

**Date 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

**Audit & Scrutiny Committee**

**Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints Working Group Draft Report**

**Working Group Members**

Cllr Pound  
Cllr Chilvers  
Cllr Russell

Apologies  
Cllr  
Barrett  
Cllr Reed

**Supporting Officers**

Steve Summers – Chief Operating Officer  
Sarah Bennett – Customer Services Manager

**Scope**

The scope of the Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints Working Group is set out below:

1. To monitor and consider the Council's service Performance Indicators.
2. To consider in detail Formal Complaints received by the Council.
3. To consider how Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints are reported to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee
4. To make recommendations to the appropriate Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

**Meeting Date**

20<sup>th</sup> September 2018  
Attached as Addendum 1 are the notes of the meeting.

**Terms of Reference**

The Working Groups Terms of Reference are attached at Addendum 2.

### **1. Report Recommendations**

The report recommendations are set out in full below.

R.1 To note and agree the proposed changes to the Council's Formal Complaints Policy.

R.2 That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Formal Complaints for the second quarter 2018/19.

R.3. That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Performance Indicators for the second quarter 2018/19.

### **2. Introduction**

2.1 Following a review in 2015 of its complaints procedure the Council currently operates a three stage complaints process for customers to take issue with any perceived failure to provide a service, failure to respond to requests or failure to adhere to standards on the part of the Council and its officers.

2.2 The council uses a variety of performance indicators to monitor how well services are performing in meeting the needs of service users. The council has set of key indicators of performance, the "toplines". The topline include a variety of indicators that relate to the delivery of the Council's priorities.

2.3 The topline measure performance across a range of council activity including: planning, housing, streetscene and revenue and benefits.

### **3. Explanation of Recommendations**

**Explanation**

The working group were advised that officers had reviewed the Council's Formal Complaints Policy and had amended the policy as set out below:

- Changed from three stages to two.
- Changed the response time from 20 working days to 10 working days
- Introduction of Unreasonable & Persistent Behaviour Policy

Officers advised that these changes would streamline the process and provide a quicker response for the complainant. The changes were in line with Local Government Ombudsman advice and a report would go to the Regulatory & Governance Committee in October, then onto P,P&R Committee in November.

**Recommendation 1**

To note and agree the proposed changes to the Council's Formal Complaints Policy.

**Explanation**

Attached as Addendum 5 is the previous Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee report from 2017/18 which outlines actions taken in response to formal complaints received in 2017. The working group noted the following:

- There had been no formal complaints for Planning in the 1st quarter of 2018/19.
- There had been 10 Housing complaints in the 1st quarter of 2018/19 as compared to 38 for 2017/18. Officers advised that regular meetings are held with the Housing service to review issues arising.
- There had been 9 Revenue & Benefits complaints in the 1st quarter of 2018/19 as compared to 31 for 2017/18. Officers advised that regular meeting were held between Brentwood and Basildon to identify where there was issues and possible solutions. It was also noted that there had been a previous trend of lack of communication from the department to residents in the previous year. No such trend existed in the 1st quarter of 2018/19.

**Recommendation 2**

That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Formal Complaints for the second quarter 2018/19.

**Explanation**

Officers advised the working group on actions that have been developed for Housing and Streetscene with regards to Performance Indicators as set out below.

Housing

- Average re-let times for Local Authority Housing

The average re-let time has increased in Q1. This is mainly due to a less desirable property being re let after a long period of time. Work is continuing through our weekly void meetings to ensure turnaround times are a priority. There has also been a large number of voids in recent weeks.

- Level of Arrears at the end of quarter

Arrears do fluctuate throughout the quarter; however, the current figure is high. Despite the push from Estates Officers during patch campaigns the figure has increased. We are seeing a larger number of people moving to Universal Credit which is impacting greatly on our arrears figure.

- Households living in temporary accommodation

The figures show a broad consistency across the year and evidence continuing effort to ensure that temporary accommodation remains in check. Measures towards creating a more effective 'move-on' process are starting to make a successful impact.

Streetscene

- Officers were currently developing a new Waste Strategy which would identify options for future recycling and waste improvements.

LGO outcomes

- 2 decisions have been made by the LGO regarding complaints registered with them. 1 was not investigated, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> was not upheld.

**Recommendation 3**

That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Performance Indicators for the second quarter 2018/19.

**Addendum 1**

**Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints Working Group  
Minutes of Meeting 20 September 2018  
Seven Arches Road**

**Present:** Cllr Jan Pound (JP), Cllr Karen Chilvers (KC) and Cllr Will Russell (WR)

**Also present:** Steve Summers (SS) – Chief Operating Officer  
Sarah Bennett (SB) – Customer Services Manager

**Apologies:** Cllr Gareth Barrett, Cllr Mark Reed

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting, which was the first meeting of the group for this financial year.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Barrett and Reed.

