

Council Performance & Budget Summary

July 2016

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

Performance measure changes

Measure	Comments
Housing repairs' satisfaction	No longer reporting this indicator. Further information on Housing repairs performance will be included in the next performance report. The indicator will be replaced with a new measure expanding on how long properties are vacant in the next report.
Claimant count	Now using number of residents claiming unemployment benefit. This new method gives a clearer indication of changes. This will be RAG rated on a trend.

Commentary

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

	Measure	Comments
R	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	The projected rent loss due to voids (empty properties) is unchanged at 1.5% of the annual rent due. There is no change to the number of properties being kept empty across three sheltered schemes prior to redevelopment (66), or the 3 vacant properties pending sale. Excluding these properties, the rent loss due to voids has fallen from 0.47% to 0.45%. Good practice is that rent loss to voids should be no more than 0.5% and we are currently below this on all our "available to re-let" voids.
R	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Rent arrears have increased to £762,463 in July 2016 (from £756,073 in June). This is due to a new vacancy in the team and a number of staff starting to take their summer holidays. We aim to fill the vacancy by September. The Income Team Leader post has been filled after a ten month vacancy. This will provide resources for closer monitoring of arrears. The new manager is also reviewing the rent arrears procedures. In July we referred ten cases to court and obtained four possession orders. There were six eviction warrants arranged from previous court orders. Two resulted in all arrears being paid, three warrants were stayed by the court and one tenant was evicted.
R	Number of households in temporary accommodation and average time in	In July 2016 we received 191 general housing advice enquiries and received 17 homelessness applications. The Council continues to use its own general needs stock to

	Measure	Comments
	temporary accommodation	<p>accommodate homeless households due to the demands on the service.</p> <p>41 new rented properties will be available for letting in coming months (18 in Bricket Wood, 15 in Harpenden, 6 in Smallford and 2 in London Colney). This should ease some of the pressures experienced by households in temporary accommodation.</p>
R	Percentage of repairs completed on time	<p>The percentage of repairs completed on time remains below target. Contractor staffing issues continue, meaning administrators are unable to register completion dates for all jobs by the end of the month. This means up to one week's repairs may not be validated in time to feed in to this report.</p> <p>In addition, there has been a high volume of 24 hour response repairs which meant the contractor has struggled to complete some jobs on time.</p> <p>The Council continues to withhold a percentage of payment to the contractor for this shortfall in performance in accordance with the contract. More information on the reasons for this performance, and actions being taken, will be included in the next performance report.</p>
R	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	<p>New claim performance continues to be affected by a full-time vacancy in the Benefits team. While one vacancy was filled in early July, another member of the team has left the Council. Recruitment to this vacancy is due to begin shortly. In the meantime, the work of this post was shared across the team.</p>
R	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	<p>In July, nineteen decisions were received. Of these, seven were allowed and twelve dismissed. This equated to 63% of Council decisions supported for the month, and 54% supported over the last 12 months.</p> <p>For dismissed appeals, inspectors gave significant weight to Green Belt considerations and the recently adopted St Albans Conservation Area Statement.</p> <p>For new housing proposals allowed, inspectors make reference to the lack of 5 year land supply being a material consideration in their decisions. As previously reported, there is a more positive approach towards development outside conservation areas and Green Belt locations.</p> <p>Decisions are shared with the team regularly to increase their awareness of how inspectors are making their decisions and with what reasons.</p>
R	Parking Penalty Charge Notices Issued	<p>The number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued remains high for July. Compared to July 2015, Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) were deployed for over 400 additional hours. This allowed the contractor to increase coverage and a high number of vehicles breaking restrictions were found. Good weather again contributed to non-compliant parking around parks and surrounding roads.</p>
R	Fly-tipping incidents	<p>Fly tipping remains high for the year with a number of large incidents occurring on rural roads around the District. The</p>

	Measure	Comments
		<p>Waste team is working with our contractors to identify options to address the growing problem.</p> <p>Detailed measures on this important area of work were reported last month, including joint working with other Hertfordshire authorities and prosecution of offenders. Two prosecution first hearings are scheduled for 21 September. A further two cases are currently being prepared for consideration by the legal team. The Community Safety Partnership is match funding a dedicated resource to fast-track fly-tipping cases where there are strong lines of enquiry. In addition, the Council continues to work with the Police on prosecutions.</p>
R	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	The number of missed waste collections increased for July alongside the introduction of a new recycling service. The changes involve additional services being offered and more crews working to collect them. While the crews and residents are getting used to the new arrangements, it is expected that the number of missed collections will be higher than previous months. The figure is expected to reduce once the collection pattern becomes more established and the rollout of new containers is complete.
R	Visits to Visitor Information Centre and www.enjoystalbans.com	<p>The number of visits to the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) and www.enjoystalbans.com is 12% higher than last month and 14% lower than July 2015.</p> <p>Visits to the VIC dropped from 8,480 to 1,057 (88%) year on year. As previously reported, the change in location and reduction in services offered have impacted on visitor numbers. Staff are capturing comments from the public about the new VIC. More information will be included in next month's performance report.</p> <p>Visits to www.enjoystalbans.com increased from 34,041 to 35,599 (5%) year on year. There has been a 25% increase in visits from links on other websites compared to July 2015, probably because of voting for the St Albans and Harpenden Food and Drink Festival.</p>
A	Museum visits	Museum visits have fallen from 14,628 in July 2015 to 13,344 in July 2016. Though there were around 300 more school visits, there were 1,000 fewer visits to the Hypocaust this year. Visits were significantly affected by the warm weather, with the nearby parking spaces being used mainly by visitors to Verulamium Park and the splash park. This meant fewer visitors could park to visit the Hypocaust.
G	Percentage of all customers seen within 10 minutes	<p>Performance is within target for July. The average wait time for all customers who arrive on an ad-hoc basis was 5 minutes 18 seconds. 93% of customers were seen within 15 minutes.</p> <p>The volume of telephone calls for July 2016 was more typical than in June. This meant more customer services staff were available to help face to face customers.</p> <p>We are working on initiatives to reduce customer demand and</p>

