

Date: 20 March 2024

Audit & Scrutiny Committee

Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints Working Group Report

Working Group Members

Cllr Rigby
Cllr Pound
Cllr Mayo
Cllr Munden
Cllr Murphy

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.

Notes of the meeting on the 4 March 2024

Attached as Addendum 1 are the notes of the meeting on the 4 March 2024.

Terms of Reference

The Working Groups Terms of Reference are attached at Addendum 2

1. Report Recommendations

1.1. The report recommendations are set out in full below.

R.1 That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Formal Complaints for the 4th Quarter of 2023/24.

R.2 That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Performance Indicators for the 4th Quarter of 2023/24.

R.3 That a Street Scene Officer/Member Working Group be held to discuss Performance.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The council operates a two 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, street scene and revenue and benefits.

3. Explanation of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Formal Complaints for the 4th quarter of 2023/24.
Explanation To continue to monitor formal complaints quarterly to identify common themes, trends or concerns.
Recommendation 2 That the working group continue to monitor the outcomes of the Performance Indicators for the 4th quarter of 2023/24.
Explanation To monitor associated annual or quarterly trends and identify areas of performance concern.
Recommendation 3 That a Street Scene Officer/Member Working Group be held to discuss performance.
Explanation To monitor trends and identify areas of performance concern with the street scene service.

Addendum 1

Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints Working Group Minutes of Meeting 4 March 2023 18:00 Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Present: Cllr Rigby
Cllr Mayo
Cllr Murphy

Also present: Greg Campbell (GC) – Director of Policy & Delivery
Marcus Hotten (MH) – Director of Environment
Lauren Stretch (LS) – Director of Housing
Nichola Mann (NM) – Joint Acting Director of People & Governance
Eugene Minogue (EM) – Interim Director of Communities
Stephanie Meek (SM) – Corporate Manager – Customer Services
Shelley King (SK) – Performance & Digital Transformation Manager

Apologies: Cllr Pound
Cllr Munden
Jonathan Stephenson (JS) – Chief Executive Officer
Steve Summers (SS) – Strategic Director
Emily Yule (EY) – Strategic Director
Sarah Bennett (SB) – Director of Customer & Data Insight
Phoebe Barnes (PB) – Director of Assets & Investments
Tim Wills (TW) – Interim Director of Resources
Leigh Nicholson (LN) – Interim Director of Place
Claire Mayhew (CM) – Joint Acting Director of People & Governance

1. Welcome & Introduction

2. Terms of Reference

These are attached to these minutes.

3. Performance Indicators – Q3 2023-24

Summary

- A summary report provided performance by department for Q3 2023-24. This showed 4% increase in targets met or exceeded compared with the previous quarter, with those measures within tolerance having increased by 11%.

Planning

- There was 14.28% of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications.
- Consistently high performance has enabled all Planning performance indicators to meet or exceeded target.

Street Scene and Environment

- Performance for Street Scene and Environment in Q3 was below target across all indicators with the exception of residual household waste (the data for which is yet to be confirmed by Essex County Council) and garden waste recycling.
- Targets for street scene are to be reviewed to better reflect the service, including a quarter-by-quarter target for garden waste collection, which is affected by the seasons.

Environmental Health

- The percentage of broadly compliant food premises is below target. Officers were progressing through the inspection programme, however numbers of new food businesses remain a challenge.
- Service requests investigated within target time increased slightly on the previous quarter but is still below target. A new service request investigation procedure had been introduced that details the steps required of officers. There was still a variance between officers and some further work would be required to improve performance across the Borough.
- Mirroring national trends, the service is short on resource. Training and recruitment of food officers is underway to bring the service up to strength.

Housing

- Average re-let times for local authority housing improved in Q3 but this figure was still below target. The quality of voids being returned in often poor condition had increased which was impacting on the re-let times. An officer working group had been established to consider how to improve rates.
- The number of households in temporary accommodation decreased this quarter to meet its target. Members were advised that the numbers of households in temporary accommodation considerably lower than neighbouring authorities.
- Gas servicing was on target, reaching 100% compliance.
- The number of households on the council's housing and transfer registers had remained relatively stable. There was a slight increase in transfer applicants and a decrease in home seekers this quarter.
- Although up from last quarter, rent arrears had come down significantly from 6 weeks earlier. Officers were concentrating on the numbers in arrears rather than the amount. This would be a slow process to get the arrears down, with more work to do. Court cases were going through at a fast rate and officers were successful in getting evictions for residents who refuse to pay.

Finance

- Performance indicators for Finance were below target but showed a marked improvement on the previous quarter for payments to suppliers. Finance was working with officers to improve these figures.
- The value of corporate debt was at its highest level for some time due to resources and capacity in the team. Overdue invoices were at £2.4m.

