

Council Performance & Budget Summary

December 2013

The monthly performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor and manage service delivery. Where relevant, it includes performance against targets set for the relevant period.

Overview

G	Budget – 0.87% projected underspend
G	Performance Indicators
G	Progress against priorities

Appendices

- A. Benefits Service
- B. Significant Planning Matters
- C. Recycling update

Recommendation

That Cabinet notes the Council Performance and Budget Summary (December 2013) and its appendices.

Commentary

The table below is provided for indicators where there has been significant change in performance and provides more detailed explanation for the performance levels and any action the Council is taking to improve performance where it is off track.

	Measure	Comments
R	% of invalid planning applications received	<p>The percentage of planning applications which were invalid (i.e. did not have the required information) has increased to 5.9%. We need to look at the detail of why this is happening and how to avoid having to return applications.</p> <p>For example, the Council encourages applicants to use the Planning Department's free face to face duty sessions for householders on Monday afternoons and Wednesday mornings. We also encourage developers to use the Council's pre-application service. Customers using this service will be better informed about what is needed to make their application valid.</p> <p>Following changes to legislation earlier in 2013, the planning department will be revising the validation checklists to make these easier for customers to access and understand.</p> <p>The review of the validation checklists should be complete by the end of March 2014.</p>

	Measure	Comments																																																												
R	Number of households in temporary accommodation + Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	<p>The numbers in temporary accommodation and length of time in temporary accommodation have both increased slightly. This reflects the continuing demand for affordable housing and number of homeless applications. During December we had 32 homeless approaches of which 13 were emergencies. We have accepted a rehousing duty to 104 homeless households so far this financial year, compared to a total of 106 for the whole of the financial year 2012/13. This gives an average of 11.5 households being accepted per month this year to date compared with an average of just below 9 households per month last year and 6 per month in 2011/12. The rise in acceptances is shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2011-12</th> <th>2012-13</th> <th>2013-14</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>April</td> <td>3</td> <td>10</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July</td> <td>5</td> <td>15</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August</td> <td>10</td> <td>8</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September</td> <td>4</td> <td>9</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October</td> <td>8</td> <td>8</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>November</td> <td>8</td> <td>7</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>December</td> <td>6</td> <td>15</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>January</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>February</td> <td>5</td> <td>8</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>March</td> <td>9</td> <td>8</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>74</td> <td>106</td> <td>104</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Projected</td> <td>Full Year</td> <td>Full Year</td> <td>139</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Also the number of void properties available for rehousing has been low in recent weeks and this does impact on how long people have to wait for rehousing.</p>		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	April	3	10	10	May	5	4	11	June	8	9	9	July	5	15	9	August	10	8	16	September	4	9	13	October	8	8	16	November	8	7	12	December	6	15	8	January	3	5		February	5	8		March	9	8		TOTAL	74	106	104	Projected	Full Year	Full Year	139
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14																																																											
April	3	10	10																																																											
May	5	4	11																																																											
June	8	9	9																																																											
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March	9	8																																																												
TOTAL	74	106	104																																																											
Projected	Full Year	Full Year	139																																																											
R	Recycling Rate	Please see Appendix C – Recycling update																																																												
R	Website Visits	Visits to the www.stalbans.gov.uk website have fallen from 250,455 (2012) to 223,687(2013). However it appears that a large number of visits have shifted from the main website to the www.enjoystalbans.com website. When these figures are combined they give a total of 315,522 for 2013 compared to 265,082 in 2012.																																																												
G	Days to process Council Tax/Housing Benefit new claims and changes	The figure of 12.24 days is the first time in 13 months that our target of 14 days has been met. This is a reflection of the work undertaken over the past months that has been reported to cabinet through the performance report.																																																												
G	% of calls to the Council answered within 5 rings (20 seconds)	Following a period of 'settling down', this indicator has returned to the previous high performance, exceeding the target of 80% by 13.9%. The new telephony system has a lot of new metrics and data that were previously unavailable in the old system. Over the next few weeks the team will look at what new metrics would be useful to include in the monthly/quarterly performance reports.																																																												

Key

The performance information is colour coded associated to the target or trend. For indicators with a target – Green is where a target is achieved, Amber is up to 10% worse than target and Red is worse than 10% from target. For indicators with trend analysis – Green highlights best performance and Red the worst performance.

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Use of forecasted underspend on the Council's General Fund

At the moment a small underspend is forecast on the Council's General Fund. It is proposed that to the extent that the Council underspends on the General Fund at year end that this be used to reduce the previously agreed need to borrow regarding the Work Environment Project (which is currently likely to come in below the target of £600,000). Note that it is proposed that the borrowing be made by the General Fund from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

This will also reduce the Council's General Fund budget gap in 2014/15 onwards. A budget update on the Work Environment Project will be presented to Cabinet in February as part of the performance report.

Update on 41 Hart Road

The Council has now received the Secretary of State's consent for the disposal of the property to Hightown and Praetorian HA. The planning application will be submitted shortly and once planning approval has been granted for conversion to two flats, the transfer will proceed. The Legal Department have been instructed and have started preparing the transfer documentation.

