

Council Performance & Budget Summary

October 2015

The monthly performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor and manage service delivery. It shows performance against relevant targets.

Overview

A	Budget – 0.7% overspend
A	Performance indicators

Appendices

- A. Planning Update
- B. Customer Contact Update
- C. Workforce Update
- D. Hertfordshire Devolution Update
- E. Parking Update

Recommendation

1.1 That Cabinet notes the Council Performance and Budget Summary (October 2015) and its appendices.

Change to Museum Visits performance indicator

The performance measure 'Museum Visits' has been updated following the closure of the Museum of St Albans in September. All previous months' data has been updated to exclude visits to that site. This allows us to present a clear picture of performance in the Museum service across active sites.

Senior Staff Cover Arrangements

Colm O'Callaghan (Deputy Chief Executive, Finance) will be away on annual and parental leave from early December to mid-March.

Arrangements have been put in place to cover both Colm's finance and corporate responsibilities. These are summarised in the table below. These aim to make good use of the skills and experience of the senior management team, and provide opportunities for development where appropriate. Responsibilities are spread across the existing senior team, to avoid overstretch for any one individual, and bearing in mind any existing key deadlines or workload peaks in the period.

Existing Responsibility	Cover
Finance	
Acting Head of Finance Department and overall responsibility for Financial Services, Council Tax and Audit	Alan Partington
S151 Officer	Alan Partington
Backfill for Financial Services Manager	Linda Parker

Deputy Chief Executive	
Acting Chief Executive if James is away	Mike Lovelady
Acting Chief Executive if both James and Mike are away	Amanda Foley
Emergency Planning gold command	Richard Shwe
Local Services Scrutiny Committee Lead Officer	Richard Shwe
Chair of various internal officer project boards	Split between Richard Shwe and Tracy Harvey

Customer Service Excellence Award

The Customer Services Team has achieved the Customer Service Excellence Award for a third year. The assessment is made by Assessment Services Ltd, an external assessment centre, in accordance with the requirements of the Cabinet Office's Customer Service Excellence standards.

The award recognises the team's on-going commitment to the delivery of excellent customer services. The assessment criteria include effective use of customer feedback, organisational culture, information and access, delivery, and timeliness and quality of service. There is also emphasis on understanding the customer's experience and robust measurement of service satisfaction.

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
A	Forecast budget variance at the year end	The predicted overspend of £146,000 relates primarily to two matters. The first is the unforeseen costs resulting from the recent sinkhole-related emergency response. The second relates to the costs of employing staff to deal with planning applications.
A	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	The projected rent loss due to voids (empty properties) is projected at 1.4% of the annual rent due i.e. £360,757. The projected increase of £3,544 is a reflection of the increase in void turnaround since last month. There has been a significant increase in the time void properties are with the contractor during the turnaround period. The average time with contractors from April to October was 8 days. In October this increased to 13 days. We have serious concerns about performance for November and have raised these with our repairs contractor. If we remove the properties which we are not intending to re-let, there would still be an increase of rent loss to 0.5% of the rent due.
A	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Between September and October rent arrears decreased by £12,787. We still have some accounts with significant rent arrears. We are awaiting a court date for a suspected fraud case where arrears are now in excess of £7,000.
R	Number of households in temporary accommodation and Average time in temporary	So far this year (April to date) we have had 1,248 housing enquiries compared to 1,144 in the same time period last year. 85 households have been accepted as homeless to date this year. In addition, we have received 125 homeless applications this year, compared to 109 for the same period last year. Sparrow Court, a scheme for older people in Wheathampstead, is due to open in November 2015. This will release some general

	Measure	Comments
	accommodation	<p>needs rental properties to applicants in temporary accommodation and on the housing register. 31 rental one and two bedroom flats are available in November at the new Oaklands development on Hatfield Road for rent. This will allow the opportunity for some accepted homeless households to be moved on from temporary accommodation.</p> <p>2 new properties at Hart Road managed by Hightown Housing Association will be available shortly for use as temporary accommodation. In addition 16 units are now being used at Ridgeview, and 3 at Linley Court, with a further 4 units available in December, all for temporary accommodation.</p>
G	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	<p>The problem with systems interfacing incorrectly was rectified in August so rent account information is now transferring into the benefit system as usual. The majority of affected cases left over have now been processed. This means the number of days to process claims has returned to normal levels.</p> <p>Furthermore, all case officers have been present following several months of sickness absence in the team.</p>
A	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	<p>10 appeal decisions were received in October, seven of which were dismissed in accordance with the Council's decision. This equates to 70% for the month. These included industrial development and new housing development in the Green Belt considered to be inappropriate and detrimental to openness. Other residential proposals were dismissed for being inappropriate development and harmful to neighbouring amenity. Two appeals were dismissed for failing to preserve and/or enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area. There were three decisions granted contrary to the Council's decision. The first was for an advertisement. The second was for a proposal to replace windows to a building in a conservation area. The third was for a single storey extension to a residential dwelling in the Green Belt.</p> <p>Officers continue to monitor appeal decisions to shape their approach to similar applications.</p>
R	Number of planning applications at end of month that have not been determined in time	<p>October has seen a reduction from 261 to 236 in the number of out of time planning applications. Turnover of staff continues to have an impact on our performance with the loss of experienced members of staff in recent weeks. Recruitment work is currently underway, but there is a shortage of applicants. Further rounds of recruitment advertising are taking place. Further details on recruitment can be found in Appendix A – Planning Update.</p>
R	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	<p>The number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued rose in October reflecting an 11.4% increase in deployed hours of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) compared to September. CEOs who started work in September are continuing to receive training and improve personal performance, and are performing efficiently.</p> <p>The contractor continues to deploy CEOs flexibly across beats. This is designed to ensure their presence cannot be predicted and circumvented.</p>
R	Fly-tipping incidents	<p>Fly-tipping has seen a slight decrease compared to September. The Fly-tipping Task and Finish Group met to discuss strategies to combat fly tipping and these will be implemented over the coming</p>

	Measure	Comments
		months. The number of incidents will continue to be monitored to gauge performance of these strategies.

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 an improved performance and Red a worse performance.