Human Resources

- Performance for the number of days lost to sickness was shown to be worsening in Q3. This is due to a number of factors including long term sickness absences and an increase in sickness cases during the colder months. These were being managed through the council's sickness absence process.

Revenues and Benefits

- Council Tax collection was just below target but all other Revenues and Benefits indicators met or exceeded target due to the proactive measures established.

Contact Centre

- Telephone calls to the Contact Centre had decreased compared to the same time last year.
- Website sessions continued to demonstrate a decline from the same time last year, this was due to a change in website platform affecting the way sessions were recorded rather than a decrease in visitors. Visitors had increased from last quarter, however.
- Amended rotas had reduced the time taken to answer calls, which had now exceeded target for Q3. A new phone system had been installed, which provided the facility for callers to request a call back rather than wait in the queue. This had proven to be popular with service users.

WORKING GROUP ACTION

For the working group to continue to review progress of the quarterly Performance Indicators.

4. Formal Complaints

- The Working Group was presented with information on the complaints received in Q3 2023/24, the number of complaints responded to within the agreed timeframe, and the complaints upheld by Ombudsman.

Electoral Registration

- A call to a customer to obtain sensitive information had been made from a mobile phone. This complaint was upheld at stage 2. A new phone system was being implemented to avoid this reoccurring in the future.

Housing

- Q3 carried a general theme of complaints associated with Housing repairs, ASB and communications. A complaint about disability discrimination relating to aids and adaptations had also been upheld.
- It was recognised that Housing complaints were relatively low. Officers were being more customer-care focussed and advised that this would lead to more complaints being upheld.
- Members felt that this approach should be mirrored across all areas and that officers should feel empowered to record complaints as such.

Environment

- Missed bins and repeated missed bins were the overriding cause of upheld complaints within the Environment service, with 18 complaints upheld in Q3.
- Members were advised that for the last few years, the street scene service had been reliant upon agency staff. These were often unfamiliar with local roads and the intricacies of some routes, which frequently led to missed bins. This was now being addressed with permanent staff being recruited to provide better service for residents.
- It was recognised that as a key service with issues it was suggested that that a street scene group meet to discuss the issues faced.

- Members agreed to make a recommendation from the Performance Indicators and Formal Complaints Working Group to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee that a street scene working group be established to consider performance matters.

Parking

- A complaint about the new payment system being unsuitable for those without smart phones was upheld at stage 1. A review of the payment methods is underway.

Ombudsman Decisions

- One complaint had received ombudsman decisions in Q3. This related to errors in the determination of a planning decision including failures in investigation. The complaint was not upheld due to being unlikely to find fault and no significant injustice caused.

WORKING GROUP ACTION: For the working group to monitor these complaints against future quarters to identify concerns or themes.

For the working group to make a recommendation to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee to establish a street scene group.

5. Date of next meeting TBC, likely July 2024

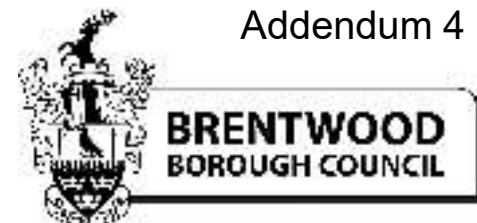
Addendum 2

Audit & Scrutiny Committee Performance Indicators & Formal Complaints Working Group

Members of Working Group:
Cllrs. Rigby, Pound, Murphy, Mayo Munden

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.
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Members Working Group Formal Complaints Q3 2023/24

Oct - Dec 2023

Formal Complaints received annually

Department	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
ASB/Community Safety	1	7	1	3
Assets	3	0	1	1
Building Control	1	0	0	0
Community Services	2	0	1	0
Corporate	0	0	0	1
Customer Service	5	7	1	1
Democratic Services	2	1	0	0
Electoral Services	0	0	1	0
Env Health	4	10	6	1
Finance	0	0	0	0
Housing	75	66	58	62
Human Resources	0	0	1	0
Legal	0	0	0	0
Licensing	0	2	1	0

Formal Complaints received annually

Department	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Parking	3	1	0	1
Planning	16	15	18	21
Revs & Bens	28	8	11	20
Streetscene	44	63	29	55
Total	184	180	132	166



Ombudsman upheld decisions annually

Department	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Environmental Health			1	2	1
Housing – Local Government Ombudsman	1	1	2	1	1
Housing – Housing Ombudsman			1		
Planning	2				1
Total	3	1	4	3	3

