

6. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE 2015/16

REPORT OF: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE
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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Cabinet
11th July 2016

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out the Council's outturn performance in 2015/16. It provides Cabinet with an analysis of performance over the past year using the suite of performance indicators previously agreed by the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery.

Summary





2. As Cabinet will be aware from the quarterly reports it has received and considered during 2015/16, the Council's services have generally performed well over the past year. Despite increasing demands on many Council services and a challenging financial climate, performance levels have remained good in most areas. In the small number of services where service targets have not been fully met, the reasons for this are clearly understood and appropriate action is being taken.

Recommendations

3. **The Cabinet is recommended to note the Council's performance throughout the year and identify any areas where it requires further reporting or information.**
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Introduction

4. This report has previously been considered by the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery on 15th June 2016. Issues raised by the Committee are set out in paragraph 71-77
5. One of the functions of the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery is to regularly monitor the performance of the Council's services, with a view to determining whether any additional scrutiny is required of services, particularly if performance is not satisfactory. To do this, the Committee is provided with performance information on a quarterly basis. This report is the culmination of such reporting for 2015/16 and provides Members with an overview of performance for the whole year (from April 2015 – March 2016).
6. Performance information is presented in a standard format across all services. Performance measures have been developed to capture the core areas of each service. Where possible a target is set for the year, against which performance is measured. Some performance measures do not have targets as these measures are 'health checks' and for monitoring purposes only.
7. The performance information for the year is provided at Appendix A. This is set out in tabular form using a traffic light system, as explained below:-

-  red – 10 percent or more off target
-  amber – slightly off target (less than 10 percent)
-  green – on or exceeding target
-  health check - indicator for information only

Overall Performance

8. Performance has continued to be good across the Council over the past year, with a small number of exceptions of which more details are provided later in the report. The outturn position is summarised below:-
 - 24 indicators were on or exceeded the target (59%)
 - 6 indicators were slightly off target (14%)
 - 11 indicators were significantly off target (27%)
 - 11 indicators were for monitoring only
9. Not all aspects of the Council's work can be measured by formal indicators and in some cases the Council has little or no influence over performance. Therefore this work is measured using health check indicators which are outlined in Appendix A and are intended to provide Members with a holistic view of the Council's work.

Performance meeting or exceeding targets

10. Of the 41 indicators with targets, 24 met or exceeded their target. This has been achieved despite increased volumes, a post recessionary economic climate and the need for the Council to continue to make efficient use of resources. This section of the report provides more information about these performance achievements.

Percentage of calls received and answered in the contact centre

11. Performance in the contact centre is good with 94% (93,790) of the total calls received (99,570) answered, exceeding the target of 88%. This is an improvement in performance compared to 2014/15 where it was 90%.

Complaints responded to within published deadlines

12. The target to respond to 100% of complaints within the published timescales was met. This is an improvement upon performance in 2014/15 of 97.5%. There has been a significant reduction of 15% in the number of formal complaints received, down to 171 in 2015/16 from 201 in the previous year. At the same time the number of formal compliments received by the Council has increased from 116 in 2014/15 to 320 in 2015/16. This indicates improvement in customer satisfaction levels.

Payment of invoices

13. One of the Council's key performance indicators is the speed the Council pays invoices. This is considered important for supporting small businesses, where cash flow can be critical to the health of the business. Performance in 2015/16 was 98.5% of the 5,342 invoices paid within 10 days, well above the target of 90% and an improvement on the 98.4 % of the 4,901 invoices paid in 2014/15. In addition, over 99% of invoices were processed within 30 days. This continued high performance is a result of refinements to the Council's processes for dealing with invoices together with a continued focus on the importance of achieving the target across the whole organisation.

Ethnic minority representation in the workforce - employees

14. In 2015/16 performance was 4.2% compared to a target of 3.3%. Performance against this indicator can vary quite substantially on the basis of one or two staff joining or leaving the Council's employment.

ICT service requests completed within the target time agreed with the customer

15. In 2015/16 88% of the 825 service requests received, were completed within the agreed time against a target of 85%. This is an improvement on the previous year's figure of 85% of the 846 service requests completed within the agreed time.