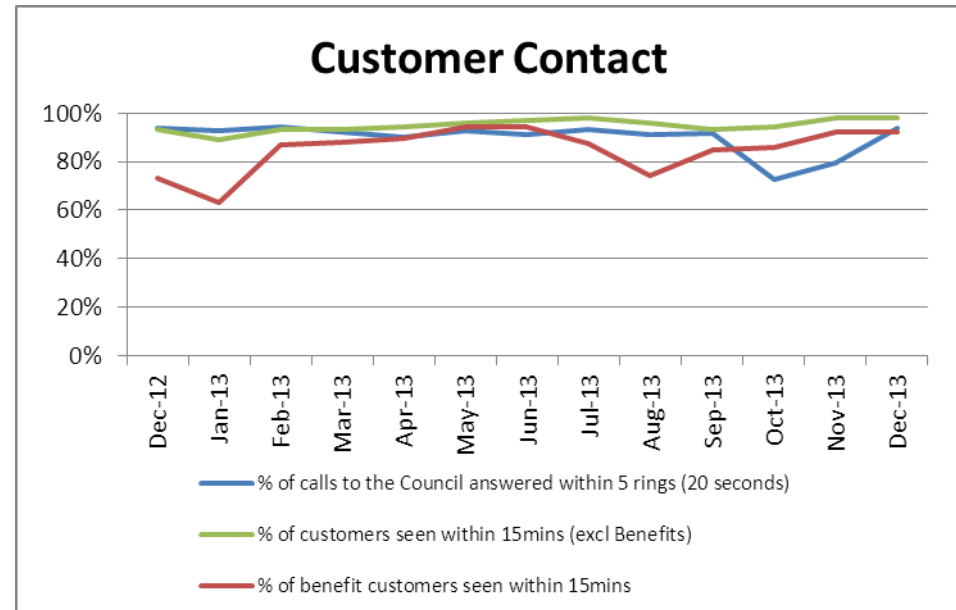
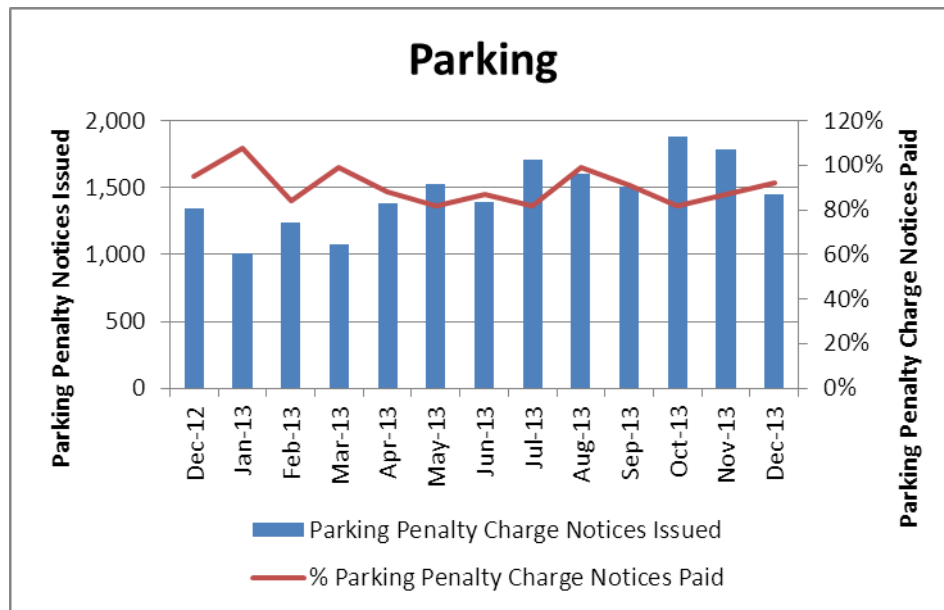
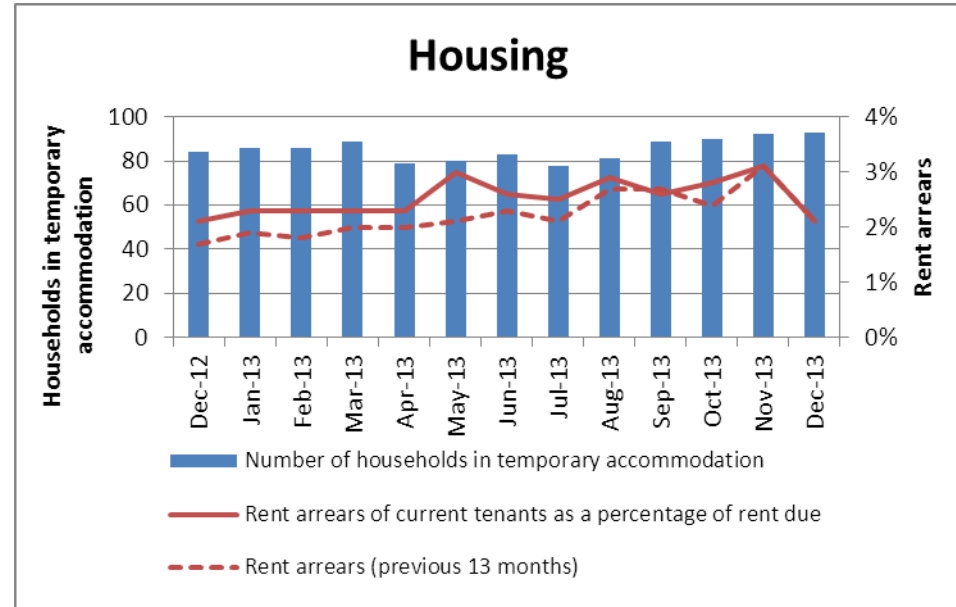
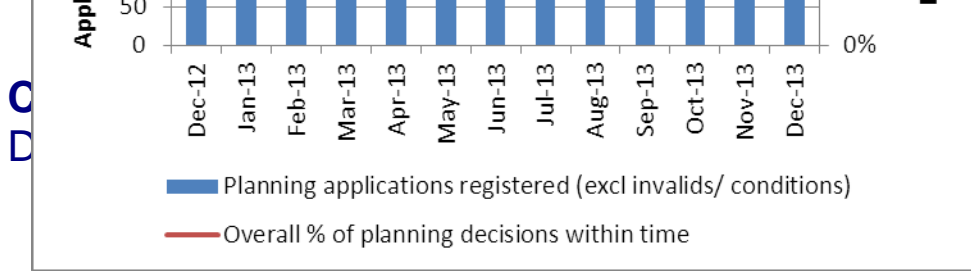
Council Performance & Budget Summary