2023/24 Formal Complaints received Oct - Dec 2023

Q3			
Department	Total	Upheld	%
ASB/Community Safety	0	0	
Assets	0	0	
Community Services	0	0	
Customer Services	0	0	
Electoral Services	1	1	100%
Environmental Health	2	0	0%
Housing	21	9	24%
Parking	1	1	100%
Planning	2	0	0%
Revenues & Benefits	4	0	0%
Streetscene	25	18	72%
Total	56	29	52%

YTD			
Department	Total	Upheld	%
ASB/Community Safety	2	2	100%
Assets	1	0	0%
Community Services	1	0	0%
Customer Services	2	2	100%
Electoral Services	1	1	100%
Environmental Health	5	2	40%
Housing	55	21	38%
Parking	3	3	100%
Planning	7	1	14%
Revenues & Benefits	19	5	26%
Streetscene	60	43	72%
Total	156	80	51%

2023/24 Formal Complaints responded to within agreed timeframe Oct - Dec 2023

Q3	
Department	%
ASB/Community Safety	
Assets	
Community Services	
Customer Services	
Electoral Services	100%
Environmental Health	100%
Housing	86%
Parking	100%
Planning	100%
Revenues & Benefits	100%
Streetscene	60%
Total	77%

YTD	
Department	%
ASB/Community Safety	100%
Assets	100%
Community Services	100%
Customer Services	100%
Electoral Services	100%
Environmental Health	100%
Housing	89%
Parking	100%
Planning	100%
Revenues & Benefits	95%
Streetscene	60%
Total	83%

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Electoral Services



No	Complaint	Stage
1	Call to customer to obtain sensitive information was made from a mobile number	2

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Housing



No	Complaint	Stage
1	No response from officer regarding the potential rental of an empty garage near property	1
2	No response to parking issues Various ASB issues Not seen officer on site since complaint made Bin store issues Windows not cleaned	2
3	Damage to property due to a water leak, caused whilst stored in garage	1
4	Disability discrimination relating to aids and adaptations Operative not briefed properly Email and questions not responded to	2

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Housing



No	Complaint	Stage
5	No response since first water leak several weeks ago and no clarification this has been resolved	1
6	Told no callback logged when requested	1
7	No response to email sent to the duty officer	1
8	Incorrect information on letter stating 'refused' a property when it had been deemed unsuitable by Housing provider	2
9	Axis engineer damaged water pipe causing damage to property Damage caused to wiring leaving no lighting upstairs	2

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Streetscene



No	Complaint	Stage
1	Repeated missed food collections and not collected once reported	1
2	Repeated missed collections and not collected once reported	1
3	Repeated missed collections	1
4	Unusable garden waste bin not replaced for 3 months	1
5	Bulky waste booking was not collected despite repeated phone calls being told it would be collected next day	1
6	Crew pile rubbish outside property Crew spill waste on area outside property Crew did not care about mess left Bins left obstructing driveway Crew arrive before 7.30am	1

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Streetscene



No	Complaint	Stage
7	Missed collections of garden waste and told due to bin not being Brentwood property despite it having BBC logo	2
8	Repeated missed recycling collections and not collected once reported	2
9	Repeated missed recycling collections	1
10	Repeated missed collections	1
11	Repeated missed collections	1
12	Repeated missed collections and delay of collection once reported	1

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Streetscene



No	Complaint	Stage
13	Repeated missed assisted collections	1
14	Repeated missed collections	1
15	Refuse vehicle parked over drive each week restricting access to road Crew member stated that they won't collect customer waste in future	1
16	Reported missed collections not collected	2
17	Repeated missed food waste collections	1
18	Repeated missed collections	1

