

Council Performance & Budget Summary

April 2015

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 – 0.0% overspend
A	Performance indicators

Performance measures 2015/16

As part of business planning for 2015/16 we have reviewed our performance measures to make sure that we continue to focus on the most important areas. This report introduces several new and revised performance measures as explained in the table below. For these measures, we have calculated the data for the last 12 months to show trends and comparisons.

	Measure	Change	Target
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation)(days) – existing measure revised to include sheltered accommodation	Revised	26 (smaller better)
	‘Percentage of benefit customers seen within 15 minutes’ – removed as included in customer measure below	Removed	
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge) – existing measure revised to include additional types of application	Revised	n/a
	Percentage of Council’s planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	New	66% (bigger better)
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale) – replaces measure ‘Overall percentage of planning decisions within time’	Revised	25% (smaller better)
	Planning applications registered (excl invalids/conditions)	Removed	
Community Services	Fly-tipping incidents – revised measure now excludes graffiti incidents	Revised	Year-on-year trend
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000 – revised methodology to reflect national reporting	Revised	40 (smaller better)
Customer Services	Percentage of all customers seen within 10 minutes – existing measure revised from 15 minutes	Revised	80%

Commentary

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

	Measure	Comments
R	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	<p>The average time to re-let dwellings has increased due to issues with statutory safety checks. In properties without a card meter we have to locate and contact the gas supplier to request a new gas card. This is sent to the address by post and must be loaded with £10 credit to carry out the test. In April, properties with this issue added a total of 37 days to the re-letting process.</p> <p>We have now established an immediately accessible petty cash fund to allow us to load credit on to the cards more easily, improving re-letting times.</p>
R	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	<p>The total rent loss due to voids projected for the year is £399,337 which represents 1.51% of the rent due. This figure also includes voids which we have no intention of letting e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betty Entwistle House which we plan to transfer to housing association, BPHA (£126,750 rent loss) • Linley Court which is part of our sheltered housing redevelopment (£78,000 rent loss) • Albert Street which we are selling (£6,807 rent loss) • Lower Dagnall Street which we are selling (£7,404 rent loss) <p>When these are removed from the overall figure the rent loss which we are actively managing is £180,376 for the year or 0.68% of the rent due.</p>
R	Number of households in temporary accommodation & Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	<p>The high use of temporary accommodation continues. In April the housing options team dealt with 200 enquiries, an increase from 121 in March. There were 18 formal homeless applications and 11 homeless acceptances.</p> <p>New developments at Parkside View in St Albans and Sparrow Court in Wheathampstead are due to open in Summer 2015. This should release some general needs rental properties to applicants on the housing register.</p>
R	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	<p>The figure for new claims is in excess of the 24 day target. There are several reasons for this. New Council Tax Bills and Benefit Notification letters were issued in April and generated a large number of queries. A high number of changes in circumstances, including housing association rent increases and annual benefit and pension increases, has impacted on our capacity to process new claims. Also a number of staff were absent during the month due to annual leave during Easter or sickness.</p>
A	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	<p>This level of appeals allowed (i.e. about 60 over the last 12 months) is just over 1.5% of the approximately 3,700 planning decisions made by the Council in the last 12 months. A general theme from recent appeal decisions is that inspectors are taking a more relaxed approach to design issues such as materials and the design and placement of windows. They have also generally considered extensions to dwellings to be acceptable. Officers are considering whether this requires a change to their approach to assessing applications.</p>

	Measure	Comments
A	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	The number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued is lower in April but is not significantly different from the ongoing trend.
G	Museum visits	Museum visits remain high at 17,134 compared to 11,457 last year. One major reason was the good weather around Easter which boosted the number of visitors to the Hypocaust in Verulamium Park. There was also a significant year-on-year increase in the number of school groups visiting the museums, including more international schools visiting during the school holidays.
G	New jobs	In April there were 6,081 new jobs in St Albans District listed on Universal Jobmatch, the government's jobs website. This increase is mainly a result of the overall economic upturn. In recent months more employers have advertised through the Jobcentre as there are fewer jobseekers to recruit from in the area. There were 720 Jobseeker's Allowance claimants in April 2015 compared to 1,005 in April 2014. Note that several advertising agencies use Universal Jobmatch which may result in some jobs being advertised more than once, though this number would not impact on the total significantly.