December 2013



		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13	TARGET	
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.75%	0.0%	-1.0%	-2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	-1.6%	-1.0%	-0.9%	0.0%	0.15%	-0.08%	-0.87%	0%	
	Average time to re let dwellings (excluding sheltered and temporary accommodation changes) (Days)	Smaller	15	28	23	18	20	21.3	24.5	16.9	17.5	24.8	18	17.2	17	21	
	% of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	1.38%	1.44%	1.42%	1.39%	1.59%	1.55%	1.53%	1.53%	1.53%	1.55%	1.57%	1.56%	1.55%	Trend	
Housing	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due (targets updated for 2013-14)	Smaller	2.1%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	3.0%	2.6%	2.5%	2.9%	2.6%	2.8%	3.1%	2.1%	3.1%	
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	84	86	86	89	79	80	83	78	81	89	90	92	93	Trend	
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	17	18.5	17.4	17.6	18.9	16.0	17	17	17.1	15.6	14.7	16.0	18.8	Trend	
	% of repairs completed on time	Bigger	98%	99%	98%	98%	99%	99.8%	99%	99.2%	99.2%	99%	98%	98.2%	98.7%	98%	
	Housing repairs satisfaction	Bigger	98%	98%	99%	99%	99.8%	99.3%	99.5%	99.4%	97.8%	97.9%	98.9%	98.7%	97.1%	90%	
	Number of Benefit Applications	Smaller	357	251	326	293	263	241	300	272	275	203	257	210	154	Trend	
	Days to process Council Tax/Housing Benefit new claims and changes	Smaller	25.42	20.47	19.87	24.2	34.57	32.14	36.45	25.53	28.03	22.81	19.69	18.13	12.24	14	
	% of benefit customers seen within 15mins	Bigger	73%	63%	87%	88%	89%	94%	94%	88%	74%	85%	86%	92%	92%	70%	
	Planning & Building Control	All planning applications received		250	236	272	272	330	240	360	317	259	261	298	260	284	
		Planning applications registered (excl invalids/ conditions)		206	206	219	257	263	296	300	270	258	269	290	243	267	
Overall % of planning decisions within time		Bigger	89%	83%	85%	89%	91%	88%	89%	84%	89%	83%	71%	79%	83%	75%	
Regulatory	Parking Penalty Charge Notices Issued	Smaller	1,347	1,008	1,238	1,079	1,380	1,530	1,395	1,710	1,607	1,507	1,886	1,784	1,454	Trend	
	% Parking Penalty Charge Notices Paid	Bigger	95%	108%	84%	99%	88%	82%	87%	82%	99%	91%	82%	87%	92%	70%	
Community Services	Graffiti and Fly-tipping Calls	Smaller	25	27	27	31	33	20	23	22	26	26	33	23	27	Trend	
	% of households with missed waste collections	Smaller	0.09%	0.03%	0.09%	0.12%	0.09%	0.09%	0.14%	0.15%	0.17%	0.15%	0.19%	0.17%	0.15%	Trend	
	Visits to Tourist Information Centre/www.enjoystalbens.com	Bigger	8,857	12,012	11,457	14,128	14,804	16,617	21,032	25,546	35,212	28,663	30,762	48,578	33,929	Year-on-year Trend	
Customer Services	Museums Visits	Bigger	7,218	9,223	12,968	13,148	12,317	12,494	18,798	19,129	16,600	16,645	17,007	16,453	11,133	Year-on-year Trend	
	% of calls to the Council answered within 5 rings (20 seconds)	Bigger	93.6%	92.7%	94.5%	92.2%	90.2%	92.6%	91.2%	93.2%	91.2%	91.4%	72.5%	79.5%	93.9%	80%	
External	% of customers seen within 15mins (excl Benefits)	Bigger	93%	89%	93%	93%	94%	96%	97%	98%	96%	93%	94%	98%	98%	80%	
	Claimant Count (% Proportion of Population)	Smaller	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	Trend	
	New Jobs (New and Unfilled Vacancies until Dec 2012)	Bigger	994	668	883	724	934	1,213	1,654	1,688	1,429	1,346	1,440	1,298	970	Trend	
	All Crime (in month)	Smaller	383	435	411	380	483	427	453	477	470	438	483	466	404	Trend	
Anti Social Behaviour Incidents (in month)	Smaller	219	270	217	206	231	219	227	296	260	203	212	189	140	Trend		

Performance Summary December 2013



Performance Summary December 2013

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



	Bigger or Smaller is Better	Quarter 3 2012-13	Quarter 4 2012-13	Quarter 1 2013-14	Quarter 2 2013-14	Quarter 3 2013-14	TARGET	
Housing	Affordable housing delivered	Bigger	30	25	57	19	11	
Planning and BC	% of invalid application received	Smaller	5.69%	3.58%	5.48%	5.80%	5.90%	Trend
	Affordable housing approved through the planning process for future development	Bigger	38	44	8	68	25	
Finance	Percentage of council tax collected of that collectable in the year	Bigger	87.16%	98.71%	30.43%	58.49%	87.13%	87.0%
	Percentage of business rates of that collectable in the year	Bigger	87.31%	98.87%	32.52%	61.00%	88.33%	90.40%
	Recycling Rate	Bigger	45.99%**	31.65%**	48.33%**	48.96%*	47.66%^	53%
	Kg per household of residual waste	Smaller	102.53	113.39	111.5	94.48	94.88	105.75
	Total number of visits to arts and entertainments venues	Bigger	66,008	62,413	44,003	32,852	83,146	Year-on-year Trend
	Total number of visits to sport and leisure centres	Bigger	223,364	283,465	267,028	323,577	356,367	Year-on-year Trend
Website	Website Visits	Bigger	250,455	251,612	249,521	247,917	223,687	Trend
Human Resources	Headcount Actuals		385 (374 permanent / 11 fixed term) 329.19 FTE	397 (377 permanent / 17 fixed term) 338.5 FTE	393 (374 permanent / 19 fixed term) 336.12 FTE	390 (378 permanent / 12 fixed term) 334.59 FTE	395 (379 permanent / 16 fixed term) 340.73 FTE	
	Agency and Casual Workers (covering vacancies or helping with added workloads)		32	35	37	39	40	
	Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee (days)	Smaller	2.15	1.67	1.39	1.71	1.38	Trend
External	Vacant Unit (St Albans City Centre)	Smaller	7.38%	9.32%	9.11%	8.32%	7.56%	Trend

* final adjusted figures from Herts County Council
 ** final adjusted figures from Herts County Council and Government's Waste Data Flow
 ^ estimated figure
 All figures now include an adjustment for Agrivert rejections

Performance Summary Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
Housing	G	Develop affordable housing on garage sites	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation carried out with Ward Councillors and local residents re 3 garage sites at Batchwood. Events held on 5 and 9 Dec 2013. • Planning applications for Batchwood sites being prepared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full planning applications to be submitted for determination for Phase 1 garage sites in London Colney and Wheathampstead –to be developed by North Herts Homes • Planning applications to be submitted for Phase 2 garage sites in Batchwood by the Housing department
	G	Implement the sheltered housing redevelopment programme	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victor Smith Court – planning permission granted • Thomas Sparrow House – community consultation event held on 28 Nov, positive feedback received. Planning application submitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractor to be appointed by North Herts Homes to develop site at Victor Smith Court • Planning application to refurbish Thomas Sparrow House to be determined

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
Community Engagement and Localism	G	Christmas Market 2013	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful market delivered with c45,000 visitors over the period. • Surveys with visitors, exhibitors and local retailers undertaken, analysis is currently underway, the findings of which will be used to improve the 2014 market • c50% of exhibitors who have returned questionnaires are interested in returning to St Albans in 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of programme to occur by the end of February 2014, to assist with the start of works for the Christmas Market in 2014
	G	Implementing the visitor strategy	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop St Albans brand – agency appointed in December 2013 • Chair of VEAB nominated for vote in Feb • Work for 2014 rephased as agreed by Visitor Economy Advisory Board (VEAB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand ready for sign-off and use by all organisations working in the visitor economy in St Albans • Independent Chair to be appointed