	Measure	Comments
		increase customer self-serve through digital technologies. As part of this process we will provide an appointment service for customers that need face to face support.
R	All crime (in month) and Anti-social behaviour incidents (in month)	<p>The District continues to see an above average rise in crime. There have been increases in thefts and criminal damage; although with a year on year fall in home burglaries. In the past month the largest percentage increases - though from a low base - have been in drug offence possession, criminal damage (dwellings and vehicles) and deliberate fires.</p> <p>The rise in criminal damage and public order offences has led to an increase in recorded anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents. ASB rates are taken from the overall crime data. This reflects the rise in ASB cases over recent months seen in the Council Community Protection team.</p> <p>It is not clear what is driving this increase. The Community Safety Partnership is keen to work with SABAC (St Albans Businesses Against Crime) and local businesses to take measures to tackle the rise in thefts from shops.</p>

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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	Bigger or Smaller is Better	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	TARGET	
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	0.0%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.7%	1.0%	1.3%	0.5%	0.1%	-1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-2.0%	-1.6%	0.0%
Housing	Average time to re-let dwellings (excluding temporary accommodation) (days)	Smaller	21	22	22	23	24	23	24	24	24	26	33	24	25	26
	Percentage of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	Trend
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Smaller	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%	2.7%	2.8%	2.8%	2.5%	2.7%	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.6%
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	112	121	126	127	125	114	112	110	113	115	117	123	122	Trend
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	23	23	24	24	26	27	27	28	25	28	28	27	26	Trend
	Percentage of repairs completed on time	Bigger	100%	94%	99%	99%	99%	81%	92%	91%	69%	90%	84%	89%	80%	98%
	Total number of households in receipt of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax support	Smaller	7,219	7,198	7,156	7,157	7,139	7,104	7,035	7,044	7,038	7,211	7,039	7,047	7,054	
	Days to process Housing Benefit new claims	Smaller	27.7	33.7	42.5	20.9	22.0	34.5	30.2	27.9	32.8	26.5	29.3	26.0	26.5	23
	Days to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances	Smaller	7.3	5.8	7.8	8.0	10.0	7.6	6.1	2.4	5.5	5.4	7.1	6.6	7.3	7
Planning & Building Control	Planning and Building Control applications received (including pre-app, trees and condition discharge)		514	478	446	494	459	385	435	546	494	513	545	462	499	
	Percentage of Council's planning decisions supported at appeal (cumulative 12 month)	Bigger	63%	61%	62%	63%	61%	63%	62%	62%	61%	58%	57%	56%	54%	66%
	Percentage of planning applications not determined (within time limits or agreed timescale)	Smaller	24%	26%	24%	17%	19%	23%	20%	29%	15%	18%	24%	22%	26%	25%
	Number of planning applications at end of month that have not been determined in time	Smaller	214	249	261	236	214	233	200	184	146	162	170	134	103	150
Regulatory	Parking Penalty Charge Notices issued	Smaller	1,716	1,630	1,585	1,787	1,601	1,511	1,581	1,396	1,282	1,630	1,763	1,726	1,827	Trend
	Percentage of Parking Penalty Charge Notices paid	Bigger	84%	82%	89%	86%	86%	88%	86%	99%	87%	84%	85%	88%	86%	70%
Community Services	Fly-tipping incidents	Smaller	103	100	102	99	90	87	110	116	130	130	**	**	167	Year-on-year Trend
	Number of missed waste collections per 100,000	Smaller	30	10	16	19	12	9	11	16	11	12	**	**	81	40
	Visits to Visitor Information Centre and www.enjoystalbens.com	Bigger	42,521	43,131	41,467	50,463	78,135	54,613	32,961	27,932	31,181	27,014	31,617	32,736	36,656	Year-on-year Trend
	Museums visits	Bigger	14,628	14,343	14,164	17,826	14,996	12,403	14,090	16,573	24,416	15,101	13,314	13,974	13,344	Year-on-year Trend
Customer Services	Percentage of calls to the Council answered within 5 rings (20 seconds)	Bigger	72.0%	75.0%	73.0%	77.0%	80.0%	77.0%	78.0%	79.0%	81.0%	81.0%	80.0%	80.0%	79.0%	80%
	Percentage of all customers seen within 10 mins	Bigger	91%	94%	88%	87%	85%	91%	76%	79%	81%	84%	84%	71%	82%	80%
External	Claimant count	Smaller	655	665	660	665	640	575	635	680	675	680	705	705	690*	
	New jobs	Bigger	2,527	2,522	3,080	4,402	4,569	4,349	5,548	5,452	6,864	5,746	7,128	6,660	5,588	
	All crime (in month)	Smaller	562	506	531	564	530	536	587	556	637	627	612	642	653*	Trend
	Anti-social behaviour incidents (in month)	Smaller	313	314	263	232	200	177	211	192	221	261	295	315	358*	Trend

* Draft figure subject to final adjustments

** Verified figure unavailable

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