**3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Approved.

**4. Matters arising from previous meeting**

Officers reminded the working group that following the previous Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee a document detailing what actions have been developed for Housing, Planning Services and Revenue and Benefits with regards to Formal Complaints had been sent to Committee members.

**5. Terms of Reference**

These are attached to these minutes.

**6. Review of reports provided**

6.1 Formal Complaints

An overview of the key aspects of the Councils Formal Complaints Policy was provided by SS to the Working Group. Recent advice had been provided by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) that best practice had suggested that complaints policies should have a two-stage approach rather than the three stage approach the Council's Policy currently adopted. A review of the Complaints policy has now been conducted which reduces the process to two stages. The intention of this is to provide a speedier resolution for the complainant.

Action: Draft Complaints Policy 2018 to be reported to Regulatory & Governance Committee in October.

- 6.2 A presentation was provided to the Working Group on Formal Complaints (Addendum 3) received by the Council for the previous four years. This identified an increase in formal complaints made over this period, but it was acknowledged that the new policy in 2015 had provided greater access for complainants.

The Working Group reviewed individually the complaints received for the period April to Jun 2018 and noted that of the 30 complaints, a majority were against Housing and Revs & Bens.

It was agreed that SS will continue to review these issues with Senior Officers from Housing and Revs & Bens.

Action: For the Working Group to monitor these complaints against future quarters to identify concerns or themes.

### 6.3 Performance Indicators

The Working Group were provided with data for the Council's topline Performance Indicators for April to June 2018 (Addendum 4) and went through them individually.

Action: To continue to review progress of Performance Indicators each quarter.

### 7. **Any Other Business**

None.

### 8. **Date of next meeting**

Next meeting will take place in December 2018 – date to be finalised.

## **Addendum 2**

### **Audit & Scrutiny Committee**

### **Performance Indicators & Formal Complaints Working Group – September 2018**

Members of Working Group

Crs. Pound, Chilvers, Barrett, Reed and Russell.

Terms of Reference

1. To monitor and consider the Council's service Performance Indicators.

2. To consider in detail Formal Complaints received by the Council.
3. To consider how Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints are reported to the  
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Committee.

Addendum 3



**BRENTWOOD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# Members Working Group Formal Complaints Q1 2018/19

April - June 2018



# Brentwood's Formal Complaint Process

1. Stage one - Officer from service replies in 20 working days
2. Stage two – Senior Officer from service replies in 20 working days
3. Stage three – Senior Officer from another service replies in 20 working days
4. Local Government Ombudsman/Local Government Housing Ombudsman

# Brentwood's Formal Complaint Process

Does it work?

Review pending



## Formal Complaints received

Department	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Assets	0	2	0	1	1
Customer Service	0	0	0	1	1
Community Services	0	0	0	2	1
Governance	0	0	1	1	0
Housing	10	11	32	30	38
Env Health & Licensing	0	1	1	0	1
Legal	3	0	2	1	0
Parking	0	0	0	0	1
Planning	10	4	23	13	10
Revs & Bens	9	2	12	9	31
Streetscene	1	3	5	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>89</b>

## Formal Complaints received April – June 2018

Department	April – June 2018
Customer Service	3
Environmental Health	1
Housing	10
Parking	1
Revenues & Benefits	9
Streetscene	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Customer Service

No	Complaint	Outcome
1	Refusal of Customer Service Advisor (CSA) to connect complainant to Officer. Felt CSA was rude and unhelpful.	Not upheld (Stage 2)
2	Misinformation supplied in relation to whether the Land Charges search was working in Reception.	Upheld (Stage 1)
3	Original Housing Benefit documents not sent back to complainant, despite requesting in writing.	Upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Environmental Health

No	Complaint	Outcome
1	Handling of noisy neighbour complaint.	Not upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Housing

No	Complaint	Outcome
1	Hygiene issues at Railway Square.	Part upheld (Stage 2)
2	State of property when moving in and incorrect LCTS calculation (partly responded by Basildon BC).	Part upheld (Stage 1)
3	Handling of Housing advice enquiry and subsequent decision.	Not upheld (Stage 1)
4	Loss of documents supplied for Housing Application and conflicting information provided by Housing staff.	Not upheld (Stage 2)
5	Oakray cancelled 2 gas inspection appointments, but complainant was then sent £1000 fine for refusing access.	Upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Housing

No	Complaint	Outcome
6	Waiting over 2 years for repairs to bathroom.	Part upheld (Stage 1)
7	Issue with Service Charge direct debit and no response from Leasehold Officer.	Upheld (Stage 1)
8	Handling of housing case and conduct of Homeless Prevention Officer.	Not upheld (Stage 1)
9	Time taken to address mother's Housing Application.	Not upheld (Stage 1)
10	Mishandling and lack of compassion shown when terminating late mother's property.	Not upheld (Stage 1)



# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Parking

No	Complaint	Outcome
1	Persistent chasing of PCN.	Not upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Revenue & Benefits

No	Complaint	Outcome
1	Liability made against deceased persons property, despite two notifications.	Upheld (Stage 1)
2	Persued by bailiffs despite agreed arrangement being in place.	Upheld (Stage 1)
3	DD confirmation contained bank details, which complainant feels left him open to fraud.	Upheld (Stage 3)
4	Delay in setting up DD resulting in Final Demand being inaccurately issued. Also, a piece of correspondence was sent out on Basildon BC headed paper.	Upheld (Stage 1)
5	Conflicting figures provided in relation to LCTS.	Not upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Revenue & Benefits

No	Complaint	Outcome
6	Delay in processing Council Tax refund.	Part upheld (Stage 1)
7	Handling of Council Tax summons and termination of call by Recovery Officer.	Not upheld (Stage 1)
8	Delay in processing Council Tax refund and no response to numerous emails.	Upheld (Stage 1)
9	Delay in processing Council Tax refund and no response to online enquiry to try and resolve issue.	Upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Streetscene

No	Complaint	Outcome
1	Repeated issue with overflowing bins in Norman Crescent and no response to numerous reports made.	Part upheld (Stage 3)
2	Mess left behind in bin shed at Limes Court and no response to 2 telephone calls and an online form regarding this issue.	Upheld and £75 compensation paid for cleaning (Stage 2)
3	Damage to vehicles and grass verge caused by mowing team.	Not upheld (Stage 1)
4	Poor quality of football pitch at KGPF resulting in injury and postponed matches.	Not upheld (Stage 2)
5	Repeated missed collections and no response to previous informal complaints.	Part upheld (Stage 1)

# Formal Complaints – April to June 2018

## Streetscene

No	Complaint	Outcome
6	Dog waste smeared across driveway after refuse collection.	Part upheld (Stage 1)