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
	G	Develop a car parking strategy and review of the car parking contract	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car Parking contract extensions progressed, including Cabinet approval • Heads of terms finalised with both NSL and NCP • 2nd draft of Strategy circulated for consultation • Consultations completed on 5 Dec 2013, with summary sent to Portfolio Holder • A business case for an additional post fixed for 22 months has been approved. This is to progress pending requests for parking restrictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Decision to implement extensions to be finalised by end of January • Summary of car parking strategy consultations will go to Car Parking Working Group on 13 January. • Strategy signed off by Portfolio Holder
	G	Redbourn Youth Cafe	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review carried out of attendance and evaluation with Young People in October • 25 young people engaged in the youth cafe • Steering group with key stakeholders set up • New youth leader recruited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage local young people to volunteer in the project • Continue to raise the profile and young peoples participation • Explore delivering additional activities at the youth café

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
Environment	A	Implement specific proposals to accelerate recycling to and beyond 60%	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications plan implemented to reinforce new arrangements and to respond to issues raised by residents. Included new recycling leaflet, 2014 calendar door hook and 'no cardboard please' green bin sticker Identified options for trial to test out introducing new scheme to flats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor (Amey) to report back on vehicle options for taking large pieces of cardboard (Feb) Programme of targeted community engagement in locations where there is the potential to make a significant increase in recycling Trial of new recycling scheme in flats underway
	A	Have completed the Verulamium Park cycle paths	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North-South path - Humps removed on 1 December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to address localised ponding in the East/West cycle path to be carried out by end of March. The top decorative surfacing needs to be applied on a completely dry surface and the temperature has to be mild for the material to cure properly.

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
Resources	G	Work Environment Programme (better working environment, improved technology and create the space for a ground floor tenant)	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works to all office areas completed by December 2013 • Councillors' area has been redecorated and has new flooring. We are currently working on the soft furnishings to complete these areas • Work commenced on new eating and meeting area on the ground floor • Agreement of Heads of Terms for Police co-location • Joint project meetings are being held monthly • Initial meeting held with Police to discuss scope of Front Desk operation & review Police data relating to customer footfall. • Visit to Three Rivers Council to understand how they operate Police Front Desk and what the key project implementation issues are. • Draft timetable for 'pilot' of Front desk operation developed; awaiting feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of eating and meeting area – end of January 2014 • Submission of Police planning application – March 2014 (subject to discussions re parking with Barclays) • Meeting between Police and SADC solicitors to discuss drafting of the agreement (13 Jan) • Next joint Project meeting with the Police (16 Jan) • Meeting with Barclays to discuss parking – TBC • Gain agreement with Police on implementation of pilot Front Desk operation. Proposed timescales for pilot include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identified & mapped the Police processes to be provided by SADC - end of January 2014 ➤ Police vetting of SADC staff completed - end of January 2014 ➤ Comms plan agreed between SADC & Police - end of January 2014 ➤ SADC staff trained in Police processes - mid February 2014 ➤ Pilot commences - 1st March

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
Sports, Leisure and Heritage	G	Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Snags and defects list completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outstanding works for roof to be completed by end of April 2014.
	G	Completion of Batchwood Leisure Centre	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development plan approved by LTA Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received funding from LTA by end of February
	G	New museum and gallery	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive decision on HLF bid Fundraising strategy developed Refurbished shop opened in Verulamium Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Board meeting to sign off PID to implement the development programme to RIBA D scheduled for 16th January HLF monitor meeting scheduled for 28th January to review documents required to secure HLF permission to start Procurement of enabling services initiated (eg archaeological investigation, architectural input) Communications strategy and community engagement plan adopted.

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Portfolio	Q2 2013/14 (Jul to Sept)	Priority Project	Q3 2013/14 (Oct to Dec)	Progress	Quarter 4 milestones (January to March)
	A	Cotlandswick leisure facility	A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full timetable and programme developed and consulted on with ward members and London Colney Parish Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise work to incorporate ward and parish councillors views of a play area into new facility proposals by end of Jan. Finalise project and cost plan by end of January to start work on site in Summer 2014.
Planning and Conservation	G	Progress the Strategic Local Plan	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report from all three studies received and reported to Planning Policy Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree timetable for SLP process Progress SLP related reports through Planning Policy Committee
	G	City centre regeneration (City Centre Opportunity Site – 'CCOS')	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preferred redevelopment approach identified Next steps agreed by landowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Next steps landowners and Portfolio Holder/CEXB meetings to develop understanding of options, viability and range of land values
	G	Regeneration of Drovers Way area	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes with potential to capitalise on Premier Inn development identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Drovers Way redevelopment approach and procurement process by April 2014

Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Quarter 3 2013-14 (October to December)



Progress against priorities Quarter 3 2013-14

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix A: Benefits Service

Date From	Date To	Caseload (Including new claims)				Active/ awaiting			New claims					Backlog [^]		
		Brought forward	Incoming including new claims	Completed	Carried forward	Active claimant caseload	Active DWP Matching Workload (Atlas)	Awaiting customer response	Brought forward	New claims received	New claims processed	New claims (Sent for customer action)	Carried forward	Tray Active	Awaiting response from customer	Comments
23-Sep-13	29-Sep-13	2,595	932	1,090	2,437	1,636	192	609	273	59	74	74	258	900	261	
30-Sep-13	06-Oct-13	2,437	687	993	2,131	1,417	90	624	258	35	45	62	248	723	308	
07-Oct-13	13-Oct-13	2,131	808	1,018	1,921	1,205	57	659	248	40	41	67	247	582	312	
14-Oct-13	20-Oct-13	1,921	1,138	1,030	2,029	1,306	29	694	247	50	50	60	247	418	361	
21-Oct-13	27-Oct-13	2,029	959	1,048	1,940	1,228	12	700	247	20	49	60	218	285	380	
28-Oct-13	03-Nov-13	1,940	597	840	1,697	1,056	14	627	218	22	35	58	205	206	336	
04-Nov-13	10-Nov-13	1,697	1,224	1,220	1,701	986	68	647	205	37	57	53	185	77	290	
11-Nov-13	17-Nov-13	1,701	708	842	1,567	885	54	628	185	41	56	55	170	73	250	
18-Nov-13	24-Nov-13	1,567	854	889	1,532	674	216	642	170	44	39	60	176	95	268	
25-Nov-13	01-Dec-13	1,532	554	657	1,429	756	81	592	176	27	31	72	172	108	270	
02-Dec-13	08-Dec-13	1,429	734	806	1,357	673	48	637	172	42	39	81	162	64	271	
09-Dec-13	15-Dec-13	1,357	589	611	1,335	715	13	607	162	37	49	93	136	83	245	
16-Dec-13	05-Jan-13	1,335	1,740	1,630	1,445	850	134	461	136	52	64	56	124	169	425	

[^] The backlog contains cases which are at least 30 days old and have not yet been processed

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Council has responsibilities, through its housing and planning functions, to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and to make appropriate provision. A report on Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople was brought before the Planning Policy Committee (PPC) on 29 November. The report informed the Committee of current national legal and policy requirements for gypsy, travellers and travelling show people accommodation needs assessment and provision.

