



Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Date Friday 13 September 2013
Time 9.30 am
Venue Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham

Business

Part A

Items during which the Press and Public are welcome to attend. Members of the Public can ask questions with the Chairman's agreement.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Substitute Members
3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2013 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Declarations of interest, if any
5. Any items from Co-opted members or interested parties
6. Quarter 1 2013/14 Performance Management Report - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 5 - 66)
7. Welfare Reform Update and Review of Local Council Tax Support Scheme - Joint Report of Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Director, Resources and Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development (Pages 67 - 98)
8. Update on the Delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 3 - Report of Assistant Chief Executive (Pages 99 - 104)
9. Notice of Key Decisions - Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Pages 105 - 114)
10. Update in Relation to Petitions - Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Pages 115 - 128)
11. Any other urgent business (subject to the Chairman's approval)

Colette Longbottom
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

County Hall
Durham
5 September 2013

To: **The Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

Councillor J Armstrong (Chairman)
Councillor P Stradling (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors B Alderson, A Batey, R Bell, J Blakey, A Bonner, D Boyes,
J Chaplow, R Crute, B Graham, D Hall, K Henig, A Hopgood, P Lawton,
J Lethbridge, H Liddle, E Murphy, T Nearney, C Potts, A Shield, M Simmons,
W Stelling, R Todd, J Turnbull and S Wilson

Faith Communities Representatives:

Revd K Phipps and Mrs M Sands

Parent Governor Representatives:

Mr R Patel

Co-opted Members:

Mr A J Cooke, Mr D Kinch and Mr A Kitching

Contact: Ros Layfield

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DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At a Meeting of **Overview and Scrutiny Management Board** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Friday 19 July 2013 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor P Stradling in the Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors B Alderson, R Bell, D Boyes, J Chaplow, K Henig, A Hopgood, P Lawton, H Liddle, R Todd, J Turnbull and S Wilson

Faith Community Representative:

Revd K Phipps

Co-opted Members:

Mr A J Cooke and Mr D Kinch

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Armstrong, A Batey, R Crute, D Hall, J Lethbridge, T Nearney, A Shield and M Simmons.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members in attendance.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Items from Co-opted members or interested parties

There were no items from Co-opted members or interested parties.

6 Medium Term Financial Plan (4), Council Plan and Service Plans 2014/15 - 2016/17

The Board considered a joint report of Corporate Director, Resources and Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the development of the 2014/15 Budget, the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 4) and Council/Service Plans (for copy see file of minutes).

The Head of Finance (Corporate Finance) informed the Board that the financial outlook for the Council continues to be extremely challenging. Key changes were in the content of the Chancellors March budget announcement, stating a further 1% cut for 2014/15 and the employer national insurance contributions rebate would cease in 2016/17.

It was reported that as of 31 March 2013, £93m of savings have been delivered for 2011/12 and 2012/13. Excellent progress had been made towards the £20.9m savings target for 2013/14, but estimated additional savings of £25.9m would be required for 2014/15 and a further £62.7m for 2015/16 to 2016/17 would be required to reach the revised £202m total savings target.

Councillor Hopgood commented that much of the significant savings that had been made were due to the implementation of the Unitary Council and asked how much of the current figures related to Local Government Reorganisation. The Head of Finance (Corporate Finance) responded that there was a £21m savings target for 2009/10 and 2010/11 for LGR based on major restructures. It is an impossible exercise to identify in the MTFP process from 2011/12 which savings were due to Local Government Reorganisation.

In response to a comment that the Council would forward some of the New Homes Bonus directly to a single pot of money, to which individual LEP's would bid, it may be that Durham would not receive a share equal to what it had put in. Councillor Hopgood suggested that the LEP representative on the Authority should be aware of this to be in a position to challenge and therefore the Head of Planning and Performance would relay this to the representative.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

7 County Durham Partnership Update

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update on the issues being addressed by the County Durham Partnership (CDP) including summaries from the Board, the five Thematic Partnerships and all Area Action Partnerships (AAP's). The report also included updates on other key initiatives being carried out in partnership across the County (for copy see file of minutes).

Councillor R Bell referred to paragraph 17 and 18 of the report and queried where the money would be coming from to fund the 'Big Local' programme in Bishop Auckland. Clare Marshall, Principal Partnerships and Local Councils Officer responded that the AAP's had been working in partnership with the Big Lottery and Community Development Foundation to secure external funding to benefit areas in Bishop Auckland and Shildon.

Feedback would be provided to Cllr Bell after the meeting to advise of the reasons why Bishop Auckland had been chosen, and whether it would be applicable for other areas to apply.

Councillor D Boyes suggested that Area Action Partnerships share best practices and that the information circulated to coordinators should also be shared with AAP members.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

8 Information update from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which provided an update of overview and scrutiny activity between June 2013 and July 2013 (for copy see file of minutes).

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

9 Notice of Key Decisions

The Board considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which provided a list of key decisions which were scheduled to be considered by the Executive (for copy see file of minutes).

The Committee Services Manager informed the Board of the items that had been removed from the previous notice while being considered by Cabinet.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**13 September 2013****Quarter 1 2013/14****Performance Management Report****Report of Corporate Management Team****Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive****Councillor Simon Henig, Leader****Purpose of the Report**

1. To present progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators (PIs) and report other significant performance issues for the first quarter of 2013/14.

Background

2. This is the first quarterly corporate performance report of 2013/14 for the council highlighting performance for the period April to June 2013. The report contains information on key performance indicators, risks and Council Plan progress.
3. The report sets out an overview of performance and progress by Altogether priority theme. Key performance indicator progress is reported against two indicator types which comprise of:
 - a. Key target indicators – targets are set for indicators where improvements can be measured regularly and where improvement can be actively influenced by the council and its partners; and
 - b. Key tracker indicators – performance will be tracked but no targets are set for indicators which are long-term and/or which the council and its partners only partially influence.
4. A summary of key performance indicators is provided at Appendix 3. More detailed performance information and Altogether theme analyses are available on request from performance@durham.gov.uk.

Developments since last quarter

5. Extensive work has been undertaken by all services to develop a revised 2013/14 corporate set of indicators as set out in Appendix 3. This set of indicators is based around our six Altogether priority themes and will be used to measure the performance of both the council and the County Durham Partnership.
6. Specific changes to note in respect to the corporate indicator set include:
 - a. The corporate indicator set contains a number of indicators that will measure the impact of welfare reform changes in County Durham as they are rolled out throughout the year. This will enable the effects to be reported through the quarterly performance reports. More detail is available in the Welfare Reform Update report which was presented to Cabinet on 11 September 2013.
 - b. There is to be a stronger focus this year on volume measures in our performance framework. This will allow us to better quantify productivity in the forthcoming year and to

monitor the effects of reductions in resources and increases in volume driven by the economic situation and national policy changes such as welfare reform.

- c. This year has seen a number of satisfaction indicators removed from the corporate indicator set mainly due to increasing intervals that surveys are carried out. Options are being considered to report measures of satisfaction through another process.

Executive Summary

Overview

7. Overall the local authority is performing well against an extremely challenging environment of a continuing depressed economy, significant health disadvantage and rising demand for key public services, at the same time as delivering on Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings.
8. Issues linked to the UK economy continue to affect performance across County Durham. The employment rate, although marginally improved, remains below the national and regional rates and youth unemployment levels remain high. The proportion of long term unemployed continues to rise. Low levels of housing development persist particularly with affordable homes. There are significant challenges in the underlying health picture in the county with male and female life expectancy below North East and national comparators.
9. Demand on council services is rising across many key areas with increased volumes of activity in areas such as face-to-face customer contacts and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests but more worrying are those relating to vulnerable or potentially vulnerable residents such as people rehoused through the Durham Key Options system, homeless presentations and council tax and housing benefit new claims and change of circumstances. However, a reduction in demand has occurred in overall planning applications and telephone calls received.
10. Despite this challenging picture, performance in most of the council's key priority areas is still improving, such as preventing and tackling crime and youth justice with reduced levels of crime and stealing offences and low levels of repeat victims of domestic abuse. Incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) have reduced along with youth re-offending and first time entrants to the youth justice system. Safeguarding children targets have improved in relation to child protection plans and child protection cases. Health and social care services show positive progress with care for older people and areas of public health. Homeless preventions continue to improve despite increased demand in homeless presentations. Good progress continues with improved recycling and composting rates and low levels of fly-tipping incidents.
11. Performance is mixed in some areas of the Altogether Better Council priority theme. Customer service indicators show improved waiting times at customer access points but abandoned telephone calls have got worse. Challenges persist in areas such as benefits processing, council tax and business rates collection and paying supplier invoices within 30 days remains inconsistent. The level of sickness absence within the organisation remains high and is an area of challenge and improvement activity. Work is on-going to improve appraisal coverage and to ensure that the council's policies are adhered to and accurately recorded and reported.

Key messages from Altogether priority themes

12. Key economic measures remain challenging. Although the employment rate has increased marginally to 65.8% at the end of March 2013 compared with 65.1% reported last quarter, this still remains below the national (71.1%) and regional (66.5%) rates. The proportion of the

working age population currently not in work who want a job has also improved slightly, falling from 16.45% to 16.40% however this is worse than both the national and North East figures of 11.63% and 14.42% respectively.

13. Long-term unemployment in County Durham, measured as the percentage of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for one year or more has risen to 34.54%, although the actual number of claimants shows a small fall from 5,055 to 4,970. Youth unemployment, as measured by the number of 18-24 year old JSA claimants, remains high although this is continuing to decrease. The number of claimants peaked in February 2012 at 5,630 however has now improved for five consecutive months, reducing from 5,200 in January 2013 to 4,435 this quarter, a decrease of 765 claimants.
14. Housing indicators show that the number of net home completions has risen to 290 this quarter from 159 at the same period last year, although remaining below pre-recession levels. Of these, 14 homes were in Durham City, an increase from the seven homes delivered during the same period last year. There were 125 completions in and near major settlements (43%), a reduction from 45% last quarter and 54% last year. This quarter 60 affordable homes were delivered, which is below the target of 87 and the same period last year when 89 homes were delivered.
15. The number of planning applications received against all categories has shown a reducing trend during 2012/13 however a slight rise in the numbers is seen this quarter but numbers still remain below 2011/12 levels. Performance shows that applications determined within deadline remains positive with performance of 89.7% being ahead of the 85% target and the 86.5% achieved in the same period last year, although major planning applications determined within 13 weeks dropped to 66.7% from 94.3% in quarter 4 2012/13.
16. There were 31 empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention this quarter, a significant improvement from the same period last year (12 properties). Performance demonstrates a good start towards the annual target of 75. The number of private sector properties improved as a result of local authority intervention was 203 which is above target (152) but below the same period last year (248).
17. Despite an increasing trend in the volume of homeless presentations seen over recent years, this quarter has seen a fall in the numbers to 1,519 compared with 1,761 last quarter, however this is 9.9% higher than the same period last year (1,382) and 42% higher than quarter 1 of 2010/11 (1,067). Statutory homeless applications have increased slightly from 14.03% last quarter to 14.35% this quarter. The number rehoused on the Durham Key Options system has risen from 959 in quarter 1 2012/13 to 1,088 in quarter 1 2013/14, an increase of 13.5%. Increased demand has been seen each quarter for the past two years and this trend continues this quarter.
18. Highlights for performance areas affecting children and young people show that positive progress continues in relation to youth justice and performance of the safeguarding service.
19. Performance shows children in need referrals occurring within 12 months of the previous referral have deteriorated, rising this period to 25.3%. Performance did not meet the target of 21% and declined in comparison to the same period of the previous year (21.8%) but was better than the 2011/12 national average (26.1%).
20. This quarter sees continued low numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system, a reduction in the rate of proven re-offending by young offenders and a reduction in the number of offences committed.
21. Performance against key safeguarding targets has improved. Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan for a second or subsequent time equate to 12.5%. This is an

improvement from 13.1% for the same period last year and 16.9% for the year 2012/13. It is also better than the 2011/12 outturn for England (13.8%) and statistical neighbours (13.2%), whilst the North East was 12.4%. Similarly, child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales equate to 99.2% which is an improvement from 96.4% for the same period last year and 91% reported at the end of 2012/13. This is however slightly below the target of 100%.

22. Prevalence of breastfeeding has increased from 26.1% at the same period last year to 28.5%; however, Durham remains worse than national (46.6%) and regional (31.9%) averages
23. Mothers smoking at time of delivery in County Durham equate to 19.9% which is a slight improvement from 21.3% in 2011/12 and is in line with the North East average of 19.7% but worse than the national level of 12.7%.
24. The under-18 conception rate has increased marginally this quarter from the previous year to a rate of 41.8 (provisional) and is above national (31.5), North East (40.7) and statistical neighbours (38.4).
25. Key health and adult care measures show that positive progress continues with care for older people and some areas of public health.
26. The number of permanent admissions to residential or nursing care for adults aged 65+ has shown a 15% reduction from the same period last year and has achieved the quarterly profiled target.
27. 88.8% of older people were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital, exceeding target as well as comparator group and England averages. In addition, 91% of respondents to the intermediate care survey said that the services they received had improved their quality of life, whilst 95% were satisfied with the service they received.
28. Delayed transfers of care from hospital reduced and levels are lower than the England average for the period.
29. Take up of the NHS Cervical Cancer Screening Programme exceeded the North East average for the period and the national Department of Health target. County Durham is the fourth best performing area in the region in relation to cervical cancer screening. NHS health checks undertaken during 2012/13 did not meet the year-end target and are below the number of health checks undertaken in 2011/12.
30. Exits from alcohol treatment show that 73% were planned discharges. This has achieved the 64% target and also exceeded the national average of 68%.
31. Winter deaths (as a proportion of non-winter deaths) were 18.1 for 2008-11 which is a reduction from 19.8 in 2007-10. This is below both the North East (18.5) and England (19.5) averages.
32. The suicide rate for County Durham was 11.4 for 2009-11. This is higher than both the North East (9.6) and England (7.9) rates.
33. County Durham remains a safe place to live with continuing low levels of repeat victims of domestic abuse and reduced levels of crime although a rise in re-offending and alcohol-related crime has been recorded this period. The headline indicator of overall crime has reduced by 4%, victim based crimes have reduced by 4.2% and stealing offences have fallen by 3%. County Durham is currently ranked lowest out of 15 most similar Community Safety Partnerships for crime, victim based crime and stealing.

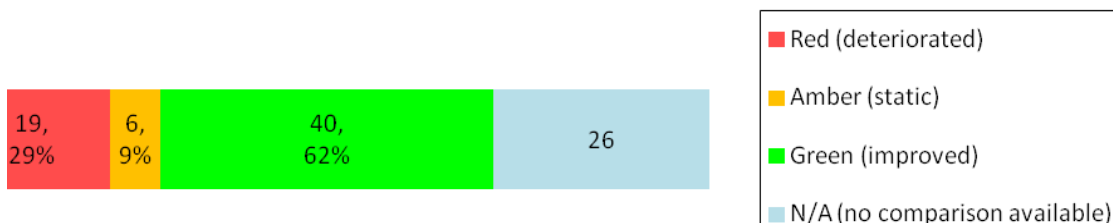
34. There are continuing low levels of repeat victims of domestic abuse with 4 of the 53 referrals received being repeat referrals. Durham consistently outperforms latest national and regional figures.
35. This quarter has seen a 7% increase in incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported to the police compared to the equivalent period in 2012/13 but this is a 35% reduction on the equivalent period in 2011/12. 35% of violent crimes reported to the police were recorded as alcohol-related. This is a 5 percentage point increase on the same period in 2012/13. There has also been an increase in alcohol related ASB incidents equating to 15% of total ASB reported to the police, a 2 percentage point increase on the equivalent period in 2012/13.
36. The proportion of offenders who re-offend in a 12-month period shows that 29.5% of offenders in County Durham reoffended, compared to 26.9% nationally. Both the local figure and national figure have risen by 0.1 percentage point compared to the previous quarter.
37. Key environmental indicators show excellent progress in recycling and composting rates with almost 47% of household waste being reused, recycled or composted. Municipal waste landfilled has improved from previous quarter but remains slightly below target. The volume of fly-tipping incidents showed a reducing trend over 2012/13 compared with incidents reported during 2011/12, although there has been a light rise at quarter 1.
38. The council's Altogether Better Council priority theme shows improvement in some areas but there continue to be areas of underperformance.
39. The collection rate of sundry debt owed to the authority currently stands at 75.6% which is above the target of 73%.
40. Performance for processing new claims as well as change of circumstances has been split this year between Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Reduction (CTR). New HB claims were processed in 26.53 days on average which met the 28 day target. New CTR claims were processed in 30.46 days on average, which was outside of the 28 day target. The volume of new council tax and housing benefit claims shows an increasing trend. In relation to processing change of circumstances the target of 14 days has not been met for either HB claims, which were processed in 19.18 days on average, or for CRT claims, which were processed in 21.59 days on average. The volume of changes of circumstances for council tax and housing benefit has risen considerably over the past year.
41. Invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers remains a challenge, but improvements are being realised. Performance was 91.5% which is slightly below the target of 92% but represents an improvement of 1.5 percentage points against quarter 4 (90%).
42. Sickness levels remain too high and require improvement. The number of days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) employee across the council (including schools based employees) deteriorated from 9.08 days at quarter 4 to 9.35 days at the end of this quarter. This nearly matches the rate of 9.34 days at the end of quarter 1 last year and is worse than the target of 9.05 days per FTE. Performance appraisals completed and recorded was 56.5%. This falls well short of the 80% end of year target, with further improvements agreed with Members over the next 4 years to bring performance up to 95% by 2016/17. Management action is underway to address sickness absence and appraisals completion rates.
43. The council tax collection rate of 28.2% during this quarter was 0.5 percentage points above last year's figure but is below the target of 29%. Similarly, the collection rate for National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) of 35.9% was 1.4 percentage points above the same point last year but was slightly below the target of 36%.

44. Tenant rent arrears have risen slightly for Durham City Homes during quarter 1, above period target. Arrears for East Durham Homes have fallen but have not achieved target. Dale and Valley Homes have seen arrears reduced and remain below target.
45. Volume of telephone calls received shows a reducing trend with 14% fewer calls received this quarter when compared with same period last year, and 22% fewer calls compared with same period of 2011/12. Despite this performance continues to decline. This in part reflects the reduction in temporary staffing who were supporting the revenues and benefits system transition. This quarter, 62% of telephone calls were answered within 3 minutes which has not achieved the 80% target. 46% of telephone calls were answered within 1 minute and 18% were abandoned. The volume of face-to-face contacts has increased some 43% from 47,155 contacts at quarter 1 2012/13 to 82,336 this quarter. Despite increased volume, the average waiting time at a customer access point continues to improve to 5 minutes and 6 seconds, which is well within the 15 minute target. Management action is underway to rebalance resources within customer services.
46. Freedom of Information requests responded to within 20 days was 73% this quarter, which is worse than the national standard of 85%. It is also worse than 12 months earlier by 6.4% but better than previous quarter by 4.3%. An increase in volume of requests has been seen over the last 6 months. Volume of requests peaked over quarter 4 of 2012/13 reducing this period, although this still remains higher than at same period last year.

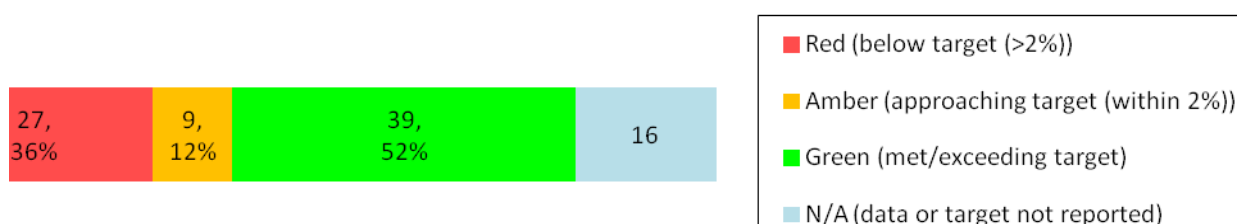
Overall Performance of the Council for Quarter 1

Key performance indicators

Direction of travel



Performance against targets

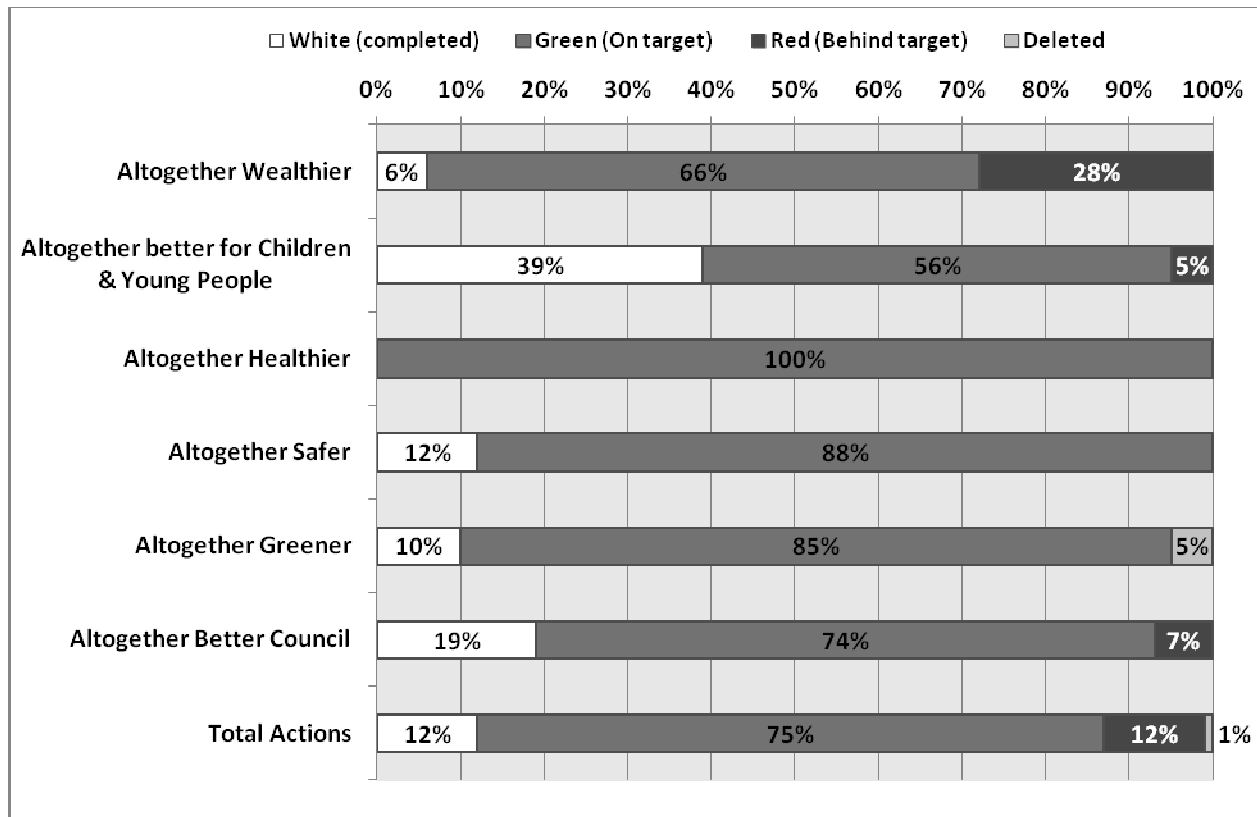


Source: Service performance monitoring data

47. In quarter 1, 71% (46) of key performance indicators have improved or remained static. In relation to performance against target 64% (48) of reported indicators are approaching, meeting or exceeding targets.

