 Q4 22-23 Q1 23-24	14.7 13.5 11.8	21 days 21 days 21 days	 Green	Performance is within target.

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Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Service Area	Quarter	Actual	Target	Outlook RAG	Comments
Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances (12-month average) Revenues & Benefits Manager 	Q3 22-23	4.4 days	6 days		Performance is within target.
	Q4 22-23	4.7 days	6 days		
	Q1 23-24	4.6 days	6 days	Green	

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Section B – Updates on the Council’s priorities set out in the Council Plan 2023 – 2028

(<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/St%20Albans%20City%20And%20District%20Council%20Plan%202023-2028%20FINAL.pdf>)

Council Priority	Q4 milestones 2022/2023 (Jan-Mar)	Priority Project	Q1 milestones 2023/2024 (Apr-Jun)	Progress	Q2 Outlook 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)	Q2 milestones 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)
Deliver more social housing	A	Deliver market rent apartments at Ridgeview, London Colney, to fund new social housing	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project remains on hold and is not currently in the Capital Programme 	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project remains on hold
Support our local economy	A	Complete development at Jubilee Square	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final snagging ahead of practical completion taking place. Building control sign-off expected w/c 18/09. Draft fire strategy and operations, and maintenance manuals, issued to the Council for review and sign-off. Morgan Sindall awaiting National House Building Council (NHBC) sign-off. There are two conditions outstanding which need resolving before the Council can accept practical completion. Morgan Sindall has submitted evidence to NHBC, which is working on this as a priority. 	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical Completion achieved. Sale of residential units to Watford Community Housing Trust completed.
Support our local economy	G	Progress the sale of the Harpenden Public Halls site	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The design brief has been prepared. The valuation is expected in September. Procurement of estate agent services has commenced; appointment expected by the end September. The delay in receiving planning brief and valuation report has 	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site to be marketed for sale.

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Council Priority	Q4 milestones 2022/2023 (Jan-Mar)	Priority Project	Q1 milestones 2023/2024 (Apr-Jun)	Progress	Q2 Outlook 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)	Q2 milestones 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)
				pushed back the marketing of the site.		
Support our local economy	New	Progress the sale of Spicer Street (Former Public toilets)	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The disposal is on hold until Centre 33 can be relocated. A valuation has been sought and an agent appointed. Issues with utilities resolved and refund received from supplier. 	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up meeting with Centre 33 to discuss relocation.
Enhance the District's Cultural Offer	New	Progress the development of a cultural strategy for the District	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Creative Sector Lead held to discuss alignment of St Albans' Culture Strategy with those of other Hertfordshire districts and areas. Further meetings with colleagues from other Hertfordshire Districts have been either conducted or arranged. Analysis of similar strategies is currently being undertaken. 	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further liaison with LEP. Timeline for tender mapped out.
Promote equality, inclusion, and fairness	G	Explore funding opportunities to develop community facilities including in the Fleetville area of St Albans	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic asset review commenced with a view to identifying potential enabling schemes and disposals which could generate a capital receipt. Following Corporate Property Board approval of opportunities, these have progressed to more detailed feasibility, planning appraisal and valuation stages. 	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built Environment team to continue the process of asset review and to present opportunities to the Corporate Property Board on a rolling basis. Officers to take forward those projects which are approved at Corporate Property Board.