Upheld Formal Complaints Oct - Dec 2023

Parking

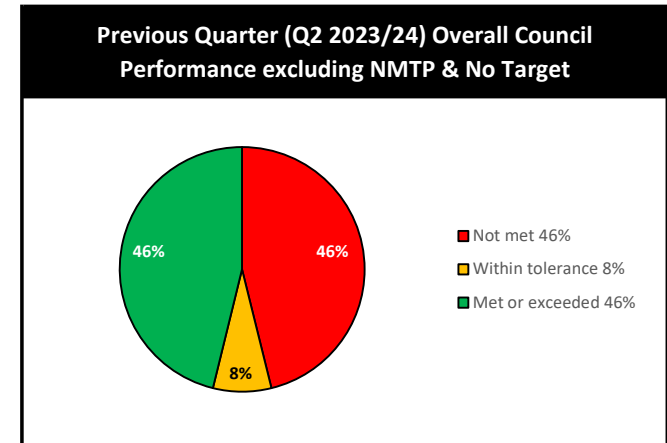
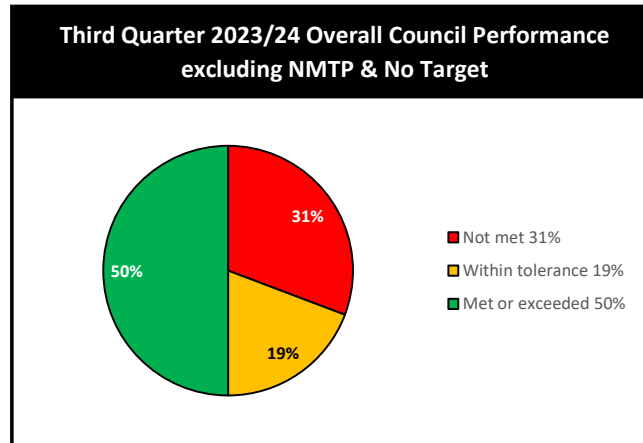
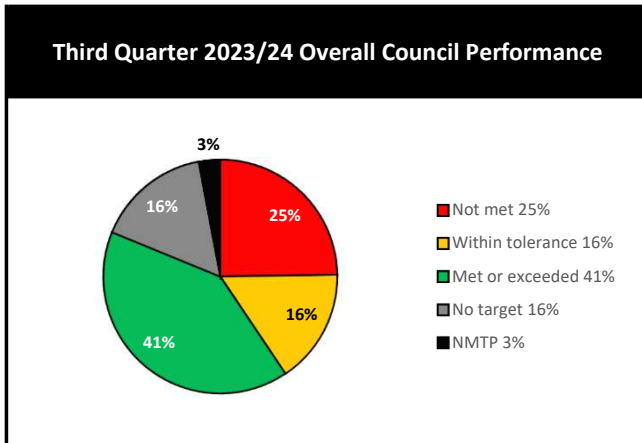


No	Complaint	Stage
1	The new payment system unusable for some people e.g. those without smart phones System will cause tail backs when people trying to pay on entry	1

Ombudsman Decisions Oct – Dec 2023



	Service	LGO/HO	Complaint	Council's decision	Ombudsman outcome
1	Planning	LGO	Council made errors in the determination of a decision including failures in investigation	Not upheld	Unlikely to find fault and no significant injustice caused


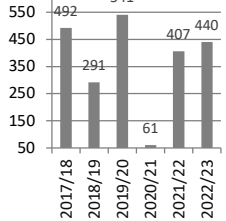


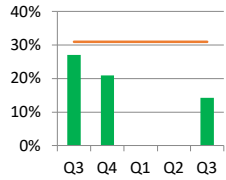


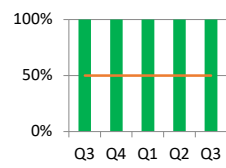


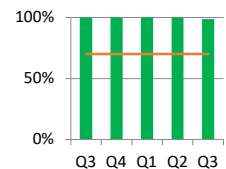




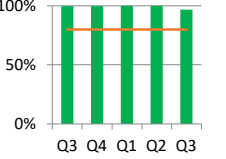


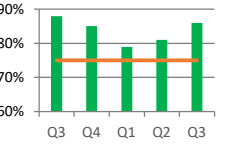

Third Quarter 2023/24 Performance by Department


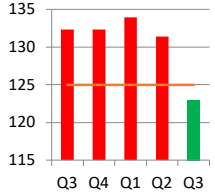


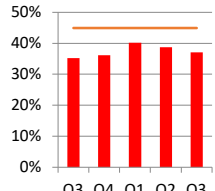


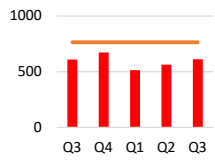


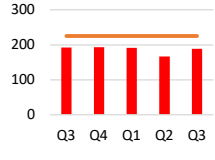


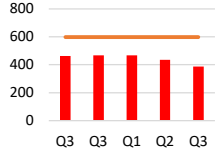

		Red		Amber		Green		No Target		NMTP		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Economy	Planning	0	0%	0	0%	5	83%	0	0%	1	17%	6
Environment	Street Scene	5	71%	1	14%	1	14%	0	0%	0	0%	7
Communities	Environmental Health	1	50%	1	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2
Housing	Housing	2	40%	0	0%	2	40%	1	20%	0	0%	5
Effective	Finance	0	0%	2	67%	0	0%	1	33%	0	0%	3
	Human Resources	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	1
	Revenues and Benefits	0	0%	1	20%	4	80%	0	0%	0	0%	5
	Customer Services	0	0%	0	0%	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	3
Total		8	25%	5	16%	13	41%	5	16%	1	3%	32
Previous Quarter Total		12	38%	2	6%	12	38%	5	16%	1	3%	32