Percentage of ICT helpdesk calls outstanding at the end of the month

16. At 19% the percentage of ICT helpdesk calls outstanding exceed the target of 20% and has shown an improvement upon the previous year's figure of 24%. In 2015/16 the service has sought to strike a balance between service on the helpdesk and project delivery which has contributed to a reduction in the volume of outstanding calls. Improved performance has been delivered despite a service restructure across the three Council sites that are supported by CenSus ICT.

Agendas which are published on the website 5 days before a meeting

17. It is vital that Council reports are published in a timely way to enable the public and Councillors to fully assimilate the information they contain ahead of formal Council meetings. In 2015/16 the target was met of 100% of agendas being published 5 days ahead of each meeting.

Speed of processing new Council Tax Support Claims

18. As reported to the meeting of Cabinet on 30 November 2015, it was agreed at the CenSus Partnership Board to change this target in 2015/16 from 18 to 20 days. This recognised that Council Tax Support claims have historically taken longer to process than Housing Benefit claims because there is less incentive for claimants to provide information to support their claims. This revised target has been met. A total of 1,609 claims were processed in the year compared to 1,735 in 2014/15.

Speed of processing Housing Benefit Changes of Circumstances

19. The November meeting of Cabinet also received notification that the target for this indicator had been changed from 12 to 10 days by the CenSus Partnership Board. The change recognises the shift in emphasis towards speeding up processing of changes of circumstances. This is aimed at reducing the amount of official error arising from overpayments and the potential loss of Housing Benefit subsidy received by the Council from the Department of Works and Pensions. At 9 days the speed of processing Housing Benefit change of circumstances was better than the target of 10 days. A total of 19,526 changes of circumstances claims were processed in the year compared to 21,010 in 2014/15.

Environmental Health Service requests actioned and resolved within 3 months of receipt

20. Performance in 2015/16 was 98% against the target of 96%. This represents 2,295 out of 2,332 service requests resolved within 3 months of receipt.

Environmental Health Service requests responded to within 5 working days

21. Environmental Health met their target in 2015/16 of responding to 97% of service requests within 5 working days. This equates to 3,553 of the 3,649 requests for service being responded to within 5 working days. This is a challenging target especially during busy periods. Requests for service can be across the range of Environmental Health activities, including licensing, housing standards, environmental protection and food hygiene.

Number of households accepted as homeless

22. At 39, the number accepted as homeless by the Council is well within the target of 45. This reflects the success in preventing homelessness over the year. Please also see the comments in paragraphs 46-48 regarding the use of temporary accommodation for more information.

Crime and Antisocial Behaviour

23. The Council, as part of the Community Safety Partnership, works with the Police and other partners to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in the District. A key part of this activity is to work with victims and perpetrators to tackle and resolve antisocial behaviour issues. The Council also participates in crime prevention campaigns to educate residents on how to reduce the risk of crime.
24. The crime rate per 1,000 in 2015/16 was 35.6, significantly below the target of 51 crimes per 1,000 people. Although this is a slight increase from the figure for 2014/15 of 34.5 crimes per 1000 people it is worth noting that there has been an increase in crime across the whole of West Sussex. Mid Sussex has seen the third smallest increase at 4.1% and remains the safest district in West Sussex.

Health and wellbeing interventions

25. The wellbeing service supports and advises people who wish to make improvements to their lifestyle, such as losing weight, taking more exercise, improving their diet, reducing alcohol consumption or stopping smoking. The service delivered 1,794 interventions over the year, which was significantly above the target of 1,000 and 16% more than the number in 2014/15 of 1,506.
26. Of the people who responded to requests for feedback, 90% of those assisted by the Wellbeing service reported a health improvement against a target of 66%. Members will be aware that there were concerns about the future funding of the service. Confirmation has now been received from West Sussex County Council of funding for 2016/17, with a 4.4% reduction in the budget for the service to £318,831.

Scheduled grounds maintenance

27. Despite deferring some of the works scheduled for the third quarter of 2015/16 due to waterlogged ground conditions and the need to move resources onto the clearing streams and water courses, the target of 95% of the scheduled grounds maintenance taking place was met.