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Council Priority	Q4 milestones 2022/2023 (Jan-Mar)	Priority Project	Q1 milestones 2023/2024 (Apr-Jun)	Progress	Q2 Outlook 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)	Q2 milestones 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)
Promote equality, inclusion, and fairness	New	Implement the measures introduced by the Elections Act 2022, including voter ID	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The polls on 4 May 2023 were run under the new legislation introduced by the Elections Act 2022 which requires all electors to show an accepted form of ID at the polling station before being issued with a ballot paper. Another installment of new burdens funding (£7,391) has been received with a further tranche expected in November 2023 and April 2024. Detailed Electoral Commission guidance on the changes to the absent vote application process has now been released (06/09/23) and is being worked through to enable detailed planning to take place. The Electoral Services team will be attending training hosted by the Association of Electoral Administrators from October onwards. 	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the additional measure introduced by the Elections Act: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to EU franchise Change to overseas franchise Online absent vote application process New postal vote handling rules.
Promote equality, inclusion, and fairness	G	Continue the implementation of the Council's Customer Engagement Strategy (2021-2024)	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council Tax online form introduced. Rolled out 8*8/Salesforce integration. Finalised team leader restructure. Multi skilling training commenced. Reviewed customer satisfaction surveys. 	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September - new customer satisfaction surveys introduced. September - new online benefits forms designed. Analysis of reasons for customer phone calls to the Council to be undertaken. October – work to be done with the Housing service to reduce

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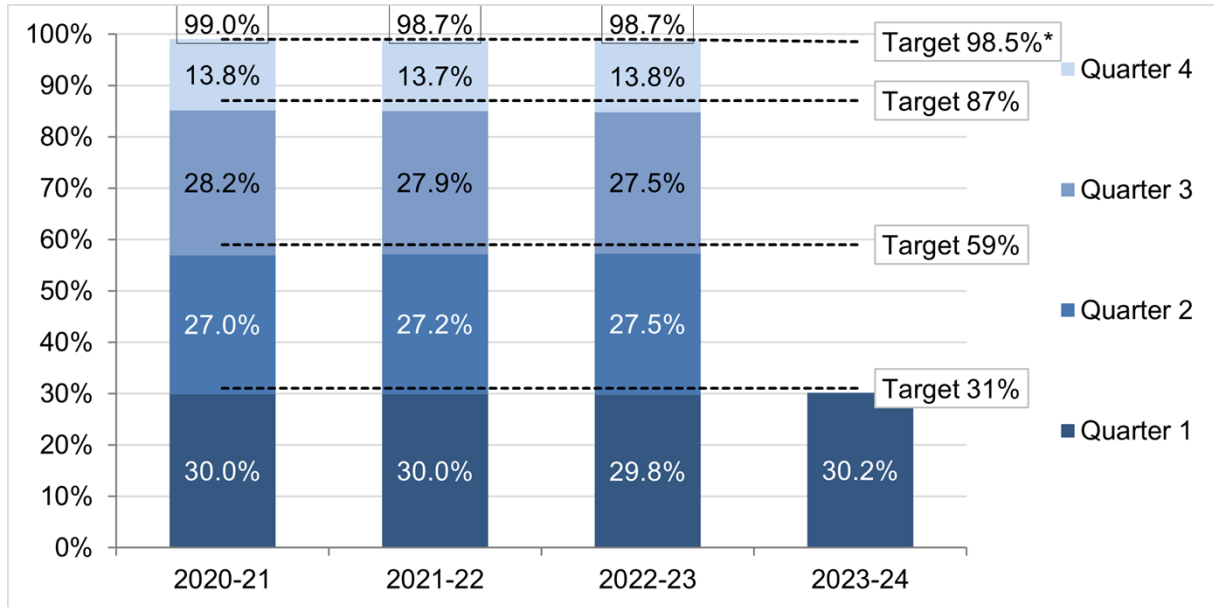
Council Priority	Q4 milestones 2022/2023 (Jan-Mar)	Priority Project	Q1 milestones 2023/2024 (Apr-Jun)	Progress	Q2 Outlook 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)	Q2 milestones 2023/2024 (Jul-Sep)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in opening times of Business Rates telephone lines. Tenancy Service duties transferred into Customer Services team. Cross training of parking services into Customer Services team underway. 		a backlog of outstanding applications for vacant Council-owned garages.

Key

R(ed)	Progress is affected to the extent that the milestone completion date is significantly affected
A(mber)	Progress toward the milestone is slightly off track i.e., a minor hold up with the project
G(reen)	Progress toward the milestone is on track
B(lue)	The milestone has been completed or ended
P(aused)	The project has been paused

Section C – Informational reporting on aspects affecting the Committee’s areas of responsibility, or external factors affecting our community.