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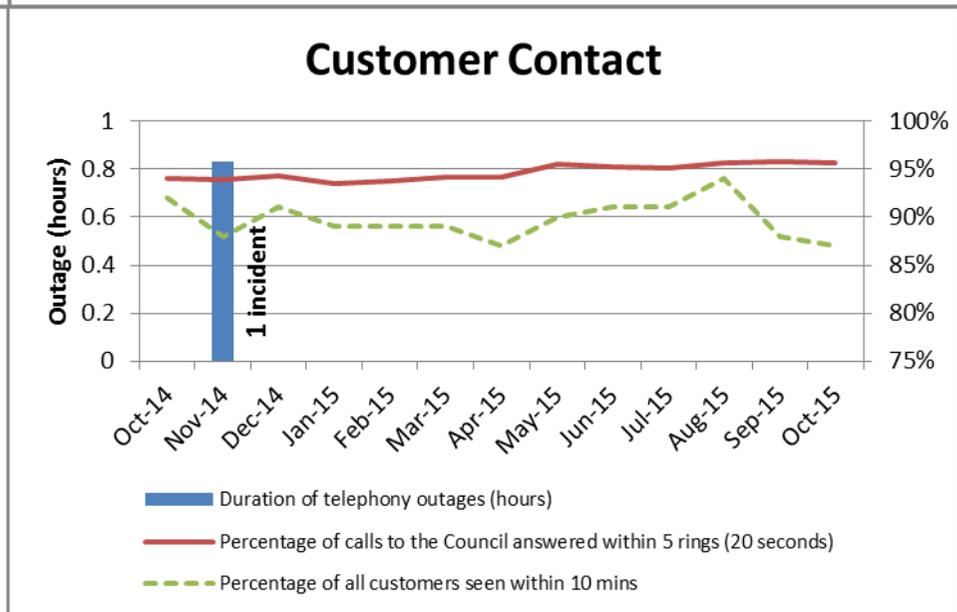
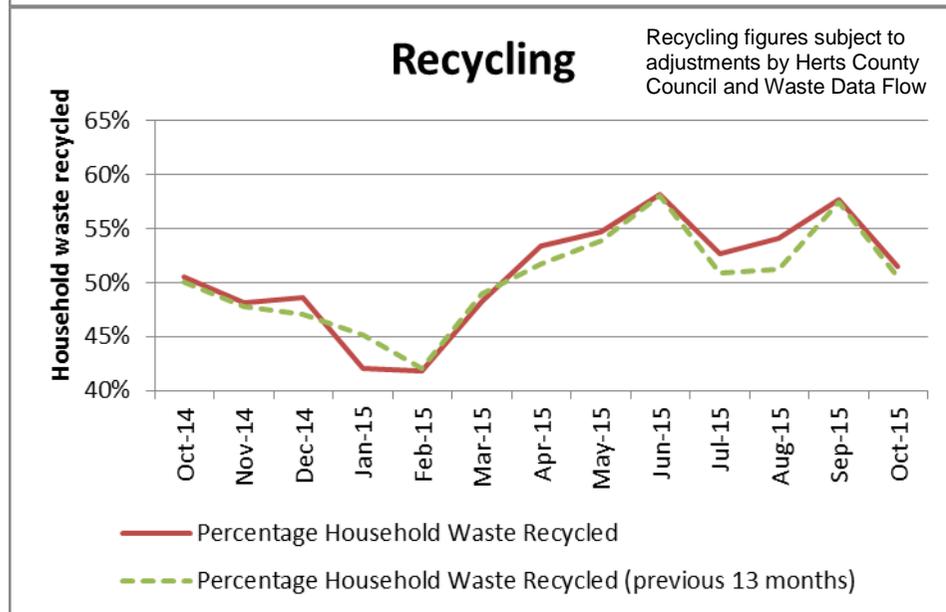
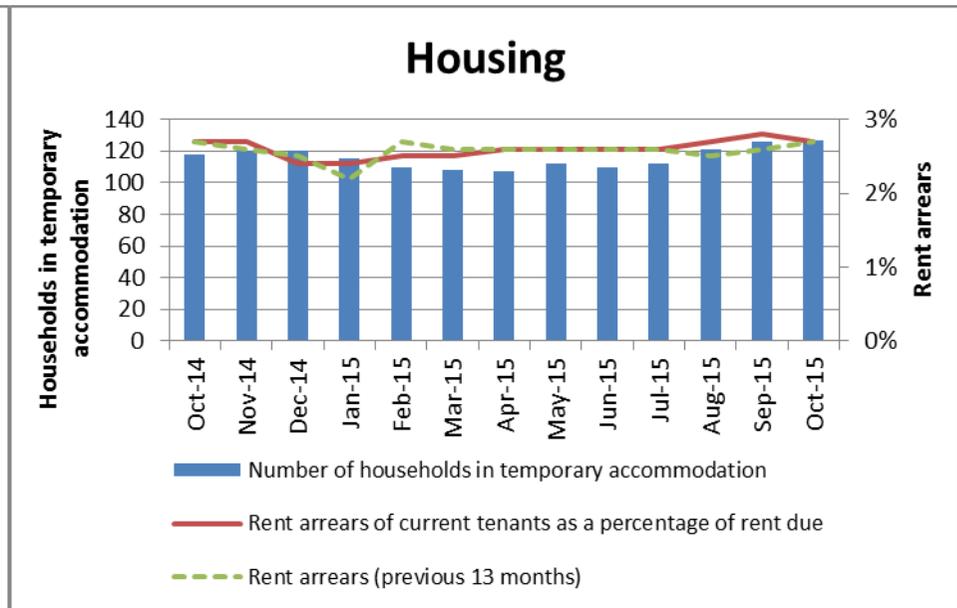
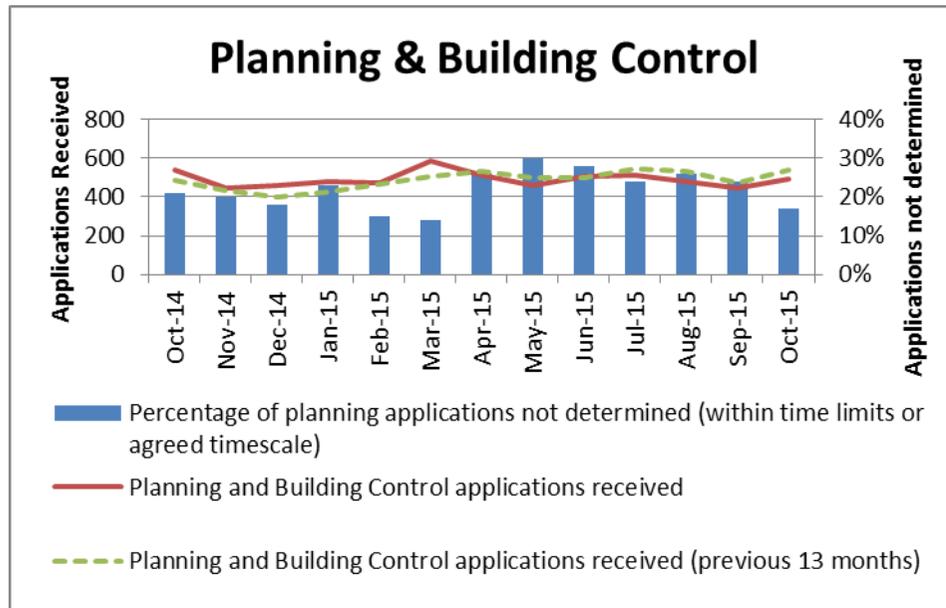
October 2015