The number of visits made to Leisure Centres and Civic Halls

28. The number of visits in 2015/16 at 1,820,658 was 8.2% above the target of 1,682,877. The main reason for the growth in attendance has been a considerable increase in Leisure Centre membership. This has grown by 19% from 9,744 in March 2015 to 11,600 at the end of 2015/16. The increase in membership can be attributed to investment in improved facilities at our leisure centres and regular promotion of membership across all three sites. Improvements to facilities have included:

- refurbishment of all of the Centres' reception and café areas;
- a new range of resistance and cardio vascular equipment provided in the gyms;
- extension of the gym at the Triangle, which has increased the number of exercise stations by 27%;
- relocation of the gym at King's Leisure Centre, doubling the number of exercise stations; and
- introduction of spin studios at the Dolphin and Triangle Leisure Centres.

Household waste disposed of in landfill sites

29. The amount of waste per household sent for landfill in 2015/16 was 445 kg against a target of 468 kg (this is based upon provisional waste tonnage figures, which will not be finalised with DEFRA until Autumn 2016). This is an improvement on the amount in 2014/15 which was 467kg. The largest single factor was a reduction in road sweeping tonnages due, in part, to drier weather in the early Autumn and therefore lighter sweepings. There has also been a reduction in the amount of street litter collected.

Percentage of car park machines repaired within 2 days

30. There are 55 car park payment machines across the District and the target for 2015/16 was to address 95% of faults within 2 days. This was exceeded with 100% of faults addressed.

Building Control site inspections carried out within 24 hours of date requested

31. Performance met the target of 98% in 2015/16. There were 6,066 site inspections carried out within the year, compared to 7,724 in 2014/15.

Processing of planning applications

32. The speed of determining planning applications remains good. Targets for this service were set at national top quartile performance levels. Targets have been exceeded for majors, minors and others planning applications. This demonstrates the excellent performance of the service relative to other councils and is against the background of a sustained level of development in the District. It is noteworthy that this has not been at the expense of the quality of decisions made by both officers and Members, demonstrated by the low level of appeals allowed against the refusal of planning permission. This was at 14% against the national average of 33%.

33. During the year 51 out of 57 major planning applications were processed within the target of 13 weeks (or within an agreed extension of time). This is a performance of 89% against the target of 79%. The number of major applications processed has increased from the 50 received in 2014/15.

34. 367 out of 399 minor planning applications were processed within the 8 week target. This represents a performance of 92% against the target of 84%. The number of minor applications processed in 2014/15 was 429.
35. 1,038 out of 1,082 'other applications' were processed within the 8 week target. This represents performance of 96% against the target of 94%. The number of other applications processed in 2014/15 was 1,141. "Other" applications mainly refer to residential development by householders.

Percentage of all postal and NLIS searches that have been replied to within 5 working days.

36. The Local Land Charges section experienced an increase in the number of searches in 2014/15 and the level of activity continued into 2015/16. The number of searches received in 2015/16 was 3,015, up from 3,006 in 2014/15. Despite these increases in workload, performance in replying to searches within 5 working days has been maintained at 99% and is above the target of 96%. This performance has been achieved despite long-term sickness leave during 2015/16.

Performance slightly below target

37. Six of the indicators fell only slightly below (within 10%) of their targets in 2015/16. Information about these is set out in this section of the report.

Percentage of calls to the switchboard answered in 40 seconds

38. Following lengthy discussion by the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery and the Performance Indicator Working Group, the Customer Services indicators for call answering were changed for 2015/16 from the average waiting time to the measurement of calls answered in 40 seconds (with a target of 90%). The percentage of calls answered by the switchboard within 40 seconds in 2015/16 was 82% (36,167 5 out of 44,011 answered). This was not collected in 2014/15.
39. The introduction of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System from 1st April 2016 has brought about a new way of working with a streamlining of processes. This combined with the future introduction of computer telephony integration designed to call up customer details as soon as a call is received, is expected to reduce the administrative time of calls. In addition to the telephone calls received, the Customer Service Team dealt with 34,000 visitors to reception during 2015/16 (this figure was not collected in 2014/15). The Council has invested in staff training to improve customer service and seven members of the Team completed a BTEC level 2 in Customer Services last year.
40. The further ongoing implementation of the CRM during the coming year will have a focus on resolving more enquiries the first point of contact and improving the quality of services offered to our customers. Additionally we will be exploring opportunities to expand the ways in which customers can engage with us and a new set of performance indicators to measure the success of these will be brought forward for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery Committee in the Autumn.