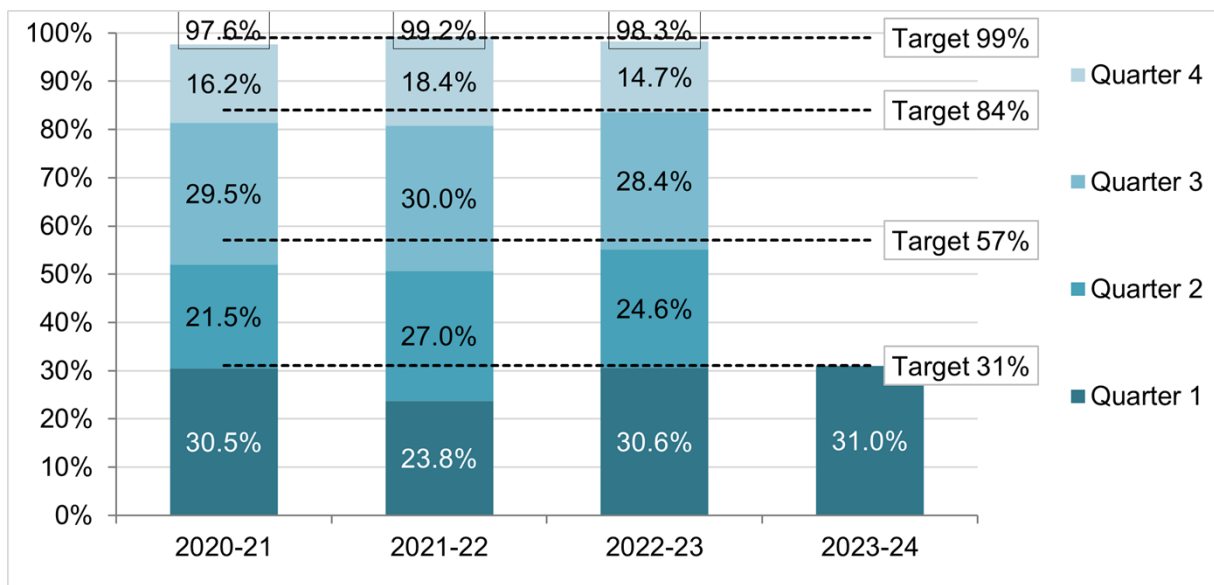
Percentage of Council Tax collected of that collectable in the year (cumulative)



*Target amended from 99% to 98.5% for 2023-24 - increases in the costs of living, energy bills, interest rates and mortgage payments are likely to impact some people's ability to pay their Council Tax.

More residents are electing to pay Council Tax over 12 months which impacts the percentage collected in Quarters 1, 2 and 3. Collection rates do not yet seem to have been impacted significantly by the cost-of-living crisis and the percentage collected in the first quarter of this financial year is almost identical to that at the same point in 2022/23. Officers will continue to monitor collection rates to identify if there is a decrease emerging.