The report also sought endorsement for undertaking a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTANA). It was resolved that a new GTANA should be undertaken to inform the Council's Local Plan and Housing Strategy, to be commissioned by April 2014. The report would not be a joint study, but would take into account work already completed and work currently undertaken for all adjoining neighbouring authorities. The study is due to be commissioned by the end of April 2014.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

A report was brought before PPC on 29 November to advise of the current approach to implementation of CIL in the District and to present the informal Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS). The Committee supported the recommendation to Cabinet to note that officers should publish the PDCS appended to the report for informal consultation. It was also resolved that the formal process of implementing the CIL be progressed alongside the Strategic Local Plan (SLP) in accordance with the approach set out in the report.

It was agreed that the PPC, at a forthcoming meeting, will have a discussion on the feedback to the informal CIL consultation and to consider issues for implementation in the District. This feedback will also be reported to Cabinet, by the end of July 2014.

Strategic Local Plan

The Independent Green Belt Review Stage1 was taken to PPC on 7 October. The final Stage 1 joint report – which also covers Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield Council areas - including detailed survey appendices has been published and is also available on the Council's website.

The Independent Assessment of Housing Needs and Strategic Housing Market Assessment was taken to PPC on 29 November. The consultants' presentation material and reports are available on the Council's website.

The Green Belt Review Stage 2 (a more detailed study of potential housing locations in areas identified for further assessment in Stage 1) was taken to PPC on 18 December. The consultants' presentation material and reports are available on the Council's website.

At the 18 December PPC meeting a report gave members preliminary information on the possible future timescales for the Strategic Local Plan (SLP). The Committee also agreed that its work should proceed on the basis that all policies (and related text) in the SLP Pre Submission Draft November 2012, other than SLP 1,8, 9, 10, 13,14 and 16, are likely to be generally acceptable to Council when it reconsiders the SLP.

Neighbourhood Plan Area Designations

Consultation on designation of Colney Heath Parish finished on 10 January and will be reported to Cabinet on 27 February.

Sewell Park (Hunston)

Judgment was given on 12 December 2013 by the Court of Appeal in respect of the Council's Appeal against the High Court Judgment dated 5 September quashing the Inspector's decision.

The case refers to an appeal by Hunston Properties Ltd (Hunston) on housing development in the Green Belt to the rear of 112 -156B Harpenden Road, St Albans. The application is for 116 dwellings, a 72 bed care home, a new road access, two tennis courts and open space.

Hunston had previously applied to the High Court for an order quashing a decision of a Planning Inspector. The Inspector had dismissed Hunston's Appeal against the Council's refusal to grant outline planning permission for the site.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the Council's Appeal and ordered the Council to pay Hunston's legal costs to be assessed if not agreed. The Planning Appeal will now be remitted to the Secretary of State for re-determination. This is likely to involve a further Planning Inquiry.

The Court of Appeal's Judgment however provides useful guidance on the interpretation of the National Planning Policy Framework. A note summarising the Judgment prepared by our Counsel, Matthew Reed is attached.

Railfreight

The Council have received a signed Section 106 Planning Obligation from Hertfordshire County Council binding the County's land ownership interest in the Railfreight Appeal site. The Obligation is dated 19 December 2013.

The Appeal is now with the Secretary of State to make a final decision following his minded to decision letter dated 20 December 2012.

Councillors will be informed when the final decision is received.

Oaklands College, Smallford

A planning application from Oaklands College for additional education facilities and residential development (348 dwellings) is under consideration (5/2013/2589). Two public exhibitions of proposals were previously held by the Applicant.

Former HSBC Centre, Bricket Wood

A planning application for residential development comprising 175 dwellings is under consideration (5/2013/2119).

Lea Industrial Estate, Batford, Harpenden

A new planning application for redevelopment to provide a mix of business floor space (approx. 2,000m²) and residential development (67 dwellings) has been submitted (5/2013/3078).

Ridgeview, London Colney

Planning application (5/2013/0011) for retail development is under consideration and will be reported to Planning Referrals Committee.

Harpenden Station Car Park

A meeting took place on 12 December 2013 with Ward Councillors and other interested parties to discuss Network Rail / First Capital Connect proposals to increase parking at the station.

Harpenden Secondary School

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Cabinet recently authorised acquisition of up to 15.04 hectares (37.16 acres) of land at Lower Luton Road, Harpenden, for enabling the future provision of an additional 6 to 8 forms of entry secondary school (or alternatively an all through school).

Inter council meetings have taken place and a County public consultation is underway.

Former Ariston Site, Harpenden Road, St Albans

Discussions with HCC as landowner about a new outline planning application for residential redevelopment and retention of key community uses (including the Pioneer Club and the Judo Club) are well advanced. The application is expected to mirror closely that considered in 2002. HCC conducted pre application consultation with local members and interest groups starting with councillor and stakeholder meetings in December. One public meeting has been held on 17 December and another is scheduled for 14 January. Following this, a planning application is expected to be submitted in late January or early February.

BRE, Bricket Wood

A planning application (5/2013/0406) for the demolition of existing buildings and construction of up to 100 new dwellings, associated access and facilities was refused on 10 May 2013.

An appeal has been submitted and will be heard by Public Inquiry scheduled to commence 1 April 2014.

Rothamsted

A planning application (5/2013/2145) for the development of facilities at Rothamsted Research, Harpenden for a shared facilities building and conference centre extension

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Significant Planning Matters



with a new car park was granted planning permission by Planning Referrals Committee on 17 December 2013.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Significant Planning Matters



IN THE COURT OF APPEAL
CIVIL DIVISION

Claim No. C1/2013/2734

ON APPEAL FROM THE QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION, ADMINISTRATIVE COURT

HIS HONOUR JUDGE PELLING QC (SITTING AS A DEPUTY HIGH COURT JUDGE)
[2013] EWHC 2678 Admin

B E T W E E N:

CITY AND DISTRICT OF ST. ALBANS

Appellant

-and-

(1) HUNSTON PROPERTIES LIMITED

(2) SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Respondent

SUMMARY OF JUDGMENT

1. Judgment was given on 12 December 2013 in the case of *St Albans District Council v Hunston Properties Limited* [2013] EWCA Civ 1610.
2. The Judgment decided how decision-makers of planning applications are required to deal with housing land supply in the absence of a housing figure contained in an up to date adopted development plan. The Court also made comments on how to arrive at a housing requirement figure in the plan-making context.
3. The relevant part of the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") dealing with housing land supply is paragraph 47. It states:
47. To boost significantly the supply of housing, local planning authorities should:
 - *use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable¹¹ sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land;*

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Significant Planning Matters

- *identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15;*
- *for market and affordable housing, illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and set out a housing implementation strategy for the full range of housing describing how they will maintain delivery of a five-year supply of housing land to meet their housing target; and*
- *set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.*

48. Local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in the five-year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, and should not include residential gardens.

49. Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

4. The objectively assessed need referred to in paragraph 47 is, generally speaking, a figure derived from the Department of Communities and Local Government new household projection figures. That is a generally a high figure in comparison to former Regional Spatial Strategy (“RSS”) housing requirement figures (for example, in St Albans District it is 688 households per annum as against the former RSS figure of 360 dwellings per annum).

Plan-Making

5. Prior to *Hunston*, there was debate in the planning fields as to whether authorities can take into account the development constraints which exist in their area when deciding what the appropriate development plan housing figure should be.
6. The court decided that such constraints can be taken into account. At paragraph 6 of the Judgment, it was stated:

It seems clear, and is not in dispute in this appeal, that such a Local Plan could properly fall short of meeting the “full objectively assessed needs” for housing in its area because of the conflict which would otherwise arise with policies on the Green Belt or indeed on other designations hostile to development, such as those on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Parks. What is likely to be significant in the preparation of this Local Plan for the district of St Albans is that virtually all the undeveloped land in the district outside the built up areas forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Decision-Taking

7. The primary issue before the Court, however, was whether, in the absence of a development plan housing figure, that same process – of settling on a housing requirement figure which takes into account constraints – could be carried out by the decision-taker when deciding whether planning permission should be granted.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Significant Planning Matters



8. The Court decided that such a process could not be lawfully carried out. Paragraph 47 only related to plan-making. As a result, when considering a planning application in the absence of a plan-based housing figure, the question of whether a housing shortfall existed should be tested against the objectively assessed need figure only; that is, the DCLG figure referred to above (para. 25).
9. However, the Court held that the question when deciding whether to grant permission for Green Belt housing development was not simply whether there was a shortfall against the objectively assessed need figure; it is whether very special circumstances exist to justify the development. It was stated that one factor to take into account when reaching that decision is the scale of the housing shortfall (para. 27).
10. However, the Court stated that another factor is the context in which the shortfall is to be seen. The Court considered that, in circumstances where there are very considerable restrictions on development in a District (like, for example, the Green Belt), the decision-maker can conclude that it is wholly unsurprising that there is some degree of shortfall in housing land supply (para. 29). A planning application decision-maker is not required, the Court held, to close his or her eyes to the existence of constraints to the provision of full housing even if a plan is not in place. A decision-maker may decide (albeit that the merits had in a particular case to be considered) that a shortfall in a district which has very little undeveloped land outside the Green Belt is nothing special and certainly not “very special” for the purposes of the Green Belt test (para. 32).
11. The Court also commented that delays in the adoption of a plan should not be a factor to hold against an authority when an appeal is being considered (on the basis that if a Green Belt permission is granted, that is the authority’s fault for delaying) since the appropriateness of developing Green Belt land is a decision arrived at in the public interest; a community, it was pointed out, may suffer from a bad decision, not just the local council or its officers.
12. I hope the above is of use.

MATTHEW REED

Landmark Chambers,

180 Fleet Street,

London,

EC4A 2HG.

18 December 2013

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C : Recycling Update



This is an update on progress on the Council's new collection scheme to achieve its priority to 'accelerate recycling beyond 60%' by 2015. The new scheme increases the materials people can recycle, encourages food recycling and separates cardboard from green waste. It has now been in place across the whole District since 20 September. Progress was last reported to Cabinet in August's performance report and an update on residual waste was provided in October.

Performance so far

The following table is a breakdown of the quantity of specific materials and their percentage of the total waste collected. The roll out of the new service started on 20 May 2013 and was broadly in place across the District by 20 September.

Material	2012/13		2013/14							
			Quarter 1 (April - June 2013)		Quarter 2 (July - September 2013)		Projected Quarter 3 (October - December 2013)		Projected Total 2013/14	
	tonnes	%	tonnes	%	tonnes	%	tonnes	%	tonnes	%
Glass	3,909	7.67%	982	7.09%	928	7.20%	772	5.91%	3,587	7.15%
Soft mix (paper and cardboard)	108	0.21%	231	1.67%	936	7.27%	1,335	10.22%	3,393	6.76%
Paper	4,770	9.36%	1,018	7.35%	346	2.68%	123	0.94%	1,997	3.98%
Plastics and Cans	1,457	2.86%	423	3.06%	381	2.96%	391	3.00%	1,621	3.23%
Green waste	11,229	22.03%	3,955	28.56%	3,624	28.13%	3,521	26.94%	13,600	27.11%
Third Party	531	1.04%	83	0.60%	92	0.71%	86	0.66%	348	0.69%
Total recycled and composted	22,005	43.18%	6,693	48.33%	6,307	48.96%	6,228	47.66%	24,546	48.93%
Landfill	28,959	56.82%	7,157	51.67%	6,574	51.04%	6,840	52.34%	25,621	51.07%
Total	50,964	100%	13,850	100%	12,881	100%	13,068	100%	50,167	100%

Notes:

- *Recycling - includes both kerbside and recycling bank tonnages.*
- *Soft mix (cardboard and paper) and paper – before the introduction of the new recycling scheme paper was collected separately from the kerbside. The figure for paper is decreasing as soft mix increases*
- *Waste sent to landfill - includes household waste, street cleansing, fly tips, bulky collections, clinical waste and rejections from Agrivert.*
- *The figures up to quarter 1 2013/14 are the final adjusted figures, confirmed by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and the Government's Data Waste Flow (DWF). Quarter 2 2013/14 has been confirmed by HCC but not DW. Quarter 3 are our figures and may be adjusted. This includes an estimate for the contaminated green waste rejected by Agrivert (composting plant).*
- *Third party – credits e.g. from textile or small electrical goods from static recycling sites.*

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C : Recycling Update

There has been a decrease in the recycling percentage from quarter 2 to quarter 3. One of the main factors, as explained in June's performance report, is the decrease in green waste collected for composting at this time of year. There has also been a significant reduction in the amount of glass collected this quarter. This is a seasonal trend experienced in previous years and is followed by an increase in quarter 4. A significant rise is therefore anticipated next quarter as a result of the festive holiday period.

The amount of residual waste has increased this quarter. The main cause was a nearly 400 tonnes increase in waste from street cleansing and fly tipping from quarter 2. This was due to the autumn leaf clearing programme, which now has to go to landfill due to changes in legislation.