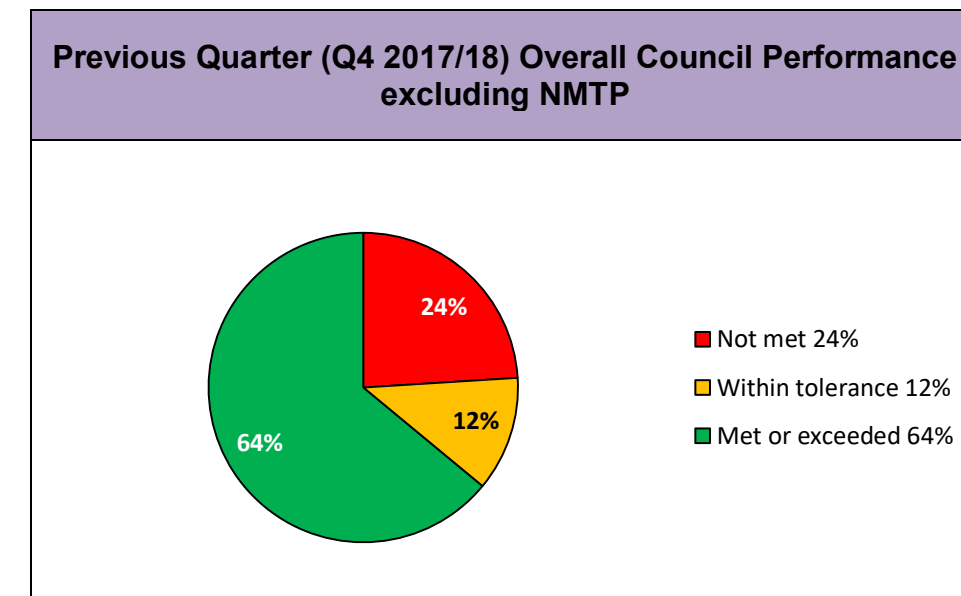
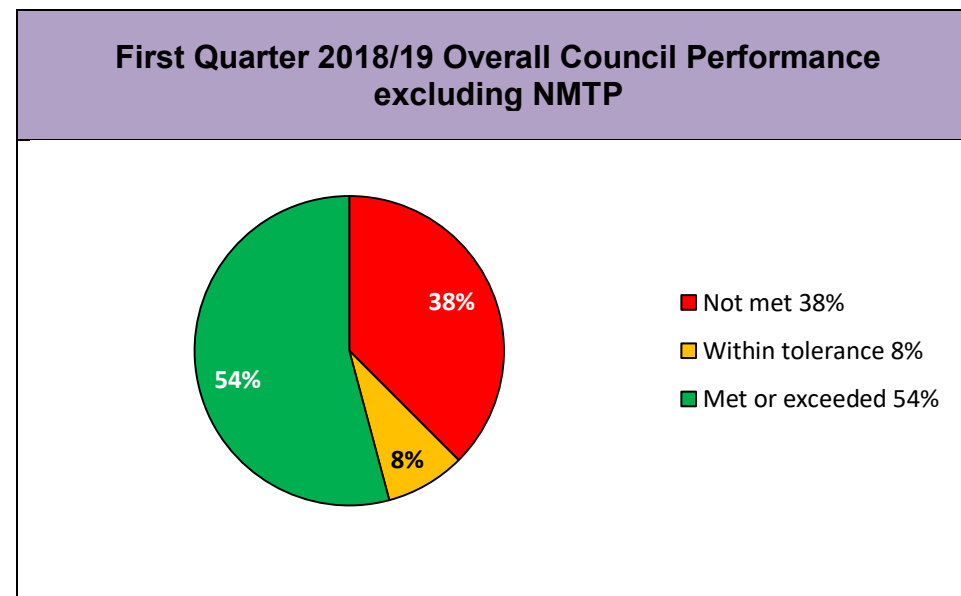
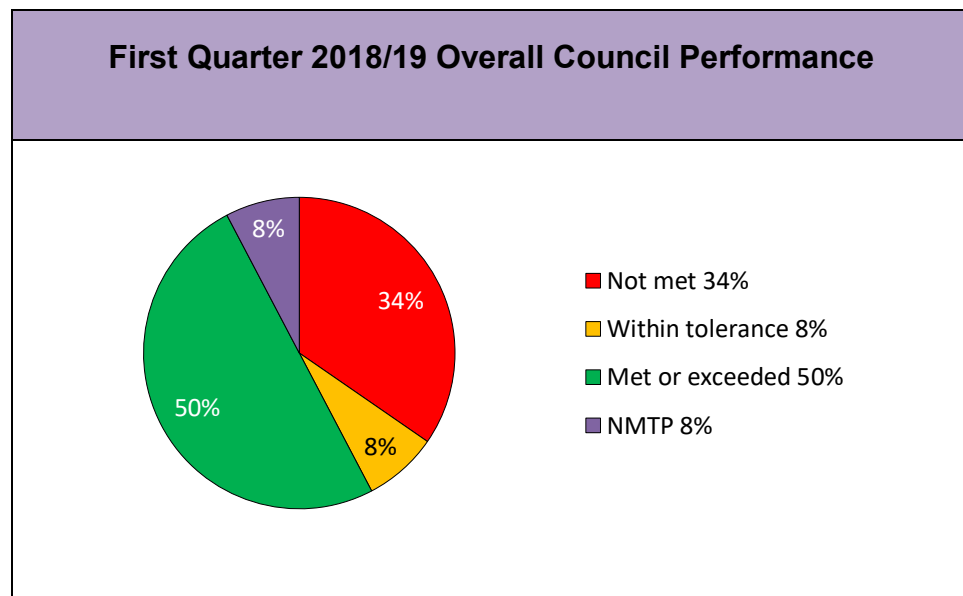


# Formal Complaints – April 2017 to March 2018

## Local Government/Housing Ombudsman

No	Service	Original Complaint Date	Complaint	Outcome
1	Operational Services	2.9.17	Lack of response to multiple reports concerning operatives at Larkins Playing Field	LGO decided not to investigate as further investigation would not achieve any more than the apology already issued
2	Planning	20.7.17	Failure to address neighbour concerns and lack of consultation with effected parties	Not upheld
3	Planning	3.8.17	Decision does not adequately consider the impact of the development on adjoining neighbours	Ongoing