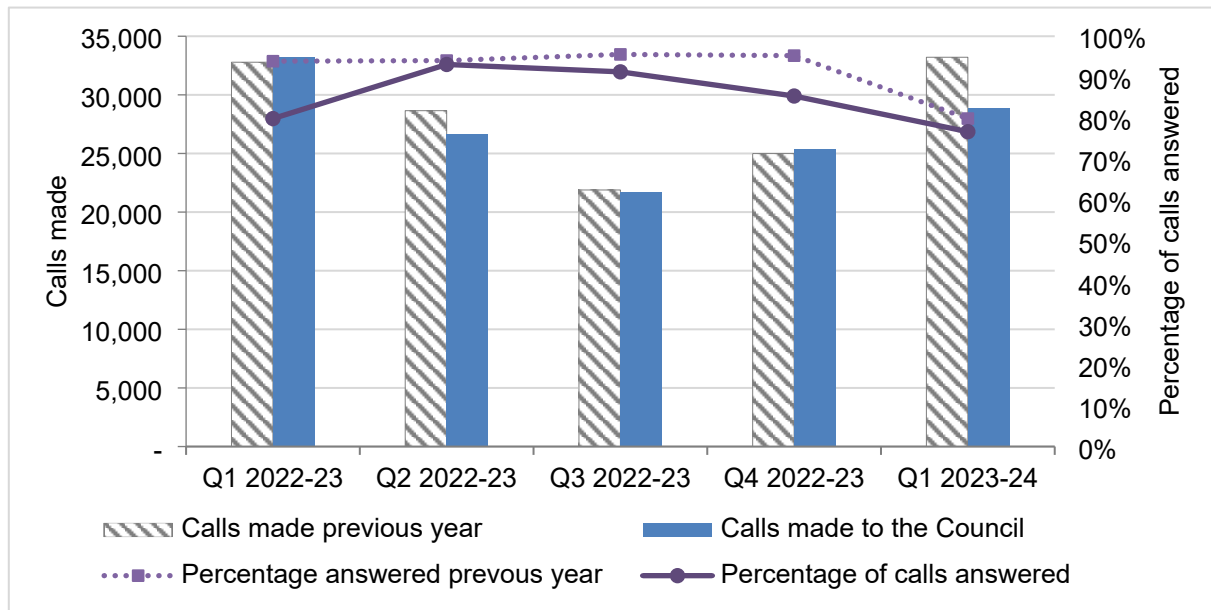
Percentage of Business Rates collected (year to date)



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Contact Centre calls



The Customer Services team has taken over responsibility for responding to calls from a number of additional back-office teams as part of the work being undertaken to implement the Council's Customer Delivery Strategy. This releases time in the back-office environment to undertake other duties.

A reduction in staffing has affected the number of calls answered. Officers are working to combat this by promoting self-service options to callers.

Call volumes are reducing year on year, with a 15% reduction in the number of calls received in Q1 2023-24 compared to Q1 2022-23. A combination of factors is affecting performance. While additional casual staff were employed to support high call volumes connected with Garden Waste subscription renewals, staffing levels are lower overall than last year.

Detailed Contact Centre data

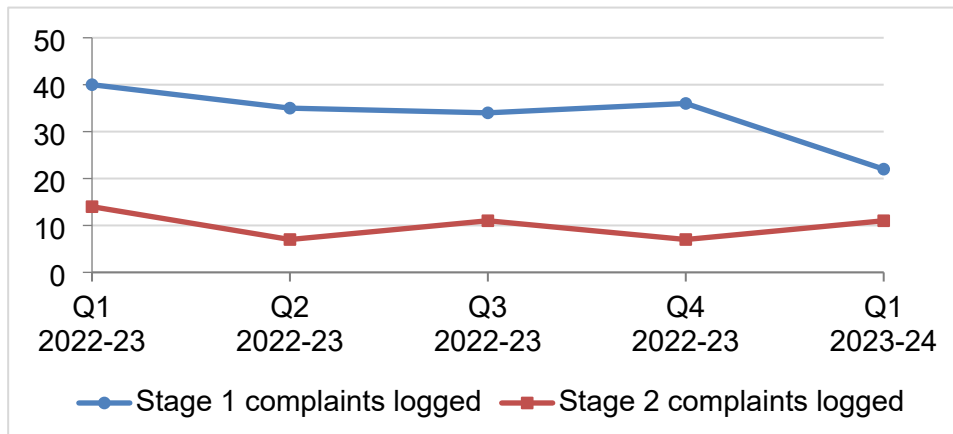
Month	Calls made to the Council	Call answered	Percentage of calls answered	Average processing time	Average wait time
Apr 2023	7,695	5,772	75.01%	0:03:51	0:05:20
May 2023	8,077	6,705	83.01%	0:03:17	0:03:46
Jun 2023	13,082	9,666	73.89%	0:04:25	0:05:16
Total Q1 2023-24	28,854	22,143	76.74%	0:03:55	0:04:52