Council Plan Actions

Figure 2: Progress against Council Plan by Altogether theme: Quarter 1 2013/14



48. Monitoring of the Council Plan is carried out on a quarterly basis to ensure that actions are being completed. Good progress has been made overall in the first quarter of 2013/14 with 12% (20 out of 162) of actions being achieved and 75% (122 actions) on target. 12% (19 actions) are behind target and 1% (1 action) is proposed to be deleted as it is no longer relevant or is included in other actions. The Altogether Better for Children and Young People theme has achieved the highest percentage of actions completed (39%) and the Altogether Wealthier theme has the highest percentage behind target (28%), which amounts to 15 actions.

Service Plan Actions

Figure 3: Service Plan progress to end of quarter 1

Service Grouping	Total number of Service Plan Actions	Number of actions met or exceeded target	% of actions met or exceeded target	Number on target	% of actions on target	Number behind target	% of actions behind target	Deleted	% of actions deleted
Assistant Chief Executive	75	19	25%	44	59%	12	16%	0	0%
Children & Adult Services	182	24	13%	155	85%	2	1%	1	1%
Neighbourhood Services	120	18	15%	97	81%	4	3%	1	1%
Regeneration & Economic Development	96	0	0%	91	95%	5	5%	0	0%
Resources	128	33	26%	83	65%	10	7%	2	2%
Total	601	94	16%	470	78%	33	5%	4	1%

Source: Service monitoring data

49. The table above shows that overall, 94% of service plan actions have either been achieved or are on target to be achieved by the deadline. Actions behind target equate to 5%. There are a number of actions (1%) proposed to be deleted as they are either no longer relevant or have been incorporated into other actions. The Children and Adult (CAS) service grouping has the highest percentage of actions achieved or on target (98%) and the Assistant Chief Executive (ACE) service grouping has the highest percentage of actions behind target (16%).

50. Reporting of these key actions is on an exception basis with a full copy of the exceptions, deletions, amendments and additions available on request from performance@durham.gov.uk.

Equalities and Diversity

51. Service plan monitoring has shown that Single Equality Scheme (SES) actions and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) actions are progressing well with 25 (19%) actions complete, 102 (76%) on track to achieve target, and six (4%) actions behind target with one (1%) action deleted. One of the exceptional achievements was the action relating to the Pay and Reward Strategy which has been completed well ahead of the original deadline of December 2013. During quarter 1, two ACE actions relating to a review of existing consultation mechanisms were delayed due to the need for further review to give a more comprehensive picture. The new target dates are now October 2013 and November 2013 respectively.

Carbon Reduction by the Council

52. In order to achieve the targets for reducing carbon emissions by the council a set of three actions have been included in all service plans and progress monitored. The action to reduce car business mileage for each service grouping (by a minimum of 10% for 2012/13) is on target. During quarter 1, the Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) service grouping has progressed well on this action. All teams in RED have been provided with the business mileage data with which to set their targets, with a suggested recommendation of a 10% reduction. This RED business mileage reduction project will be used as a pilot to progress this action further. This quarter has also seen an increase in the number of eco-

champions covering more buildings. The action for each service area to recruit a minimum of one eco-champion per locality has now been completed. The action relating to office carbon reduction surveys is underway with all ACE areas having been completed. Other service groupings are making good progress and it is anticipated that all surveys will be complete by the end of September.

Peer Challenge

53. In July 2012 the council was the subject of a peer challenge review by the Local Government Association (LGA). The peer challenge process included some core elements common to all councils, namely: leadership and governance, financial viability and organisational capacity. In addition, Durham's peer challenge also focussed specifically on the council's approach to community engagement and partnership working and our strategic approach to economic development.
54. The peer challenge team produced a report following their visit to the council which was submitted to Cabinet on 10 October 2012 and identified a number of areas for development including: council's apprenticeship scheme, information technology, transformation programmes, organisational development, economic development and community engagement. An action plan based on these themes was developed and is underpinned by service plan actions. Key progress is as follows:
- a. Phase 2 of the apprenticeship programme is up and running and measures are also currently being implemented in order to extend the council's apprenticeship programme and to develop strategies and initiatives to increase opportunities for young people.
 - b. Implementation of the council's accommodation strategy is ongoing with relocation plans progressing well at Teesdale House, Barnard Castle, Chester-le-Street Civic Centre and Peterlee. Good progress is also being made on the Corporate Asset Management Plan and Property Strategy, with a presentation being undertaken to Cabinet in July 2013.
 - c. Good progress is being made with the Digital Durham programme and it is now subject to a high-level deployment/ rollout plan. The current focus is digital inclusion with the Digital Durham team representing the programme at a series of North East workshops.
 - d. The Spatial Policy Team has supported the Local Enterprise Partnership North East Independent Economic Review which is now published. In addition the team has also been part of the governance review project team which led on the governance review and the production of a draft scheme.

Risk Management

55. Effective risk management is a vital component of the council's challenging improvement agenda, so that any risks to successful delivery can be identified and minimised. The council's risk management process therefore sits alongside service improvement work and is integrated into all significant change and improvement projects.
56. The key risks to successfully achieving the objectives of each corporate theme are detailed against each Altogether theme in the relevant sections of the report. These risks have been identified using the following criteria:-
- a. Net impact is critical, and the net likelihood is highly probable, probable or possible.
 - b. Net impact is major, and the net likelihood is highly probable or probable
 - c. Net impact is moderate, and the net likelihood is highly probable

57. As at 30 June 2013, there were 38 strategic risks, which is a decrease of one from the previous period on 31 March 2013. Of these, seven are key risks matching the criteria above. The following matrix summarises the total number of strategic risks based on their net risk assessment as at 30 June 2013. Where there have been changes to the number of risks from the last quarter period end, the risk total as at 31 March 2013 is highlighted in brackets.

Figure 4: Corporate Risk Heat Map

Impact					
Critical	2 (1)	2 (2)	2 (3)		
Major		3 (3)	3 (4)	1 (1)	1 (2)
Moderate		2 (2)	11 (11)	5 (5)	3 (3)
Minor			1 (0)	2 (2)	
Insignificant					
Likelihood	Remote	Unlikely	Possible	Probable	Highly Probable

Key risks 

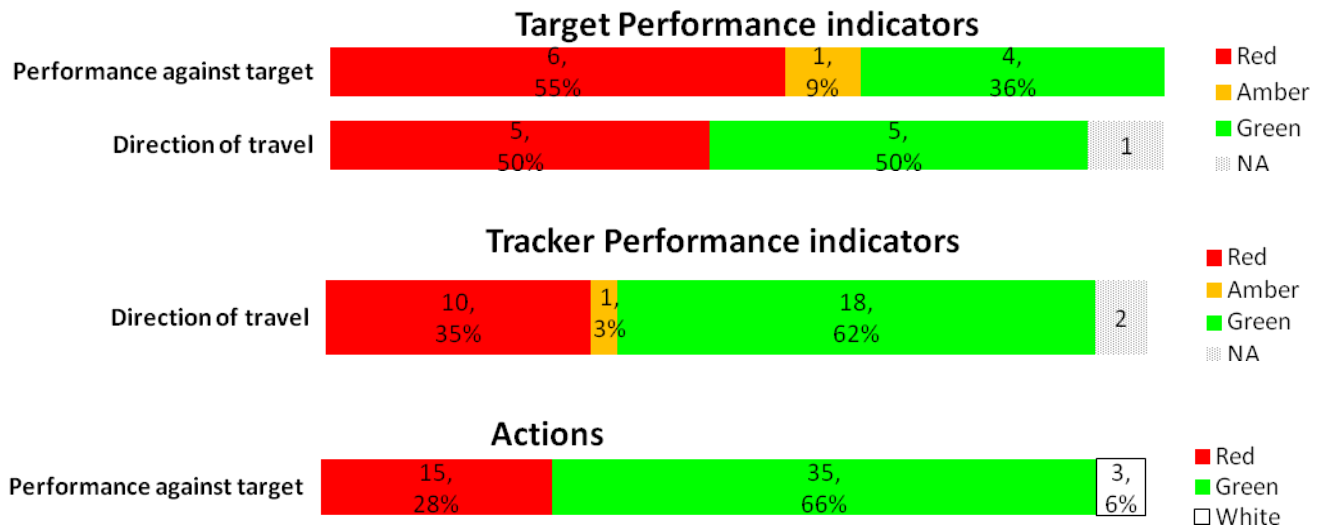
58. At a corporate strategic level, key risks to draw attention to are:

- a. Government ongoing funding cuts which now extend to at least 2017/18 will continue to have an increasing major impact on all council services;
- b. Slippage in delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will require further savings, which may result in further service reductions / job losses;
- c. Failure to identify and effectively regulate contaminated land;
- d. Potential claw-back from MMI (former insurers) under the Scheme of Arrangement (SOA);
- e. Potential restitution of search fees going back to 2005;
- f. School funding reforms and Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) reductions threaten viability of some centrally managed services for children and young people;
- g. If proposed funding reforms are implemented, the council may have a major funding shortfall for post 16 high needs placements.

59. One risk has been removed from the register in this quarter. This is due to management of the risks by the services as mitigating actions have been completed to reduce risks to a level where management now consider existing controls to be adequate.

60. The implementation of additional mitigation on a number of risks has enabled the council to improve performance, decision-making and governance, and this is detailed in the relevant sections of the report.

Altogether Wealthier: Overview



Council Performance

61. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. This quarter 36% of East Durham Homes were classed as non-decent, an improvement of five percentage points from last quarter and 20 percentage points from the same period last year. Progress is being made towards the target of 25% at the end of the financial year. Dale and Valley Homes and Durham City Homes stand at 15.6% and 13.5% respectively. Although rates are higher than in the previous quarter, this is not because properties have fallen out of decency, but because the stock condition survey undertaken in 2012 identified properties that would require works to maintain decency. This financial year's programme of works has commenced and work is progressing to return their level of non-decency to 0% by quarter 4.
- b. There have been 31 empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention, a significant improvement from the same period last year (12 properties). Performance is well ahead of the quarterly target of 15 and demonstrates a good start towards the annual target of 75. This is the result of a focused approach and partnership work with registered providers to identify long term empty properties and discussions with owners regarding their options for returning properties back into use. The number of private sector properties improved as a result of local authority intervention (203) was also above target (152) although performance was not as good as last year when 248 properties were improved.
- c. Throughout the county the number of net home completions has risen to 290 this quarter from 159 at the same period last year, an increase of 82%. Of these, 14 homes were in Durham City, an increase from the seven homes delivered during the same period last year. There were 125 completions in and near major settlements (43%), a reduction from 45% last quarter and 54% last year. More major schemes are being implemented in smaller towns however recent monitoring suggests there are a large number of sites in major settlements with planning permission that are yet to be implemented. This quarter 60 affordable homes were delivered, which is less than the same period last year when 89 homes were delivered. The service is to revise the annual target from 255 increasing to 350 affordable homes delivered. This is due to a number of programmes being confirmed which aim to deliver more affordable homes.
- d. The number of planning applications received against all categories has shown a reducing trend during 2012/13. A slight rise has been seen this quarter but numbers still remain below 2011/12 levels. Performance shows that applications determined within

deadline remains positive with performance of 89.7% which is ahead of the 85% target and the 86.5% achieved in the same period last year (see Appendix 4, Chart 1). However, performance has dropped to 66.7% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks from 94.3% in quarter 4 2012/13. Performance was below the 71% target and the 68.8% achieved in the same period last year. An analysis is to be undertaken to understand the reasons behind the underperformance.

- e. Occupancy levels of council owned factories and business support centre floorspace have increased again this quarter and now stand at 74.5%, just below the 75% target. This is an improvement of 4.9% from the same period last year when occupancy levels were 71%.
- f. The number of people in the county qualified to NVQ level 3 and above has increased by 5.1%, from 46.5% in 2011 to 47.4% in 2012. Although this is an encouraging improvement, the county is still below the North East regional rate of 50.9% and the England rate of 56.9%. Initiatives such as the Welfare to Work programmes and continued liaison with the National Apprenticeships Service are supporting residents to achieve higher skill levels.
- g. There has been good progress made with a number of Council Plan actions as follows:
 - i. Delivery of Durham City projects - initial discussions have taken place on the design for North Road bus station, soft market testing has been completed and an options appraisal will be commissioned at the next stage. An options appraisal has commenced on Lower Claypath and Millennium Place and should be completed on time. The former ice rink has been demolished and enabling works are underway. The Lindisfarne Gospels event opened as scheduled. Construction for the Belmont Business Park junction improvements commenced in July 2013.
 - ii. Seaham Town Centre improvements - the North Dock Marina is open to the public and was officially launched on 11 July 2013. There have been 25 expressions of interest in the marina building received to date. Consideration is being given as to whether to embark on a marketing exercise.
 - iii. Delivery of transport capital and Local Transport Plan priorities in South Durham - approval has been received from Network Rail in relation to works to improve passenger waiting facilities at Bishop Auckland Railway Station and construction is expected to be complete by September 2013. Approvals have been sought from Network Rail to deliver a cycle/walk route between Shildon and Newton Aycliffe, following receipt of a grant to support the capital allocation.
 - iv. Barnard Castle Town Centre improvements - the Heart of Teesdale project is progressing well with the Castle and Scar Top landscaping works being completed in July 2013. A preview event and open day have been held and the website has been launched. The Amen Corner scheme (an area outside St Mary's Church, Newgate) has commenced and is expected to be completed by September 2013.
- h. There is a key action in the Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) service plan regarding the renewal of the permanent Gypsy Roma Traveller Sites. Adventure Lane, West Rainton and Tower Road, Stanley have both been fully decanted. The sites closed in April and demolition, site clearance and site investigation works are complete and the full works are expected to commence in August and September 2013 respectively. Work is ongoing to develop proposals for alternative sites.

62. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- a. During quarter 1, 28 apprenticeships were started through county council schemes. This figure is below the target of 32 and performance for the same period last year (56). The

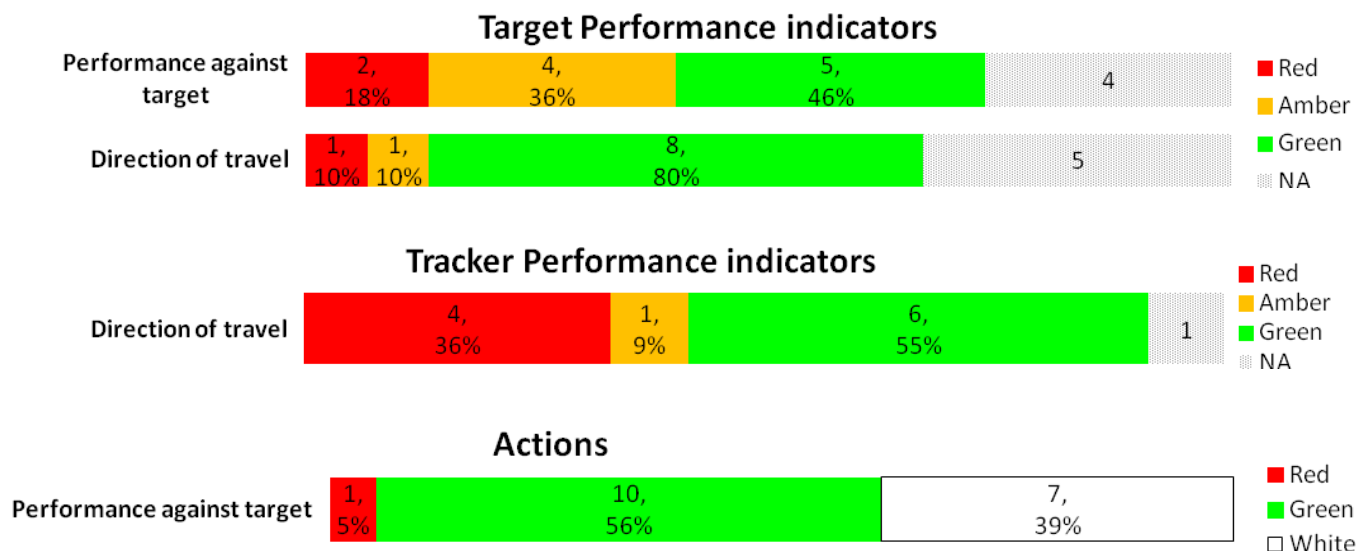
terms, conditions and criteria of the apprenticeship programme (phase 2) have just been revised, which should lead to more interest from private, public and community sector employers.

- b. Key Council Plan actions behind target in this theme include:
- i. The Durham City Regeneration Scheme at Aykley Heads (a mixed use development for employment) to allocate the site upon adoption of the County Durham Plan was due to be delivered by July 2014. The timescales for completion have been amended to December 2014 to align with the County Durham Plan.
 - ii. The delivery of traffic priorities in Durham City, including the use of technologies to reduce congestion on the network by 2015, has been delayed as there is currently no funding available for the introduction of Urban Traffic Management within Durham City. Future design work will be co-ordinated with the potential redevelopment of the Aykley Heads site. A new timeframe is unable to be agreed until funding has been secured.
 - iii. Development of the County Durham Plan 2014 has been delayed due to the timescales being rearranged in line with the Planning Inspectorate. This includes:
 - Statement of consultation for preferred options, due by May 2013 has been revised for completion by September 2013;
 - Consultation on preferred options, due in October 2013 has been revised for completion in November 2013;
 - Preparation for examination in public, including mock examination and pre-enquiry meeting, due in April 2014 has been revised for completion by June 2014; and
 - Full Council adoption, due in July 2014 has now been revised to December 2014.
 - iv. Completion of regeneration frameworks for some key towns has been delayed as follows:
 - Peterlee - September 2013 (Revised date: October 2013)
 - Shildon - June 2013 (Revised date: October 2013)
 - Newton Aycliffe - September 2013 (Revised date: October 2013)
 - Spennymoor - June 2013 (Revised date: September 2013)A draft document and report has been produced and will be submitted to Cabinet in September and October 2013 when meetings are held in relevant locations.
 - v. Delivery of a programme of transport capital works across the county has had some delays at the A167 Northlands roundabout at Chester-le-Street, (revised date April 2014). The introduction of a new signal controlled roundabout was agreed in July which has caused a delay in the deadline. Construction phase is expected between December 2013 and April 2014.
 - vi. Reducing the number of empty domestic properties through a programme of targeted support was due to be completed by March 2014. Expression of interest was disappointing as no registered providers sought to work in partnership to bring empty properties back into use within the identified areas. As such, a way forward has been agreed with the Homes and Communities Agency and a detailed proposal is to be prepared by August 2013.