		Bigger or Smaller is Better	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	TARGET	
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.8%	1.0%	2.3%	1.9%	1.6%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%	
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	32	24	25	33	24	19	29	22	22	21	22	22	23	26	
	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	1.09%	1.10%	1.12%	1.15%	1.18%	1.21%	1.51%	1.55%	1.49%	1.41%	1.37%	1.34%	1.36%	Trend	
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Smaller	2.7%	2.7%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%	
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	118	120	120	115	110	108	107	112	110	112	121	126	127	Trend	
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	24	25	27	28	28	26	24	22	22	23	23	24	24	Trend	
	Percentage of repairs completed on time	Bigger	100%	98%	99%	99%	100%	99%	100%	99%	99%	100%	100%	94%	99%	99%	98%
	Housing repairs' satisfaction	Bigger	100%	99%	100%	99%	98%	98%	98%	99%	99%	99%	86%	97%	98%	99%	90%
	Total number of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support	Smaller	7,445	7,408	7,346	7,295	7,241	7,248	7,211	7,244	7,222	7,219	7,198	7,156	7,157		
	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	Smaller	19.4	28.2	26.6	29.6	20.8	23.0	28.7	23.9	23.7	27.7	33.7	42.5	20.9	24	
Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances	Smaller	6.2	8.0	6.9	3.2	3.3	8.1	5.5	7.9	9.4	7.3	5.8	7.8	8.0	11		
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		539	445	459	478	473	586	512	459	506	514	478	446	494		
	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	66%	65%	63%	61%	61%	61%	61%	62%	61%	63%	61%	62%	63%	66%	
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	21%	20%	18%	23%	15%	14%	26%	30%	28%	24%	26%	24%	17%	25%	
	Number of planning applications at end of month that have not been determined in time	Smaller	116	110	119	157	142	122	157	202	231	214	249	261	236	150	
Regulatory	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	Smaller	1,671	1,477	1,632	1,597	1,469	1,739	1,511	1,549	1,319	1,716	1,630	1,585	1,787	Trend	
	Percentage of Parking Penalty Charge Notices paid	Bigger	84%	87%	86%	85%	90%	85%	89%	86%	91%	84%	82%	89%	86%	70%	
Community Services	Fly-tipping incidents	Smaller	52	52	61	68	93	96	68	73	124	103	100	102	99*	Year-on-year Trend	
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	Smaller	48	38	33	30	30	28	33	34	37	30	10	16	19*	40	
	Visits to Tourist Information Centre and www.enjoystalbens.com	Bigger	46,952	65,316	52,316	32,862	31,953	35,330	31,155	40,556	47,105	42,521	43,131	41,467	50,463	Year-on-year Trend	
	Museums visits**	Bigger	16,507	15,262	12,350	12,576	16,016	15,840	15,581	13,248	14,781	14,628	14,343	14,164	17,826	Year-on-year Trend	
Customer Services	Percentage of calls to the Council answered within 5 rings (20 seconds)	Bigger	94.0%	93.9%	94.3%	93.5%	93.8%	94.2%	94.2%	95.5%	95.2%	95.1%	95.7%	95.8%	95.6%	80%	
	Percentage of all customers seen within 10 mins	Bigger	92%	88%	91%	89%	89%	89%	87%	90%	91%	91%	94%	88%	87%	80%	
External	Claimant count (% proportion of population)	Smaller	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%	Trend	
	New jobs	Bigger	1,541	2,250	2,349	3,214	3,024	4,817	6,081	6,955	2,234	2,527	2,522	3,080	4,402	Trend	
	All crime (in month)	Smaller	496	485	493	500	473	574	517	514	555	555	501	528	576	Trend	
	Anti-social behaviour incidents (in month)	Smaller	237	199	162	161	192	190	254	224	211	313	311	263	231	Trend	

*draft figure subject to final adjustments
 ** indicator updated to exclude Museum of St Albans site

Performance Summary October 2015



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Appendix A: Planning Update

Staffing

	Post	Last month	Update
1	Lead Development Planner	Post re-advertised	Post re-advertised
2	Lead Development Planner	Post re-advertised	Post re-advertised
3	Development Management Planning Officer	Maternity cover advertised	Candidates currently being shortlisted.
4	Development Management Planning Officer	Interviews taken place. Offer made and accepted.	In post
5	Development Management Planning Officer	Post re-advertised	Candidates currently being shortlisted
6	Development Management Planning Officer	Post re-advertised	Candidates currently being shortlisted
7	Assistant Development Management Planner	Interviews taking place October 2015	In post
8	Assistant Development Management Planner	Interviews taking place October 2015	In post
9	Technical Support Technician	Paperwork to confirm appointment being completed	In post. Fixed term for 22 months
10	Technical Support Technician	Paperwork to confirm appointment being completed	In post. Fixed term for 22 months
11	Technical Support Technician	Paperwork to confirm appointment being completed	In post. Fixed term for 22 months
12	Technical Support Technician		In post. Permanent
13	Technical Support technician		In post. Permanent
14	Building Control Officer	No suitable candidates. Post to be re-advertised	Post advertised
15	Building Control Officer	No suitable candidates. Post to be re-advertised	Post advertised
16	Deputy Development Management Team Leader		Post to be advertised
17	Tree officer (TPO's)		Post to be advertised. 12 month contract
18	Tree officer (TPO's)		Post to be advertised. 12 month contract

The vacancies set out above currently leave the teams:

¹ Colour coding for Staffing table: Pink- job re-advertised. Blue- candidates shortlisted. Green- post filled. Orange- post advertised/to be advertised

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Appendix A: Planning Update



Building Control:

2 below establishment – covered by staff working additional hours. The posts have been reviewed before re-advertisement and now include a temporary market supplement.

Development Management:

Technical Support – completely filled excepting 1 case of maternity leave. Nothing currently advertised for maternity leave.

Development Management Case Officers:

5 below establishment – covered by contractor (x1 post), part-time casual and part time contractor (x1 post), temporary staff (x1 post) and staff working additional hours.

Lead development planner post advertised internally for secondment opportunity, in anticipation of post becoming vacant. Team leader post also advertised internally as secondment opportunity.

There have also been several cases of internal staff promotion in recent weeks, reflecting the Council's succession planning strategy, whereby suitably skilled staff progress their careers internally.

Planning Application Performance

There remains a backlog of undetermined planning applications (252 on 23/10/15). The target is to deal with 75% of all planning applications within the eight week statutory timescales. At present, we are achieving 83%. The average for all planning applications to receive a decision is 10.4 weeks. Householder planning applications are being considered faster, on average in 9.7 weeks. Measures are being taken to reduce this backlog including the use of contractors, temporary and casual staff. The aim continues to be the appointment of permanent staff to vacant roles.