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 or exceeded, Amber is up to 10% worse than target and Red is more than 10% worse than target. For indicators with trend analysis – Green highlights an improved performance and Red a worse performance. On the priority project progress and appendices tables Blue is used to show that a project or action is completed.

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		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	TARGET
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.0%	-0.2%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	1.0%	2.3%	1.9%	1.6%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	21	22	22	17	22	26	32	24	25	33	24	19	29	26
	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	1.06%	1.05%	1.03%	1.05%	1.05%	1.08%	1.09%	1.10%	1.12%	1.15%	1.18%	1.21%	1.51%	Trend
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due (targets updated for 2014-15)	Smaller	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%	2.5%	2.8%	2.6%	3.1%	3.0%	2.2%	2.4%	2.6%	2.4%	2.6%	2.5%^
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	103	106	108	110	115	113	118	120	120	115	110	108	107	Trend
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	22	23	19	25	25	25	24	25	27	28	28	26	24	Trend
	Percentage of repairs completed on time	Bigger	96%	100%	100%	100%	99%	98%	100%	98%	99%	99%	100%	99%	100%	98%
	Housing repairs satisfaction	Bigger	100%	99%	100%	99%	99%	99%	100%	99%	99%	100%	99%	98%	98%	90%
	Total number of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support	Smaller	7,550	7,490	7,517	7,536	7,509	7,490	7,445	7,408	7,346	7,295	7,241	7,248	7,211	
	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	Smaller	25.9	29.7	18.3	23.5	19.3	21.6	19.4	28.2	26.6	29.6	20.8	23.0	28.7	24
Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances	Smaller	6.1	6.8	6.5	6.3	6.7	7.2	6.2	8.0	6.9	3.2	3.3	8.1	5.5	11	
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		534	499	499	544	533	471	539	445	459	478	473	586	512	
	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	56%	61%	61%	61%	63%	66%	66%	65%	63%	61%	61%	61%	61%	66%
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	26%	37%	26%	23%	22%	21%	21%	20%	18%	23%	15%	14%	26%	25%
Regulatory	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	Smaller	1,236	1,387	1,206	1,298	1,291	1,520	1,671	1,477	1,632	1,597	1,469	1,739	1,511	Trend
	Percentage of Parking Penalty Charge Notices paid	Bigger	92%	89%	92%	84%	78%	82%	84%	87%	86%	85%	90%	85%	89%	70%
Community Services	Fly-tipping incidents	Smaller	95	74	95	89	60	55	52	52	61	68	93	96	68*	Year-on-year Trend
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	Smaller	12	14	17	18	18	51 ¹	48	38	33	30	30	28	33*	40
	Visits to Tourist Information Centre and www.enjoystalbens.com	Bigger	28,231	33,534	34,084	35,051	35,418	35,050	46,952	65,316	52,316	32,862	31,953	35,330	31,155	Year-on-year Trend
Museums visits	Bigger	11,457	12,504	13,528	13,225	13,277	15,599	18,312	16,969	13,475	14,396	18,184	17,263	17,134	Year-on-year Trend	
Customer Services	Percentage of calls to the Council answered within 5 rings (20 seconds)	Bigger	95.0%	94.9%	94.1%	94.3%	94.3%	94.4%	94.0%	93.9%	94.3%	93.5%	93.8%	94.2%	94.2%	80%
	Percentage of all customers seen within 10 mins	Bigger	90%	92%	89%	93%	89%	91%	92%	88%	91%	89%	89%	89%	87%	80%
External	Claimant count (% proportion of population)	Smaller	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	Trend
	New jobs	Bigger	991	1,196	1,128	1,421	1,312	1,541	1,541	2,250	2,349	3,214	3,024	4,817	6,081	Trend
	All crime (in month)	Smaller	483	520	554	516	456	519	496	485	493	500	473	574	526	Trend
	Anti-social behaviour incidents (in month)	Smaller	226	221	251	273	220	228	237	199	162	161	192	190	250	Trend

^ Seasonal Target for Rent Arrears
 Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun): 2.5%
 Quarter 2 (Jul-Sep): 2.9%
 Quarter 3 (Oct-Dec) 3.1%
 Quarter 4 (Jan-Mar) 3.3%

* draft figure subject to final adjustments
¹ recording system changed from this month on

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