

Performance Report

- Quarter 3 (October to December) 2015-16

4. Sound and self-sufficient council - a well-run and innovative council supporting its staff to realise commercial opportunities whilst transforming its services to deliver at the best possible value for money

Quarterly Update on Performance

1. Underpin all council activity with sound governance and internal control measures minimising the opportunities for fraud and corruption.

Internal Audit

- The team are focussing on the assurance work on the agreed Internal Audit Plan for 2015-16 in risk priority order. For a number of reasons the team are forecast to deliver less audit days than planned in the 2015-16 financial year and as a result will present a revised plan to the Finance & Audit Committee (F&A) at their meeting on 9 March.
- An update on the team’s performance measures is calculated at half year and end of year; the last update to the full set of indicators was presented to F&A on 18 November:
<http://web.gravesham.gov.uk/democracy/documents/s29470/6.%20Half%20Year%20Internal%20Audit%20Report%202015-16%20-%20Appendix%206%20-%20Internal%20Audit%20Performance.pdf>
- The performance indicator relating to the follow up of agreed recommendations is monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to Management Team and Members as part of the new Performance Reporting arrangements. As at the end of Q3 2015-16, 89% of recommendations had been implemented by their agreed target in the year to date. Internal Audit has arrangements in place to escalate outstanding recommendations through quarterly reports to Management Team and ultimately through reporting to F&A. When the current monitoring arrangements were introduced performance was at 62% and is frequently in the high 90s; there are three recommendations which are awaiting the completion of other work-streams before they can be implemented and this is causing the dip in performance reported.

Fraud As at the end of Q3 the team had recorded the following:



- Referrals received – 1785 (498 accepted, 1287 rejected)
- Completed investigations – 665 (compares favourably to 2015-16 full year of 630)
- HB payments reduced by £6,793.24 per week = annual saving of £353,248.48.
- CTR awards cut by £923.44 per week = annual saving of £48,018.88.
- £23,683.99 extra council tax income due to removal of SPDs no longer entitled for.
- HB/CTB overpayments generated of £504,326.39
- Excess CTR awards £58,435.59 and additional CTAX (historic from SPD removal) £47,878.33 = total of £106,313.72
- 63 people have been issued with civil penalties totalling £3,540
- 17 people have received cautions for offences (9 HB, 6 HB&CTR, 2 Housing)
- 13 people accepted Adpens (8 HB and 5 CTR) totalling £12,917.65
- 6 people convicted for HB fraud
- 4 properties recovered
- 2 Right to Buy purchases stopped
- 162 people removed from the Housing Register.

Actions for Improvement

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Performance indicators

PI 41 Percentage of internal audit recommendations implemented

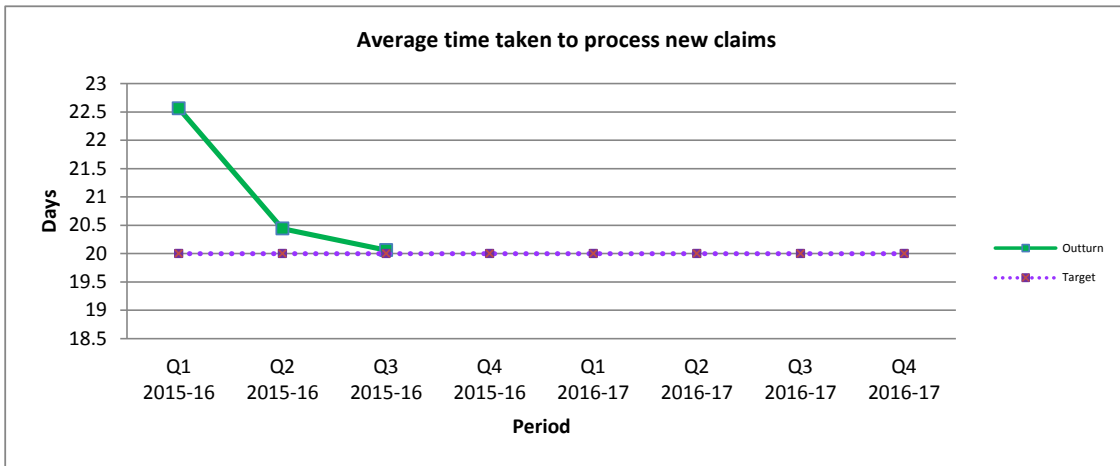
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	50.00%	79.00%	89.00%					
Direction of Travel	N/A							