63. There are also three council plan actions behind target due to timescales changing following further in depth service planning discussions within the RED service grouping. Details of these are included later in the report as part of the recommendations.
64. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:
- a. The employment rate has increased from 65.1% reported last quarter to 65.8% at the end of March 2013, although this remains below the national rate of 71.1% and regional rate of 66.5%. The proportion of the working age population currently not in work who want a job has also improved slightly, falling from 16.45% to 16.40% however is below both the national and North East figures of 11.63% and 14.42% respectively.
 - b. The proportion of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants claiming for one year or more continues to rise, from 32.33% last quarter, to 34.54% this quarter, although the actual number of long term claimants has fallen from 5,055 to 4,970. This compares favourably to the North East rate of 35.1% however is worse than the national rate of 29.75%.
 - c. The number of 18-24 year olds claiming JSA remains high although this is continuing to decrease. The number of claimants peaked in February 2012 at 5,630 however has now improved for five consecutive months, reducing from 5,200 in January 2013 to 4,435 this quarter, a decrease of 765 claimants.
 - d. There has been a rise in the total number registered on the Durham Key Options system who have been rehoused (which includes existing and new tenants) from 959 in quarter 1 2012/13 to 1,088 in quarter 1 2013/14, an increase of 13.5%. Increased demand has been seen each quarter for the past two years and this trend continues this quarter (see Appendix 4, Chart 2).
 - e. The proportion of children in poverty increased slightly from 24.6% in November 2012 to 24.7% in February 2013. It should be noted that this has remained at around the same level since February 2012 whilst nationally there has been a steady, although small reduction. This means the relative child poverty gap between County Durham and England is growing. This is also the trend in the North East in general.
 - f. Despite an increasing trend in the volume of housing solutions (homeless) presentations seen over recent years, this quarter has seen a fall in the numbers to 1,519 compared with 1,761 last quarter, however this is 9.9% higher than the same period last year (1,382) and 42% higher than quarter 1 of 2010/11 (1,067). There was an increase of clients in the first few weeks of the quarter due to welfare reform. However changes to processes such as the pre eviction procedure and the housing triage, designed to highlight early concerns, have reduced this number (see Appendix 4, Chart 3).
 - g. The proportion of statutory homeless applications has increased slightly from 14.03% last quarter to 14.35% this quarter. There has been a decrease in the proportion of homeless applicants accepted with a full homeless duty from 3.69% (65) in quarter 1 2012/13 to 3.36% (51) this quarter. However this is an increased level of those accepted with a full homeless duty and further analysis will be carried out into why this percentage is high. Homeless preventions have improved slightly from 19.53% (344) last quarter to 20.93% (318) this quarter.
65. A new development this period within this priority theme relates to the Hitachi high tech rail assembly plant in Newton Aycliffe. Site preparation and investigation works have commenced with the archaeological investigations now completed. The developers continue to prepare for the on-site construction of the buildings and related infrastructure. The Government have also recently announced that Hitachi will be awarded a £1.2bn deal to build new UK trains. The firm will build 270 carriages which are part of the class 800 series and will go into operation on the East Coast Main Line from 2019. Production will start in 2016.

66. This period has seen two prestigious events taking place in the county. The Lindisfarne Gospels Durham, a world-class exhibition staged on Durham's World Heritage Site, opened in Palace Green Library. The centre piece of the exhibition is the Lindisfarne Gospels, one of the world's most precious books. It is on loan to Durham from the British Library until 30 September 2013. To date, the exhibition has seen some 60,000 tickets being booked. The Emirates Durham International Cricket Ground in Chester-le-Street held the first Ashes test ever in the region. The North East's first experience of the Ashes has been hailed as a huge success, with more than 70,000 spectators packed into the ground to watch. Both events will bring major benefits to the regional economy and businesses are already reporting the benefits of an influx of visitors. Feedback so far from visitors is overwhelmingly positive.
67. There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.

Altogether Better for Children and Young People: Overview



Council Performance

68. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. A reduction in the proportion of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection (CP) Plan for a second or subsequent time. Data for April to June 2013 identify that 18 out of 144 children who became subject to a CP Plan had previously been the subject of a plan, which equals 12.5%. This is an improvement from 13.1% for the same period last year and 16.9% for the year 2012/13. It is also better than the 2011/12 outturn for England (13.8%) and statistical neighbours (13.2%), whilst the North East was 12.4%.
- b. An increase in the percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales. Data for reviews undertaken between April and June 2013 show that 131 out of 132 cases were reviewed within timescale which equals 99.2%. This is slightly below the target of 100% but is an improvement from 96.4% for the same period last year and 91% reported at the end of 2012/13.
- c. Continuing low numbers of first time entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system. Provisional data for April to June 2013 indicate that there were 59 10-17 year old FTEs to the youth justice system. This is in line to be within the 2013/14 target of no more than 340 in the year. It is also an improvement from 74 FTEs during the same period last year.

69. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- a. Performance shows children in need referrals occurring within 12 months of the previous referral have deteriorated. Data for April to June 2013 identify that 483 out of 1,911 referrals occurred within 12 months of the previous referral, which equals 25.3%. Performance did not meet the target of 21% and declined in comparison to the same period of the previous year (21.8%) but was better than the 2011/12 national average (26.1%). The increase will be investigated and will involve analysis to explore trends across the county in terms of sources of referrals and geographical breakdowns as well as the length of time between referrals. A sample audit of cases to examine the underlying reasons will also be completed by the end of August 2013.
- b. In 2012/13 the percentage of mothers smoking at time of delivery in County Durham was 19.9%, which was a slight improvement from 21.3% in 2011/12 and in line with the North East average of 19.7% but worse than the national level of 12.7%. Work continues

between maternity services and stop smoking services to increase referrals and uptake of the stop smoking service by pregnant women. Maternity and stop smoking services in County Durham are involved in the regional Babyclear project, the North East's approach to reducing maternal smoking rates. Babyclear will provide training and resources to front-line staff, supporting a quality, structured pathway for pregnant women to receive stop smoking support from their first booking appointment through subsequent midwifery appointments. A range of materials, including leaflets and carbon monoxide monitors will be provided in order to assist with the identification and referral of smokers and emphasise the dangers of carbon monoxide.

- c. Between April and June 2013, 28.5% of mothers (399 of 1,398) were breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks. This is an increase from 26.1% for the same period last year. Latest benchmarking data from quarter 4 2012/13 shows Durham is worse than national (46.6%) and regional (31.9%) averages. Public Health has commissioned a programme of activities to improve uptake of breastfeeding and support mothers who choose to breastfeed. These include:
- Baby friendly accreditation – County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT) has achieved stage 1 UNICEF accreditation for breastfeeding support. This means CDDFT has policies and appropriate structures in place to support mothers to breastfeed. It is anticipated that stage 2 accreditation will be achieved by May 2014, which will require the implementation of a workforce development plan. Service audits will also be planned and pathways developed with midwifery, primary care and community services to support mothers to breastfeed.
 - Peer support – the National Childbirth Trust (NCT) has been commissioned to train mothers who have previously breastfed in order to support new mothers to breastfeed. CDDFT will deliver additional telephone support to mothers.
 - Breastfeeding Friendly Scheme – a scheme has been developed through which local businesses are supported to become breastfeeding friendly venues. Businesses signing up to the scheme pledge to: make staff aware of the health benefits of breastfeeding; display the breastfeeding friendly window sticker; support mothers if they encounter negative attitudes when breastfeeding; provide a comfortable environment to breastfeed in. The Healthy Lifestyles Team visits the business to deliver a short breastfeeding awareness session to staff and ensure promotional materials are in place.
- d. There is one Council Plan action behind target to review and revise assessment processes in line with Munro recommendations (concerning child protection) by June 2013. The deadline has been revised to January 2014 as this action has been included in the Children's Care Transformation Project, which had a deadline completion date of January 2014.

70. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- a. The number of looked after children reduced to 624 at the end of June 2013, which equates to a rate of 62.3 per 10,000 population. This has reduced from 65 per 10,000 (654) at the same point in 2012 and is better than the latest available comparative data (31 March 2012) for statistical neighbours (76 per 10,000) and the North East (78 per 10,000). The national rate was 59 per 10,000. The Looked After Children Reduction Strategy continues to be implemented with the aim of reducing the number further. In addition, Children's Care has a Placement Resource Panel to ensure that all placements and admission requests for looked after children are robustly scrutinised and ratified.
- b. A reduction in the rate of proven re-offending by young offenders. Data for 2012/13 indicate that there were 202 offences committed by the 157 young people in the cohort,

which equates to a frequency rate of 1.29 offences per young offender. This was a reduction from the previous year when 293 offences were committed by the cohort of 200 (1.47 per young offender). In the same period, the percentage of young offenders reoffending was 39.5% (62 of the cohort of 157). This was a decrease from the previous year when 48.5% (97 of the cohort of 200) of young people re-offended within 12 months.

c. Provisional quarterly under 18 conception rate data relate to January to March 2012 and show 89 conceptions, which equates to a conception rate of 41.8 per 1,000 girls aged 15-17 years. This is a marginal increase in comparison to the corresponding period of the previous year (41.7). However, the quarterly rate in County Durham is above national (31.5), North East (40.7) and statistical neighbours (38.4). Actions being taken to reduce teenage conceptions include:

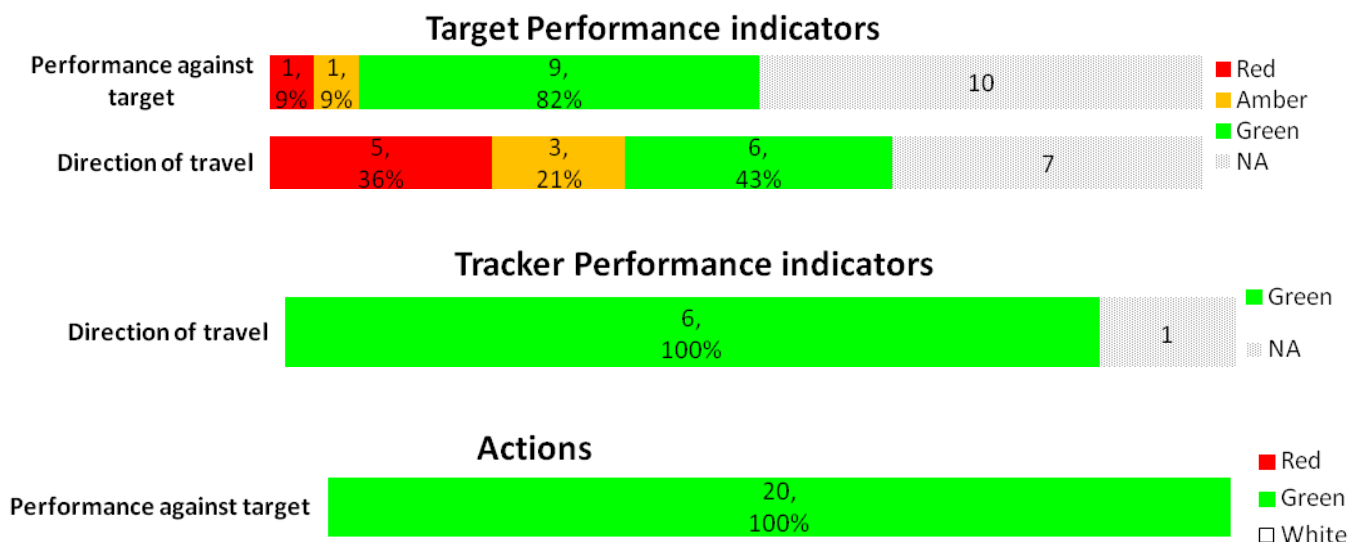
- Development of a Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) framework, which is due to be completed by September 2013.
- Delivery of Speakeasy (an 8-week SRE programme for parents and carers of children and young people aged up to 19 which will increase their confidence in talking to their children about sex, relationships and growing up) in Children's Centres plus non-accredited training in hot spot areas for parents and carers of young people accessing targeted services and vulnerable young people.

71. From September 2013, all schools will be held to account for the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils, the progress made by their disadvantaged pupils and the in-school gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. These three measures will also be used across other key parts of the existing accountability system: they will be part of the range of evidence considered during Ofsted inspections; they will be published in performance tables, and will be used in letters that ministers send to schools about their performance.

72. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:

- a. *School funding reforms and Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) reductions threaten viability of some centrally managed services for children and young people.* Management consider it highly probable that this risk may occur, and to mitigate the risk, staffing structures have been reviewed to take account of reductions in 2013/14. This risk will persist for 2014/15, depending upon school spending decisions on Service Level Agreement (SLA) offers.
- b. *If proposed funding reforms are implemented, the council may have a major funding shortfall for post-16 high needs placements.* Management consider it highly probable that this risk may occur, and to mitigate the risk, the Education Funding Agency (EFA) has provided details of additional funding but there remains a substantial shortfall, equivalent to 75 students. A project group has been established to review eligibility thresholds.

Altogether Healthier: Overview



Council Performance

73. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. The Stop Smoking Service reached 4,949 smoking quitters in 2012/13 (1,165 per 100,000 population). This is better than the annual target of 4,875 (1,154 per 100,000 population). The Smokefree Tobacco Control Alliance's five-year plan to reduce smoking prevalence was signed off by the Health Improvement Partnership on 11 July 2013.
 - b. Take up of the NHS Cervical Cancer Screening Programme was 81.1% of eligible women (aged 25-64) receiving a test in the 5 years to the end of March 2013. This equates to 105,201 of the total eligible population of 129,767. Performance exceeded the North East average for the period of 79.5% and the national Department of Health target of 80%. County Durham is the fourth best performing area in the region in relation to cervical cancer screening.
 - c. A reduction in the number of adults aged 65+ per 100,000 population admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care. Between April and June 2013, 138 people aged over 65 years were admitted on a permanent basis to residential or nursing care. This equates to 148 per 100,000 population and achieved the quarterly profiled target of 191 per 100,000 population. Performance is also better than at the same period last year (174 per 100,000 population).
 - d. A continued high proportion of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services. Of those older people discharged between January and March 2013, 316 of 356 older people (88.8%) remained at home 3 months later. This exceeded the target of 85%, the 2012/13 comparator group average of 84.8% and England average of 81.5%. Latest performance is also above the same period last year (88.1%). In addition, 91% of respondents to the local intermediate care survey (which is sent to people who have exited the service) responded that the services they received had improved their quality of life, whilst 95% were satisfied with the service they received.
74. The key performance improvement issue for this theme is that provisional data for 2012/13 indicate that 16,856 NHS health checks were undertaken, which equates to 14.2% of the eligible population. This did not meet the year-end target of 23,792 and is below the 20,939 health checks undertaken in 2011/12. The 2012/13 England average was 8.1%. Actions to increase the number of Health Checks include:

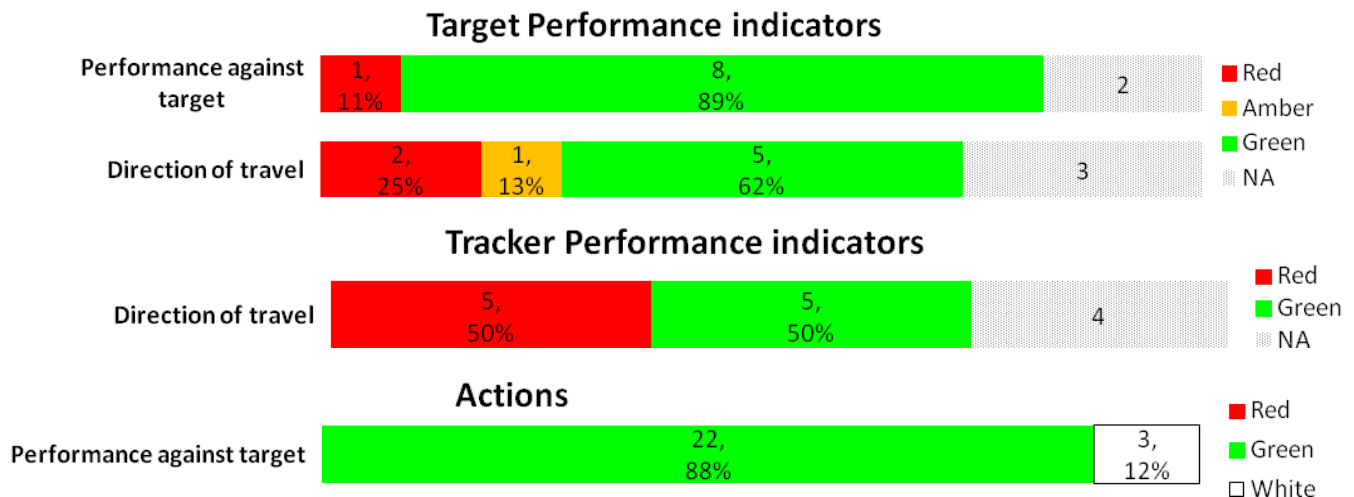
- North East Commissioning Support (NECS) is working with GP practices to improve data recording on health checks.
- 220 new health check practitioners have been trained to undertake NHS health checks across various settings. 35 community providers now offer health checks, including pharmacies.

75. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- a. There has been a reduction in the number of delayed transfers of care from hospital. In the 2 sample days in April and May 2013 there were 72 delays, which equates to a rate of 8.7 delays per 100,000. This is a reduction from 10.7 per 100,000 for 2012/13 and is also lower than the England average for the period of 9.3 delays per 100,000.
- b. The number of excess winter deaths as a proportion of non-winter deaths was 18.1 for 2008-11. This is a reduction from 19.8 in 2007-10 and is below both the North East (18.5) and England (19.5) averages.
- c. The suicide rate for County Durham was 11.4 per 100,000 population for 2009-11. This is higher than both the North East (9.6) and England (7.9) rates. Analysis for County Durham shows the most common triggers are mental health diagnoses, family / relationship breakdown, bereavement and financial problems. Also, 44% had contact with their GP in the 3 months before death, 37.9% had contact with mental health services in the 12 months before their death and 16.5% had been admitted by the mental health services during this time.

76. There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.

Altogether Safer: Overview



Council Performance

77. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. Continued low levels of repeat victims of domestic abuse. 53 victims presented at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) between April and June 2013, of which 4 were repeats, which equates to 7.5% of all referrals. Latest research from Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) identifies the England average repeat referral rate at 24% and the North East rate at 27% (rolling year to end of March 2013).
 - b. Reduction in the number of detected crimes for offenders in the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) cohort. The total number of offences committed previously by the 195 offenders in the current IOM cohort was 889. The number of offences committed by the same cohort between April and June 2013 was 90. This gives a full year projection of 360 offences, which equates to a 60% reduction on the IOM cohort's previous offending and exceeded the target of a 40% reduction.
 - c. High percentage of exits from alcohol treatment (Community Alcohol Service) that are planned discharges. During 2012/13, the Community Alcohol Service successfully discharged 724 (73%) individuals from treatment: 658 completely left treatment services and 66 were successfully transferred to another treatment agency outside of County Durham. Performance achieved the 2012/13 target of 64%, was a 9 percentage point increase on the final 2011/12 figure (64%), and also exceeded the national average of 68%.
 - d. During the January to March 2013 period there were 37 people killed or seriously injured on the county's roads; of these 3 were fatalities. This is 9 below the profiled target and also the same period last year.
78. The key performance improvement issue for this theme is that latest data for the proportion of offenders who re-offend in a 12-month period (rolling year July 2010 to June 2011) show that 29.5% of offenders in County Durham reoffended, compared to 26.9% nationally. Both the local figure and national figure have risen by 0.1 percentage point compared to the previous quarter. The local proxy reoffending indicator continues to be developed and updates are reported back to the Reducing Re-offending Group (RRG). The RRG are holding a workshop in November 2013 to focus on performance and in particular the development of this indicator. In addition, the police will take data from the Police National Computer (PNC) and

produce a list of individuals committing more than 2 offences. This information will be provided on a monthly basis highlighting offenders, date crime detected and offence type.

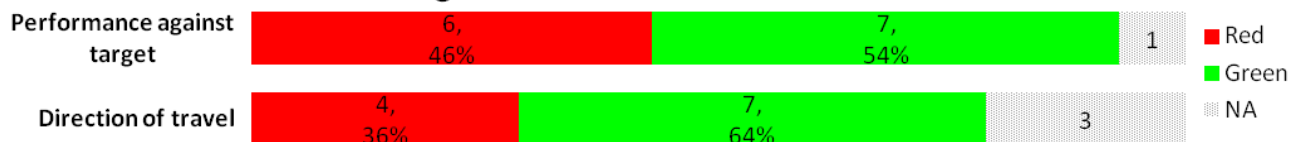
79. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- a. During the period April to June 2013 there were 5,741 crimes reported to the police. This reduced from 5,976 crimes in the same period of 2012/13 and equates to a 4% reduction in overall crime. This includes 4,985 victim based crimes, which is a 4.2% reduction (218 fewer victims) when comparing to the same period in 2012/13. For the same period there were 2,751 stealing offences. This is a decrease of 3% when comparing to the same period of 2012/13 (2,849). County Durham is currently ranked lowest out of 15 most similar Community Safety Partnerships (rolling year to end of May 2013) for crime, victim based crime and stealing.
- b. Between April and June 2013 there were 6,343 incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported to the police. This equates to a 7% increase on the equivalent period in 2012/13 (5932 incidents) but is a 35% reduction on the equivalent period in 2011/12 (9,733). To improve public confidence and reduce ASB in County Durham a campaign to reduce dog fouling has been undertaken and a number of community speedwatch operations have been carried out across local neighbourhoods. A campaign to tackle car thrown litter will be run during the month of August 2013 and will involve a range of internal and external partners delivering activities covering education, engagement and enforcement themes.
- c. Between April and June 2013 there were 1,043 violent crimes reported to the police of which 35% were recorded as alcohol-related (369). This is a 5 percentage point increase on the same period in 2012/13. There has also been an increase in alcohol related anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents with 959 reported incidents. This equates to 15% of total ASB reported to the police and is a 2 percentage point increase on the equivalent period in 2012/13. There has been a re-appraisal of incident reporting where alcohol is an aggravating factor, in order to make this more robust, which will impact upon performance in terms of increases. The Government has announced that the introduction of a minimum unit price for alcohol will not be taken forward at present but will remain a policy under consideration. However, a number of measures to tackle drunkenness and disorder blighting town centres were announced, including:
 - A ban on sales of alcohol below the level of duty plus VAT in order to stop the worst cases of heavy discounting by retailers. It will take effect in England and Wales no later than spring 2014 and make it illegal to sell a can of ordinary strength lager for less than around 40p.
 - Tougher action on irresponsible promotions in pubs and clubs and raising customer awareness of availability of small servings
 - Further action at a local level, including facilitating targeted action by pubs and clubs themselves to curb irresponsible drinking

80. There are no key risks in delivering the objectives of this theme.

Altogether Greener: Overview

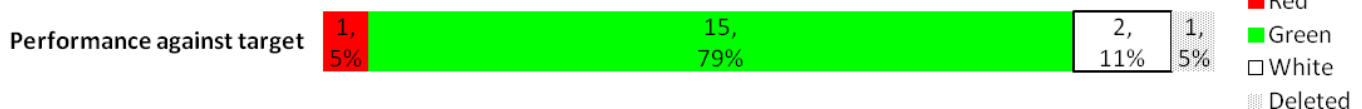
Target Performance indicators



Tracker Performance indicators



Actions



Council Performance

81. Key achievements this quarter include:

- Household recycling collected from the kerbside has been split between recycling and composting this year. Household recycling collected from the kerbside represented 22.3% of overall household waste collected and exceeded the 19% target this quarter. Performance has improved by 37.6% compared to the same period last year. Similarly, household composting collected from the kerbside represented 10.8% of overall household waste collected and exceeded this quarter target of 10.1%. Performance has improved by 12.5% compared to the same period last year.
- During the 12 months ending June 2013, 46.8% of household waste was re-used, recycled or composted. Performance has improved from 43.3% reported 12 months earlier and was better than the 44% target.

82. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- The percentage of municipal waste landfilled for the 12 month period to May 2013 was estimated as 37.8% which had decreased from 42.3% reported at previous quarter. Performance was worse than the 35% target. However, a small decrease in the amount of waste going to landfill is expected during 2013/14, year 1 of the contract, and this downward trend will continue in the following years.
- There were 214 feed in tariff installations registered and approved during quarter 1; 213 Solar PV and 1 wind installation equating to installed capacity of 0.727MW. The quarter 1 target of 300 installations was not achieved. There has been an increase of 13.1% in renewable energy generation this quarter compared to the same period last year. The installed or installed/approved capacity within County Durham was 200.99MW in quarter 1; 168.77 MW operational (wind 128.33) and 32.223 approved (wind 6.06).
- There is one Council Plan action behind target due to timescales changing following further in depth service planning discussions within the RED service grouping. Details of these are included later in the report as part of the recommendations.
- There is also one Council Plan action to be deleted which is to develop an approach to providing fuel efficient pool vehicles at major depots to manage and reduce business mileage. This action is to be merged into the review of transport taking place within Neighbourhood Services.

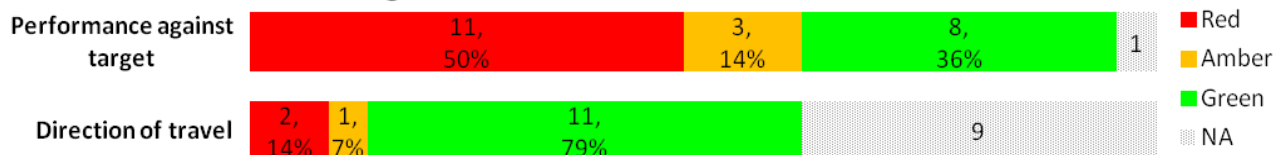
83. Tracker indicators for this priority theme (see Appendix 3, table 2) show:

- a. The volume of fly-tipping incidents has seen a reducing trend over 2012/13 compared with incidents reported during 2011/12. Fewer fly-tipping incidents were reported this period, compared to the same period last year, although incidents have increased this quarter compared with the previous quarter. There were 6,655 fly-tipping incidents reported for the 12 month rolling period to June 2013 compared with 6,390 for the period to March 2013 (see Appendix 4, Chart 4). Out of 1,913 fly-tipping incidents reported this quarter, 1492 fly-tipping incidents were investigated, which represents 78%.
- b. CO₂ emissions in County Durham has achieved 41.2% reduction during 2011/12 compared to 25.1% reduction in 2010/11. The target of 40% reduction was met in 2011/12. However, this will have much to do with the economy and the reduced output from within County Durham and is similar to most UK authorities.

84. The key risk to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme is *failure to identify and effectively regulate contaminated land*. Management consider it possible that this risk will occur, which will impact on both public health and environmental sustainability across the county. A Contaminated Land Strategy has been approved, and two phases of the inspection have been completed, and a budget has been allocated to fund 2013/14 inspection programmes.

Altogether Better Council: Overview

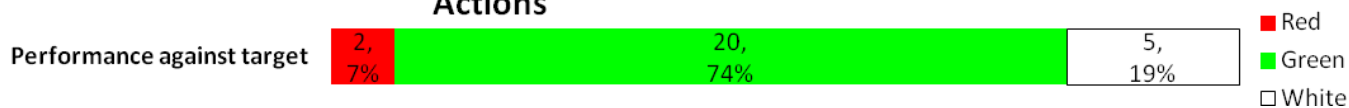
Target Performance indicators



Tracker Performance indicators



Actions



Council Performance

85. Key achievements this quarter include:

- During April to June 2013, 75.6% sundry debt owed to the council was paid within 30 days which is above the target of 73%. The advanced collection module of the Oracle system continues to be refined to ensure that all necessary action is taken promptly and efficiently.
- The volume of face-to-face customer contacts has increased some 43% from 47,155 contacts at quarter 1 2012/13 to 82,336 this quarter. Despite increased volume performance continues to improve with the average waiting time at a customer access point being 5 minutes and 6 seconds, which is well within the 15 minutes target (see Appendix 4, Chart 5). The footfall in customer access points (CAPs) increased this period by 3,739 from quarter 4 2012/13, an increase equivalent to 34 additional customers per CAP per week. A number of changes have been implemented to make the service more efficient. This has resulted in reduced waiting times despite the increased demand.
- A key action within the Resources Service Plan is to increase availability of technology across the county by developing the Digital Durham programme. The programme continues to make good progress and is now subject to a high-level deployment / rollout plan.
- Another key action relates to compliance with the Electoral Commission's performance standards for the county and local elections. Following recent evaluation it was confirmed that the administration of the recent local council and parish elections was effective and overall the elections ran smoothly.

86. Key performance improvement issues for this theme are:

- Paying undisputed supplier invoices within 30 days remains a challenge, but improvements are being realised. Quarter 1 performance was 91.5%, slightly below the target of 92% but this represents an improvement of 1.5 percentage points from quarter 4 2012/13. A number of developments have been introduced or are underway to improve invoice payment processing, which should be reflected from quarter 2 performance reporting.
- Carrying out and recording employee appraisals in accordance with the council's agreed policy and procedure is an ongoing area for improvement. The percentage of performance appraisals completed and recorded this quarter was 56.5%. While this

represents an increase over the 2012/13 rate of 47.82%, this fell well short of the 80% corporate target. Management action is being taken to deliver improvements.

- c. Sickness levels remain too high and require improvement. The number of days lost per FTE in the rolling year period (including schools based employees) deteriorated to 9.35 days this quarter from 9.08 days at the previous quarter. While sickness in quarter 1 this year nearly matches the rate of 9.34 days at the end of quarter 1 last year, it is worse than the 2013/14 target of 9.05 days per FTE. The actual number of days lost in the rolling year to quarter 1 2013/14 increased by 1.56% compared to quarter 4 2012/13. During quarter 1 further analysis of sickness data has been carried out to better understand the profile of the council's sickness absence and thereby focus effort optimally, and to consider options and viability of available benchmarks.
- d. The 2013/14 recovery cycles for the collection of council tax and business rates have been adjusted to ensure that late payers are picked up more quickly this year and that recovery action is taken in a more timely manner.

The collection rate for council tax of 28.2% during quarter 1 was 0.5 percentage points above last year's figure and 1.5 percentage points above the 2011/12 performance but is below the challenging profiled year to date target of 29%. Factoring in the increase in council tax collectable for 2013/14, the collection figure is an early indication that the changes to the recovery cycles are having a positive impact. The overall collection for council tax, excluding the current year, was 98.9% at the end of June 2013, which was above the target of 98.5%.

The collection rate for national non domestic rates (NNDR) of 35.9% during quarter 1 was 1.4% above the same point last year but was slightly below the challenging profiled year to date target of 36%. The increased collection figure is an early indication that the changes to the recovery cycles are having a positive impact and is welcomed in light of the funding changes in 2013/14. The overall collection for NNDR, excluding the current year, was 99.2% at the end of June, which was above the target of 98.5%.

- e. Processing new claims as well as change of circumstances has been split this year between Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Reduction (CTR).

During quarter 1, the target of 28 days has been achieved for new HB claims, which were processed in 26.5 days on average. New CTR claims were processed in 30.5 days on average which was worse than the period target of 28 days due to the high volume of work and the diversion of resources to dealing with additional demand for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). Performance for CTR had improved to 25.9 days in June. The annual target for processing new claims both HB and CTR is 25 days across the year and this is expected to be achieved. The volume of new council tax and housing benefit claims shows an increasing trend. The number of new claims increased this period to 7,156 compared with previous period of 6,291 and same period last year (7,059) (see Appendix 4, Chart 7). Processing times remained challenging at the beginning of 2012/13 due to backlog of claims following system integration but despite increased volume, performance continues to improve.

The time taken to process change of circumstances was on average 19.18 days for HB claims and 21.59 days for CTR claims. Performance was worse than the period target of 14 days. The volume of outstanding work at the beginning of the financial year impacted on performance but this has improved to 14.49 days for HB and to 16.15 days for CTR in June. Recovery plans are in place to meet the annual target of 12 days for processing changes for HB and CTR across the year. The volume of changes of circumstances for council tax and housing benefit has risen considerably. 62,900 changes were received this quarter compared with 49,320 received in the same period last year, but this is less than the previous quarter when 70,390 changes were received (see Appendix 4, Chart 8). Improvements have been realised in processing times over recent quarters although performance has dipped this period.

- f. Tenant rent arrears have risen slightly for Durham City Homes from 2.5% in quarter 4 2012/13 to 2.69% during quarter 1 and the target of 2.5% has not been met. This is believed to be as the result of Welfare Reform impacts but further monitoring will take place in quarter 2. Arrears currently stand at £651,000. This quarter, Dale and Valley Homes performance of 1.57% is well within target of 3% and by far the best of all three providers. Arrears currently stand at £254,000. Arrears for East Durham Homes have fallen slightly from 3.02% in quarter 4 2012/13 to 2.91% during quarter 1 but the target of 2.8% has not been achieved. Arrears currently stand at £840,000. East Durham Homes have a higher percentage of tenants affected by the under occupancy rules but recognise that they are behind performance of Durham City Homes and Dale and Valley Homes in this area and are looking to learn from best practice. The service is to revise the target for East Durham Homes from 2.8% to 3.00% as a result of an analysis carried out to map the likely number of tenants who will be impacted by welfare reform and in particular the likely scale of possible tenant rent arrears.
- g. Latest survey results indicate that overall 86% of local authority tenants are satisfied with landlord services. This is slightly below the target of 87%. Tenants of Dale and Valley Homes are likely to be most satisfied (90%). They are followed by tenants of East Durham Homes at 86% and Durham City Homes at 84%.
- h. During quarter 1, 62% of telephone calls were answered within 3 minutes and the target of 80% has not been achieved. 46% of telephone calls were answered within 1 minute and 18% were abandoned. Volume of telephone calls received shows a reducing trend with 14% fewer calls offered this quarter (219,974) when compared with same period last year (256,994), and 22% fewer calls compared with same period of 2011/12 (282,357) (see Appendix 4, Chart 6). Despite the reduction in telephone calls received, the number of calls answered within 1 minute continues to deteriorate. This in part reflects the reduction in temporary staffing who were supporting the revenues and benefits system transition. During quarter 4 2012/13 the service suspended the taking of annual leave during council tax billing which increased capacity during this period so there was a higher complement of staffing to take calls. This combined with longer call handling times due to the complexities surrounding changes to the welfare system and taking on new staff due to turnover, has resulted in the performance dip in relation to the ability to answer calls received. Management action is underway to rebalance resources within customer services.
- i. The percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within 20 days was 73% for quarter 1, worse than the national standard of 85%. It is also worse than 12 months earlier by 6.4% but better than quarter 4 by 4.3%. An increase in the volume of FOI requests has been seen over the last 6 months due in part to pre-election enquiries. Volume of requests peaked to 265 over quarter 4 of 2012/13 reducing to 234 this period although this still remains higher than the 208 at same period last year (see Appendix 4, Chart 9).
- j. A key Council Plan action to review our Sustainable Community Strategy by September 2013 has been delayed due to inclusion of new information including census information. A revised date has been agreed as April 2014.
- k. There is also one Council Plan action behind target due to timescales having changed following further in depth service planning discussions with the ACE service grouping. Details of these are included later in the report as part of the recommendations.

87. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:

- a. *Slippage in delivery of the MTFP will require further savings, which may result in further service reductions / job losses.* Management consider it possible that this risk could occur, which will result in a funding shortfall, damaged reputation and reduced levels of service delivery. To mitigate the risk, the implementation of the delivery plan by ACE is closely monitored. It should be recognised that this will be a significant risk for at least the next 4 years.
- b. *Linked to the above, a related risk is that Government ongoing funding cuts which now extend to at least 2017/18 will continue to have an increasing major impact on all council services.* These forecasts have been included as far as possible in the new financial model for the MTFP. Sound financial forecasting, based on a thorough examination of the Government's budget plans is in place. It is now clear from the latest consultation paper (The Local Government Finance Settlement 2014-15 and 2015-16 technical consultation published by the Department for Communities and Early Government (DCLG) on 25th July 2013) that the headline 10% cut in funding announced by the Government in the Spending Round lies a larger real terms reduction in the basic allocation affecting all local authorities. Early engagement with Cabinet and a timetable of key milestone dates will be agreed so that this risk will be managed and mitigated to best effect.
- c. *Potential restitution of land charge search fees back to 2005.* Management consider it highly probable that the risk will occur as a firm of solicitors has taken action against all councils across England and Wales to recover the alleged land charge fees overpayment. The mitigation of this risk is dependent upon the outcome of the negotiations and litigation currently being defended by lawyers instructed in group litigation.
- d. *Potential claw-back from Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) [former insurers] under the Scheme of Arrangement (SOA).* The SOA has now been invoked, and the scheme administrators have announced that a levy of 15% will be charged on all claims previously paid by MMI. Consequently, the council will be expected to pay approximately £815,000 to MMI at some point during 2013/14, and the cost will be met from the insurance reserve. As this is not a solvent run-off of MMI, we are likely to be required to pay additional levy contributions in future years.

Conclusions

88. Overall the local authority is performing well against an extremely challenging environment of a continuing depressed economy, significant health disadvantage and rising demand for key public services, at the same time as delivering on Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) savings.
89. The major impact on the council continues to be performance of the UK economy with it affecting a number of tracker and target indicators. Issues linked to the economy continue to affect performance across County Durham such as the employment rate, youth unemployment as well as low levels of housing development. There are significant challenges in the underlying health picture in the county with male and female life expectancy below North East and national comparators. Demand on council services is rising across many key areas with increased volumes of activity in areas such as face-to-face customer contacts and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests but more worrying are those relating to vulnerable or potentially vulnerable residents. Despite this challenging picture, performance in most of the council's key priority areas is still improving.
90. A small number of Council Plan actions need to be amended or deleted to reflect current circumstances.
91. This quarterly report has highlighted a number of performance issues which require further investigation or intervention.

Recommendations

92. Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is recommended to:
- a. Note the performance of the council at quarter 1 and the actions to remedy under performance.
 - b. Note revised changes to performance indicator targets outlined below:
 - i. Affordable homes - Since the original target of 255 was set, a number of programmes aiming to deliver affordable homes have been confirmed. The revised target of 350 affordable is more realistic.
 - ii. East Durham Homes rent arrears - Since the original target of 2.80% was submitted, further analysis has been undertaken to map the likely number of tenants who will be impacted by welfare reform and in particular the likely scale of possible tenant rent arrears. The revised target of 3% is considered to be a more realistic figure.
 - iii. Street cleansing (litter) – The previous two years have seen several bouts of severe weather, both winter and flooding. This weather has impacted on the street cleansing regime, not only due to resources being diverted to minimise the impact of these weather events but also due to litter accumulating beneath snow and ice. As a result of past conditions, it is considered the target of 5% of land that falls below an acceptable level be revised to 7% which is a more realistic level of improvement.
 - c. Note all changes to the Council Plan outlined below:

Altogether Wealthier

- i. Delivery of Durham City regeneration schemes: Aykley Heads (a mixed use development for employment) - site allocated upon adoption of the County Durham Plan - July 2014. Revised date: December 2014
- ii. Development of the County Durham Plan 2014 including:
 - Completion of statement of consultation for preferred options - May 2013. Revised date: September 2013
 - Consultation on preferred options - October 2013. Revised date: November 2013.
 - Preparation for examination in public, including mock examination and pre-enquiry meeting - April 2014. Revised date: June 2014.
 - Full Council adoption - July 2014. Revised date: December 2014.
- iii. Complete regeneration frameworks for the key towns of:
 - Peterlee - September 2013. Revised date: October 2013.
 - Sildon - June 2013. Revised date: October 2013.
 - Newton Aycliffe - September 2013. Revised date: October 2013.
 - Spennymoor - June 2013. Revised date: September 2013.
- iv. Delivery of Durham City Regeneration Schemes including; North Road (major regeneration, gateway to the City) – September 2013. Revised date: January 2014.
- v. Identify opportunities to enhance work programme delivery within County Durham through working with specialist provides - March 2014. Revised date: March 2016
- vi. Pursue the preferred option for the future of council housing across County Durham - November 2014. Revised date: March 2015.

Altogether Better for Children and Young People

- vii. Review and revise assessment processes in line with Munro recommendations by June 2013. Revised date - January 2014.

Altogether Better Council

- viii. Improve understanding of customer and population needs: sub-county analysis of performance and population needs - June 2013. Revised date December 2013.

Altogether Greener

- ix. Delivery of the Limestone Landscapes Heritage Lottery Fund programme, which includes the consolidation of Hawthorn Hythe Lime Kiln and Field training for staff and volunteers - November 2013. Revised date: September 2014

Deleted Actions

Altogether Greener

- x. Develop an approach to providing fuel efficient pool vehicles at major depots to manage and reduce business mileage.

Amended Actions

Altogether Wealthier

- xi. Work with the welfare to work programme contractors to co-ordinate employability support delivered by partner agencies for County Durham residents with a focus on 18-24 year olds, including identifying opportunities to enhance work programme delivery within County Durham through working with specialist providers - March 2014 (new wording).

- xii. Work with employers to co-ordinate skills development to ensure appropriate alignment to future employment opportunities. Some key projects will include:
 - Develop sector specific Pre-Employment Training (PET) to prepare clients for employment and meet employers' needs and requirements - March 2014. (new wording)
 - Seek opportunities for funding and work with employers to develop and deliver sector specific qualifications within the workplace – March 2014 (new wording)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Latest performance information is being used to inform corporate, service and financial planning.

Staffing

Performance against a number of relevant corporate health PIs has been included to monitor staffing levels and absence rates.

Risk

Reporting of significant risks and their interaction with performance is integrated into the quarterly monitoring report.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

Corporate health PIs and key actions relating to equality and diversity issues are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Accommodation

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

A number of PIs and key actions relating to crime and disorder are continually monitored in partnership with Durham Constabulary.

Human Rights

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable

Disability Issues

Corporate health PIs and key actions relating to accessibility issues and employees with a disability are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Appendix 2: Key to symbols used within the report

Where icons appear in this report, they have been applied to the most recently available information.