Complaints and Compliments

On 21 October the Standards Committee received the Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2014/15. The Committee resolved: 'That the concern of this Committee in relation to the sharply increasing number of complaints about the Planning department be drawn to the attention of Cabinet'

The following is a breakdown of the complaints and compliments:-

	2013/14	2014/15	6 months to 30/9/2015
Complaints stage 1	25	39	31
Complaints stage 2	9	8	7
Compliments	190	236	206

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Appendix A: Planning Update



Breakdown of complaint types for 2014 figure	Number
Poor quality of service	11
Outcome of application/decision	7
Policy/procedures	5
Delay (in service provision)	5
Lack of response to communications	4
Staff behaviour/attitude	4
Service failure	3
Total	39

Whilst the number of complaints has risen correspondingly the number of compliments has also increased. As last year the majority of the complaints relate to poor service, delays and responsiveness which reflect the issues around increasing application numbers and staff recruitment. Measures put in place to address the matters include customer training for staff, appointment of contractors and temporary staff and creation of new posts.

Building Control Pilot

Market supplement: A 10% market supplement has been implemented for the Principal Officers in Building Control. This supplement was agreed in line with the Council's published Pay Policy.

Income sharing: A pilot of a salary earn back scheme has been implemented in Building Control. The one year pilot is intended to support and encourage the commercial work of this team. It provides a financial mechanism to reward performance and help retain hard to recruit Principal Officers. It is directly based on income generated by Building Control.

Summary of Housing and Planning Bill

The Bill proposes to introduce "permission in principle" (PiP) on land allocated for development in certain adopted or emerging documents. Initially, the Government intention is that only land allocated in the Brownfield Register, Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Plans may obtain PiP

The Bill will also enable the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (SSCLG) to speed up the neighbourhood planning process. This includes setting time limits for local authorities to decide whether to designate a neighbourhood planning area and whether to hold a referendum on a neighbourhood plan. The SSCLG would be able to intervene in a local authority's referendum decision in certain circumstances.

The Bill includes proposals to give the government significant new powers to intervene in the planning and plan-making process. The proposals set out that Councils must produce local plans for new homes in their area by 2017 or the Government will ensure, in consultation with local people, plans are produced for them.

A series of changes to make the process for compulsory purchase orders clearer and faster are also proposed. Proposals giving the SSCLG power to grant development consent for housing linked to an application for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project are also included.

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Appendix A: Planning Update



The Bill also contains proposals relating to Gypsy and Traveller needs assessments. Councils are currently obliged to carry these out to forecast the number of new pitches needed in each locality. The Bill proposes to remove this duty. More information can be found here;

<http://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1370795/housing-bill-amendment-removes-gypsy-traveller-housing-need-duty>

The Bill had its first reading in the House of Commons on 13 October. More information can be found here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2015-16/housingandplanning.html>

Permitted Development

Temporary permitted development rights were introduced in 2013, enabling offices to be converted to new homes without the need for planning permission. The rights were set to expire on 30 May 2016. On 13 October 2015, the Housing and Planning Minister Brandon Lewis announced that these permitted development rights would be made permanent. The rights will in future allow the demolition of office buildings and new building for residential use. New permitted development rights will also enable the change of use of light industrial buildings and laundrettes to new homes.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/thousands-more-homes-to-be-developed-in-planning-shake-up>

Commencement of S91 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015

Section 91 and Schedule 16 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 include provisions for Court permission before claimants can bring specified planning statutory reviews. Applications for permission must be made within a six-week period following the decision or action being challenged. Challenges to the validity of costs orders connected with specified planning decisions, directions or actions can only be brought by way of statutory review.

These provisions came into force on 26 October. Changes made by S91 and Schedule 16 only apply to documents, decisions, directions or actions which are confirmed or take effect on or after 26 October 2015. More information can be found at the link below:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/contents/enacted>

Update for Hertfordshire's Local Nature Partnership (LNP) Support Group

In preparation for the LNP Board meeting on the 19 October 2015, an update for the LNP Support Group was provided. The update consisted of matters relating to Green Infrastructure, input into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Pollinator Project Funding. The government response to Environmental Audit Committee was also included in the update.

The next meeting of the LNP Support Group is on Wednesday 6 January 2016.

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Appendix A: Planning Update



Launch of New Listing and Planning Advice Services

On 19 October 2015, Historic England announced the launch of new listing and planning advice service. The four services are: fast-track listing; listing enhancement; extended pre-application advice; and listing screening advice. More information can be found at the link below:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/our-planning-services/enhanced-advisory-services>

Planning Policy Committee (PPC)

The PPC will meet on 17 November 2015. On the agenda is: report on engagement with landowners/developers on delivery issues for draft SLP potential Broad Locations: sustainability appraisal to support publication/submission; SLP draft for publication (finalisation); infrastructure development plan update.

Luton Borough Council (LBC) Regulation 19 Pre-Submission consultation

On 29 October 2015, LBC released details for their Regulation 19 pre-submission consultation. The consultation will continue until 7 December 2015. It is not yet known as to whether the Council will need to respond. This consultation is one of the latter stages in LBC's Local Plan process. Following the consultation, the Plan will be signed off by LBC's Full Council in March 2016 for submission to the Secretary of State. An independent examination is anticipated to follow in Summer 2016 and adoption of the Plan by winter 2016.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.luton.gov.uk/Environment/Planning/Regional%20and%20local%20planning/Pages/Local%20Plan%202011%20-%202031.aspx>

St Albans City and District Council's Strategic Local Plan Timetable

The timetable agreed at PPC's September 2015 meeting is as follows:

	Planning Policy Committee	Planning Policy Committee	Cabinet - Whole draft	Council Whole draft	Pre-submission Publication
SLP	13 October – All updates and suggested changes	17 November - Respond to PPC suggested amendments – take agreed version to Cabinet	19 Nov	2 Dec	8 Jan – 19 Feb 2016 (To avoid Christmas)

A paper relating to this timetable and the implications for Council business was agreed at Full Council on 14 October.

Following the previous Cabinet meeting, Group Leaders agreed that all councillors should have the opportunity to attend a training seminar on the Strategic Local Plan (SLP).

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Appendix A: Planning Update



These training seminars will be held on:

Monday 23 November, 16.00-18.00, Council Chamber
Tuesday 24 November, 19.00-21.00, Council Chamber

The 23/24 November training dates were chosen by Group Leaders as they fit between the Cabinet meeting on 19 November and Full Council on 2 December.

Further background and details will be provided in advance.

St Albans Sustainability Week and National Tree Week

The Trees and Woodlands team will be participating in Sustainable St Albans Week during 21-28 November (www.sustainablestalbans.org). National Tree Week takes place the week after.

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) – Land at Oaklands College, St Albans Campus

An appeal by means of a Public Inquiry is scheduled for May 2016.