Month	Calls made to the Council	Call answered	Percentage of calls answered	Average processing time	Average wait time
Apr 2022	8,361	7,626	91.21%	0:03:12	0:01:55
May 2022	9,928	8,842	89.06%	0:03:21	0:02:34
Jun 2022	14,918	10,074	67.53%	0:03:51	0:06:06
Total Q1 2022-23	33,207	26,542	79.93%	0:03:30	0:03:59

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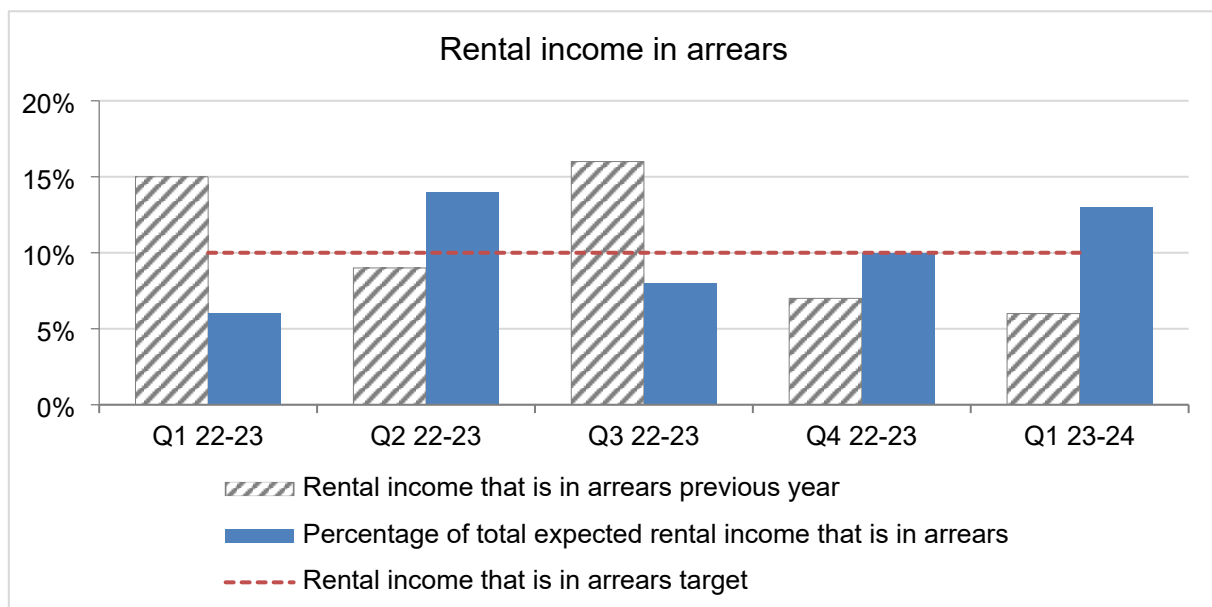
Complaints (trend)



Complaints by service

Service	Stage 1		Stage 2	
	Q4 (2022/23)	Q1 (2023/24)	Q4 (2022/23)	Q1 (2023/24)
Housing	18	11	4	3
Planning	11	3	2	5
Public Realm	5	4	1	2
Council Tax	2	2	0	1
Legal	0	1	0	0
Customer Services	1	0	0	0
	37	21	7	11