Performance Indicators:

Direction of travel

Latest reported data have improved from comparable period

GREEN

Latest reported data remain in line with comparable period

AMBER

Latest reported data have deteriorated from comparable period

RED

Performance against target

Performance better than target

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

Performance >2% behind target

Actions:

WHITE

Complete. (Action achieved by deadline/achieved ahead of deadline)

GREEN

Action on track to be achieved by the deadline

RED

Action not achieved by the deadline/unlikely to be achieved by the deadline

Benchmarking:

GREEN

Performance better than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

AMBER

Performance in line with other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

RED

Performance worse than other authorities based on latest benchmarking information available

Appendix 3: Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Table 1: Key Target Indicators

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Wealthier										
1	Apprenticeships started through Durham County Council funded schemes	28	Apr - Jun 2013	32	RED	56	Not comparable [1]			
2	Percentage achievement rate of all enrolments on adult learning courses	96.5	2011/12 ac yr	92.0	GREEN	92.3	GREEN	91.7 GREEN		2010/11 ac yr
3	Number of affordable homes delivered	60	Apr - Jun 2013	87	RED	89	RED			
4	Number of private sector properties improved as a direct consequence of local authority intervention	203	Apr - Jun 2013	152	GREEN	248	RED			
5	Number of empty properties brought back into use as a result of local authority intervention, excluding empty properties demolished as part of an area based housing renewal intervention.	31	Apr - Jun 2013	15	GREEN	12	GREEN			
6	Proportion of Dale and Valley Homes properties currently not meeting decency criteria	15.6	As at Jun 2013	0.0	RED	2.0	RED	11.1 RED	8.4** RED	2010/11
Page 39	Proportion of Durham City Homes properties currently not meeting decency criteria	13.5	As at Jun 2013	0.0	RED	9.8	RED	11.1 RED	8.4** RED	2010/11

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
8	Proportion of East Durham Homes properties currently not meeting decency criteria	36.0	As at Jun 2013	25.0	RED	56.0	GREEN	11.1	8.4**	2010/11
9	Percentage of council owned factories and business support centre floorspace that is occupied	74.5	As at Jun 2013	75.0	AMBER	71.0	GREEN			
10	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	66.7	Apr - Jun 2013	71.0	RED	68.8	RED	57.0	63**	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013
11	Overall proportion of planning applications determined within deadline	89.7	Apr - Jun 2013	85.0	GREEN	86.5	GREEN			
Altogether Better for Children and Young People										
12	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at KS 4 (including English and maths) (%)	17.4	2011/12 ac yr	21.0	RED	15.2	GREEN	14.6	17.1*	2011/12 ac yr
13	Percentage of 16-18 year olds whose status is 'not known'	8.7	As at Jun 2013	8.5	AMBER	Not comparable	Not comparable [1]			
14	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (%)	62.5	2011/12 ac yr	60.4	GREEN	60.0	GREEN	59.0	58**	2011/12 ac yr
15	Percentage of pupils on Level 3 programmes in community secondary schools achieving 2 A levels at grade A*-E or equivalent	99.1	2011/12 ac yr	97.9	GREEN	97.6	GREEN	97.7	98.2**	2011/12 ac yr
16	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers (Key Stage 2) (% pts)	20.0	2011/12 ac yr	19.9	AMBER	Not comparable	Not comparable [1]	17	17**	2011/12 ac yr

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
17	Achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers (Key Stage 4) (% pts)	30.3	2011/12 ac yr	31.9	GREEN	32.8	GREEN	26.4 RED	31.6** GREEN	2011/12 ac yr
18	Percentage of mothers smoking at time of delivery	19.9	2012/13	Not set for 2012/13	NA	21.3	GREEN	12.7 RED	19.7* RED	2012/13
19	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 - 17 (per 100,000 population of 10-17 year olds) (Also in Altogether Safer)	129	Apr - Jun 2013	185	GREEN	159	GREEN		738** Not comparable	2010/11
20	Percentage of Children In Need (CIN) referrals occurring within 12 months of previous referral	25.3	Apr - Jun 2013	21.0	RED	21.8	RED	26.1 GREEN	21.6** RED	2011/12
21	Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (%)	12.5	Apr - Jun 2013	15.0	GREEN	13.1	GREEN	13.8 GREEN	13.2** GREEN	2011/12
22	Percentage of looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales	96.9	Apr - Jun 2013	97.6	AMBER	97.0	AMBER	90.5 GREEN	93.7** GREEN	2009/10
23	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	99.2	As at 30 Jun 2013	100.0	AMBER	96.4	GREEN	96.7 GREEN	97.4** GREEN	2011/12
24	Parent/carer satisfaction with the help they received from Children and Young People's Services	67.9	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	Not set for 2012/13	NA	NA	NA			
Page 2 of 41	Percentage of successful interventions via the Think Family Programme	40.1	Jan 2013	Not set for 2012/13	NA	New indicator	NA	7.1 GREEN		Jan 2013

Page 42	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
26	Percentage of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage meeting or exceeding expected levels of development in the prime areas of learning	Reported Q2	NA	NA	NA	New indicator	NA			
Altogether Healthier										
27	Four week smoking quitters per 100,000	1,165	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	1,154	GREEN	1,308	RED	944	1318*	2011/12
28	Percentage of eligible people who receive an NHS health check	14.2	2012/13	20.0	RED	15.5	RED	8.1		2012/13
29	Percentage of people eligible for bowel cancer screening who were screened adequately within a specified period (new definition under development)	No Data recorded	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA			
30	Percentage of women eligible for cervical screening who were screened adequately within a specified period	81.1	As at Mar 2013	80.0	GREEN	81.1	AMBER	75.3	79.5*	2012/13
31	Under 75 all cause mortality rate per 100,000 population	302.0	2010	Not set for 2010	NA	320.6	GREEN	272.8	309.74*	2010
32	Under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases (including heart disease and stroke) per 100,000 population	71.5	2009-11	Not set for 2009-11	NA	New indicator	NA	62		2009-11
33	Under 75 mortality rate from cancer per 100,000 population	117.6	2009-11	Not set for 2009-11	NA	New indicator	NA	106.7		2009-11
34	Under 75 mortality rate from liver disease per 100,000 population	17.9	2009-11	Not set for 2009-11	NA	New indicator	NA	14.4		2009-11

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
35	Under 75 mortality rate from respiratory disease per 100,000 population	28.5	2009-11	Not set for 2009-11	NA	New indicator	NA	23.4 RED		2009-11
36	Percentage of women eligible for breast screening who were screened adequately within a specified period	79.3	2012	Not set for 2012	NA	79.7	RED	76.9 GREEN		2012
37	Percentage of exits from alcohol treatment (Community Alcohol Service) that are planned discharges (Also in Altogether Safer)	73	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	64	GREEN	64	GREEN	68 GREEN		Apr 2012 – Mar 2013
38	Percentage of successful completions of those in drug treatment - opiates (Also in Altogether Safer)	8	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	Not set for 2012/13	NA	New indicator	NA			
39	Percentage of successful completions of those in drug treatment - non-opiates (Also in Altogether Safer)	33	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	Not set for 2012/13	NA	New indicator	NA			
40	Number of adult community health checks / appraisals completed	625	Apr-Jun 2013	625	GREEN	1159	RED			
41	Adults aged 65+ per 1,000 population admitted on a permanent basis in the year to residential or nursing care	148.4	Apr - Jun 2013	191.2	GREEN	174.2	GREEN	709 Not comparable	759** Not comparable	2012/13 (provisional)
42	Proportion of people using social care who receive self-directed support, and those receiving direct payments	59.8	As at 30 Jun 2013	55	GREEN	52.6	GREEN	55.6 GREEN	52.6** GREEN	2012/13 (provisional)
Page 43	Percentage of service users reporting that the help and support they receive has made their quality of life better	89.7	Apr - Jun 2013	92.0	AMBER	93.7	AMBER	88.2 GREEN		Apr 2011 - Mar 2012

Page 44	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
44	Proportion of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation services	88.8	Jan - Mar 2013	85.0	GREEN	88.1	GREEN	81.5 GREEN	84.8** GREEN	2012/13 (provisional)
45	Percentage of people who have no ongoing care needs following completion of provision of a reablement package	62.0	Apr - Jun 2013	55.0	GREEN	66.8	RED		60.2* GREEN	Q2 2012-13
46	Percentage of adults receiving secondary mental health services known to be in settled accommodation	88.65	Jul 2012 - Jun 2013	85.0	GREEN	89.01	AMBER	59.3 GREEN	57.4** GREEN	2012/13 (provisional)
47	Patient experience of community mental health services (scored on a scale of 0-100)	88.4	2012	Not set for 2012/13	NA	87.3	GREEN	86.6 GREEN		2012
Altogether Safer										
48	Repeat incidents of domestic abuse (referrals to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC))	7.5	Apr - Jun 2013	25.0	GREEN	11.1	GREEN	24 GREEN	27* GREEN	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013
49	Percentage of adult safeguarding investigations completed within 28 days	76.0	Apr - Jun 2013	75.0	GREEN	79.8	RED			
50	Proportion of people who use adult social care services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure	90.5	Apr - Jun 2013	75.0	GREEN	New indicator	NA	77.9 GREEN	79.4* GREEN	2012
51	Percentage reduction in detected crimes for offenders in the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) cohort	60	Apr - Jun 2013	40	GREEN	45	GREEN			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
52	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 - 17 (per 100,000 population of 10-17 year olds) (Also in Altogether better for Children & Young People)	129	Apr - Jun 2013	185	GREEN	159	GREEN		738**	2010/11
									Not comparable	
53	Percentage of exits from alcohol treatment (Community Alcohol Service) that are planned discharges (Also in Altogether Healthier)	73	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	64	GREEN	64	GREEN	68 GREEN		Apr 2012 – Mar 2013
54	Percentage of successful completions of those in drug treatment - opiates (Also in Altogether Healthier)	8	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	Not set for 2012/13	NA	New indicator	NA			
55	Percentage of successful completions of those in drug treatment - non-opiates (Also in Altogether Healthier)	33	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	Not set for 2012/13	NA	New indicator	NA			
56	Building resilience to terrorism (self assessment)	3	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	3	GREEN	3	AMBER	2.34 GREEN	2.88** GREEN	2009/10
57	Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	37	Jan - Mar 2013	46	GREEN	46	GREEN			
	Number of fatalities	3								
	Number of seriously injured	34								
Page 45	Number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	5	Jan - Mar 2013	4	RED	3	RED			
	Number of fatalities	0								
	Number of seriously injured	5								

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Greener										
59	Reduction in CO ₂ emissions from local authority operations	6.3	2011/12	11	RED	3	GREEN			
60	The number of properties occupied by owner occupiers made energy efficient (SAP rating increase from below 35 to 65 or more) as a direct consequence of local authority assistance	5356	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	2500	GREEN	2,134	GREEN			
61	Number of registered and approved Feed In Tariff (FIT) installations	214	Apr - Jun 2013	300	RED	296.0	RED			
62	Value of bids to Environment Agency for Local Levy Scheme	Reported at Q4	NA	0	GREEN	New Indicator	NA			
63	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed (LEQSPRO survey) as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level	10	Jan - Mar 2013	5	RED	3	RED	11 GREEN		2011/12
64	Percentage of relevant land and highways assessed (LEQSPRO survey) as having deposits of detritus that fall below an acceptable level	12	Jan - Mar 2013	10	RED	3	RED	11 RED		2011/12
65	Percentage of the 378 local sites (geological and wildlife) that have an up to date management plan in place	18.3	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	18.3	GREEN	16.9	GREEN			
66	Area of council owned woodland brought into positive management	Reported Q4	NA	50	GREEN	New indicator	NA			
67	Percentage of the 94 conservation areas in the county that have an up to date character appraisal.	34	as at Jun 2013	37	RED	NA	NA			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
68	Number of additional heritage assets that are open for Heritage Open Days	34	Apr 2012- Mar 2013	NA	NA	13	GREEN			
69	Percentage of household waste that is re-used, recycled or composted	46.8	Jun 12 - May 13	44.0	GREEN	43.3	GREEN	43.6 GREEN	37.5* GREEN	Oct 2011 - Sep 2012
70	Percentage of household waste collected from the kerbside - recycling	22.3	Jun 12 - May 13	19.0	GREEN	16	GREEN			
71	Percentage of household waste collected from the kerbside - composting	10.8	Jun 12 - May 13	10.1	GREEN	10	GREEN			
72	Percentage of municipal waste landfilled	37.8	Jun 12 - May 13	35.0	RED	33.6	RED	35.0 RED	32.8* RED	Oct 2011- Sep 2012
Altogether Better Council										
73	Percentage of calls answered within 3 minutes	62	Apr-Jun 2013	80	RED	New Indicator	NA			
74	Average waiting time at a customer access point (mins:secs)	05:06	Apr-Jun 2013	15:00	GREEN	10:06	GREEN			
75	Percentage all ICT Service Desk incidents resolved on time	94	Apr-Jun 2013	90	GREEN	94	AMBER			
76	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims (days)	26.53	Apr-Jun 2013	28.0	GREEN	New Indicator	NA			
77	Average time taken to process new council tax support claims (days)	30.46	Apr-Jun 2013	28.0	RED	New Indicator	NA			
Page 7 of 7	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for housing benefit support claims (days)	19.18	Apr-Jun 2013	14.0	RED	New Indicator	NA			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
79	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for council tax support claims (days)	21.59	Apr-Jun 2013	14.0	RED	New Indicator	NA			
80	Percentage of council tax recovered for all years excluding the current year	98.9	as at June 2013	98.5	GREEN	NA	NA			
81	Percentage of National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.2	as at June 2013	98.5	GREEN	NA	NA			
82	Savings delivered against the MTFP (£m)	15.1	Apr-Jun 2013	20.9	Not comparable [2]	NA	NA			
83	Percentage of council tax collected in-year	28.2	Apr-Jun 2013	29.0	RED	27.71	GREEN	97.4 Not comparable	96.7* Not comparable	2012/13
84	Percentage of National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected in-year	35.9	Apr-Jun 2013	36.0	AMBER	34.5	GREEN	97.7 Not comparable	96.7* Not comparable	2012/13
85	Percentage of accounts paid to the council within 30 days (debtors)	75.6	Apr-Jun 2013	73.0	GREEN	67.3	GREEN			
86	Income generated from council owned business space (£)	760,662	Apr - Jun 2013	687,500	GREEN	652,000	GREEN			
87	Percentage of local authority tenants satisfied with landlord services (all three providers)	86	As at Apr 2013	87	AMBER	New indicator	NA			
88	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - Dale & Valley Homes	1.57	As at Jun 2013	3.0	GREEN	1.99	GREEN			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Period target	Current performance to target	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
89	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - Durham City Homes	2.69	as at Jun 2013	2.5	RED	3.03	GREEN			
90	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit - East Durham Homes	2.91	As at Jun 2013	2.8	RED	3.22	GREEN			
91	Average asset rating of Display Energy Certificates (DECs) in county council buildings	99.7	As at Jun 2013	96.0	RED	136.6	GREEN			
92	Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within statutory deadlines	73	Apr-Jun 2013	85	RED	78	RED			
93	Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers	91.5	Apr-Jun 2013	92	AMBER	87	GREEN			
94	Percentage of performance appraisals completed	56.5	Apr-Jun 2013	80.0	RED	40.3	GREEN			
95	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services including school staff	9.35	Jul 12 - Jun 13	9.05	RED	9.34	RED			

[\[1\] Due to changes to the indicator previous year's data is not comparable](#)

[\[2\] Annual target](#)

Table 2: Key Tracker Indicators

Page 50 Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Wealthier										
96	Number of the top retailers represented in Durham City	13	As at Jun 2013	13	AMBER	15	RED			
97	Percentage of households within County Durham that can access Durham City market place by 8.30am, using public transport with a total journey time of 1 hour, including walking time	73.58	Apr - Jun 2013	76.35	RED	78.71	RED			
98	Number of visitors to the main tourist attractions in Durham City.	99,687	Apr - Jun 2013	56,933	Not comparable [3]	94,527	GREEN			
99	Number of passenger journeys recorded by the operator of the 3 Durham City Park and Ride sites	258,786	Apr - Jun 2013	251,925	GREEN	255,685	GREEN			
100	Number of all new homes completed in Durham City	14	Apr - Jun 2013	2	GREEN	7	GREEN			
101	All homes completed in and near all major settlements, as defined in the County Durham Plan, as a proportion of total completions	43.10	Apr - Jun 2013	45.40	RED	54.08	RED			
102	Proportion of properties within the county that are	14.83	Apr - Jun	14.80	GREEN	14.71	GREEN			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
	within council tax band D and above as provided by the District Valuation Office		2013							
103	Total number of planning applications received against all categories	798	Apr - Jun 2013	712	GREEN	874	RED			
104	Total number of major planning applications received	39	Apr - Jun 2013	35	GREEN	32	GREEN			
105	Number of apprenticeships started by young people resident in County Durham as recorded by the National Apprenticeship Service	1,659	2011/12 ac yr	1,951	RED	1,951	RED			
106	Proportion of the working age population defined as in employment	65.8	As at Mar 2013	65.1	GREEN	66.6	RED	71.1 RED	66.5* RED	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013
107	Number of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants aged 18-24	4,435	As at Jun 2013	4,955	GREEN	5,165	GREEN			
108	Proportion of all Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants that have claimed for one year or more	34.54	As at Jun 2013	32.33	RED	25.24	RED	29.75 RED	35.1* GREEN	as at June 2013
109	Percentage of children in poverty (quarterly proxy measure) (Also in Altogether Better for Children and Young People)	24.7	As at Feb 2013	24.6	RED	24.7	AMBER	19.8 RED	25.7* GREEN	As at Feb 2013
110	Percentage of children in poverty (national annual measure)	23.0	2010	23.5	GREEN	23.5	GREEN	21.1	24.8*	2010

Page 52	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
	(Also in Altogether Better for Children and Young People)							RED	GREEN	
111	Proportion of the working age population currently not in work who want a job	16.40	As at Mar 2013	16.45	GREEN	15.43	RED	11.63	14.42*	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013
112	Proportion of the working age population who are qualified to NVQ Level 3 or equivalent	47.4	2012	46.5	GREEN	46.5	GREEN	56.9	50.9*	2012
113	Number of net homes completed	290	Apr - Jun 2013	354	RED	159	GREEN			
114	Total number of those registered on the Durham Key Options system who have been rehoused (includes existing tenants and new tenants)	1,088	Apr - Jun 2013	1,024	GREEN	959	GREEN			
115	Number of preventions as a proportion of the total number of housing solutions presentations	20.93	As at Jun 2013	19.53	GREEN	15.60	GREEN			
116	Number of statutory homeless applications as a proportion of the total number of housing solutions presentations	14.35	As at Jun 2013	14.03	RED	16.70	GREEN			
117	Number of homeless acceptances (of a statutory duty) as a proportion of the total number of housing solutions presentations	3.36	Apr - Jun 2013	3.69	GREEN	6.30	GREEN			
118	Total number of housing	1,519	Apr -	1,761	GREEN	1,382	RED			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
	solutions presentations		Jun 2013							
119	Number of passenger journeys made by concessionary bus pass holders	2,350,000	Apr - Jun 2013	3,052,279	RED	2,368,913	RED			
120	Number of passenger journeys made on the Link2 service	8,183	Apr - Jun 13	7,773	GREEN	7,577	GREEN			
121	Number of trips made using council funded community transport	18,474	Apr - Jun 2013	24,515	Not comparable [4]	New indicator	NA			
122	Number of local passenger journeys on the bus network	5,884,111	Apr - Jun 2013	5,923,981	RED	5,848,648	GREEN			
123	Number of visitors to the main attractions in County Durham	1,326,220	Apr - Jun 2013	910,209	Not comparable [3]	1,265,775	GREEN			
124	Number of tourism businesses actively engaged with Visit County Durham	644	Dec 2012 - Mar 2013	555	Not comparable [5]	358	GREEN			
125	Businesses engaged with/assisted (all sectors)	296	Apr - Jun 2013	104	GREEN	99	GREEN			
126	Number of new business start-ups as a result of receiving business assistance	6	As at Mar 2013	3	Not comparable [5]	New indicator	NA			
Altogether Better for Children and Young People										
Page 473 12673	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (%)	10.4	Nov 2012 - Jan 2013	7.5	RED	7.5	RED	5.6 RED	7.3** RED	Mar 2013

Page 54	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
128	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) - comparison against corresponding quarter of previous year (%)	8.7	Apr - Jun 2013	Not comparable	Not comparable [4]	Not comparable	Not comparable [4]			
129	Percentage of children in reception with height and weight recorded who have excess weight	23.6	2011/12 ac yr	22.9	RED	22.9	RED	22.6 RED	22.9** RED	2011/12 ac yr
130	Percentage of children in year 6 with height and weight recorded who have excess weight	38.4	2011/12 ac yr	36	RED	36.0	RED	33.9 RED	35.2** RED	2011/12 ac yr
131	Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 girls aged 15-17	41.8	Jan - Mar 2012	35.3	RED	41.7	RED	31.5 RED	38.4** RED	Jan - Mar 2012
132	Under 16 conception rate per 1,000 girls aged 13 - 15	7.7	Jan - Dec 2011	10.8	GREEN	10.8	GREEN	6.1 RED	8.7** GREEN	Jan - Dec 2011
133	Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders	1.29	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	0.89	Not comparable [5]	1.47	GREEN			
134	Emotional and behavioural health of Looked After Children	16.4	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	15.9	GREEN	15.9	GREEN	13.8 GREEN	13.5** GREEN	2011/12
135	Rate of Looked After Children per 10,000 population	62.3	As at 30 June 2013	63.4	GREEN	65.0	GREEN	59.0 RED	76** GREEN	As at 31 Mar 2012
136	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth	28.5	Apr - Jun 2013	27.6	GREEN	26.1	GREEN	46.6 RED	31.9* RED	Jan - Mar 2013

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
137	Percentage of children in poverty (quarterly proxy measure) (Also in Altogether Wealthier)	24.7	As at Feb 2013	24.6	RED	24.7	AMBER	19.8 RED	25.7* GREEN	As at Feb 2013
138	Percentage of children in poverty (national annual measure) (Also in Altogether Wealthier)	23.0	2010	23.5	GREEN	23.5	GREEN	21.1 RED	24.8* GREEN	2010
Altogether Healthier										
139	Male life expectancy at birth (years)	77.0	2008-10	76.9	GREEN	76.9	GREEN	78.6 RED	77.2* RED	2008-10
140	Female life expectancy at birth (years)	81.0	2008-10	80.7	GREEN	80.7	GREEN	82.6 RED	81.2* RED	2008-10
141	Percentage of the adult population participating in at least 30 minutes sport and active recreation of at least moderate intensity on at least 3 days a week	24.3	Apr 11 - Apr 13	24.0	GREEN	20.3	GREEN	22.6 GREEN	22.1* GREEN	Jan - Dec 2012
142	Excess winter deaths (3 year pooled)	18.1	2008-11	19.8	GREEN	19.8	GREEN	19.5 GREEN	18.5* GREEN	2008-11
143	Delayed transfers of care from hospital per 100,000 population	8.7	Apr - May 2013	10.7	GREEN	12.0	GREEN	9.5 GREEN	7.6* RED	2012/13 (provisional)
144	Delayed transfers of care from hospital, which are attributable to adult social care, per 100,000 population	0.9	Apr - May 2013	1.8	GREEN	1.0	GREEN	3.3 GREEN	2.2* GREEN	2012/13 (provisional)
145	Suicide rate per 100,000 population (Also in Altogether Safer)	11.4	2009-11	New indicator	NA	New indicator	NA	7.9 RED	9.6* RED	2009-11