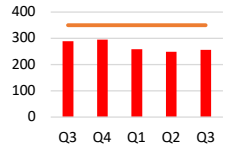


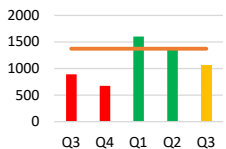

Key


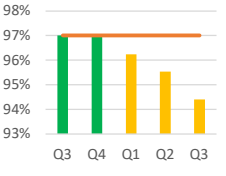


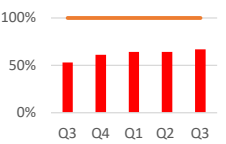

	Current performance is below target by more than the specified target deviation.
	Current performance is below target but is within tolerance.
	Current target has been met or exceeded.
	No target.
	NMTP Not measured this period.
	Performance for the quarter or year to date is improving (up) or deteriorating (down) compared to previous quarter or across the year.


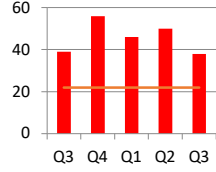


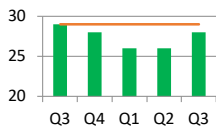


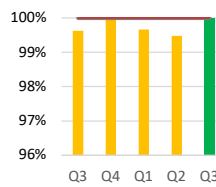


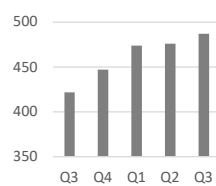

Growing our economy															
Department and PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results				Latest Quarterly Results			Q Status & Trend	Q Graphic	2023/24 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q Target	Year to Date Result			Year to Date Target	Year to Date Status & Trend		
Planning P01	Number of new homes approved to be built in the Borough	Annual	NMTP	440	NMTP	NMTP	NMTP	NMTP	No target	NMTP 		NMTP	No target	NMTP 	The gross number of new homes approved to be built in the Borough. Approvals for new homes help towards the Borough's supply of homes, specifically the required five-year housing supply (published annually). Monitoring data has concluded that there are 440 NET new dwellings within the borough for the monitoring period 2022-23. This is an increase from last year likely due to the adoption of the Brentwood Local Plan. The adopted Local Plan states in policy MG01 that we will deliver 300 new homes during this period, so we have over delivered by 140 new dwellings which helps with closing the gap for our previous years' short falls.
Planning P02	% of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications (percentage)	Quarterly	26.90%	21%	0%	0%	14.28%	31%	Green 		4.76%	31%	Green 	Monitoring is done to understand why appeals happen and what can be done to reduce them and reduce number of overturns. Also working with agents to understand what we can do to help. An 'Appeals Update' is presented to Planning Committee to provide more detail on appeals. The number of appeals has dropped off so far year to date.	
Planning P03	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'Major' application types	Quarterly	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	Green 		100%	50%	Green 	Consistently high performance. Processes and performance are constantly being reviewed to ensure standards remain high. The number of all application types has dropped off.	
Planning P04	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'Minor' application types	Quarterly	100%	100%	100%	100%	98.76%	70%	Green 		99.59%	70%	Green 	Consistently high performance. Processes and performance are constantly being reviewed to ensure standards remain high. The number of all application types has dropped off.	


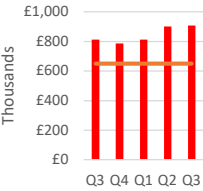

Planning P05	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'Other' application types	Quarterly	99.80%	99.60%	100%	100%	96.73%	80%	Green 		98.91%	80%	Green 	Consistently high performance. Processes and performance are constantly being reviewed to ensure standards remain high. The number of all application types has dropped off.
Planning P06	Percentage of planning applications approved	Quarterly	88%	85%	79.20%	81.00%	86.00%	75%	Green 		82.07%	75%	Green 	This reports approvals of all PS1 and PS2 applications (i.e. excluding pre-applications)