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) – James Marshall House, Harpenden

An appeal (Public Inquiry) is scheduled for six days commencing 24 November 2015 at St Albans City and District Council's offices. The proposed application is for demolition of existing buildings and construction of 'later living accommodation' consisting of 38 apartments with communal facilities.

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) – 270-274 London Road, St Albans

This appeal was due to be considered by informal hearing. However, the Planning Inspector has determined that the appeal is now to be considered by Public Inquiry. The Planning Inspectorate is making arrangements for the Inquiry. It is anticipated that it will last six days in view of the issues raised and the amount of third party interest.

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) – Former HSBC Site/Hanstead Park, Smug Oak Lane, Bricket Wood

An appeal (Public Inquiry) is scheduled to commence on 9th February 2016 at St Albans Council offices for 4 days.

Beaumont School and land north of Winches Farm, Hatfield Road

Development of the school playing field relocation is now starting on site.

A 'reserved matters application' for the housing layout has now been submitted by Charles Church Homes. The application is currently under consideration.

Spencers Park, Phase 2, Pre Application

The Crown Estate and Housing and Community Agency joint application. 80% of the land is located in Dacorum Borough Council's boundary area, and 20% within St Albans District. The application will need cross boundary co-operation and will represent a good example of St Albans fulfilling its Duty to Cooperate obligation.

Ariston Site, land off Harpenden Road

Pre-application discussions continue between the applicant (Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)) and the District Council on the draft planning application and associated legal agreement. HCC's Cabinet agreed a report on the potential re-location of the St Albans Judo Club on 21 September. HCC has indicated it intends to finish negotiations with the Judo Club prior to finalising the application. They will arrange to meet local councillors and stakeholders prior to submission. In the light of the recent sinkhole incident nearby, HCC has been asked to update the Land Stability Report submitted with the previous planning application.

Harperbury Hospital, Harper Lane

A planning application for redevelopment, including demolition and removal of existing buildings and erection of 206 dwellings, is due to be considered by the Planning Referrals Committee. This takes place on 16 November 2015.

Town Hall New Museum and Gallery Project

An application for the change of use and improvements has been submitted and is due to be considered by the Planning Referrals Committee on 16 November 2015.

Copsewood, North Orbital Road, Chiswell Green, St. Albans

The Planning Referrals Committee recommended approval for a planning application for a 150 bedroom hotel, conference and function centre on the 24 August 2015. As this involves significant development in the Green Belt, the question of whether the application should be 'called in' was considered by the National Planning Casework Unit. The Unit has decided that the decision remains with the Local Planning Authority to issue. The decision can be issued on the completion of a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Former Hatfield Aerodrome/Ellenbrook Country Park

Following submission of a Scoping Opinion, Brett Aggregates have recently carried out a public consultation on proposals for mineral working. Officers have written to Brett Aggregates with key questions relating to the restoration and future provision of Ellenbrook Country Park.

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Appendix B: Customer Contact Update

Compared to same period last year there have been:

- **22% fewer customer visits to the Customer Contact Centre**
- **21% fewer customer telephone calls to the Contact Centre**

Across both telephone calls and face to face contact the Council has had 38,387 fewer customer interactions so far in 2015 compared to 2014.

In this this is because we have improved the customer contact experience by establishing direct customer access to our Waste Management contractors. We have also provided more opportunities for customers to self-serve, for example through the self-service payment kiosk located at Council reception.

These changes have created capacity in the Customer Services team which has been used to:

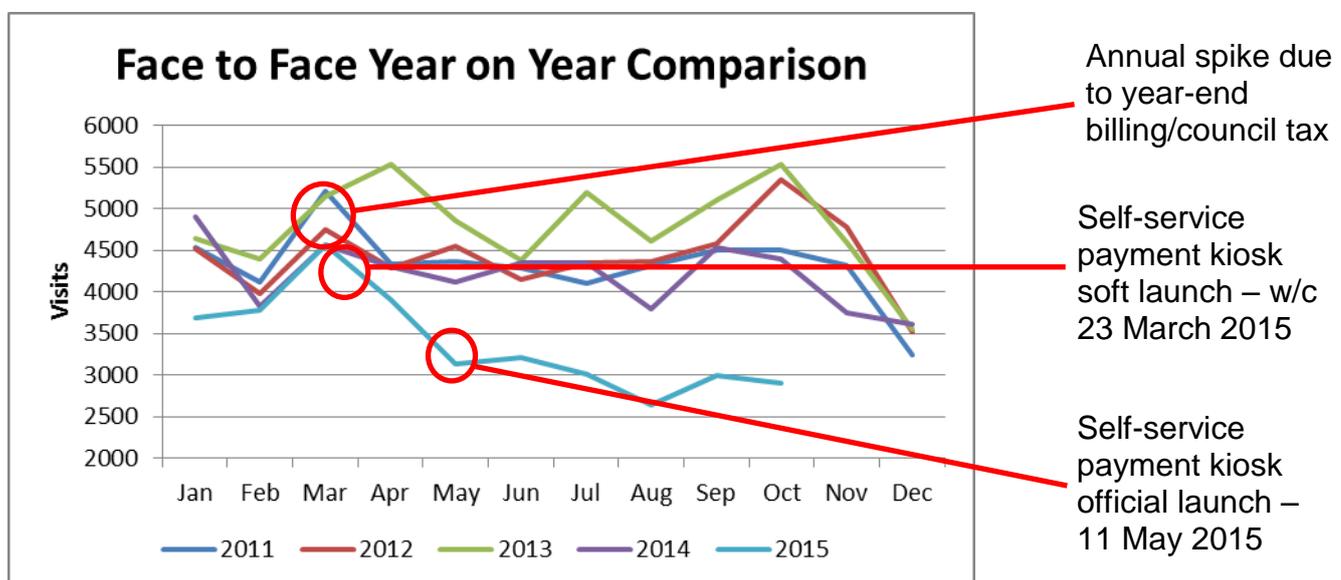
- Support two secondments to other departments; one to Land Charges and one to Mayoralty Services.
- Provide further training for all customer service staff with the aim of making Customer Services the first point of contact for all Planning calls in future.

This supports the Council's priority to develop its Customer Access and Digital Strategy. One aim of this strategy is to improve access to services for residents. The project is also an important part of the Council's proposed savings for 2016-17, reported to Cabinet in October.