Speed of processing new Housing Benefit Claims

41. The Council processed new Housing Benefit claims in an average of 18.4 days against the target of 18 days and a slight reduction in performance on the previous year's average of 17.9 days. A total of 1,555 new claims were processed in the year, compared to 1,556 in 2014/15.
42. The Benefits Service is introducing self-service modules and an on-line claim form, which will help to speed up the processing time of new claims and improve customer service. A publicity drive encouraging the use of the online facility will take place in the summer to coincide with the launch of the new website.

Council Tax collected

43. Council Tax collection in 2015/16 was 98.6% against the target of 98.8%. This represents an improvement on the 98.5% collection rate in the previous year. In cash terms £86.8 million was collected in 2015/16, an increase of £1.6 million on 2014/15.

Non Domestic Rate collected

44. Non Domestic Rate collection in 2015/16 was 95.8% against the target of 98.00%, and a fall in the 97.3% collected in 2014/15, however the amount of cash collected was £42.6 million, an increase of £0.9 million on 2014/15.
45. It is important to emphasise that the indicator measures in year collection of debts. There was a large Non-Domestic Rate bill (for over £300,000) issued in March 2016 for a business premises in the District. It was not possible to collect this by year end. If this debit hadn't been raised, the collection rate would have been 96.5%. Collection has also been affected by a greater number of businesses opting to pay over twelve instalments, rather than ten. This allows less time in the year to pursue non-payment. Figure 1 below shows monthly collection against the target across 2015/16.