Percentage of total expected commercial rental income in arrears

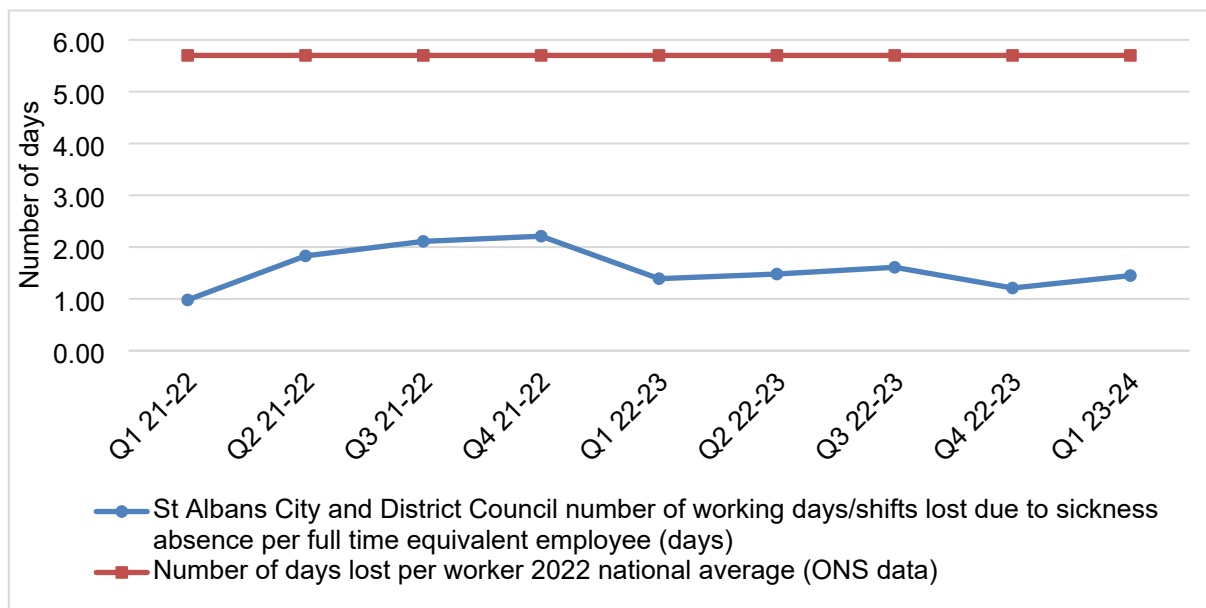


The number of commercial tenants in rent arrears is small – 2. Appropriate action is being taken to recover rent due.

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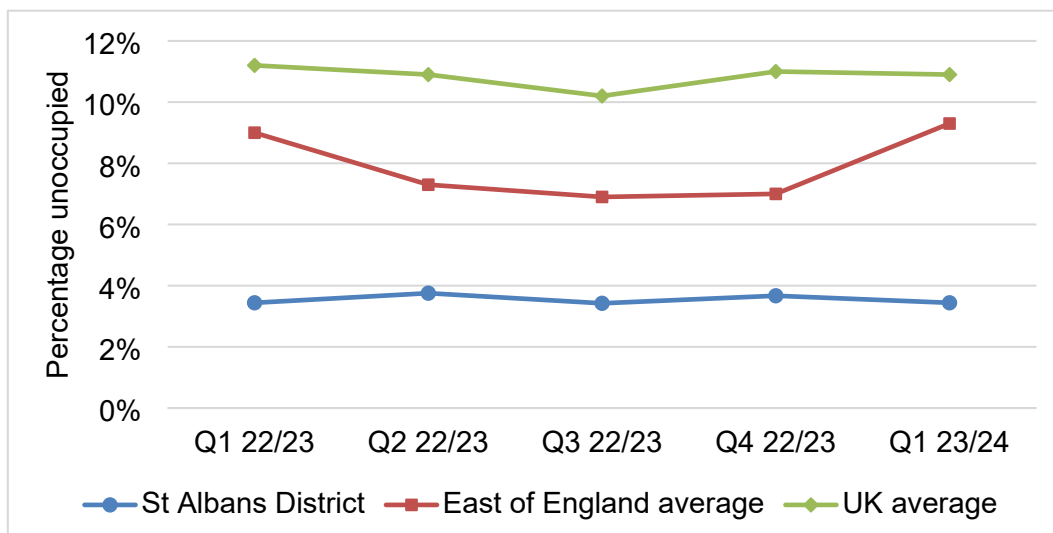
2023-24 Quarter 1 (April to June)

Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (days)



Vacant Retail Units (City and District)

There has been a slight reduction in the number of vacant retail units locally in Quarter 1 and St Albans District continues to have a much lower vacancy rate than both the national and regional average, showing the relative resilience of the retail sector locally, when compared with other areas.