This has resulted in a decrease in the recycling percentage this quarter. It reflects the pattern in previous years, where the recycling rates for quarters 3 and 4 were lower.

We have introduced a major change to the way we report, to include an estimated adjustment for the contaminated green waste rejected by Agrivert, the composting plant Hertfordshire Waste Partnership use for our waste. The estimated adjustment is based on the rejections in previous quarters, the potential impact of our new collection arrangements, and our performance in comparison to other councils using Agrivert. The recycling rate for quarter 3 including this adjustment is 47.66%, however without this adjustment would be 50.34%.

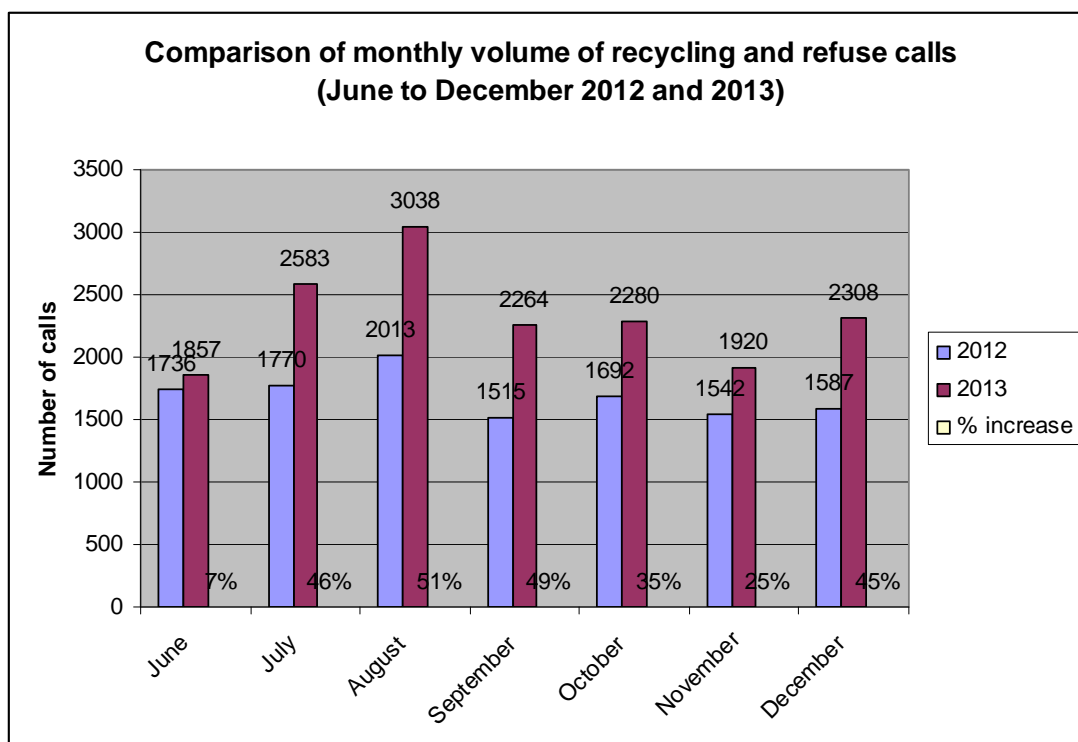
The projected totals for 2013/14 are calculated from the average of quarters 1, 2, and 3. It includes adjustments to reflect historical trends. For example, quarter 4 includes the post Christmas collections which typically sees an increase in both dry recycling and refuse as a result of the festive season. If we continue to perform at the current rate we will achieve a recycling rate of 48.93% by the end of 2013/14. The 2012/13 recycling rate was 43.18% on a comparable basis.

As the following information on enquiries shows, many residents are only just engaging with the new scheme in response to the latest communications. Also, given the seasonal impacts, it is anticipated that improvements to the recycling rate will start to be seen during quarters 1 and 2 of 2014/15. However, this highlights the importance of continued support to residents to encourage them to recycle more and to remove cardboard from green waste.

Enquiries and feedback from residents

Number of enquiries

As anticipated, with the introduction of the new service there has been a higher volume of recycling and refuse calls, emails and visits. The table below shows the monthly number of calls received by Customer Services, from June until December. It compares the volume of calls each month between 2012 and 2013. The percentage rise is given at the bottom of the year bars.

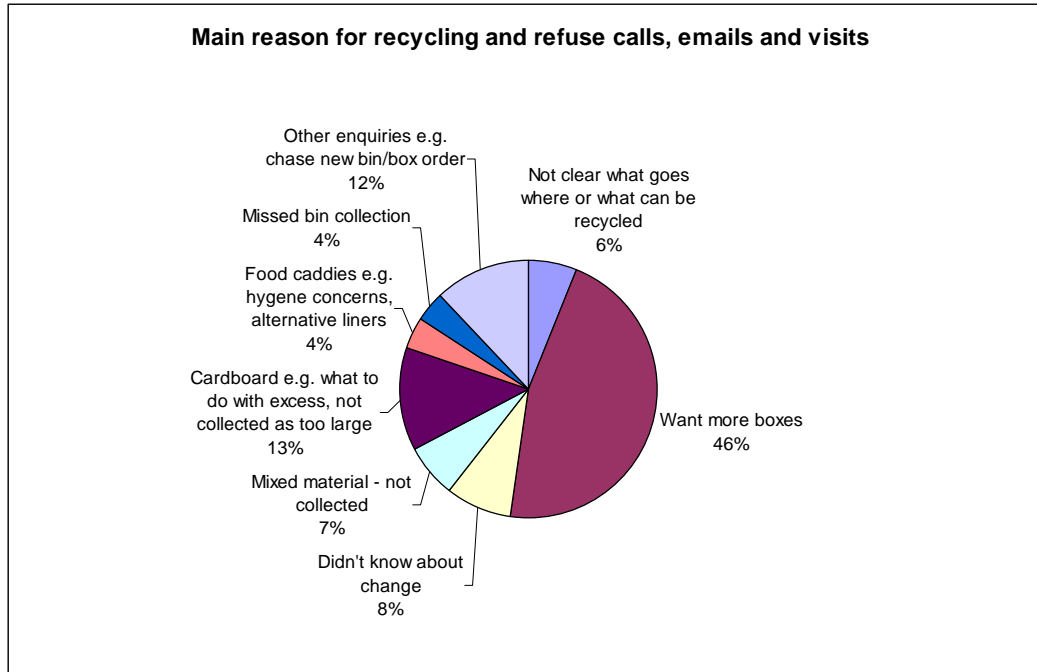


There was a large increase in the number of calls from June to July this year, rising further to a peak in August. The level of calls reduced significantly from August to September. By November it was back to a similar level to the volume in June, however it rose again in December.