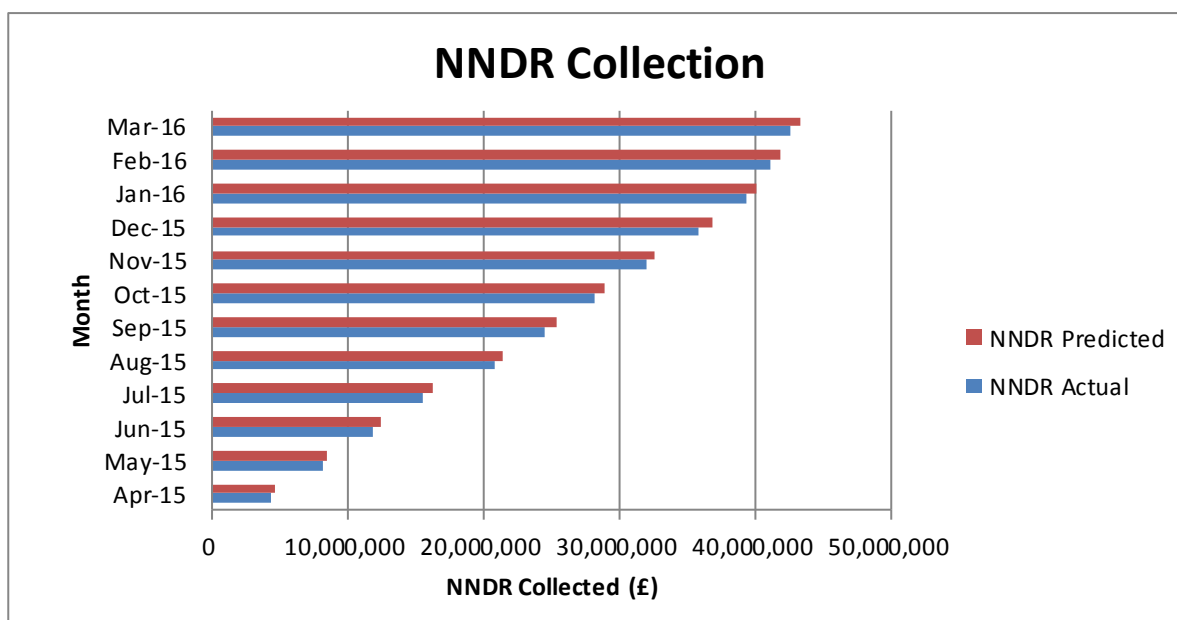


Figure 1

Number of households living in temporary accommodation

46. Forty Three households were in temporary accommodation at the end of March 2016 against the target of 40 compared to 30 at the end of 2014/15. Whilst the number of households for whom the Council has accepted a homelessness duty remains within target, the number of households in temporary accommodation continues to exceed the target. There are a number of reasons for this:
- There has been a reduction in the number of lettings of affordable rented homes delivered. This pressure is likely to continue as changes to welfare benefits, the rent regime within which Registered Providers work and the Government's focus on home ownership make it increasingly challenging to deliver affordable rented housing. In this context it is important that homeless households get a priority for the lettings that do occur. Changes to the housing allocation scheme were agreed by Council on 23 March 2016, and these should reduce the length of time households are in temporary accommodation being housed within a reasonable period.
 - The Council is finding it increasingly difficult to access privately rented housing, despite employing a part-time tenancy negotiator and providing rent in advance and deposit guarantees where required. This is largely due to welfare reforms making most privately rented housing unaffordable for those in receipt of benefits. There is a risk that this trend will continue with the freezing of the Local Housing Allowance for four years from April 2016.
 - Sometimes it is taking longer than we would like for empty properties in the registered housing sector to be made ready to let. This means that households may have to wait longer in temporary accommodation. This is an issue that we continue to work on with our 'Registered Provider' partners.
47. Overall, there is likely to be an increased demand for the temporary accommodation available to the Council. An additional £12,000 has been built into this year's budget for temporary accommodation and this will be closely monitored throughout the year.
48. A new Homelessness Strategy was considered by the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community on 6 July 2016. This included a review of homelessness in the District and set out actions for preventing homelessness and minimising the use of temporary accommodation.

Validation of planning applications within 5 working days

49. In order to support Development Management in meeting their targets for processing planning applications, the Council aims to validate planning applications within 5 working days of submission in 98% of cases. Performance in 2015/16 was 96%, an improvement on the 93% in 2014/15, despite the Planning and Building Control Support Team dealing with an increased number of planning applications in 2015/16 (790 compared to 684 in the previous year). This performance was achieved despite vacancies and sickness.

Performance not achieving targets

50. There were very few services where performance fell significantly below target in 2015/16. This report considers overall performance for the whole year, and therefore under-performance in only a few months of the year can impact on the outturn position at year end. This is the case in some of the services outlined below.

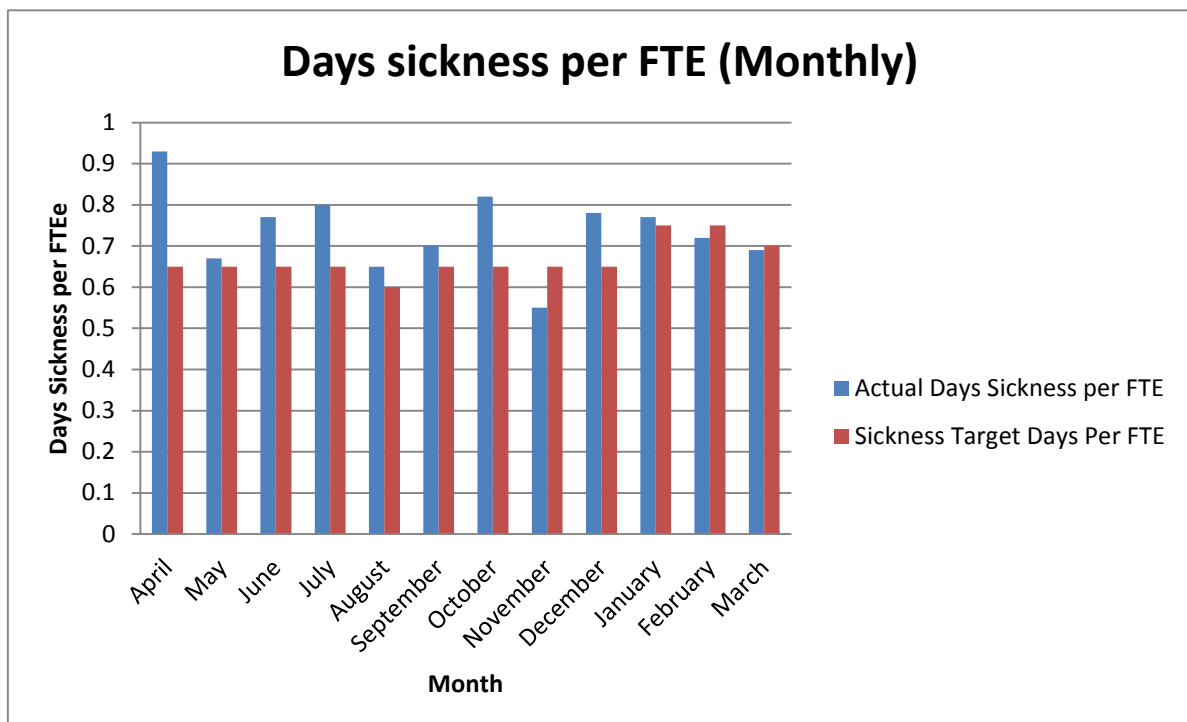
Percentage of all calls answered in 40 seconds