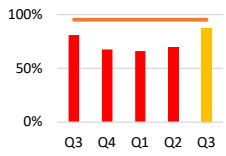
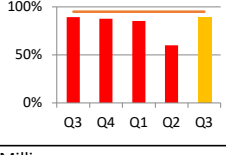
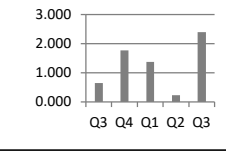
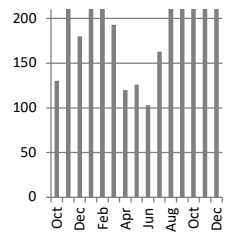
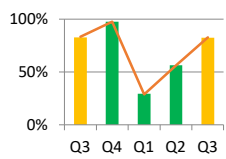
Protecting our environment															
Department and PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results				Latest Quarterly Results			Q Status & Trend	Q Graphic	2023/24 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q Target	Year to Date Result			Year to Date Target	Year to Date Status & Trend		
Street Scene and Environment E01	Residual household waste per household (kg)	Quarterly	132.34	132.26	133.94	131.39	123.23	125	Green 		388.56	375	Red 	Figures need to be confirmed with ECC but it appears that residual waste kg per household figures appear to be dropping, although it is too early to draw any conclusions. The rescheduled collections over the Christmas holidays will also have contributed to this quarter's reduced tonnages.	
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	35.28%	36.20%	40.18%	38.74%	37.09%	45%	Red 		38.67%	45%	Red 	Estimated as statistics to be verified by ECC. Slight drop in recycling rate due to lower tonnage of garden waste being collected.	
Street Scene and Environment E03	Paper and card recycled by tonne	Quarterly	608.3	672.14	513.02	562.703	611.203	763	Red 		1686.92	2289	Red 	Recycling of paper/card is now recovering but will require further monitoring before any conclusions can be drawn.	
Street Scene and Environment E04	Cans and plastic recycled by tonne	Quarterly	191.9	193.42	191.3	166.86	189.26	225	Red 		547.42	675	Red 	Collections in last quarter have show an improvement and are more consistent with Q4 and Q1 outturns.	
Street Scene and Environment E05	Mixed glass recycled by tonne	Quarterly	464.1	467.1	468.91	435.656	388.22	600	Red 		1292.8	1800	Red 	Glass tonnage is consistent with previous quarters of last year. Possibly a review of the target is required.	

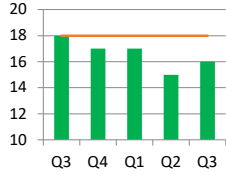
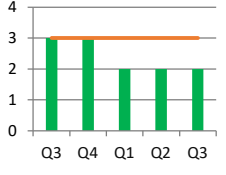
Street Scene and Environment E06	Food waste recycled by tonne	Quarterly	288.8	295.54	258.18	247.82	255.56	350	Red 		761.6	1050	Red 	Food tonnage remains relatively low and will need further monitoring.
Street Scene and Environment E07	Garden waste recycled and diverted from landfill per tonne	Quarterly	895.6	673.12	1603.42	1403.22	1073.6	1375	Amber 		4080.2	4125	Amber 	Lower levels of garden waste tonnage are consistent with the time of year and colder conditions and slower growth.


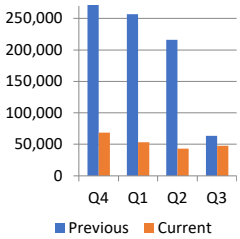


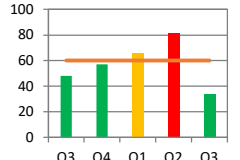

Developing our communities															
Department and PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results				Latest Quarterly Results			Q Status & Trend	Q Graphic	2023/24 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q Target	Year to Date Result			Year to Date Target	Year to Date Status & Trend		
Environmental Health EH01	Food safety/ hygiene standards in food premises - % of broadly compliant food premises	Quarterly	97%	97%	96.24%	95.54%	94.40%	97%	Amber 		95.39%	97%	Amber 	Progressing through the inspection programme, however the numbers of new food businesses remain a challenge.	
Environmental Health EH02	Service requests responded to within target time (5 days)	Quarterly	53.10%	61.25%	64.25%	63.70%	66.70%	100%	Red 		64.88%	100%	Red 	The quarter 3 figure has improved by 3 percent from quarter 2. This is thought to be the result of the start of the use of the improved service request investigation procedure that details the steps required of officers. There is still a variation between officers and further work will be required with some officers to improve performance across the borough.	

Improving our housing															
Department and PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results				Latest Quarterly Results			Q Status & Trend	Q Graphic	2023/24 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q Target	Year to Date Result			Year to Date Target	Year to Date Status & Trend		
Housing H01	Average re-let times for Local Authority Housing	Quarterly	39 Days (35 GN, 48 SH, 34 TA)	56 Days (42 GN, 55 SH, 81 TA)	45 Days (29 GN, 67 SH, 51 TA)	Days 50 (49 GN, 49 SH, 54 TA)	Days 38 (31 GN, 44 SH, 46 TA)	22 Days	Red 		45 Days	22 Days	Red 	Whilst the figures for turnaround of voids has reduced, this is mainly due to only two properties being let in December which were deemed major works. We expect to see a return to roughly 40 to 50 days next quarter as lettings pick up after the Christmas period but work continues to improve turnaround times from works through to lettings.	
Housing H04	Households living in temporary accommodation	Quarterly	29	28	26	26	28	29	Green 		26.6	29	Green 	Temporary accommodation has fluctuated with an increase in complex approaches however with an increase in discharge numbers are still relatively low. We have experienced issues with discharge through Housing Association nominations ranging from long void periods to poor conditions which has delayed several TA move ons.	
Housing H05	Gas servicing in Council homes	Quarterly	99.62%	100%	99.51%	99.47%	100%	100%	Green 		99.66%	100%	Amber 	Target achieved on 18th December. All properties due for a landlord gas safety check have been completed.	
Housing H07	No. of applicants on the waiting list for Local Authority housing	Quarterly	422	447	483	476	487	No Target	No Status 		487	No Target	No Status 	Housing Register: 243 Transfer Register: 244 The Council's housing and transfer registers have remained relatively stable this quarter. We have seen a slight increase in transfer applicants and a decrease in homeseekers at the end of the quarter. We continue to work on a weekly bidding cycle to ensure allocations are processed in a timely manner.	