Quarterly Update on Performance
<p>2. Quality frontline services delivered on time and to the right people.</p>
<p>PM 11 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims is on target at 20 days. Historically the average time for processing new claims is high in the first quarter as this is when the annual bills and benefit letters are issued and the amount of correspondance that we receive is higher than normal. We then recover performance in the following quarters to achieve our target. We do try and prioritise new claims to ensure to keep them on target</p> <p>Average time taken to process Housing Benefit change of circumstances is 5 days and therefore exceeding the target of 7 days. However the direction of travel is not positive because changes have become more complex and time consuming since Real Time Information (RTI) has been introduced. Staff spend more time on dealing with the RTI cases which means there is less time free to work on day to day workload. Also as the cases are more complex it means we are having to write out for more information and have to wait for the customer to respond and provide the relevant documentation.</p>
Actions for Improvement
<p>0</p>

Key performance measures

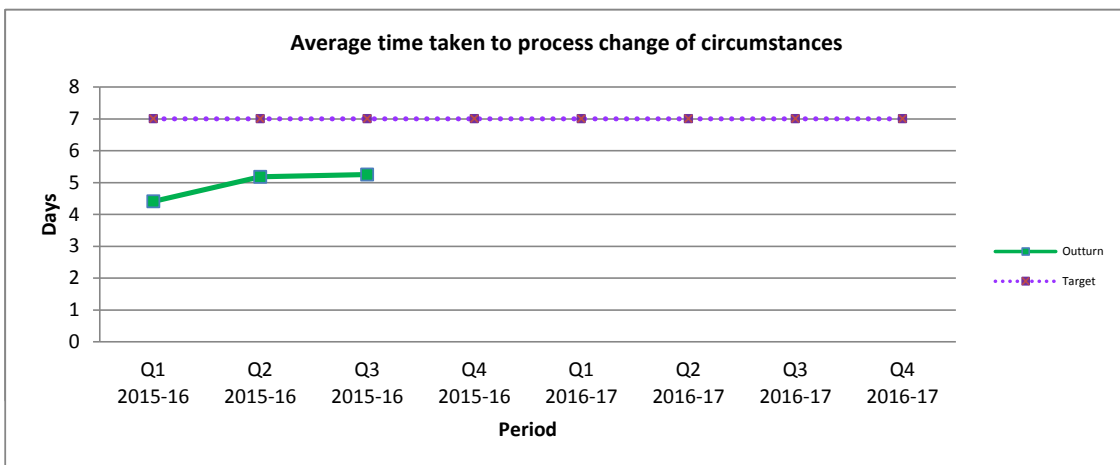
PM 11 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council Tax new claims (days)

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	22.56	20.44	20.06					
Target	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Direction of Travel	N/A	↑	↑					



PM 12 Average time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council Tax change of circumstances (days)

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	4.41	5.18	5.25					
Target	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Direction of Travel	N/A	↓	↓					

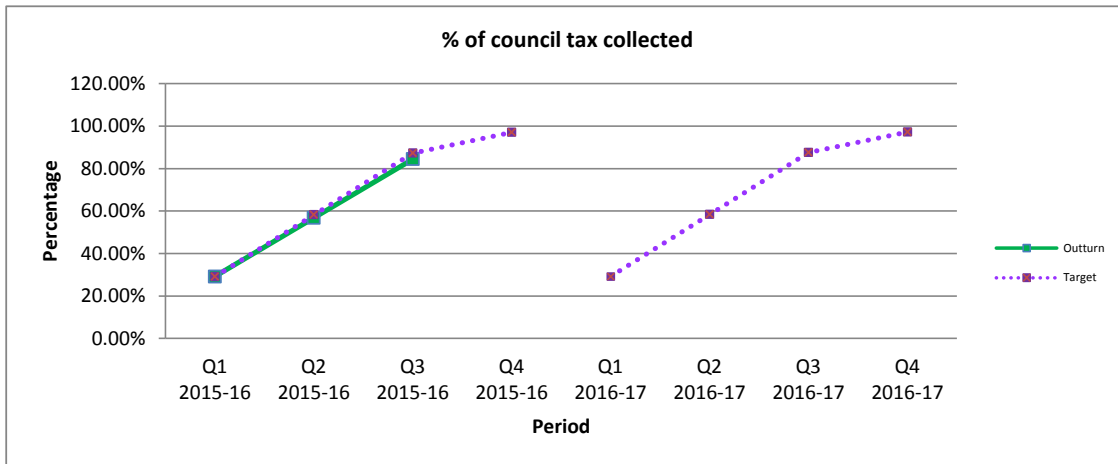


Quarterly Update on Performance
<p>3. Work to maximise income collection through the robust management and recovery of debts owed to the council.</p>
<p>The % Council Tax collected is 84.40% which is below the target of 87.30% but above the percentage of 84.29% collected at this point in 2014/15. Collection fluctuates on a monthly basis and with the introduction of 12 monthly instalments we are confident that we can achieve our end of year target.</p> <p>The % of NNDR collected is 83.43% which is below our target of 88.65% but above the percentage of 81.68% collected at this point in 2014/15. Similarly to Council Tax this can fluctuate and is influenced by the introduction of 12 monthly instalments.</p>
Actions for Improvement
<p>Recovery action will continue through to the end of March to ensure we collect the maximum possible. Instalment payments are now extended to 12 months therefore this will also affect % rates achieved.</p>