51. The percentage of all calls answered within 40 seconds in 2015/16 was 75% (70,774 out of the 93,790 calls received and answered). All calls refer to those calls received by the Customer Services Team for the 10 services they handle directly as well as those to the switchboard. See paragraph 38-40 regarding changes that are being introduced in this area. Overall, the average waiting time for all calls has improved from 58 seconds in 2014/15 to 40 seconds in 2015/16. The trend for the percentage of calls answered in 40 seconds has consistently improved across the year from 62% in Quarter 1 to 83% in quarter 4. This has been achieved in the latter quarters whilst an additional volume of calls has been received (600-1,000 per month). These increases have been as a result of changes in the green waste arrangements and calls regarding the elections/referendum.

Staff sickness absence rates

52. The cumulative staff sickness rate at the end of 2015/16 was 8.9 days per full-time equivalent (FTE), which is above the target of 8 days. Although adverse to target this was an improvement against the performance in 2014/15 of 9.2 days. The main reason for the failure to meet the target was the increase in the number of long-term (11 days or more in the month) cases. This is illustrated by the fact that the Councils short-term sickness figure at the end of the year was just 4.5 days per FTE. 240 of 311 staff (77%) took at least one period of sickness in 2015/16, but just 29 out of 311 (9%) accounted for 47% of the total days lost through continuous periods (11 days or more) of long-term sickness. Of these 29 staff, 22 have returned; five have left the Council's employment; and two are ongoing.

Figure 2 below shows the monthly figures for sickness rates against the target.



Staff Turnover

53. This is one of the indicators that is reported to the Committee quarterly by exception, recognising that staff turnover can be affected by a number of factors, many of which are out of the control of the Council. Staff Turnover in 2015/16 of 14.3% (45 voluntary leavers) was higher than the 12% (38 voluntary leavers) year-end target. This is also slightly more than the 11.7% figure (38 leavers) in 2014/15. Increased turnover can be a reflection of the jobs market and the general health of the economy. Exit interviews continue to indicate no issues that need specific attention. Reasons for departures were as follows:

- Personal 17
- Career Progression 10
- Retirement 7
- Relocation 5
- Job Content 2
- Salary 2
- Travel difficulties 2

Percentage of employees with a disability

54. Performance for this indicator was 4.2% against the target of 5% and down from 4.9% last year. This measure is affected by only one or two staff joining or leaving the Council's employment.

Speed of processing Council Tax Support claims change of circumstances

55. The average speed of processing the 13,611 Council Tax Support claims changes in circumstances received in 2015/16 was 11 days against the target of 10 days. This is an improvement on the average speed of 12 days it took to process the 13,961 Council Tax Support claims changes in circumstances received in 2014/15. It was agreed at the CenSus Partnership Board to an in year change to this target from 12 to 10 days. As referred to earlier in this report this change was in recognition of the shift in emphasis towards speeding up the processing of changes of circumstances.

56. It was recognised that reducing the target from 12 to 10 days would be challenging for the CenSus Partnership and an improvement in performance has been achieved in Mid Sussex. Although the number of claims with change of circumstances processed has reduced slightly, the total number and complexity of amendments required is increasing (one such claim can require several recalculations of benefit). The nature of the caseload in Mid Sussex contributes to this with a large proportion of claimants in work and living in private rented accommodation.

The Number of Disabled Facilities Grants completed

57. This is one of the indicators that is reported to the Committee quarterly by exception, recognising that the completion of Disabled Facilities Grants can be delayed by a number of factors outside of the Council's control. Grants are provided for a range of home adaptations to help disabled people live independently in their own homes. 89 Disabled Facilities Grants were completed in 2015/16 against the target of 120. This compares to 88 completed in 2014/15.