Housing H08	Average Rent Arrears Total (Current Tenants, Garages)	Quarterly	£812,721	£787,893	£812,065	£900,683	£906,627	£650,000	Red 	 <p>Thousands</p> <p>£1,000 £800 £600 £400 £200 £0</p> <p>Q3 Q4 Q1 Q2 Q3</p>	£873,125	£650,000	Red 	<p>Although up from last quarter, the arrears have come down significantly from 6 weeks ago. At the moment we are still seeing a massive increase with residents struggling with finances. Our use of food banks has massively increased and we are awarding more and more DHP to help people back on their feet. There have also been more people transfer to Universal Credit causing at least a 5 week delay on payments. We are dedicating 1 day a month to scrutinise arrears over £2,000 in addition to our usual weekly arrears processes to keep on top of the people struggling. Our court cases are going through at the fastest rate we've seen for a long time and we are successfully getting evictions for residents who refuse to pay.</p> <p>The Housing Officers have been working tirelessly to ensure we are providing support for residents whilst also being enforcers and getting the rent. We have had some major successes with large payments coming in and will continue to use new an innovative ways to engage with residents and ensure a better payment culture of "rent first" .</p>
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Delivering an effective and efficient council															
Department and PI Code	Performance Indicator	Measure	Previous Quarterly Results				Latest Quarterly Results			Q Status & Trend	Q Graphic	2023/24 Year to Date			Commentary
			Q3 Result	Q4 Result	Q1 Result	Q2 Result	Q3 Result	Q Target	Year to Date Result			Year to Date Target	Year to Date Status & Trend		
Finance F01	% of invoices from local suppliers paid within 20 days	Quarterly	80.89%	67.30%	65.98%	69.35%	87.31%	95%	Amber ↑		74.21%	95%	Red ↑	Local invoices are currently below par, but we have seen a increase this quarter with the number of invoices paid within 20 days in term at 87%. A slightly lower performance in October and November caused this variance. Accounts Payable officers have been instructed to work with officers to help assist this figure to increase.	
Finance F02	% of invoices from all suppliers paid within 30 days	Quarterly	89.35%	87.73%	85.40%	59.86%	89.44%	95%	Amber ↑		78.23%	95%	Red ↑	We've seen an increase in invoices compared to last quarter with the percentage of invoices being paid within 30 days going up. Accounts Payable team have been advised to work closely with departments to ensure these invoices are paid on time.	
Finance F03	Value of corporate debt (£m)	Quarterly	£0.654m	£1.764m	£1.374m	£0.233m	£2.4m	Reduction from previous quarter	No Status ↓		£2.4m	Reduction from previous quarter	No Status ↓	The Accounts Receivable Team aim to keep the debt level below £1m. However, due to resources within the team, we have reduced capacity to chase. Overdue invoices are currently at £2.4m as we are seeing an increase in the number of invoices being raised again and with the majority of invoices sitting with Seven Arches Investments.	
Human Resources HR03	Number of days sickness lost per month	Monthly	Oct 130.5 Nov 218 Dec 180	Jan 286.5 Feb 261 Mar 193	Apr 120 May 126 Jun 103	Jul 163 Aug 230 Sep 241	Oct 252 Nov 272 Dec 244	No Target	No Status ↓		1851	No Target	No Status ↓	This PI reflects the number of working days lost to sickness each month. Absence figures for Q3 show an increase in number of days lost. This is due to a number of factors including long term sickness absence cases that are being managed through the council's sickness absence process, it is also common during the colder seasons to have a higher level of sickness absence. As an organisation we continue to offer support to all employees around their wellbeing by way of wellbeing check ins, EAP, regular 1:1s, One You and Team meetings, Mental Health First Aiders, wellbeing Teams channel, lunch and learn sessions and encouraging a form of physical activity. The HR Officers have been monitoring the reporting of absence and encouraging timely reporting. All staff triggered are being managed through the sickness process.	
Revs & Bens CT01	Council Tax collection	Quarterly	82.80%	97.60%	29.40%	56.30%	82.50%	82.80%	Amber ↓		82.50%	82.80%	Amber ↑	We are slightly below target for Q3. We started our bi-annual single resident discount review in November which is an ongoing project. As a result of this we have increased the Council Tax debit by £100k in the month of December. This money will be collected from January onwards. In addition, throughout January we will be removing single resident discounts from customers who have not responded to the review, this will generate additional debt. We will continue to engage with customers to collect as much as possible whilst signposting to support available too.	