Performance Dashboard - First Quarter 2018/19



First Quarter 2018/19 Performance by Department


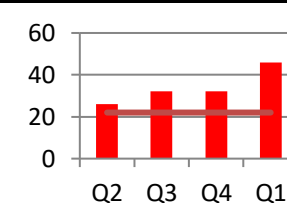


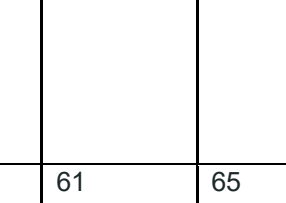


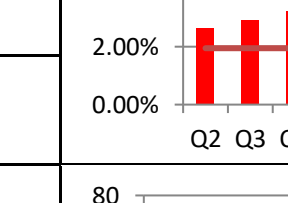


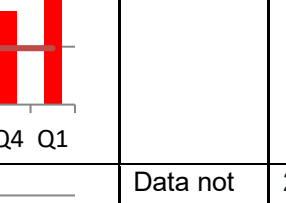


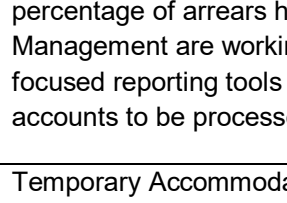

Dept.							NMTP		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Contact Centre	0	0%	0	0%	4	100%	0	0%	4
Environmental Health	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	1
Finance	0	0%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0%	2
Housing	4	50%	1	17%	1	17%	1	17%	6
Human Resources	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%	1
ICT	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	1
Planning	1	20%	0	0%	3	60%	1	20%	5
Revenues and Benefits	2	67%	0	0%	1	33%	0	0%	3
Street Scene and Environment	2	100%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>26</b>
<i>Previous Quarter Total</i>	<b>8</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>26</b>

Key

	Current performance is below target by more than the specified target deviation.
	Current performance is below target but is within tolerance.
	Current target has been met or exceeded.
NMTP	Not measured this period.
	Performance for the quarter or year to date is improving (up) or deteriorating (down) compared to previous quarter or across the year.

# Brentwood Borough Council - Performance Indicator Dashboard

# Addendum 4

Dept. & PI C	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
Housing H01	Average re-let times for Local Authority Housing	Monthly	26 Days (20 Days GN & 37 Days SH)	32 Days (19 Days GN & 72 days SH)	32 Days (33 Days GN, 26 days SH)	46 Days (32 Days GN, 115 Days SH)	22 days	 ↓		46 days	22 days	 ↓	The average re-let time has increased in Q1. This is mainly due to a less desirable property being re let after a long period of time. Work is continuing through our weekly void meetings to ensure turnaround times are a priority. There has also been a large number of voids in recent weeks.
Housing H02	% Rent collected from current tenants only as a percentage of rent due	Monthly	98.02%	98.75%	98.15%	98.51%	98.05%	 ↑		98.51%	98.05%	 ↑	Rent collection has dropped slightly in Q1 despite increased efforts from Housing Officers to reduce the rent arrears. This appears to be from a large number of accounts going into lower level arrears and the increase in Universal Credit claimants that we are now getting. Officers have completed their arrears drive and are now processing arrears by patch focussing on the lower level as much as the higher level arrears. Reports have been changed to highlight less frequent payers and those in receipt of UC to allow officers to be more focused on which accounts to process.
Housing H03	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due	Quarterly	2.64%	2.94%	3.24%	3.72%	1.95%	 ↓		3.72%	1.95%	 ↓	Due to the slight decrease in arrears collection the percentage of arrears has increased slightly. Estates Management are working to reduce this through more focused reporting tools which will allow the more high-risk accounts to be processed in a more timely manner.
Housing H04	Households living in temporary accommodation	Monthly	71	58	61	65	29	 ↓		Data not yet available	29	 ↓	Temporary Accommodation ('TA') provision is required by law for eligible households presenting as homeless. Nationally figures for TA have risen every quarter since 2011, with a 65% increase since 2010. Within the last 12 months the use of TA by Brentwood Borough Council has been kept relatively static compared to the national backdrop. As part of the new statutory 'Prevention Duty' (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) the Housing Options team has been working hard to overcome the competing challenges of rising homelessness and lack of affordable housing within the Borough.
Housing H05	Gas servicing in Council homes	Quarterly	100%	99.45%	99.53%	99.87%	100%	 ↑		99.87%	100%	 ↑	Gas compliancy is always a top priority for Housing. We have a robust court process to ensure 100%. There has been a slight increase in compliancy since Q4 however, due to availability of the court we were unable to be 100% compliant. We are now working in advance and ensuring court dates are provisionally booked to ensure 100% compliancy.



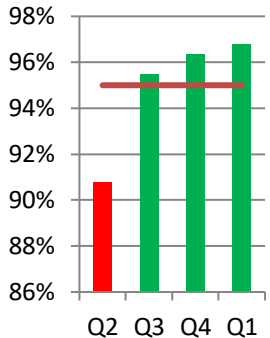




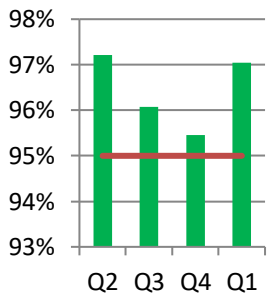




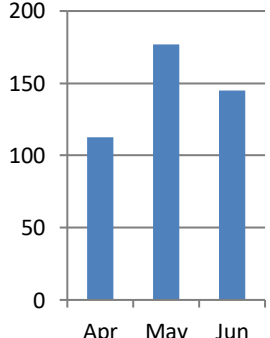




# Brentwood Borough Council - Performance Indicator Dashboard

# Addendum 4

Dept. & PI C	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
Housing H06	Level of Arrears at the end of quarter	Quarterly	£352,790	£381,487	£390,066	£430,135	Reduction from previous quarter		Thousands  £500 £400 £300 £200 £100 £0 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1	£430,135	Reduction from previous quarter		Arrears do fluctuate throughout the quarter; however, this figure is high. Despite the push from Estates Officers during patch campaigns the figure has increased. We are seeing a larger number of people moving to Universal Credit which is impacting greatly on our arrears figure.