58. The number of completions has been affected by a higher proportion of complex and high expenditure adaptations (those between £15,000 and the £30,000 maximum). There were 12 complex grants in 2015/16 out of 84 grants awarded (14.3%), this compares with the 7 complex grants in 2014/15 out of 89 grants awarded (7.9%). The more complex adaptation works are, the longer they take to deliver and to coordinate with the relevant professionals.
59. Before the Council can consider a Disabled Facilities Grant application, a recommendation must be received from an Occupational Therapist. There have been a number of changes at West Sussex County Council within their Occupational Therapist section and at one stage in the year very few or no recommendations were being received. This has contributed to the below target level of Disabled Facilities Grants completed.

Affordable homes delivered

60. This is another of the indicators that is reported to the Committee quarterly by exception, recognising the fact that the Council has little influence over the timing of affordable housing completions. The number of affordable homes delivered in 2015/16 was 113 against the target of 160. This compares to 221 new affordable homes delivered in 2014/15, a record number. The number delivered in 2014/15 was particularly high due to the Homes and Communities Agency requirement that Housing Associations had to complete by the 31 March 2015 deadline in order to qualify for grant. As a result 10 homes included in the 2015-16 targets were actually brought forward and completed in 2014-15.
61. It is important to emphasise that the remaining shortfall in 2015/16 is not a loss of affordable housing, but a delay in completion of the units which will be delivered in 2016/17. The cause of the shortfall is a delay in the completion of units on Section 106 sites where the developer determines the speed of affordable housing delivery. The 113 new affordable homes delivered last year comprised 84 (74%) rented and 29 (26%) shared ownership properties which is in line with the tenure split requirements to meet the district's known affordable housing needs.

Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting

62. The combined recycling and composting rate in 2015/16 was 39.4% against the target of 44% (this is based upon provisional waste tonnage figures, which will not be finalised with DEFRA until Autumn). This is a slight decrease on the 2014/15 figure of 39.5%. There has been a trend across the county of recycling performance plateauing in recent years. The weight of dry recycling fell in part due to the reductions in the amount of paper collected and the reduced weight of bottles particularly glass. Manufacturers have also made significant steps to reduce weight in the production of new packaging. Despite growth in the numbers of subscribers, the weight of garden waste collected reduced due to a particularly wet late Autumn and Winter.
63. Members are aware of the Council's Recycling Quality Project, which includes an educational programme aimed at encouraging residents to minimise their waste and recycle. The programme explains how materials should be placed for recycling to reduce the amount which is rejected and thereby maximise recycling rates. The project commenced in Spring 2015 and is being rolled out across the District, with completion due in November 2016.

64. Levels of rejection of waste for recycling at the transfer stations improved in 2015/16, but this did not offset the other factors already described that have led to a decrease in the weight of dry recycling. The expansion of the green waste service from 14,200 to 18,200 subscribers over the next two years will assist in improving performance.
65. Recycling performance and the strategic review of waste management is included in the work programme for the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community who considered a report in March 2016 considering long term options for improving recycling and waste reduction. This work also sets out a road map for the remainder of the Council's waste management contract. Options for consideration could include changes to collection methods, materials collected and collection vehicles.

Parking enquiries dealt with within 10 days

66. This is an indicator with a 100% target, where under performance in only a few months of the year can impact upon the outturn position. Performance has reduced from 99% in 2014/15 to 89% in 2015/16. As previously reported performance was impacted by ICT issues during the 2nd quarter of the year where problem in migrating the parking software system onto a new server, meant that the system had limited availability. This led to a backlog in enquiries being processed and payments applied to accounts. It took longer than expected to clear this backlog, due to staff issues which have now been resolved. Performance has been back on track from quarter 4, with 100% of the 815 parking enquiries received dealt with within 10 days and targets are expected to be met in 2016/17

The percentage of property not in rent arrears

67. This indicator measures the rent paid on properties managed by the Council. Performance in 2015/16 was 74% compared to a target of 97%. This has been adversely affected by a single contested rent which has been highlighted in previous reports to this Committee. The main dispute with the tenant has been resolved. The Council is working with them to revise their lease agreement. This has contributed to improved performance of 98% for quarter 3 and 96% for quarter 4.
68. The Council has achieved an improved return on the Council's tenanted non-residential property portfolio in 2015/16, up to 7.5% from 5% in the previous year. This is mainly due to completion of outstanding rent reviews and improved processes.