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
Altogether Safer										
146	Recorded level of victim based crimes	4,985	Apr - Jun 2013	20,270	Not comparable [5]	5,203	GREEN			
147	Dealing with concerns of anti-social behaviour and crime issues by the local council and police	59.5	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	59.0	GREEN	58.9	GREEN		55.3** GREEN	Apr 2012 - Mar 2013
148	Overall crime rate (per 1,000 population)	11.2	Apr - Jun 2013	44.9	Not comparable [5]	11.6	GREEN	71 Not comparable		Apr 2011 - Mar 2012
149	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	44.5	April 2013	37.7	RED	New indicator	NA			
150	Number of serious or major crimes	88	Apr - Jun 2013	458	Not comparable [5]	113	GREEN			
151	Number of police reported incidents of anti-social behaviour	6,343	Apr - Jun 2013	25,474	Not comparable [5]	5,932	RED			
152	Number of reported crimes categorised as stealing	2,751	Apr - Jun 2013	11,043	Not comparable [5]	2,849	GREEN			
153	Number of adult safeguarding referrals fully or partially substantiated	40	Apr - Jun 2013	New indicator	NA	New indicator	NA			
154	Proportion of offenders who re-offend in a 12-month period	29.5	Jul 2010 - Jun 2011	29.4	RED	28.8	RED	26.9 RED		Jul 2010 - Jun 2011
155	Percentage of alcohol related anti-social behaviour incidents	15.1	Apr - Jun 2013	13.7	RED	13.1	RED			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
156	Percentage of alcohol related violent crime	35	Apr - Jun 2013	32	RED	30	RED			
157	Percentage of families where a successful intervention for crime/anti-social behaviour is achieved	Reported Q2	NA	New indicator	NA	New indicator	NA			
158	Suicide rate per 100,000 population (Also in Altogether Healthier)	11.4	2009-11	New indicator	NA	New indicator	NA	7.9 RED	9.6* RED	2009-11
159	Number of hate incidents	69	Apr - Jun 2013	222	Not comparable [5]	64	RED			
Altogether Greener										
160	Reduction in CO ₂ emissions in County Durham by 40% by 2020	41.2	As at Dec 2011	25.1	GREEN	25.1	GREEN	6 GREEN	18* GREEN	2009
161	Renewable energy generation -MwE installed or installed/ approved capacity within County Durham	200.99	As at 10 July 2013	198.35	Not comparable [6]	177.76	Not comparable			
162	Number of fly-tipping incidents reported	6,655	Jul 12 - Jun 13	6,390	RED	6,791	GREEN			
163	Percentage of fly tipping incidents that have been investigated	78	Apr - Jun 13	New Indicator	NA	New Indicator	NA			
164	Number of prosecutions by Durham County Council in response to fly tipping	Reported at Q2	NA	New Indicator	NA	New Indicator	NA			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
165	Net change in the number of sites on the Heritage at Risk Register	Data due Q3	2012/13	0	NA	0	NA			
166	Net change in the number of sites at 'high risk' on previous years Heritage at Risk register	Data due Q3	2012	0	NA	0	NA			
Altogether Better Council										
167	Staff aged under 25 as percentage of headcount	5.47	as at 30 Jun 2013	4.52	NA	4.5	NA			
168	Staff aged over 50 as a percentage of headcount	36.41	as at 30 Jun 13	38.04	NA	36.66	NA	36		
169	Women in the top 5 percent of earners	51.6	as at 30 Jun 2013	50.2	NA	49.9	NA	43		
170	BME as a percentage of headcount	1.41	as at 30 Jun 2013	1.55	NA	0.90	NA			
171	Staff with disability (DDA definition) as a percentage of headcount	2.94	as at 30 Jun 2013	3.14	NA	3.07	NA			
172	Percentage of abandoned calls	18	Apr-Jun 2013	17	RED	18	AMBER			
173	Percentage of calls answered within 1 minute	46	Apr-Jun 2013	56	RED	61	RED			
174	Staff - total headcount (ONS return)	17,546	as at 30 Jun 2013	17,724	NA	18,459	NA			
175	Staff - total full time equivalent (FTE) (ONS return)	14,164	as at 30 Jun 2013	14,316	NA	14,859	NA			

Ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
176	Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	14	Apr-Jun 13	77	Not comparable [5]	16	GREEN			
177	Percentage of posts with no absence (excluding Schools)	77.64	Apr-Jun 2013	72.1	GREEN	75.9	GREEN			

[\[3\] Due to seasonal opening hours data is not comparable with the previous quarter](#)

[\[4\] Due to changes to the indicator previous year's data is not comparable](#)

[\[5\] This data is cumulative and the figure is based on 12 months data for the year end so comparisons are not applicable.](#)

[\[6\] This data is cumulative year on year](#)

Appendix 4: Volume measures

Chart 1 – Planning applications

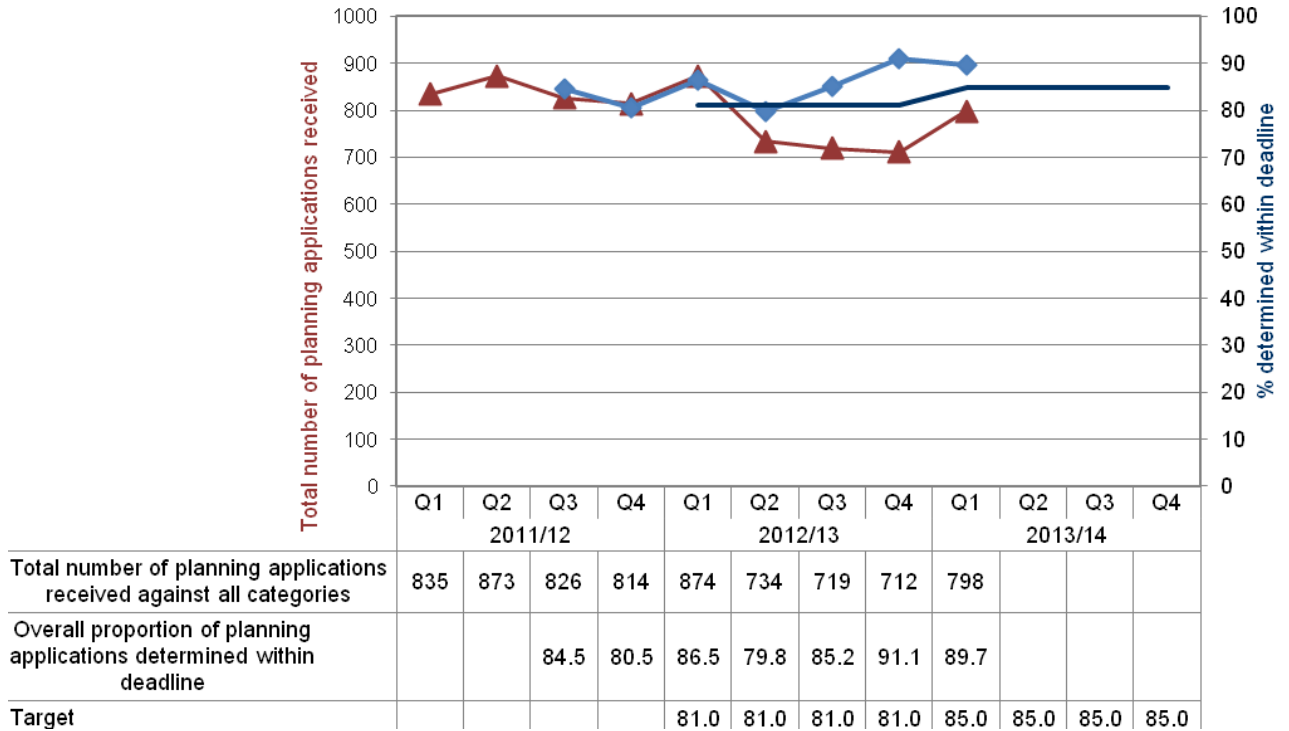


Chart 2 – Durham Key Options - total number of those registered on the Durham Key Options system who have been rehoused (includes existing tenants and new tenants)