Dept. & PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
Street Scene and Environment E01	Residual household waste per household	Quarterly	120.94kg	124.01kg	126.73kg	128.42kg	109kg		 130 120 110 100 90 Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1	128.42kg	109kg		Estimated as statistics to be verified by ECC
Street Scene and Environment E02	Percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion	Quarterly	45.94%	43.62%	38.1%	43.99%	53.00%		 60% 50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0% Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1	43.99%	53.00%		Estimated as statistics to be verified by ECC
Environmental Health EH01	Food safety/hygiene standards in food premises	% of broadly compliant food premises - Quarterly	99.26%	99.41%	99.4%	99.7%	97%		 100% 95% 90% Q2 Q3 Q4 Q1	97%	97%		Broad compliance across food premises continues due to the concerted actions of this department.

Dept. & PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
Finance F01	% of invoices from local suppliers paid within 20 days	Monthly	90.76%	95.46%	96.32%	96.78%	95%	 		96.78%	95%	 	Finance continues to be proactive in progressing invoices for payment when the due date is approaching, and in resolving purchase order mismatches. Accounts Payable officers are spending some time each week in departments where invoices need to be expedited to ensure all are authorised in time to meet the targets. Dip in performance for local invoices is due to staffing issues in some areas where a combination of compassionate, sick and annual leave occurred simultaneously, and other staff were not able to authorise invoices as they had no knowledge of the work/services completed.
Finance F02	% of invoices from all suppliers paid within 30 days	Monthly	97.22%	96.07%	95.45%	97.04%	95%	 		97.04%	95%	 	Finance continues to be proactive in progressing invoices for payment when the due date is approaching, and in resolving purchase order mismatches. This action helps improve performance. Accounts Payable officers are spending some time each week in departments where invoices need to be expedited to ensure all are authorised in time to meet the targets.
Human Resources HR03	Number of days sickness lost per month	Monthly	N/A	N/A	N/A	Apr 112.5 May 177 Jun 145	No target.	 		145 days	No target.	 	This PI replaces HR01 'days lost to short-term sickness' and HR02 'days lost to long-term sickness' from 2017/18. This PI has been revised due to the transition to a new HR provider.