Percentage of plans received by Building Control which are checked within 15 working days

69. Performance in checking plans within 15 working days was 77% of the 1,257 applications received against the target of 85%. This compares to the 92% of the 1,237 applications received in 2014/15
70. The team has managed to maintain its existing base of customers but, in common with most local authority Building Control services has experienced difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff due to the national shortage of officers and competition from private companies. During 2015/16 a trainee Building Control Officer was appointed to 'grow our own talent'. The Council is continuing to work with other authorities in West Sussex to explore alternative service delivery options, in order to increase the resilience and cost-effectiveness of the service. Performance in the fourth quarter was above target at 88%.

Consideration of the Performance Report by the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery at its meeting on 15th June 2016

71. The Committee at its meeting on 15th June enquired about performance in answering telephone calls in the context of the new Customer Relations Management (CRM) system and was informed that the new system increased the call capacity of the Contact Centre and allowed more calls to be dealt with at the first point of contact. It also provided the opportunity to establish more qualitative indicators about how well calls are dealt with, rather than just the quantity of calls answered within a certain timeframe. The new CRM system was introduced in April and time is needed to gain experience of its use. It was confirmed that a proposed new set of Customer Services performance indicators would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 9 November 2016.
72. The Committee expressed concern about the increased use of temporary accommodation and the difficulty in accessing accommodation for homeless people to move into. The Committee was informed that the Council's Private Tenancy Negotiator had had some success in gaining access to temporary accommodation in Crawley. Affinity Sutton had recently recruited an officer based in Haywards Heath in order to speed up the re-letting of their vacant properties, which would assist in moving people on from temporary accommodation. It was confirmed that the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community would be considering the Council's Homelessness Strategy at its meeting on 6 July. This strategy would include more information about the causes of homelessness, actions for its prevention and minimising the use of temporary accommodation.
73. Concerns were also expressed about the downward trend in the percentage of waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting. This was in the context of the EU target for local authorities to reach a recycling rate of 50% by 2020 and the potential for fines for non-achievement. It was acknowledged that recycling performance and the strategic review of waste is included in the work programme for the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community. This review will consider the waste contract and introduction of additional waste streams for recycling.
74. The continued high levels of Health and Wellbeing interventions were highlighted by the Committee, despite the difficulties in planning and delivering the service arising from the lack of clarity about its long-term funding.
75. The Committee emphasised the importance of delivering Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) in order to enable disabled people to stay in their own homes. The Committee was informed that the former delays in providing DFGs caused by the lack of Occupational Therapists had now been addressed by the County Council.
76. Issues around staff sickness and turnover were discussed by the Committee. It was acknowledged that staff turnover was related to the general health of the economy and that sometimes it was necessary to leave some posts unfilled in the short term to review staff structures.
77. The Committee agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery would request to meet with their counterparts on the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community, to discuss concerns about performance in recycling and housing which are included in the Leisure and Community work programme.

Policy Context

78. This performance report sets out how the Council has performed against the targets set out in its Service Plans and Corporate Plan for 2015/16.

Financial Implications

79. There are no direct financial implications contained within this report.

Risk Management Implications

80. There are no specific risk management implications arising from this report. Performance across the Council was seen as a strategic risk in the past but the Council has a proven track record in performance management and it is no longer seen as a significant risk. However, pressures on services brought about by increased service volumes as set out in this report will need to be monitored, as they have the potential to adversely impact on the Council's ability to continue to deliver current levels of service should demand continue to increase.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

81. The equality and customer service implications of each of the services mentioned in this report are subject to their own separate equality impact assessments.

Other Material Implications

82. There are no other material implications arising from this report.

Background Papers

[Corporate Plan for 2015/16](#)

[Report of Scrutiny Committee for Leader and Service Delivery of the Council's performance in the third quarter of 2015/16](#)

[Report to Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Community 2 March 2016 Review of Waste Management- Update Report](#)