Key performance measures

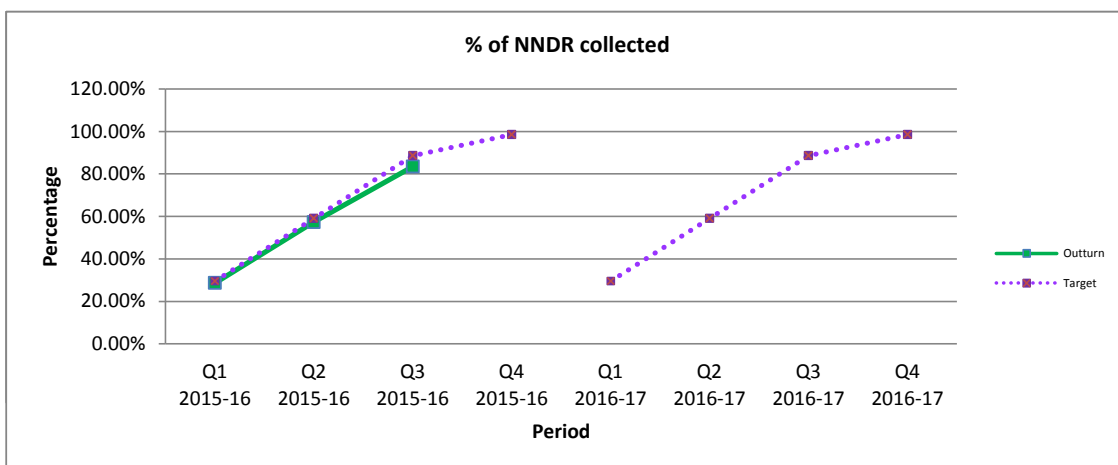
PM 9 Percentage of council tax collected

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	29.16%	56.78%	84.40%					
Target	29.10%	58.20%	87.30%	97.00%	29.18%	58.35%	87.53%	97.25%
Direction of Travel	N/A	↓	↔					





PM 10 Percentage of NNDR collected

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	28.63%	57.32%	83.43%					
Target	29.55%	59.10%	88.65%	98.50%	29.55%	59.10%	88.65%	98.50%
Direction of Travel	N/A	↑	↓					





Performance indicators

PI 42 Total amount of housing benefit overpayments raised

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	387,743	1,006,130	470,107					
Direction of Travel	N/A							



PI 43 Amount of Housing benefit overpayments received as a percentage of total debt.

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	271,967	302,594	303,689					
Direction of Travel	N/A							

Quarterly Update on Performance
<p>4. Implement genuine channel shift through an enhanced IT infrastructure, enabling customers to access key services online, anytime, anywhere.</p> <p>Live Chat - Live Chat has been fully adopted in the Customer Contact Centre after a successful three month trial period started in August 2015. We've had a total of 2672 since launch (an average of 668 chats per month)</p> <p>Council Tax and Rent Balances Online - Customers can now check their Council Tax and Rent balances online including the last five payments made to their account. These two features went live in October 2015. A total of 1858 customers have checked their Council Tax balance and 1963 have checked their Rent balance since launch.</p> <p>Digital Newsletter - The digital newsletter was created in the summer of 2015 to advertise the council's online digital offering and other important news. The first issue went out to 500 subscribers in July and now has 1160 subscribers having seen a sign up form implemented to each page of the website.</p> <p>Christmas in Gravesend Website - Developed by the Digital Team to promote the council's Christmas Everyday programme, the website went live in November 2015 and received 6894 page views in two months.</p> <p>Intranet - The council's new Intranet was soft launched in September 2015 to help staff find information relating to their job, view policy documents, download forms, book meeting rooms and have quick access to council systems. The Intranet has received many positive comments from staff saying how easy it is to use.</p> <p>Garden Waste and Bulky Waste Booking Systems - In September 2015, customers have been able to book and pay for a garden waste bin or book a bulky collection online. Customer Services have been actively promoting the online service instead of taking the booking over the phone. Since launch, the split of self service bookings vs. bookings made by the CCC for Garden Waste are 84% online and 87% online for bulky bookings.</p> <p>Face to face Services - Changes are being made with Customer Service Officers moving to more of an 'assisted' service. A self-help pc has been set up at the meet & greet desk and, where services can be delivered online, customers are encouraged to do so. With the location of the pc being so close to officers, this means that customers have the confidence of being assisted when required. If the customer has a more complex enquiry then they are still seen by a Customer Service officer who can assist them, but focus is placed on ensuring that customers that are able to self-serve do so, in order that resources can be directed to those who need support.</p> <p>PI47 – The number of customer services assisted self-serve transactions - This is a new indicator and therefore no figures are available for this quarter. Reporting will commence from Quarter 4.</p>
Actions for Improvement
<p>0</p>