Face to face visitors – 9,312 fewer visitors

Numbers have dropped steeply since the introduction of the self-service payment kiosk in late March 2015. This has resulted in over 1,000 fewer visits requiring personal contact per month from June 2015 onwards.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2011	4,526	4,110	5,211	4,326	4,360	4,294	4,096	4,321	4,501	4,499	4,311	3,245
2012	4,525	3,973	4,746	4,288	4,551	4,145	4,350	4,363	4,579	5,342	4,784	3,523
2013	4,642	4,392	5,141	5,534	4,849	4,382	5,199	4,616	5,110	5,540	4,593	3,555
2014	4,899	3,826	4,563	4,307	4,112	4,352	4,356	3,796	4,526	4,394	3,744	3,605
2015	3,682	3,786	4,568	3,898	3,136	3,207	3,003	2,643	3,000	2,896		



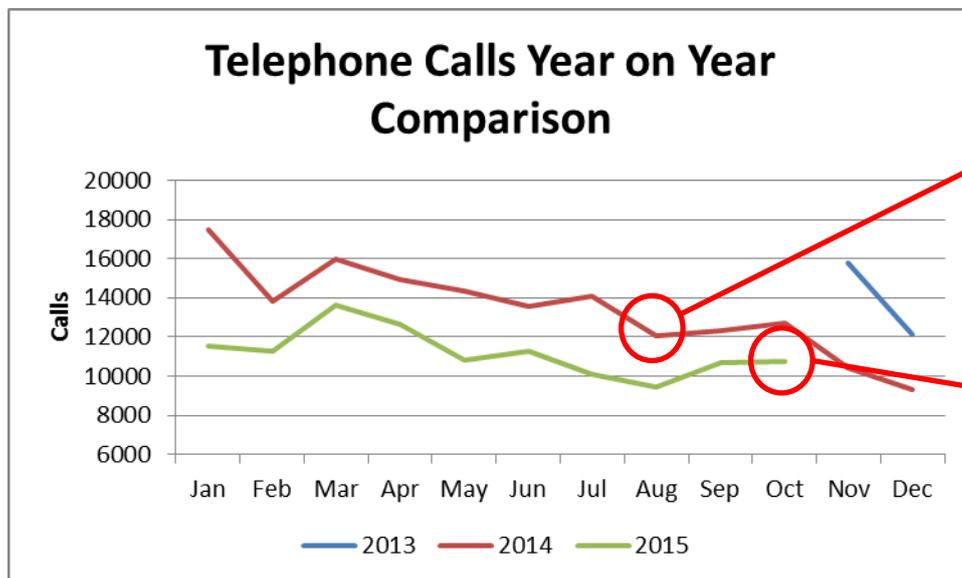
Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix B: Customer Contact Update

Telephone calls – 29,075 fewer telephone calls

Due to the introduction of the new telephony system in late 2013 there is less comparable back data. In August 2014, waste and recycling calls were transferred from the contact centre to the Council's waste contractor Amey. Amey took over telephone payments for waste management services (e.g., bulky waste payments) on 18 October. Most months show a reduction of over 2,000 fewer calls compared to 2014.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2013											15,772	12,126
2014	17,468	13,808	15,968	14,906	14,321	13,583	14,064	12,067	12,338	12,680	10,397	9,306
2015	11,556	11,238	13,644	12,645	10,827	11,269	10,094	9,422	10,710	10,723		



Transferred Waste and Recycling calls to Amey – 18 August 2014

Transferred Waste Management payment calls to Amey – 18 October 2015

Council Performance & Budget Summary
Appendix C

Workforce Update

Challenges

- Increasing staff turnover
- Harder to recruit and retain staff for key technical and professional posts
- Workforce age profile
- Managing absence

Management Priorities for 2015/16

Key challenge - Increasing turnover

Prioritised action in response

- Attract and retain the right people
- Develop our managers
- Manage absence effectively
- Embed succession planning

Workforce Development priorities

- Focus on recruitment/retention
- Review approach to pay and reward
- Increase capacity at senior levels and in larger departments
- Develop career pathways and entry points in priority areas

Workforce Development Plan

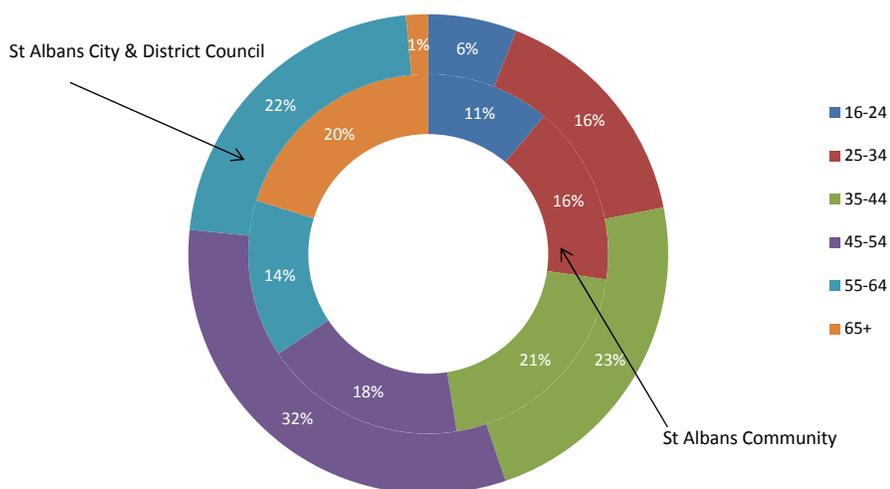
Sets out how we lead, support and develop our people, ensuring we have the capacity to deliver.

Principles:-

- **An employer of choice** – clear ‘St Albans’ offer
- **Effective people planning** – integral to our business planning
- **Clear expectations for attitude and behaviours** – linked to values
- **Attracting and retaining the right people** – permanent where possible
- **Positive about our people** – supporting aspirations and professional development

Workforce Profile 2014/15

Age Profile - St Albans Council and St Albans Community



Key issues – older age profile, recruiting and retaining new generations entering the workforce