Source: East of England and UK data supplied by Springboard Research Ltd

The table below shows the proportion of vacant retail properties as of 30 June 2023 by parish and the non-parished area (City). The properties are retail only. The information is extracted from the Council's business rates database and includes both Council-owned and privately-owned units.

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Parish	Total no. of retail units	No. of units Unoccupied	% Unoccupied				
			Q4 21/22	Q1 22/23	Q2 22/23	Q3 22/23	Q4 22/23
Unparished City	764 (up 17*)	27 (down 2)	3.86%	3.99%	3.70%	3.88%	3.53%
Colney Heath	14	0	3.13%	3.13%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Harpenden Rural*	4	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
London Colney	52	3	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%	5.77%	5.77%
Redbourn	34	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
St Michael	3	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
St Stephen	57 (up 2)	1 (down 1)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	3.64%	1.75%
Sandridge	59	2	5.17%	1.72%	1.69%	3.39%	3.39%
Wheathampstead	41	2 (up 2)	2.50%	2.44%	0.00%	0.00%	4.88%
Harpenden	251 (up 6)	9 (down 1)	3.27%	5.31%	4.47%	4.08%	3.59%
Overall percentage	1,279	44 (down 2)	3.44%	3.75%	3.42%	3.67%	3.44%

*The list of unit types included in the calculation was reviewed in summer 2023 with some additional categories included. This change has led to the notable increase in the figures for units within the unparished city area and in Harpenden.

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Appendix 1: Performance Reports to the other Service & Scrutiny Committees

Housing and Inclusion Committee Performance Summary 2023-24 Quarter 1

This report was considered by the Housing and Inclusion Committee at its meeting on Thursday 7th September 2023.

Performance Report: <https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065128/Housing%20and%20Inclusion%20Q1%202023-24%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Morgan Sindall Property Services 2023/24 Performance Summary (Q1):

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065129/Appendix%201%20MSPS%20KPIs%20Q1%202023-24.pdf>

Appendix 2 – Additional Data Plan:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065130/Appendix%202%20HIC%20Additional%20Data%20Plan.pdf>

Planning Policy & Climate Committee Performance Summary

This report was considered by the Planning Policy & Climate Committee at its meeting on Tuesday 12th September 2023.

Performance Report: <https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065190/Planning%20Policy%20Climate%20Q1%202023-24%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

Appendix 1 – Section 106 Update Quarter 1 2023-24:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065191/Appendix%201%20Section%20106%20Update%20PPC%2012.09.2023.pdf>

Appendix 2 – Additional Data Plan:

<https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065192/Appendix%202%20PPC%20Additional%20Data%20Plan.pdf>

Public Realm Committee Performance Summary 2023-24 Quarter 1

This report was considered by the Public Realm Committee at its meeting on Thursday 14th September 2023.

Performance Report: <https://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s50065202/Public%20Realm%20Q1%202023-24%20Performance%20Report.pdf>

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Appendix 2: Additional Data Plan

The following data will be reported to the Strategy and Resources Committee in November 2023

Information	Summary	Format	Reported to
Debt position – level and trend broken down between General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	Data broken down between General Fund and Housing Revenue Account	Section A: KPIs	November Strategy and Resources Committee
MyStAlbans sign up data	TBC	TBC	November Strategy and Resources Committee
Glossary	Glossary of Performance Indicators for the Strategy and Resources Committee	Section C: Narrative	November Strategy and Resources Committee
Median number of traders and pitches (Wednesday, Saturday and second Sunday markets)	<p>The Council will be setting a target for each market based on the median value of the best attended 25% of each market in the same financial quarter of the previous year.</p> <p>We are switching from mean average to median average to calculate the average. Mean averages are more susceptible to being skewed by outlying high or low values.</p> <p>Targets are set per financial quarter to account for the fluctuations in attendance caused by season and weather.</p>	TBC	November Strategy and Resources Committee