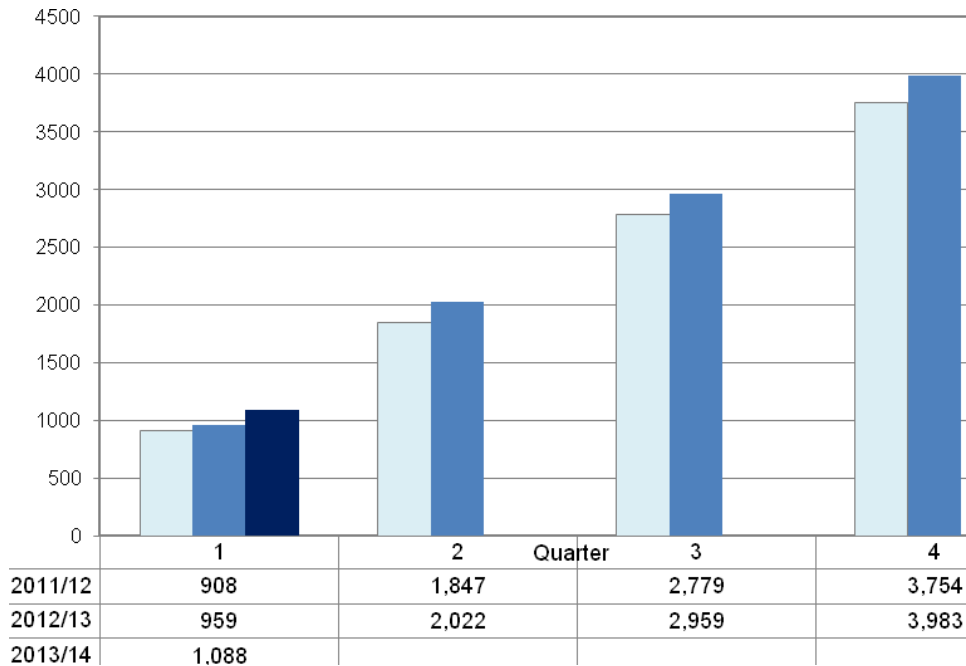


Chart 3 – Housing Solutions presentations

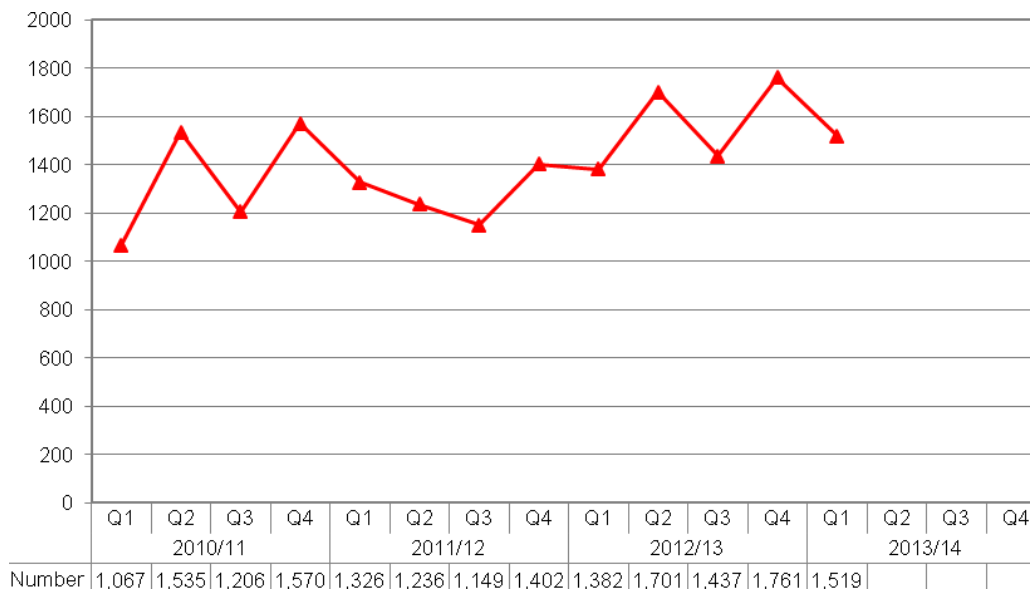


Chart 4 – Fly tipping incidents reported

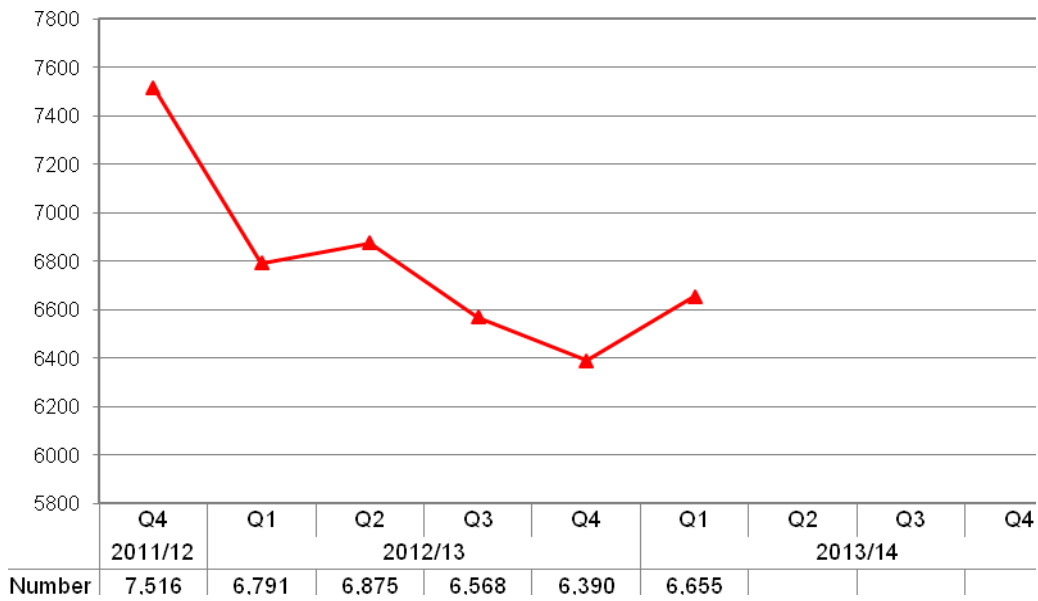


Chart 5 – Face to face contacts

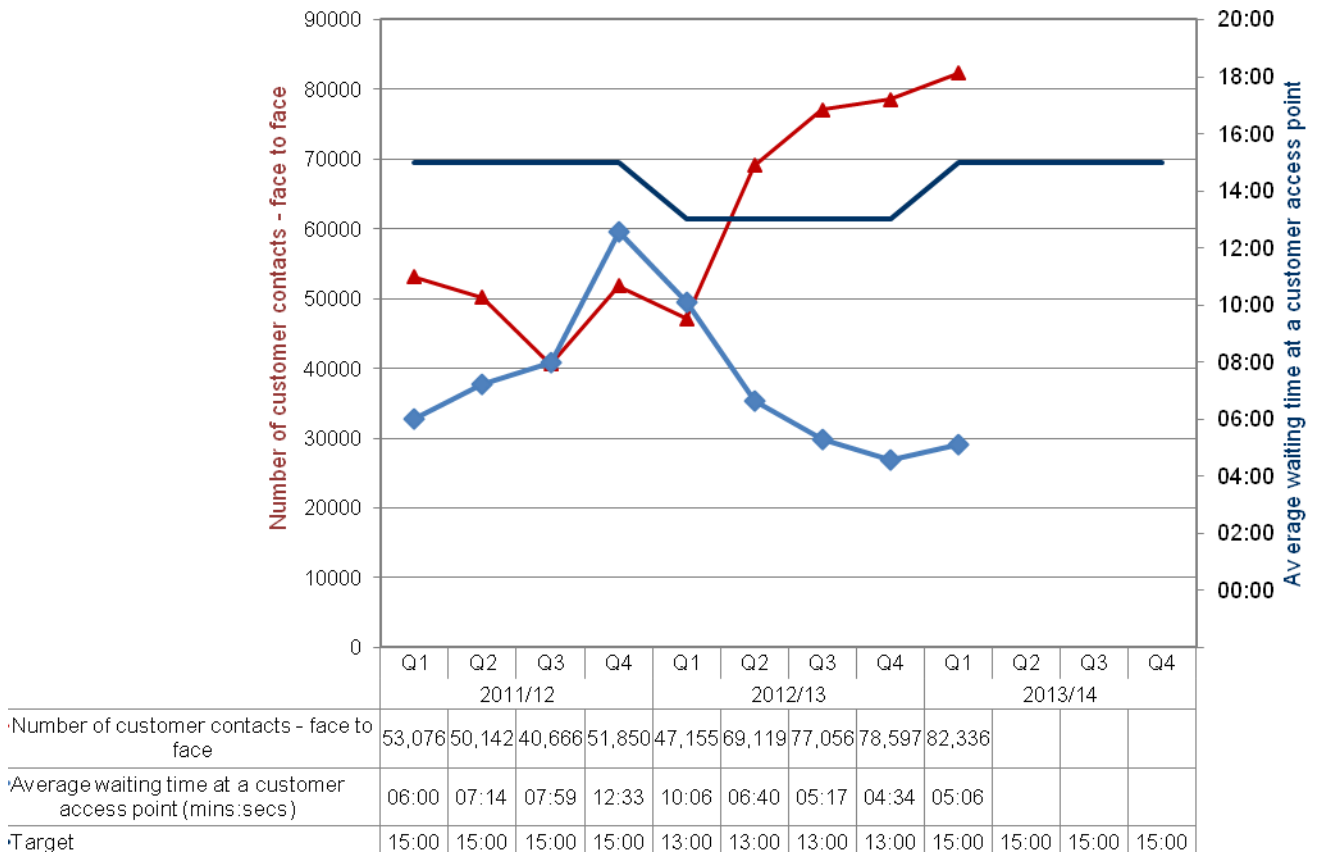


Chart 6 – Telephone calls

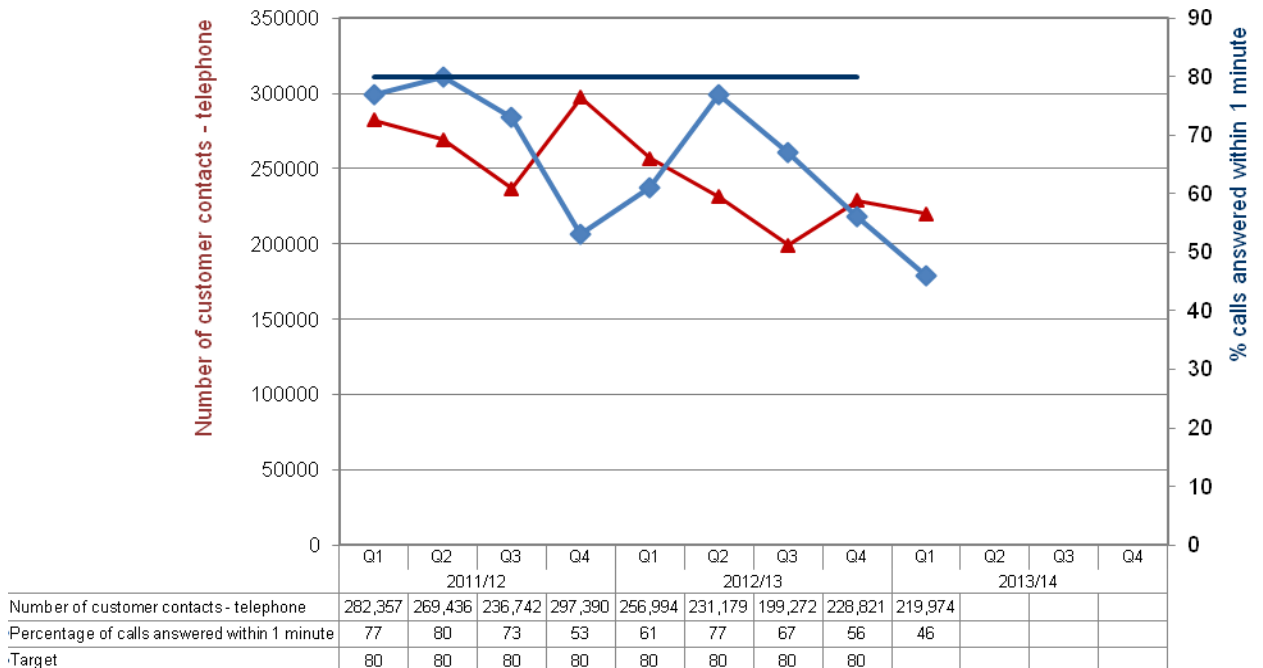


Chart 7 – Benefits – new claims

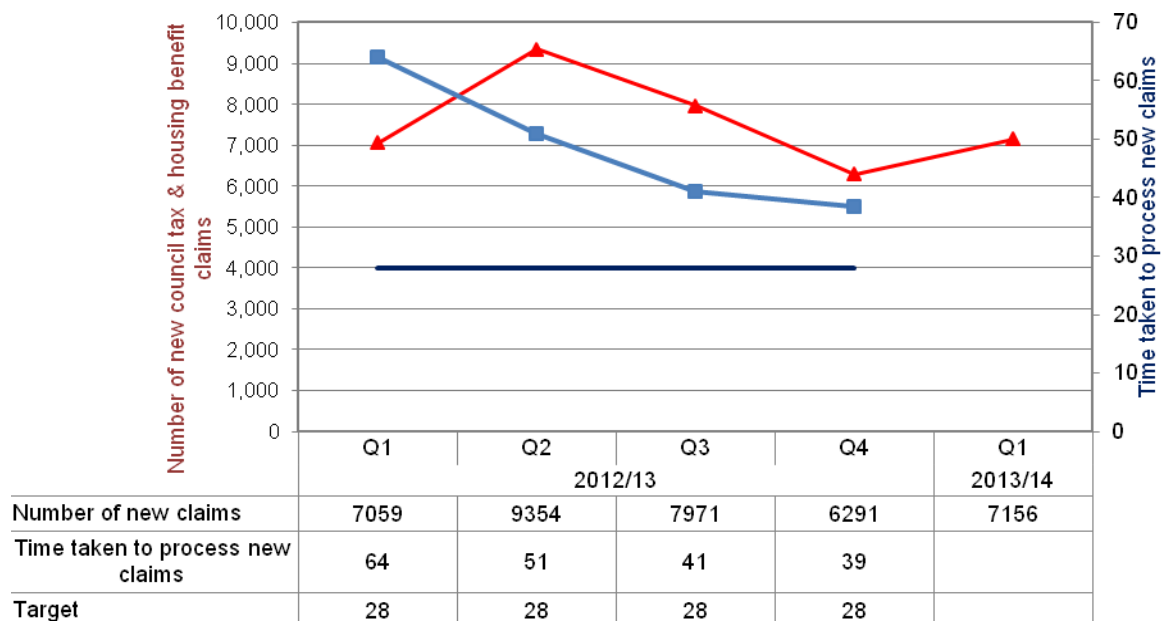


Chart 8 – Benefits – changes of circumstances

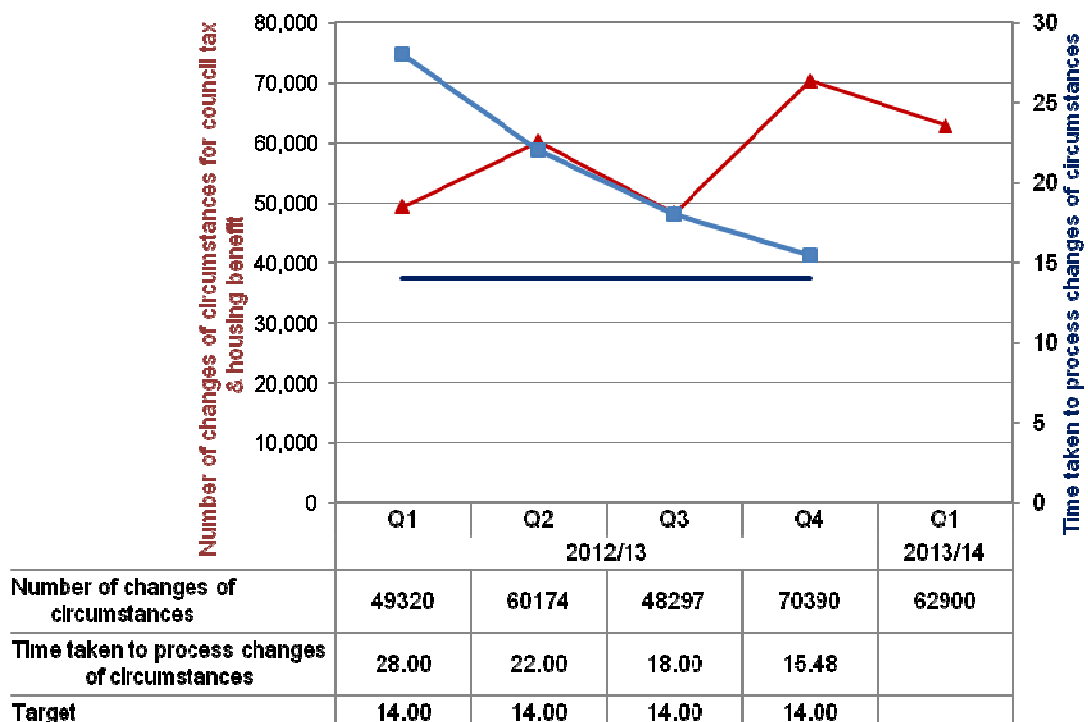
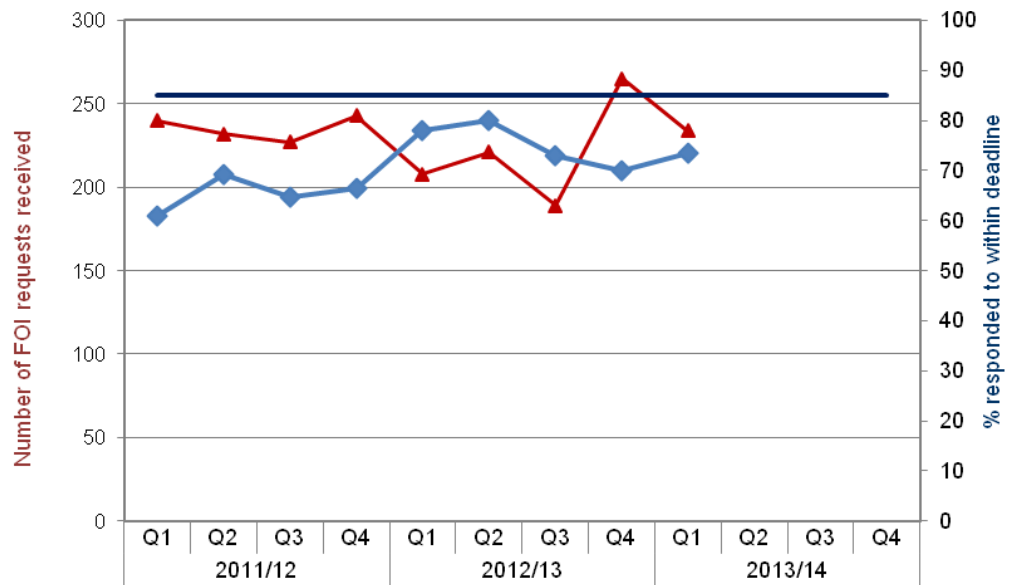


Chart 9 – Freedom of Information (FOI) requests



	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	2011/12				2012/13				2013/14			
Number of FOI requests received	240	232	227	243	208	221	189	265	234			
% of FOI requests responded to within statutory deadlines	61	69	65	66	78	80	73	70	73			
Target	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85	85

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

13th September 2013

Cabinet

11 September 2013

**Welfare reform update and review of
Local Council Tax Support Scheme**



Key decision CORP/R/13/03

Report of Corporate Management Team

Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Don McLure, Corporate Director, Resources

**Ian Thompson, Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic
Development**

Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

**Councillor Alan Napier, Deputy Leader and Finance Portfolio
Holder**

**Councillor Eddie Tomlinson, Housing and Rural Issues Portfolio
Holder**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report updates Cabinet on recent policy developments relating to the government's welfare reforms, the council's response and the expected impact on the county. The report also considers a review of the council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme and the requirement to agree the council's approach to Local Council Tax Support for 2014/15 as well as an early operational review of the Welfare Assistance Scheme and the Discretionary Housing Payments policy, which have been in place since 1 April 2013.

Executive summary

- 2 The government brought forward the Welfare Reform Act 2012 to implement its commitment to "simplify the benefits system, make it fairer and to encourage people into work".
- 3 As previously reported to Members, the scale of reform is significant and involves over 40 changes. There is no single point of contact or document for the changes, which makes it difficult to analyse the overall impact.

- 4 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is continuing to add detail to the operational implementation of its initial policy reforms and the more recent cap on the future uprating of benefits, as announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. Since the last report to Members in March 2013, policy announcements relating to the following have been made:
- a) Universal Credit pilots, pathfinders and roll-out;
 - b) Benefit Cap roll-out;
 - c) Personal Independence Payment toolkit and medical assessments;
 - d) Employment Support Allowance;
 - e) Discretionary Housing Payment guidance and changes to Housing Benefit reductions for specific groups;
 - f) Welfare reform support services;
 - g) Disability Living Allowance claims and Court of Appeal judgements;
 - h) Social Fund loans budget allocations and guidance on discretionary payments;
 - i) Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme;
 - j) The government's response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report on the implementation of welfare reform by local authorities;
 - k) Work and Pensions Select Committee review of progress with the implementation of Universal Credit;
 - l) Food banks;
 - m) Spending review.
- 5 Whilst the government did not undertake a comprehensive impact assessment of its welfare reform programme, a number of studies and assessments of the impacts are now being published.
- 6 In April 2013, researchers at Sheffield Hallam University identified that those local authority areas with the greatest levels of deprivation stood to be most impacted by welfare reform, losing most income as benefit payments are withdrawn and reduced, whilst having insufficient economic growth and employment opportunities to enable benefits claimants to move into work and off welfare.
- 7 In terms of absolute losses, the researchers estimate that the County Durham economy stands to lose £188 million per year because of the welfare changes. This is equivalent to £565 per working age adult, slightly more than the regional average loss of £560 per working age adult and significantly more than the average loss of £470 per working age adult for Great Britain as a whole.

- 8 Given the nature of the reforms and their impact on the county, the council continues to monitor and respond to the implementation of the government's welfare changes.
- 9 At its meeting on 19 December 2012, Cabinet agreed a new Welfare Assistance Scheme to fill the gap left by the withdrawal of the Social Fund. In addition, on 13 March 2013, Cabinet agreed a revised Discretionary Housing Payments policy for the council, operating from 1 April 2013 to coincide with the introduction of wider welfare reforms including the social sector size criteria (otherwise known as the 'bedroom tax').
- 10 Both schemes have been successfully introduced and officers are closely monitoring the uptake and feedback to identify if either needs to be revised in order to support those affected by the changes. The monitoring includes reviewing the application of the award criteria within the agreed policies, and a number of minor changes to both schemes have been agreed since their implementation under delegated authority in order to fine-tune the schemes to improve the support the council is able to provide. The policies will continue to be reviewed as our understanding of the impacts grows and to ensure where it is appropriate we can respond quickly to improve the support available.
- 11 In addition, in January 2013, the council agreed a new Council Tax Support Scheme to replace the national Council Tax Benefit scheme, abolished in April 2013. An initial review of the scheme has been carried out; however, in terms of learning from other councils, there is a lack of meaningful data available at this stage on the impact of charging working age benefit claimants for the first time to inform a complete review of the scheme. We will keep this position under review.
- 12 Based on our MTFP planning for 2014/15, the council could continue with its current scheme for a further year. This will allow a more comprehensive review to be undertaken in early 2014/15 when more comparative data will be available before recommending options to Cabinet on what the council may wish to do from April 2015 and consulting on this during the summer/autumn of 2014.
- 13 It is also fair and reasonable to assume that the Government has applied pro-rata reductions in the Council Tax Support Grant element in line with overall reductions in the formula funding, as published in the Spending Round of 26 June 2013. As a result, discussions have been held with the Town and Parish Councils about their share of this grant being reduced accordingly.

Background

- 14 Welfare reform is a key element of the Coalition's *Programme for Government*, published in May 2010. Cabinet considered a comprehensive report on the government's welfare reform programme at its meeting of 30 May 2012. A further report on 19 December 2012 considered the introduction of Local Council Tax Support Schemes (LCTSS) and the replacement of the Social Fund and on 13 March 2013, Cabinet considered a revised approach to Discretionary Housing Payments in the light of changes to government guidance and funding allocations.

- 15 In between these major reports, updates have also been included in the regular government policy implications reports, the most recent one being the report to Cabinet on 5 June 2013.
- 16 Since then, the government has made a number of further policy announcements, which are outlined in more detail below.
- 17 In addition, more information is beginning to emerge on the impact of welfare changes on the county and the performance of the schemes, which the council has put in place to support individuals to adapt to the changes.

Update

- 18 The most significant policy announcements since the last report to Members in March 2013, relate to the following, which are outlined in more detail below:
- a) Universal Credit pilots, pathfinders and roll-out;
 - b) Benefit Cap roll-out;
 - c) Personal Independence Payment toolkit and medical assessments;
 - d) Employment Support Allowance;
 - e) Discretionary Housing Payment guidance and changes to Housing Benefit reductions for specific groups;
 - f) Welfare reform support services;
 - g) Disability Living Allowance claims and Court of Appeal judgements;
 - h) Social Fund loans budget allocations and guidance on discretionary payments;
 - i) Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme;
 - j) The government's response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report on the implementation of welfare reform by local authorities;
 - k) Work and Pensions Select Committee review of progress with the implementation of Universal Credit;
 - l) Food banks;
 - m) Spending review.

Universal Credit pilots, pathfinders and roll-out

- 19 On 28 March 2013, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) issued an update on the rollout of Universal Credit, confirming that the new benefit would be introduced in parts of North West England at the end of April 2013 before being progressively rolled out across the rest of the country by October 2017.

- 20 On 29 April 2013, new claimants in Ashton-under-Lyne were able to make limited claims for the new benefit. In addition, jobcentres in Oldham, Wigan, and Warrington started to trial other elements of the new credit, including the new Claimant Commitment and Universal Jobmatch, which allows people to share their curriculum vitae online and receive notification of vacancies, which may be of interest to them.
- 21 On 20 May 2013, the DWP published initial results from the direct payment demonstration projects, which have been taking place in six parts of the country to assess how social housing tenants cope with taking responsibility for paying their own housing costs under Universal Credit as opposed to having housing benefit paid direct to landlords.
- 22 Across the different areas, the DWP reported that levels of payments by tenants varied from 91 per cent to 97 per cent. The total level of rent charged stood at £19,204,022 and the average rent collection rate stood at 94 per cent, compared with 92 per cent in the first four months of the pilots.
- 23 6,168 tenants were being paid by direct payments, however the DWP also acknowledged that another 1,258 tenants (17 per cent of the total) had originally been paid by direct payment but had subsequently had the payments switched back to their landlord.
- 24 While the government drew comfort from the figures as indicating that the majority of claimants were able to manage their own money, a number of organisations involved in the pilot work disputed the figures and reported that rent arrears were higher and increasing. Southwark claimed that rent arrears have increased from two per cent to 11 per cent, whilst New Charter Housing Trust Group, which manages homes within the Ashton-under-Lyne pathfinder area said it had seen a 29 per cent rise in people contacting its financial support team in the last year, and a 19 per cent rise in the total amount of debt referred.
- 25 On 16 May 2013, Ministers confirmed that the demonstration projects exploring the effect of paying housing benefit directly to social tenants rather than to landlords were to be extended for six months until the end of this year.
- 26 On 28 May 2013, the Major Projects Authority, which is part of the Cabinet Office raised doubts about whether the DWP is on track with Universal Credit, and the overall benefit cap. While this indicates concerns within some quarters of government about potential slippage, the DWP has commented that significant progress has been made in recent months and it expanded the Ashton-under Lyne pathfinder into other areas in July.
- 27 On 10 July 2013, the Minister for Work and Pensions announced that from October 2013, there would be a three-stranded approach to the Universal Credit roll out. The first strand will address the changes needed within Jobcentre Plus to support the introduction of Universal Credit for example, additional training for Jobcentre Plus advisors. The second strand will involve improving digital services across Jobcentre Plus including the installation of ICT equipment, the final strand will involve the roll out of Universal Credit to six hub Jobcentres at Hammersmith, Rugby, Inverness, Harrogate, Bath and Shotton (in Wales).

28 A summary of the early learning from the Local Authority led pilots was published on 25 July 2013. The report highlights six core themes that the local authorities have identified and the key challenges under these:

- Digital Inclusion:
 - Not all customer groups have access to the internet.
 - There is some resistance from some customers to using online services and to making online benefit claims.
- Budgeting and financial management support:
 - Many social housing tenants have problems with debt and rent arrears compounding problems they may have with personal budgeting.
 - Reluctance among social housing tenants to attend group financial management sessions.
 - Concerns that some tenants are poor money managers and will face additional problems because of welfare reform changes.
- Work access:
 - Providing work access support encourages customer to focus on employment as a way of maximising income.
- Vulnerable groups and the triage process:
 - Effective triage processes are essential in allowing authorities to identify customer groups most likely to be affected by welfare reform and who require additional support services.
 - Authorities report difficulties in getting people to engage with the welfare and benefit changes that are likely to affect them.
- Partnership development:
 - Some authorities report that existing partnership arrangements do not facilitate the effective joint delivery of local services. More work is needed to understand the core business and service delivery processes of each partnership agency.
- Data sharing:
 - Local authorities report that data sharing amongst partners is a significant problem and the lack of shared data is limiting their ability to identify and target particular customer groups.

- 29 In summary, the government has toned down the ambitions for the national roll out of Universal Credit from October this year and is taking a more cautious and measured approach in the light of concerns about the ICT systems and experience from the pilot authorities.
- 30 At the time of writing, the council is still waiting for the outcome of the consultation on the Universal Credit local support services framework, and in particular, the role of local government and how the government proposes to fund this.

Benefit Cap roll-out

- 31 On 25 February 2013, the government confirmed that its new benefit cap would be implemented in April in four London boroughs (Bromley, Croydon, Enfield and Haringey), to test the new system prior to wider national roll-out, which was initially scheduled to take place between July and September this year.
- 32 On 5 June 2013, the government confirmed the schedule for the wider roll-out, based on the number of households affected in each local authority area. From 15 July, the cap was introduced in 335 local authority areas including Durham. Roll-out in the remaining 40 authorities, which mainly comprise London boroughs and major urban authorities with greater numbers of households affected, commenced in mid-August.
- 33 In April, the government issued a press release claiming that 8,000 people who would have been affected by the benefit cap had moved into work, demonstrating the effectiveness of the policy.
- 34 Following a complaint from the Trades Union Congress, Andrew Dilnot, the chair of the UK Statistics Authority wrote to the Secretary of State on 9 May 2013 to advise that the claims were not substantiated by official statistics from the DWP, which had explicitly cautioned that the figures were not intended to show the additional numbers entering work as a direct result of the contact. The department was also criticised for two sets of figures released alongside the ministerial statement, which did not fully comply with the UK's codes of practices on statistical releases, with particular concerns around information on methodology and sourcing, and possible sharing of the data in advance with some media outlets.
- 35 In addition, a judicial review proceeding has commenced regarding Part 8A of the housing benefit regulations relating to the benefit cap. Eight claimants argue that the benefit cap is 'discriminatory and unreasonable', and that the Secretary of State did not take into account the impact of the policy on women, children, disabled people, racial and religious minorities, and carers when formulating the policy.
- 36 In July, initial data was released on the impact of the benefit cap in the pilot areas. Between 15 April 2013 and the end of May 2013, in the four local authorities, almost 2,500 households had their housing benefit capped. The biggest impact was in the London Borough of Enfield where 48 per cent of claimants had their benefit capped. Across the four pilots, 86 per cent of households capped had between one and four children and 78 per cent of

households constituted a single parent with child dependents. Some 67 per cent of households were capped by £100 or less per week.

- 37 Building on these findings, research by the Gingerbread charity has estimated that 46 per cent of the households affected by the benefit cap will be single parents who claim income support.
- 38 Currently, the only mechanism for capping benefit until Universal Credit is introduced is to reduce the amount of housing benefit paid to claimants by local authorities. This means that in areas such as Durham with low cost housing, a claimant receiving say £400 over the benefits cap, but with the housing benefit element of only £100, will still receive £300 per week in benefit entitlement over the imposed cap limit.
- 39 Alongside the data on the impact of the benefit cap in the pilot areas, the DWP has published research into the public perceptions of the benefit cap and pre-implementation impacts. The research found that there was a consensus about the need to have a benefit system; however only 11 per cent of the people surveyed in this report thought the current benefit system is working effectively. The report found that there was positive endorsement for the aim to reduce governmental spend on benefits, with broad support for encouraging claimants to take low paid jobs, move to a cheaper property or move to a similar property in a cheaper area to manage reductions in benefit. However, the level of knowledge about the benefit cap was limited with only 29 per cent reporting that they knew a great deal or a fair amount about the policy.

Personal Independence Payments and Disability Living Allowance

- 40 On 25 February 2013, the government published updated statistics on the number of claimants receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA). The total number of DLA claims in May 2012 was 3,258,440, an increase of 15,000 on the previous quarter. In ten years, the number of people claiming DLA has risen by almost 35 per cent from 2.4 million to 3.3 million people.
- 41 As part of its welfare reforms, the government is replacing DLA with Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and will require all those who change from DLA to PIP to be reassessed as part of the transfer.
- 42 The government expects that the level of spending will be the same under PIP, as under DLA; however, the new system will include a face-to-face assessment and regular reviews, which may lead to a change in the number of claims approved. The Department for Work and Pensions has also recently confirmed that DLA and PIP will be included in the overall cap on welfare expenditure announced in the spending review. The government believes that the change from DLA to PIP will better reflect today's understanding of disability, particularly for people with mental health conditions; and will help improve the targeting of money spent on disability benefits.
- 43 In February 2013, the DWP released a toolkit for support organisations, given the national roll-out of PIP to replace DLA.