Priority Actions

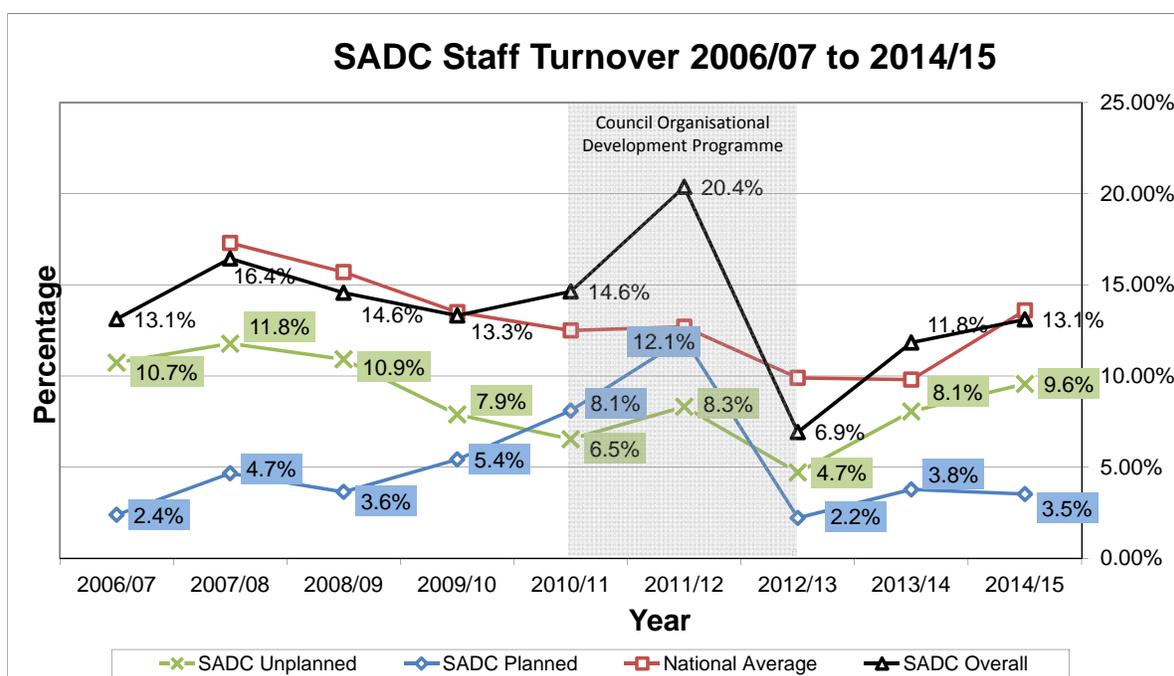
Older age profile

- Analyse at team and department level
- Plan succession for key roles

Recruiting and retaining new generations entering the workforce

- Offer varied entry points – apprenticeships, graduate placements, paid internships
- Promote career and development opportunities

Recruitment & Retention



Key issue - turnover returning to historic levels particularly in certain professional/technical roles

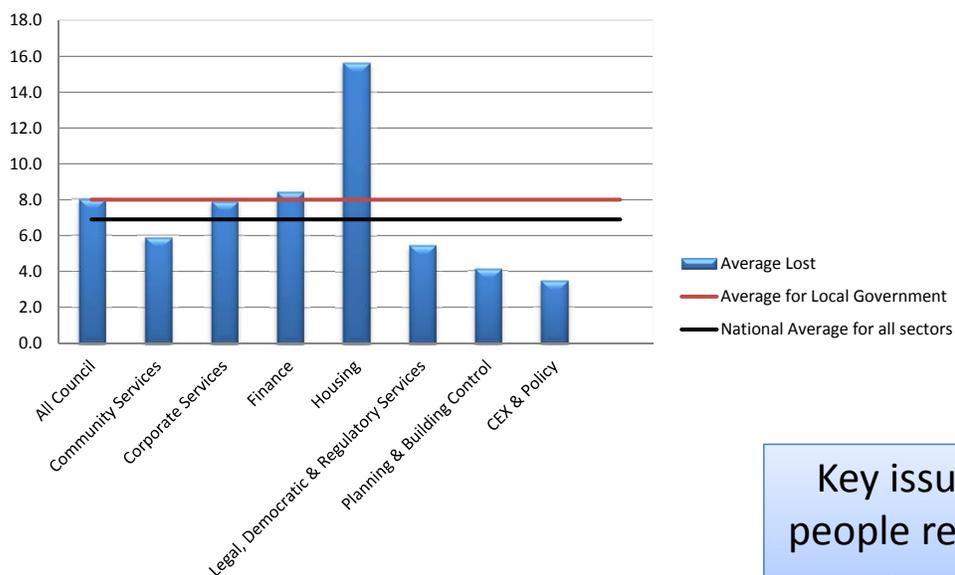
Priority Actions

Increasing Turnover

- Focus on areas experiencing significant levels of turnover – e.g. Planning and Housing.
- Broaden promotion of vacancies including use of social media and professional networks – focus on flexible working and attracting local staff.
- Review approach to pay and reward – including market supplements where evidence justifies them.
- Better understand reasons for leaving and proactively working with staff to encourage people to stay.

Attendance Management

Average Days Lost per Employee

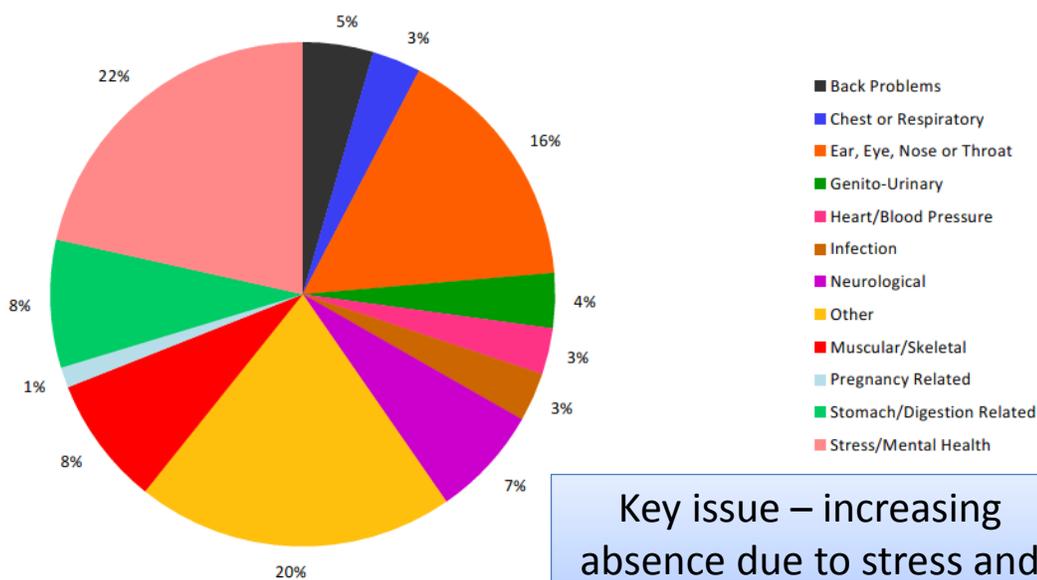


Key issue – helping people return to work as soon as possible



Reasons for absence

Percentage of Council Sickness By Reason 2014/15



Key issue – increasing absence due to stress and mental health issues

Priority Actions

Reducing unplanned absences

- Updated policy to make it easier to implement
- Training being delivered for all managers
- Effective use of data to understand trends

Increasing absence due to stress / mental health

- Mental Health Awareness training for all managers
- Offer Health and Wellbeing initiatives

The full Annual Workforce Report 2014/15 can be found at:

<http://stalbans.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=391&MId=7814&Ver=4>

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix D: Hertfordshire Devolution Update



Hertfordshire County Council held a workshop on 15 October for Leaders, Chief Executives and heads of other public sector organisations in the county including the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). This was organised so that leaders could start to discuss the aims and the potential elements of any bid to government for more devolved powers.