Performance indicators

PI 48 Percentage of council tax accounts signed up for e-billing

	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
Outturn	0.80%	0.90%	0.70%					
Direction of Travel	N/A							

Quarterly Update on Performance
<p>5. Deliver on opportunities for the sharing and selling of council services.</p>
<p>Work to implement the new Internal Audit & Counter Fraud Shared Service with Medway Council is on-going – progress is in line with the timetable so we will be launching the new service on 1 April as planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham formally delegated authority for the delivery of its audit and fraud functions to Medway on 7 September 2015, with Medway formally accepting this on 24 November (both respective Cabinet meetings). • A formal Shared Service Agreement was signed on behalf of both councils on 30 November 2015; this agreement sets out the legal basis for the service and includes schedules detailing the services to be provided, performance measurement arrangements and the financial contributions to be made to Medway by Gravesham in respect of these services. • Gravesham’s audit & fraud staff transferred under TUPE regulations to Medway Council’s employment on 1 December. The cost of Gravesham’s staff will continue to be met by Gravesham until 1 April 2016 when the cost of the new team will be split between the councils on a proportionate basis, as set out in the Shared Service Agreement. The consultation process for the necessary restructure closes on 13 January and following this the new structure will be appointed to. • Given the complexity of the ICT solutions required to enable a fully shared service to operate in both councils, the project group engaged an IT Consultant (with Gravesham contributing proportionately to the cost) to work with both councils to design and implement the required hardware and software. The two councils have established a secure link for data via the Kent Public Service Network (KPSN) enabling staff in the Shared Service to access the networks of both councils from either site. Laptops will be provided to staff to enable them to be fully mobile to drive flexibility and efficiency in the service, with banks of flexible desks being made available at both sites to ensure the team retains a high profile at both councils. • From 1 February the council will cease the investigation of Housing Benefit Fraud and all new referrals will be re-directed to the DWP SFIS. The team will then prepare the files to transfer to the DWP in advance of any staff transferring on 1 March. <p>Opportunities for further sharing of services continue to be explored and will be reported to Members as appropriate.</p>
Actions for Improvement
<p>0</p>

Quarterly Update on Performance
<p>6. Continuously review and adapt how we deliver our services to achieve financial efficiencies and improved performance.</p> <p>As part of the council’s new Corporate Plan (2015-19) a new Performance Management Framework (PMF) has been established to evaluate if the council is effectively achieving against its stated policy commitments, and is ultimately delivering consistently high quality services.</p> <p>As such, since the Corporate Plan was adopted by Full Council in October 2015, the focus of the Corporate Performance team has been to finalise the performance reporting process; both in terms of creating a new in-house reporting tool, generating a small saving to the council in ending the previous reporting tool contract, and also in terms of arranging the reporting process.</p> <p>Quarterly reporting will take place along the following brief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet will receive a headline report which contains outturns for all performance information relating to the corporate plan. This will be a stats-based report with the Directors available at Cabinet meetings to field any queries. The report will be split across the four corporate objectives and itemised to reflect the responsible portfolios. • Following the report to Cabinet, each Cabinet Committee will receive their specific elements of the report, complete with supporting contextual information to enable discussion at a Committee level. These will be treated as ‘information-only’ papers. <p>Within the Corporate Services Directorate, a Corporate Change Manager post has been created. The purpose of this position is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and co-ordinate change management across the council and lead, direct and provide guidance of associated project teams in delivering the programme • Manage the implementation of a programme of Business Reviews through to successful implementation, with the aim of achieving service efficiencies whilst maintaining/improving customer satisfaction. <p>The creation of this post will help to drive forward the council's efficiency agenda in working to deliver financial savings and service improvements across the council.</p> <p>The Overview Scrutiny Committee have commenced two topic reviews in the areas of Housing Repairs and Planning Applications, supported by the Corporate Change Manager and the Committee Service Officer (Scrutiny). The reviews are in an early stage but will aim to draw out service efficiencies and financial savings in the services where applicable.</p>
Actions for Improvement
<p>The role of the Corporate Change Manager is fairly new and as such, all project work is at an early stage so it is not possible to report on specific achievement and outcomes at this stage. It is intended that the project/review work will proceed further in the coming months and as such, future updates will provide more detailed information on the work currently underway.</p>