A significant portion of the December calls were requests for additional boxes in response to the latest leaflet and the 2014 waste and recycling collection calendar, delivered before Christmas. This is also reflected in the large number of emails and website requests for additional boxes between 16 December (when the leaflet was delivered) and 3 January. There were a total of 1,255 requests for 2,635 additional boxes. It is anticipated that the volume of calls will start to reduce back to a similar level to June, once the service has settled down after the Christmas holiday period.

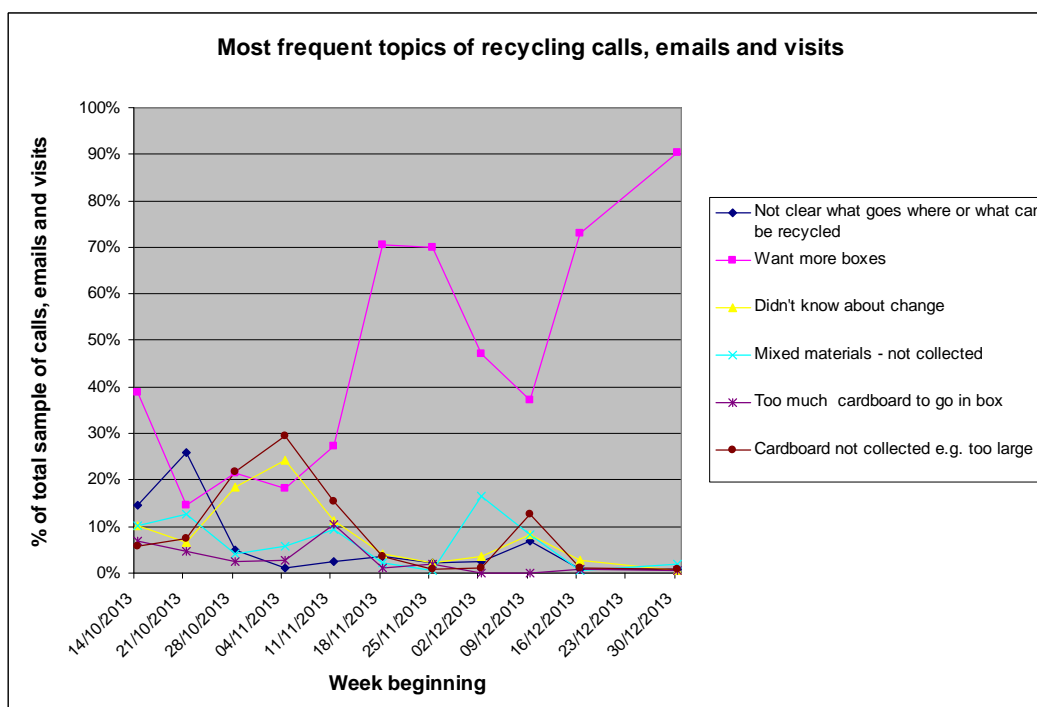
What residents contacted us about

Below is an analysis of why residents are contacting us about recycling and refuse. The reasons were recorded for a sample of calls, emails and visits each week, from the week beginning 14 October 2013 until the week ended 2 January. The volume has been given as a percentage of the total sample to allow comparison between the weeks. The table below shows the proportion of the main types of enquiries during the period.



The highest proportion of enquiries (46%) were from people asking for additional recycling boxes. The second largest (13%) were about cardboard recycling e.g. asking what to do with excess, to ask why their cardboard had not been collected.

The next table shows the proportion of the most frequent recycling enquiries each week, including a further breakdown of what most cardboard enquires were about. Data was not collected during the Christmas week, as there were only two working days.



The highest proportion of calls, emails and visits were from people asking for more recycling boxes. This is a positive indication that residents are

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C : Recycling Update

responding to the new scheme and adapting how they collect their materials. There was a peak at the end of November, as a result of the further promotion of the recycling scheme in the winter edition of Community News. The peak over the Christmas holiday period, as previously mentioned, is in response to the recycling leaflet and 2014 calendar.

There was a peak in the proportion of calls from people who were not aware of the changes, at the end of October and beginning of November. This has now reduced and is expected to reduce further as a result of the recent communications. Likewise, the queries about why boxes have not been emptied (mostly because materials are mixed) are expected to reduce.

The highest proportion of calls, emails and visits about cardboard were asking about why their cardboard had not been collected. Mostly this was because it is too large. There was a peak in the proportion of these enquiries, at the end of October and beginning of November. This was due to the contractor (Amey) being more stringent about not collecting large cardboard, once the 'on request' oversize cardboard collection service was introduced.

The initial higher proportion of calls about what to do with excess cardboard has now decreased, as residents have adapted to the new scheme.

Responding to residents issues

We have worked with our contractor, Amey, to look at operational solutions to address common issues and have adapted our communications to provide clearer information.

Operational solutions

We recognise that recycling large pieces of cardboard that do not fit in the recycling box is causing difficulties for some residents.

- Our contractor is currently looking at options for adapting the recycling collection vehicles or sourcing alternatives so that we can take large pieces of cardboard. They will report back to us in February 2014.
- In the meantime, we introduced a free oversized cardboard collection service, which residents can book for the Wednesday or Saturday of their recycling collection week.
- To help residents deal with extra cardboard waste over the Christmas holiday period, we hired in additional vehicles. These were able to pick up any additional cardboard on the rounds, whatever the size.
- Our contractor has strengthened training for their crews by using photographs to make it clearer what size and presentation of materials they must collect.

Strengthening our communications

As the scheme has rolled out, we have adapted our information in response to the feedback from residents, to make it clearer and to answer common queries. We have now launched the next phase of our recycling

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix C : Recycling Update

communications. This will reinforce information about the new scheme and encourage residents to think about how they can recycle more and reduce landfill.

- **Recycling leaflet** - delivered to all houses, to provide a clear visual guide for residents. This was distributed along with the 2014 collection calendar which includes a summary of what materials go where.
- **Improvements to the waste and recycling web pages**
www.stalbans.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling
- **'No cardboard please' sticker** – put on all green waste bins to give residents a gentle reminder.
- **Winter Community News** - included articles reminding people about the new scheme and encouraging recycling.
- **New signage on the side of the collection vehicles** – coming soon. This will reinforce the messages about what materials go where.
- **Recycling in flats leaflet** – coming soon. This is to remind flats what they can already recycle and to let them know that new arrangements will be coming to many flats later in 2014.
- **Targeted work with the community** - particularly in locations where recycling rates are lower, where there are specific issues which are barriers for recycling, or where there is the potential to increase recycling significantly.