The focus of the workshop was:

- to identify the appetite amongst leaders for greater collaboration on areas of mutual interest that could benefit Hertfordshire residents
- To consider where greater local control over funding would help further such collaboration.

Delegates agreed that they did wish to see greater collaboration, and that further work should be undertaken to identify those areas which might form part of a potential devolution bid in 2016. Members of the Herts Public Sector Chief Executives' group are now leading projects to look in more detail at six areas. These are health and social care, planning and infrastructure, transport, employment and skills, crime and the justice system and finance (including public assets). They will present this research to Herts Leaders at their next meeting in January. There was a strong consensus that consideration of any governance changes should follow, once there was greater clarity on what powers were being sought.

Background

1. The Chancellor announced in May the intention to hand more power from the centre to local areas. The purpose is to give greater control over local transport, housing, skills and healthcare. The first deal was agreed with Greater Manchester in November. Following the initial deal, Greater Manchester and NHS England signed up to arrangements to bring together £6 billion of NHS and social care budgets.
2. Over 30 further proposals covering city and non-metropolitan areas were submitted to be considered as part the Spending Review. The following areas have already secured devolution deals: Sheffield City Region; Cornwall Council; West Yorkshire Combined Authority; and Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Devolution proposals must be fiscally neutral. The attached grid (produced by the LGA) shows the areas which have been included in devolution deals agreed to date. Further information including the proposals can be found at <http://www.local.gov.uk/devolution>.
3. The Cities and Devolution Bill, introduced in May is currently at committee stage. It will put in place the legal framework for areas across the country to follow Greater Manchester. The Government has said that cities making bids will need to create an elected mayor, to provide stronger scrutiny of decision-making. However they said that the government will not impose structures, and that in non-metropolitan areas other governance structures could be considered.

Summary analysis of devolution bids

Bid areas	Governance	Skills/ employment	Housing/ planning	Transport/ infrastructure	Business support/ enterprise/ innovation	Fiscal	Health and well- being	Public estate	Rural	EU	Digital	Trade/ investment	Energy/ environment	Public service reform	Public safety
North East															
NECA	Established CA; will consider with Government the most appropriate governance structures, including an elected mayor On track to establish CA by April 2016; working together with Government to establish a democratically accountable arrangement	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X		X	
Tees Valley		X	X	X	X							X			
South West															
Dorset	Anticipates making a CA submission by end of 2015 Powers devolved to councils collectively working with the LEP, then passed to the appropriate level	X	X	X		X	X					X			
Heart of SW	Appropriate governance and delivery mechanisms will be determined by the nature of the deal itself	X		X		X	X	X					X		
West of England		X	X	X											
Gloucestershire	Proposes to establish a CA Will take forward a council boundary review for existing Deal; any future Deal will be predicated on strengthening of local governance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cornwall*		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Wiltshire	Will build on governance arrangements already in place	X	X	X		X	X	X			X		X		
North West															
Greater Manchester*	Established CA, with directly-elected mayor for city region in 2017	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Liverpool City Region	Established CA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Cumbria		X	X	X		X	X	X				X			
Cheshire and Warrington	Proposes a CA	X		X	X	X		X							
Yorkshire and Humber															
Sheffield City Region*	Will work with the government to ensure that any new governance arrangements work with CA	X	X	X	X	X									
North Yorkshire	Proposes CA with directly-elected mayor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
Hull	Proposes CA with directly-elected mayor	X		X								X			
Leeds City Region*	Established CA, will give serious consideration to directly-elected	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X

	mayor	Skills/ employment	Housing/ planning	Transport/ infrastructure	Business support/ enterprise/ innovation	Fiscal	Health and well- being	Public estate	Rural	EU	Digital	Trade/ investment	Energy/ environment	Public service reform	Public safety
Bid areas	Governance														
East Midlands															
D2N2	In process of establishing 2 CAs across LEP geography	X	X	X	X	X					X	X			
Leicestershire	Proposes a CA	X	X	X	X	X				X					
Lincolnshire	Ruling nothing out	X	X	X	X	X		X					X		X
West Midlands															
West Midlands Combined Authority	In process of establishing CA; discussing with Government appropriate governance structures for whatever devolved powers are agreed	X		X										X	
Telford and Wrekin		X		X	X		X	X					X		
Worcestershire	Committed to reviewing current governance arrangements to ensure that efficient, robust and transparent governance are in place to deliver any future devolution deal	X		X	X	X								X	
South East															
Hampshire and IOW	Will undertake a full governance review, exploring all options	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Oxfordshire and districts		X	X	X			X								
Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire	Setting up Leaders Board made up of county council Leaders and LEP Chairmen	X	X	X		X									
Three Southern Counties (3SC)	Committed to review of governance and options	X	X	X	X	X				X			X		
Greater Brighton	Formal agreement to take decisions through the Greater Brighton Economic Board; MOU with 3SC	X	X	X	X	X		X			X				
East of England															
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	Commissioning independent expert advice to consider governance model options	X	X	X	X	X									X
Essex	Exploring CA model aligned to current federated working model within SELEP		X			X									
Southend and Thurrock	Proposes CA aligned with Greater Essex proposals														
Suffolk	Proposes Public Sector Board	X	X	X	X		X	X		X				X	
Norfolk	Will explore new forms of governance based around a CA model	X	X	X			X		X				X		
London		X	X	X	X	X	X							X	X

*Reflects provisions of agreed Devolution Deals, as well as further proposals submitted to Government.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix E: Parking Update



NCP Equipment Refresh

Drovers Way and Russell Avenue 'Pay on Foot' machines, entrance/exit barriers, and associated equipment were installed between 2nd and 6th November 2015. All equipment is now operational.

The new 'Pay on Foot' equipment has software installed that can provide detailed management information. The software is currently being configured and staff trained in its use. The first monthly reports will be available at the beginning of December. Reports will include:

- Fault reporting – machine, credit card, ticketing failure;
- Number of users by tariff;
- Cash and card income;
- Use by time of day.

This will give us much better management information to help track progress against the objectives in the parking strategy.

Off-street car park equipment has been ordered by NCP Ltd. It is scheduled for delivery during the 3rd week of December. NCP is currently considering timings for installation in the New Year.

Council Equipment Refresh

The on-street 'Pay & Display' machines were installed between 1st and 7th November 2015. All equipment is operational.

There are some technical complications with the removal of the old Pay and Display machines. We are awaiting a detailed quote from UK Power Networks for their removal. Initial estimates put the cost at around £550 per machine. Once an order has been placed, UK Power will timetable the work as part of their on-street works' schedule.

Off-street Car Parking Tariff Changes

- The planned alterations to tariffs took place on Monday 2nd November covering all NCP and Council managed car parks, together with Harpenden Town Council's Lydekker Car Park.
- A new 1 hour tariff was introduced to Keyfield Terrace Car Park.
- Sunday enforcement of the car parks has been changed to start from 10am.