Revs & Bens CT03	Housing Benefit and Pensioner Council Tax Support - time taken to process new claims (days)	Quarterly	18	17	17	15	16	18	Green ↓		16	18	Green ↑	Our average days to process New Claims at the end of quarter three is under our target of 18 days which is a fantastic achievement for the team. Especially when most of our New Claims that we receive are supported or temporary housing and the most complicated to process. We will always strive to achieve this target by ensuring we do not delay asking customers for information that is required to process their claim. We will always try to telephone and text customers rather than write, as this builds unnecessary delays in processing.
Revs & Bens CT05	Housing Benefit and Pensioner Council Tax Support - time taken to process Change of Circumstances (days)	Quarterly	5.2	3.2	9	4.5	5	7	Green ↓		6	7	Green ↑	Another great quarter, averaging our processed change of circumstances within 5 days, and achieving our quarter three target which is always pleasing to reach especially around this time of year when change in circumstances can be higher. This is due to customers doing short term or additional work around November and December. We continue to encourage residents to use emails, the website and telephone to let us know of their change in circumstances so that we can ensure they get the correct help they need and within a timely manner. This also helps keeping customer contact to a minimum and supports our residents at this difficult time with the cost of living rising.
Revs & Bens CT07	Council Tax Reduction scheme for working age persons - time taken to process new applications (days)	Quarterly	3	3	2	2	2	3	Green ↔		2	3	Green ↔	We are below target for time to process new applications for Council Tax Reduction which is great for our customers receiving their entitlement in a timely manner.
Revs & Bens CT08	Council Tax Reduction scheme for working age persons - time taken to process change of circumstances (days)	Quarterly	3	3	3	2	3	3	Green ↓		2.6	3	Green ↓	We are at target for time to process changes of circumstances for Council Tax Reduction which is great for our customers receiving their entitlement in a timely manner.
Contact Centre CC02	Telephone calls taken by the Contact Centre for those services undertaken by the Contact Centre	Quarterly	10,351	11,504	10,313	10,331	9,452	No Target	No Status ↓		10,032	No Target	No Status ↓	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. It does not include calls that have selected option '0'. The services undertaken by the Contact Centre are Environmental Health, Licensing, Planning, Building Control, Parking, Operational Services and Housing Services.

Contact Centre CC04	Website sessions	Quarterly	63,603	68,559	53,390	42,983	47,449	No Target	No Status 	 <table border="1"> <caption>Website Sessions Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Previous</th> <th>Current</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q4</td> <td>~250,000</td> <td>~70,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1</td> <td>~240,000</td> <td>~50,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2</td> <td>~220,000</td> <td>~40,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3</td> <td>~60,000</td> <td>~50,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Previous	Current	Q4	~250,000	~70,000	Q1	~240,000	~50,000	Q2	~220,000	~40,000	Q3	~60,000	~50,000	143,822	No Target	No Status 	<p>Website sessions are defined as: A session is the period time a user is actively engaged with your website. By default, if a user is inactive for 30 minutes or more, any future activity is attributed to a new session. Users that leave your site and return within 30 minutes are counted as part of the original session.</p> <p>On 5 Oct 22, the Council changed its website platform, which has dramatically affected the number of sessions recorded. We do not believe that this is an indication of a drop in users, rather a reduction in the number of computer generated hits, leading to false records. This rebaselines the results.</p>
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Contact Centre CC05	Time taken to answer calls (seconds)	Quarterly	48	57	66	81	34	60	Green 	 <table border="1"> <caption>Time taken to answer calls Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Time (seconds)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Q3</td> <td>~50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q4</td> <td>~60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q1</td> <td>~70</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q2</td> <td>~80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Q3</td> <td>~40</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Time (seconds)	Q3	~50	Q4	~60	Q1	~70	Q2	~80	Q3	~40	60	60	Green 	<p>Benchmarking across Essex reports varying targets for time to answer. We have set our target relatively low in recognition of the importance of maintaining a good level of customer service.</p> <p>Current trend - Throughout quarter 2 we operated with one vacant post affecting call queue time. We have amended rotas to have a positive affect going forward into quarter 3.</p>			
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