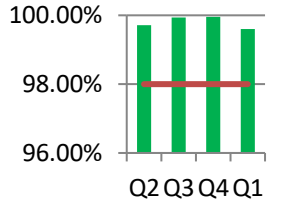


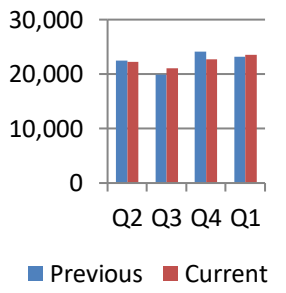






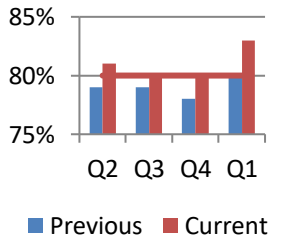



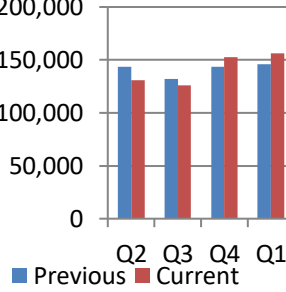


# Brentwood Borough Council - Performance Indicator Dashboard

# Addendum 4

Dept. & PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
Revs and Bens CT01	Council Tax collection	Monthly	58.15%	85.06%	98.37%	23.5%	30.32%			23.5%	30.32%		<p>We continue to employ a more robust and structured recovery process issuing more reminder notices, final notices and taking Court hearings on a monthly basis. The Recovery team are currently unable to take payments on behalf of Brentwood BC, which reduces the teams ability to collect outstanding Council Tax. Debt busting days have proven a great success for Basildon Council and once the Recovery team are able to take payments on behalf of Brentwood this should also help improve the collection. Automated payment arrangements are now issued with Summons notices, which help reduce customer contact although the recovery team still receive a high volume of telephone calls.</p>
Revs and Bens CT03	Time taken to process new Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support claim	Quarterly	24 days	24 days	21 days	22 days	24 days			22 days	24 days		<p>Performance for Q1 is 2 days above target. As always the service is always keen to explore new ways of working, and embracing new IT ideas, we are exploring IT solution which can automate some of our processing streams, which we hope will reduce processing times and improve our customer's journey. The team will continue to resolve escalated complex enquiries through to conclusion and enable resolution of cases of extreme hardship or vulnerability whilst improving the customer journey. We are continuing to work closely with our Systems Team and software provider to ensure that our system is as efficient as possible as this is still impacting on our ability to process claims as efficiently as possible. .</p>
Revs and Bens CT05	Time taken to process Housing benefit and Council Tax Support Change of Circumstances	Quarterly	14.5 days	16 days	9 days	16 days	12 days			16 days	12 days		<p>To continue to pay Housing Benefit accurately we need information to support the customers circumstances, which we rely on the customers to provide. This information can also come to us from the DWP, HMRC, the Rent Service as well as landlords. Until the information required has been provided and is complete, a change of circumstances cannot be actioned. All of this will impact on claim processing times. We are exploring IT solutions which can automate some of our processing streams, which we hope will reduce processing times and improve our customer's journey.</p>

# Brentwood Borough Council - Performance Indicator Dashboard

# Addendum 4

Dept. & PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
ICT ICT01	Website uptime	Quarterly	99.72%	99.94%	99.96%	99.6%	98%	 		99.6%	98%	 	Drops in website availability can be attributed to a number of factors, usually external, such as a power surge or cut.
Contact Centre CC01	Telephone calls received via auto attendant	Quarterly	22,218	21,052	22,694	23,518	No target.	 		23,518	No target.	 	This figure depicts the number of calls received by the Contact Centre via the main Council telephone no. 01277 312500. We continue to monitor trends associated with these statistics. Q1 tends to be the busiest quarter for the Contact Centre.
Contact Centre CC02	Telephone calls taken by the Contact Centre for those services undertaken by the Contact Centre	Quarterly	13,579	12,960	13,882	14,248	No target.	 		14,248	No target.	 	This figure depicts the number of calls received via the main Council telephone no. 01277 312500 and that have selected the applicable service from the options provided in the auto attendant. It does not include calls that have selected option '0'. The services currently undertaken by the Contact Centre are Environmental Health, Licensing, Planning and Building Control, Street Scene and Housing Services.
Contact Centre CC03	% of telephone calls resolved for those services undertaken by the Contact Centre	Quarterly	81%	80%	81%	83%	80%	 		83%	80%	 	As above. The individual outcomes per service for this quarter range from 7% - 93%.  Monthly meetings continue to be held with the service areas to identify areas of improvement and training needs.
Contact Centre CC04	Website sessions	Quarterly	130,524	126,172	152,406	156,141	No target	 		156,141	No target.	 	Website sessions are affected by seasonal variances, with the start of the financial year and the summer months providing more hits on average. This trend is reflected in previous years.  Comparison with 2017/18 Q1 shows an increase of 10,000 (7%) in comparison with the same period last financial year.

Dept. & PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results			2018/19 Quarterly Results				2018/19 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q Target	Q Status/Trend	Q Graphic	YTD Result	YTD Target	YTD Status/Trend	
Planning P01	Number of new homes approved to be built in the Borough	Annual	NMTP	NMTP	492	NMTP	NMTP	NMTP		NMTP	No target	NMTP	The gross number of new homes approved to be built in the Borough. This gives an indication of new homes expected to be completed in the Borough in future. Approvals for new homes help towards the Borough's supply of homes, specifically the required five-year housing supply (published annually).
Planning P02	% of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications	Quarterly	46.2%	41.6%	26.7%	40%	31%		40%	31%		Cumulative total for 2017/18 is 33.9% which is within target.	
Planning P03	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'Major' application types	Quarterly	100%	100%	100%	88.9%	50%		88.9%	50%		Consistently high performance achieved throughout 1. Changes previously made within the service are now imbedded, so use of EOT agreements, pre-applications discussions as well as PPA.	
Planning P04	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'Minor' application types	Quarterly	97.1%	98.3%	100%	100%	70%		100%	70%		Consistently high performance achieved for 4 <sup>th</sup> quarter running. Changes made within service are now imbedded, staffing levels are correct as well as the use of EOT agreements.	
Planning P05	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'Other' application types	Quarterly	98.0%	99.4%	100%	100%	80%		100%	80%		As above, exceeding targets due to previous changes now being imbedded in team. Currently performing in top 10 in country and best in Essex.	

**Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee – 2017/18**

**Subject:** Formal Complaints  
**Report by:** Steve Summers, Chief Operating Officer  
**Date:** March 2018

**1. Background**

This report has been compiled following a resolution from the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018 on what actions have been or will be taken in response to Formal Complaints that have been received for Housing, Planning and Revenue and Benefit Services from April to December 2017.

The report also includes how many formal complaints each department have received in the final quarter of 2017/18 to provide information on the progress in this matter.

The future actions for the Housing Service will be delivered within a 6 month period, for both Planning and Revenue and Benefits the Formal Complaints will continued to be monitored by the services and appropriate action taken where necessary.

Formal complaints will continue to be reviewed by officers, the Performance Indicators/Formal Complaints Members Working Group and the Corporate Projects Scrutiny Committee.

**2. Formal Complaints – April to December 2017**

**Formal Complaints received 2013 -2016/17**

<b>Department</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
Housing	10	11	32	30
Planning	10	4	23	13
Revs & Bens	9	2	12	9

**3. Housing**

**3.1 Formal Complaints received 2017**

<b>Department</b>	<b>April-Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 17</b>	<b>Total</b>
Housing	24	6	30

+ From 1.1.18 to 31.03.18 – 8 Formal Complaints received for Housing Services

### 3.2 Outcomes

	<b>April-Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 17</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not Upheld	12	2	14
Partially Upheld	4	2	6
Upheld	7	1	8
Ongoing	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>

### 3.3 Common Themes of Complaint types

- Lack of Contact, response or Communication
- Property Issues, (Disrepair, general repairs, damp)
- Temporary Accommodation
- Mishandling of casework
- Loss of Documents

### 3.4 Customer Service

#### 3.4.1 Actions taken to date

- Customer Charter awareness training held at team meetings

#### 3.4.2 Actions to be taken

- All Housing Staff to attend Customer Awareness Training – to be completed by 30.06.18
- Key Housing Staff to attend Complaint Handling Training – to be completed by 31.07.18
- Review and simplify our existing processes to ‘free up’ staff time in order to spend more time with our customers – to be completed by 31.09.18

### 3.5 Disrepair issues (Inc general repairs)

### 3.5.1 Actions to be taken

- Review our current re-let standards – to be completed by 31.09.18
- Review our existing response times to carry out inspections or repairs – to be completed by 30.06.18
- Improve our communication with our customers - ongoing

### 3.6 Loss of documentation

Housing has been historically a paper-based service which has led to misplacement of documentation, which in part is due to the high volume of documents that are received.

#### 3.6.1 Actions taken to date

- Housing have now recently introduced a new 'Document Management system' which will mean we can now hold information electronically which will reduce the likelihood of loss of documentation.

#### 3.6.2 Actions to be taken

- We are also in the process of finalising the new 'On-Line' Housing application form which speed up the Housing Application Process, reduce the likelihood for misplaced documents and allow staff to spend more time with our customers. To be completed by 30.06.18.

## 4. Planning

### 4.1 Formal Complaints received 2017

Department	April-Sept 17	Oct – Dec 17	Total
Planning	7	1	8

+ From 1.1.18 to 31.03.18 – 2 Formal Complaints received for Planning Services

### 4.2 Outcomes



	<b>April-Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 17</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not Upheld	3	0	3
Partially Upheld	2	0	2
Upheld	0	1	1
Ongoing	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>

### **4.3 Common Themes of Complaint types**

- Lack of Contact, response or Communication
- Delays in administration of application

#### **4.3.1 Actions taken to date**

- Applications are being dealt with in a more timely manner leading to less complaints about delays in obtaining planning permission.
- Where there is a need to require more time on planning applications officers are making extensive use of extension of times which agents generally agree and are happier as they are in regular contact with officers.
- The agents forum held on a regular basis allows them to voice concerns with the department and gives us a chance to rectify any issues.
- Applications are being validated quicker leading to less delays and less annoyance to applicants.
- Increased promotion of pre-application discussion. A number of applicants are choosing this route and given the pre-application process has been improved this provides customers with a more efficient service which leads to more productive outcomes on subsequent planning applications.
- Enforcement is being more efficient and accessible to public/members with the issue of a monthly report leading in the future to an online system.
- Better return of complaints received over the phone. People are being phoned back reducing the number of written complaints.

## **5. Revenue & Benefits**

### **5.1 Formal Complaints received 2017**

<b>Department</b>	<b>April-Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 17</b>	<b>Total</b>
Revenue & Benefits	8	10	18

+ From 1.1.18 to 31.03.18 – 13 Formal Complaints received for Revenue & Benefits.

## **5.2 Outcomes**

	<b>April-Sept 17</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 17</b>	<b>Total</b>
Not Upheld	1	0	1
Partially Upheld	2	1	3
Upheld	5	9	14
Ongoing	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>

## **5.3 Common Themes of Complaint types**

- Lack of Contact, response or Communication
- Delays in processing changes to Council Tax
- Delays in processing Housing Benefit Claims

### **5.3.1 Action taken to date**

- Short term additional resource obtained
- Recruitment undertaken to ensure fully staffed