- 44 Trials for the new PIP award began on 8 April 2013 in Merseyside, north-west England, Cumbria, Cheshire and parts of north east England including County Durham.
- 45 Following the trials, from 10 June 2013, the new payment was rolled out nationally for all new claims.
- 46 From October 2013, anyone with a DLA award coming up for renewal, young people turning 16 or DLA claimants reporting a change in their health condition or disability, will be contacted by DWP and invited to claim PIP.
- 47 From October 2015, DWP will write to all other existing DLA claimants to let them know when their DLA is due to end and to explain how they can make a claim for PIP. It is important to note that unless a claimant applies for the new payment, they will lose their benefit. The council may therefore need to support the DWP by ensuring that claimants, who may also receive social care support, respond to the notifications and apply for the new payment.
- 48 Earlier in the year, Ministers had announced plans to amend the Regulations on PIP, to make clear that, when assessing whether an individual can carry out an activity, consideration must be given to whether they can carry out that activity safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly, and in a reasonable time period.
- 49 The move followed a critical report from the Public Accounts Committee on the DWP's contract management of work capability assessments, which called into question what the committee saw as a 'one size fits all' approach to medical assessments and the department's long term reliance on a single contractor (Atos) to undertake the assessments. The proposed changes to the regulations were issued for consultation until 8 August.
- 50 On 26 February 2013, Employment Minister Mark Hoban MP announced that senior occupational physician, Dr Paul Litchfield, would carry out a fourth independent review of the work capability assessment, overseen by an independent scrutiny group chaired by Professor David Haslam, past President of the Royal College of General Practitioners, National Professional Adviser to the Care Quality Commission, and Chair Designate of National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).
- 51 On 22 July 2013, following an internal audit undertaken by the DWP, the government announced that additional providers are to be brought in alongside Atos from 2014 in order to improve the quality of capability assessments.
- 52 As previously reported to Cabinet, a legal challenge has been mounted in relation to the mobility limits for the new PIP award. The claimants' case is that the official consultation did not state that the new PIP mobility limit was to be reduced from being able to walk for 50 metres to being able to do so for 20 metres.
- 53 On 3 May 2013, the High Court gave permission for the case to go to a full hearing.
- 54 Following feedback that stakeholders were unhappy with the changes that had been made for the assessment criteria for the 'moving around' activity in

PIP, the government has gone back out to consult on opinions on the moving around activity assessment criteria, including the current thresholds of 20 and 50 metres. It is also asking for estimates of what the impact of the current criteria will be and whether government needs to make any changes to them or assess physical mobility in a different way altogether.

55 In addition, Members may wish to note that while the High Court found in the government's favour in a challenge to its decision to close the Independent Living Fund, five disabled people are appealing the decision.

Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

56 On 10 July 2013, a two-year pilot was announced for those claimants on ESA. Around 3,000 people on ESA who have been assessed as being able to work in the future will have regular appointments with healthcare professionals as a condition of receiving their benefit. The meetings will focus on helping claimants to move closer to being able to get a job.

57 There will be three separate pilot schemes:

- health care professional-led – mandatory engagement with health care professionals;
- Jobcentre Plus – enhanced Jobcentre Plus support;
- Work Programme – enhanced support designed by Work Programme provider.

58 The pilots will begin in November 2013 and will run until August 2016. They will involve people on ESA in the work related activity group who are expected to be able to return to work in 18 months or longer.

Discretionary Housing Payment guidance and changes to Housing Benefit reductions for specific groups

59 Following last minute policy changes in relation to foster carers, service personnel and families with disabled children who cannot share with a sibling, the government issued a revised guidance manual on Discretionary Housing Payments on 2 April 2013. In response to mounting concerns about the impact of the size criteria (or 'bedroom tax') on specific groups, the government amended policy so that the criteria did not apply to foster carers (with one spare bedroom), families with disabled children and service personnel. In addition, the Minister wrote to local authorities to encourage them to prioritise households with people with disabilities for support through Discretionary Housing Payments.

60 On 15 May 2012, the Court of Appeal upheld the legal challenge made by Burnip, Trengove and Gorry that the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) size criteria discriminated unlawfully against the three appellants on grounds of disability, by not including provision to meet their need for an additional room.

61 Although initially, the government sought leave to appeal against the decision, on 12 March 2013, the Secretary of State decided not to pursue the action further and issued urgent guidance to local authorities to clarify that from the

date of the Court of Appeal judgment, local authorities should allow an extra bedroom for children who are unable to share because of their severe disabilities. The judgment applies to both the LHA size criteria and the reduction of the size criteria for social housing, which came into effect on 1 April 2013.

- 62 On 15 May 2013, the High Court began a three day hearing into cases brought by lawyers representing 10 families challenging the government's decision to cut housing benefit for recipients living in properties deemed too large. The appellants included families with disabled children or who have suffered from domestic violence and an individual who suffers from mental health problems.
- 63 They argued that changes to the size criteria discriminate against them because they need extra rooms to cope with their disability and that whilst the government has made Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) available to help people affected by welfare reforms, the payments do not offer long-term security, and are insufficient to meet the needs of all those affected.
- 64 Following deliberation, the High Court finally ruled that the changes to the social housing size criteria did not breach equality duties. It is understood that the families involved in the legal case plan to appeal this decision.
- 65 Alongside the ruling on the legal case, the DWP announced an additional £35 million in-year funding to help claimants affected by changes to housing benefit in the social sector who need extra support. The funding comprises:
- £10 million transitional payments distributed to all councils (Durham received £104,000);
 - £5 million discretionary housing payment funding for the least densely populated areas in the country (Durham did not receive any of this funding);
 - a new £20 million discretionary housing payment fund (against which local authorities will need to bid for funding).
- 66 On 20 June 2013, Lord Freud wrote to local authorities to warn against re-designating properties without reducing their rent to reflect the loss of a bedroom.
- 67 This followed announcements by a number of local authorities of re-designation of properties in light of the under occupancy policy changes.
- 68 While not objecting to re-designation where there are justifiable grounds, for example, where a property has been adapted for a disabled person's need, the Minister warned that blanket re-designations without a clear and justifiable reason and without reductions in rent, were inappropriate and could lead to DWP considering to either restrict or not pay housing benefit subsidy in such circumstances.
- 69 Since the 1 April 2013, the Council has re-designated a total of 85 properties on the basis of correct size and layout – effectively correcting anomalies in the current charges. All of these have been in the former Durham City area and were identified as part of the on-going stock condition survey work. In all of

the cases, the rent was reduced, with the Delegated Decision being made by the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development, with reference to the impact on the HRA Business Plan.

Welfare reform support services

- 70 On 7 February 2013, the government published proposals for information-sharing in relation to welfare services to combat fraud, improve services and to enable support services to work more effectively
- 71 In March, the DWP published a welfare reform communications toolkit to help local authorities and other delivery partners to explain how and why changes were being made to welfare.
- 72 Following consultation earlier in the year on a proposed local services support framework for Universal Credit, Lord Freud wrote to consultees on 17 May 2013 to outline the government's initial response and to confirm that further detail would be provided over the coming months.
- 73 He acknowledged concerns raised about the need to provide long term support as opposed to shorter term, transitional help to some client groups and that clarity about funding and associated outcomes was a central concern in many consultation responses. On this, he advised that work was underway on a financial instrument, which will address a minimum offer for local support services, and the way in which both funding and outcomes should reflect variations in local needs, for example taking account of factors like rurality and levels of deprivation.
- 74 The government expects to publish more detail about the funding instrument shortly and aims to finalise the design of the support framework before Universal Credit is rolled out more widely.
- 75 In speeches to the Policy Exchange on 5 June 2013, Mark Hoban MP, Minister of State for Employment issued a 'call for ideas' on implementing UC and Lord Freud, Minister for Welfare Reform highlighted the government's openness to support a range of tests and pilots across the country to explore how effective support can be provided to welfare claimants, beyond benefit payments. He drew attention to the new 'Claimant Commitment' under Universal Credit, which is being extended beyond the claimant's obligation to look for work, to also include ongoing support from Jobcentre Plus until a claimant achieves full financial independence, and no longer requires welfare payments.
- 76 He also pointed towards trials being undertaken by Jobcentre Plus, working in conjunction with the Cabinet Office's Behavioural Insights Team to test tools and techniques from behavioural science that can improve an individual's chances of finding work.
- 77 Following on from the Communities and Local Government Committee report on the implementation of welfare reform by local authorities, on 19 April 2013, the Work and Pensions Committee launched an inquiry into the role of Jobcentre Plus. The inquiry will focus on the services Jobcentre Plus offers to benefit claimants and employers and its relationships with external providers

and stakeholders, including local authorities, in the introduction of Universal Credit.

78 On 5 June 2013, the government published a summary of the responses received to their call for ideas, for ways in which claimants of Universal Credit in work will be supported to maintain work and encouraged to progress. Over 350 responses were received, the ideas covered:

- provision of advice and support on career and skill development;
- supporting the identification and generation of progression opportunities;
- self employment;
- addressing barriers; and
- cross cutting ideas.

79 DWP is considering which of these ideas will be developed into pilots.

Social Fund loans budget allocations and guidance on discretionary payments

80 Since the last report to Members, the government has announced that it will allocate £460.7 million in 2013/14 for the gross national loans budget. The budget supports interest-free loans, which are designed to spread the cost of certain one-off expenses for claimants (for example, the cost of furniture/household equipment) over a longer period. Local awards are managed by Jobcentre Plus and are made to those people in need, who have been in receipt of specified benefits for at least 26 weeks. The national loans budget is funded exclusively by recoveries from existing loan debt and it is expected that the scheme will continue until the full roll out of Universal Credit.

81 Alongside the announcement on the funding allocation, the Secretary of State issued amended directions and guidance on the discretionary social fund to reflect the ending of community care grants and crisis loans and the continuation of budgeting loans.

Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme

82 On 22 March 2013, the government launched the Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP) to simplify the financial support available for members of the armed forces who have been seriously injured as a result of military service since 2005.

83 The benefit is designed to provide financial support to service personnel and veterans who have been seriously injured as a result of service to cover the extra costs they may have as a result of their injury. The amount paid will be £134.40 per week, the same amount as the enhanced rates of both the daily living and mobility components of PIP or the highest rate of both components of DLA. It is non-taxable and will not be means tested and service personnel and veterans seriously injured as a result of their service, will not be subjected to review or further medical assessments.

84 The new benefit does not impact on the eligibility of service personnel and veterans to other benefits, other than Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance (AA).

Government response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report on the implementation of welfare reform by local authorities

- 85 On 6 June 2013, the government published its response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report on the implementation of welfare reform by local authorities.
- 86 The council was one of 25 local government bodies, which provided written evidence to inform the select committee's report.
- 87 The Select Committee had highlighted that the implementation of welfare reform posed significant challenges and risks for local authorities and recommended that government should:
- do more to provide local authorities with essential spending data and the public and claimants with information about the national aspects of the changes;
 - work with the Local Government Association to assess the cumulative impact of the welfare reform programme on local authority resources;
 - do more to address the risk of rent arrears to local authorities and housing providers arising from direct payments and Universal Credit;
 - provide assurance that the benefits system will not be vulnerable to fraud, given concerns regarding the readiness of ICT systems.
- 88 In relation to the Social Fund, it is interesting to note that the Select Committee commented that *'We expect that there will be pressure to divert funding for replacing Social Fund provision to support Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). It is a matter for local authorities how they allocate non-ring-fenced money from central Government to provide local support in place of the Social Fund'*.
- 89 The Select Committee also identified that *'The Government gave local authorities an assurance that replacing the Social Fund would not result in additional unfunded burdens. Replacing Social Fund provision locally is a new area of work for local authorities and represents a major change in their costs particularly when taken together with DHP, the demand for both of which is difficult to forecast.'* The Committee recommended that *'The Government must ensure that local authorities are provided with the funding they need to set up and administer local support schemes and deal with reasonable demands for DHP from 1 April. We recommend that the Government meet with the Local Government Association after 12 and again after 24 months to review the level of support required and decide on the appropriate level of additional funding if local authorities are incurring reasonable, unfunded costs.'*
- 90 In the main, the government response to the Select Committee response was that its existing strategies and programmes addressed the select committee's recommendation and concerns.
- 91 On the cumulative impact on local authority resources, the government pointed towards the New Burdens doctrine, which has been introduced to

compensate local government for additional duties and responsibilities it takes on as a result of public sector reform.

- 92 Cabinet may wish to note that the Public Accounts Committee's report on the financial sustainability of local authorities published on 7 June 2013 concluded that the government did not properly understand the overall combined impacts on local government resulting from separate but interlinked policy and funding decisions on services.

Work and Pensions Select Committee review of the implementation of Universal Credit

- 93 On 10 July 2013, the Work and Pensions Select Committee held a one-off oral evidence session on progress with implementation of Universal Credit. In the session, Committee members questioned Ministers on the progress that has been made since the committee published its report on Universal Credit implementation in November 2012. A key line of inquiry from the committee was whether the current pilots were robust enough to test the complexities of some claims. Lord Freud and Ian Duncan Smith defended the approach of the pilots, arguing that initially starting with small numbers was more helpful "so you can ramp up and learn the lessons".
- 94 The Work and Pensions Select Committee has also announced they are to undertake an inquiry into provision of support to meet housing costs in the reformed welfare system. The committee is looking for view on changes to housing support already taking place, which could help future approaches.

Food banks

- 95 The use of food banks has been the focus of some media scrutiny and debate. In a Lords debate on 2 July 2013, Lord McKenzie of Luton asked Lord Freud about the link between the changes to the Social Fund, harsher benefit sanctions, longer wait for benefits, and the increase in use of food banks.
- 96 Lord Freud responded by saying, *'My Lords, there is actually no evidence as to whether the use of food banks is supply led or demand led. The provision of food-bank support has grown from provision to 70,000 individuals two years ago to 347,000. All that predates the reforms. As I say, there is no evidence of a causal link.'*
- 97 Following this statement in the Lords, the Archbishop of Canterbury commented that, *'I'm not sure where [Lord Freud] got his information from on that. Certainly, in my last diocese in Durham about 35 per cent of those who came to food banks came referred by social services because they were entitled to benefits, which had not been paid.... We're very strict about our statistics and we don't just hand out food, you have to be referred, usually by social services. I'm not absolutely sure how he came to that conclusion.'*
- 98 Timely data was produced by the Trussell Trust which reported that nationally during the last 12 months they have provided almost 350,000 people with at least three days' emergency food, this is triple the number of people helped in 2011/12. The Trust reports that more than half of the 150,000 people receiving emergency food aid between April and June were referred because

of benefit delays, sanctions, and financial difficulties relating to the size criteria and abolition of council tax relief.

Welfare reform and the spending review

- 99 In the Spending Review on 26 June 2013, the government announced that for the first time, it will introduce a cap on the country's welfare spending to improve spending control, support fiscal consolidation and ensure that welfare remains affordable. The cap will apply to over £100 billion of welfare spending. All other social security and tax credits expenditure will be included, however the basic and additional state pension will be excluded as will Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and any passported expenditure. Over the coming months, the government will consider whether it is appropriate to include other elements of Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) in the cap.
- 100 In addition, it announced that the period before a claimant is able to apply and be eligible for support under the Job Seekers Allowance is to be extended from three to seven days.

Impacts of welfare reform

- 101 The Cabinet report on 30 May 2012 provided an initial analysis of the potential impacts of welfare reform, based on our assessment of the proposed changes known at that time.
- 102 Whilst the government has not undertaken a comprehensive impact assessment of its welfare reform programme – and therefore we do not have a comprehensive picture – the council has been able to update its assessment of the likely impact of the changes and a number of other studies and assessments are now being published.
- 103 The council's latest estimate is that Universal Credit will impact on around 95,000 households in the county, which is around two in five households (this is lower than the estimate reported in May 2012 and is due to changes to Tax Credit eligibility and methodological changes arising from more information being released by DWP). Although the implementation of Universal Credit will begin in some areas later this year, most of the impacts will be felt well beyond 2015 with the full impact not realised until 2018 when all of the existing work-related payments will have been incorporated into the new payment.
- 104 Unlike many of the other welfare reforms, Universal Credit is not expected to result in a net reduction in benefit entitlement. Although there will be individual households who will gain or lose, on balance UC is expected to result in slightly higher expenditures, particularly as transitional relief will be available to existing claimants transferring across to the new system.
- 105 The same cannot be said of the other changes where the county can expect to have large numbers of households who will experience a reduction in their benefit entitlement.
- 106 A national external assessment of this has been produced by researchers at Sheffield Hallam University, whose report *Hitting the Poorest Places Hardest: the local and regional impact of welfare reform*, published on 10 April 2013,

identified that those local authority areas with the greatest levels of deprivation stand to be most impacted by welfare reform. The researchers expect such areas to lose most income as benefit payments are withdrawn and reduced, which will be compounded by low levels of economic growth and employment opportunities in these areas, which limit the ability of benefit claimants to move into work and off welfare.

- 107 Overall, the total estimated financial loss to the county economy per year is estimated to be £188 million. In terms of financial loss per working age adult per year, this is equivalent to £565 per adult, which compares with the loss per working age adult in the North East region of £560 per adult and £470 per adult across Great Britain. This compares with other regions as outlined below;

Overall impact of welfare reforms by 2014/15* by region

	Estimated loss £million per annum	Loss per working age adult £ per annum
County Durham	188	565
North East	2,560	560
North West	940	560
Wales	1,070	550
London	2,910	520
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,690	500
West Midlands	1,740	490
Scotland	1,660	480
East Midlands	1,310	450
South West	1,440	430
East	1,490	400
South East	2,060	370
Great Britain	18,870	470

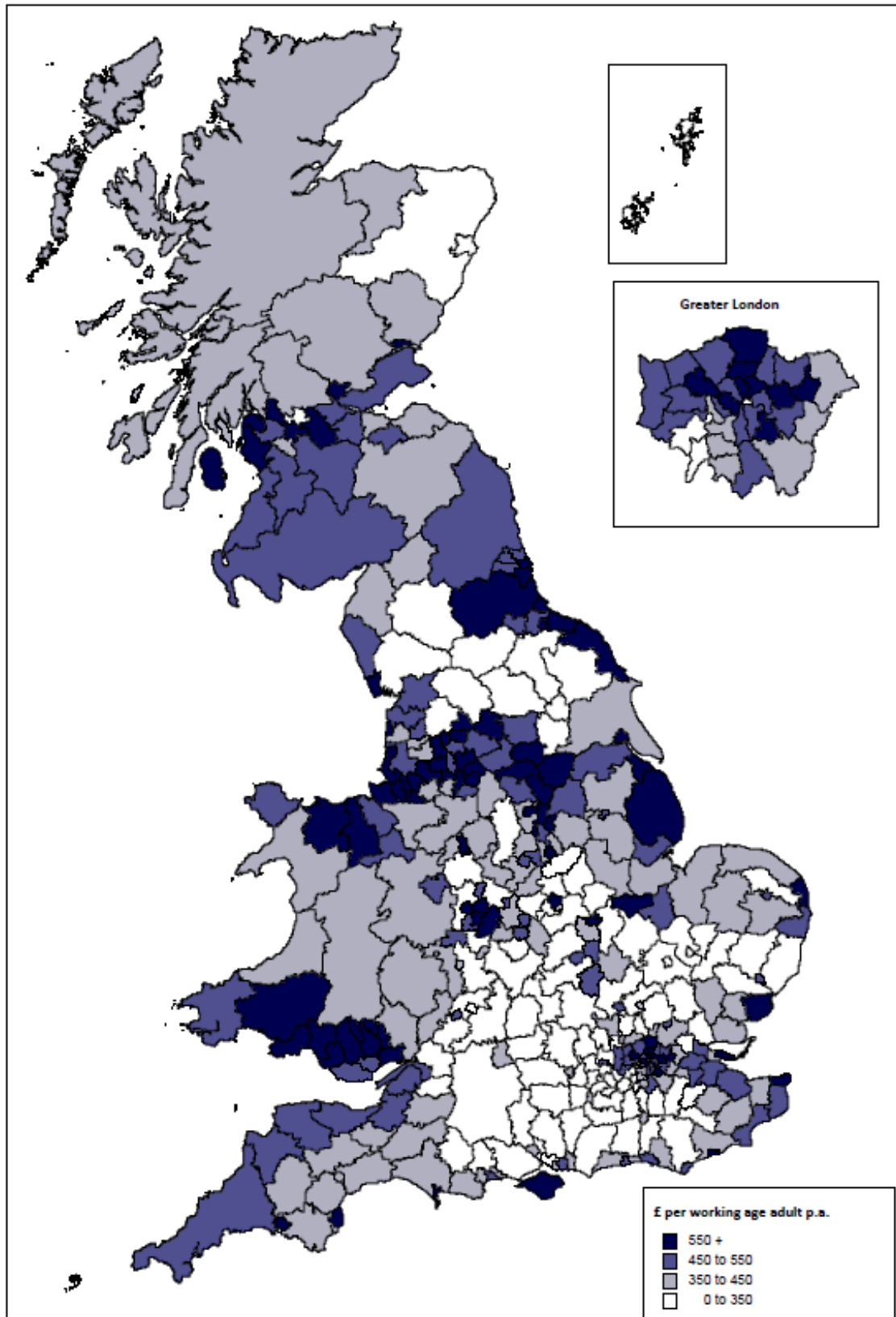
*Except DLA by 2017/18, incapacity benefits and 1% up-rating by 2015/16
Source: Sheffield Hallam estimates based on official data

- 108 Appendix 2 outlines the quantitative and financial impacts of each of the main welfare changes.
- 109 The study identified that Britain's older industrial areas, a number of seaside towns and some London boroughs are the most affected, as illustrated in

figure 1 below. In contrast, much of the south and east of England outside London is affected comparatively lightly.

- 110 Blackpool is the worst affected area, losing more than £900 a year for every adult of working age in the town. The three northern English regions can expect to lose around £5.2 billion a year in benefit income.
- 111 The researchers concluded that as a general rule, the more deprived the local authority, the greater the financial impact and as a result, a key effect of the welfare reforms will be to widen the gaps in prosperity between the strongest and weakest local economies across Britain.

Figure 1: Overall financial loss arising from welfare reform by 2014/15⁽¹⁾



- 112 The themes found by the Sheffield Hallam study are mirrored in the findings of a report undertaken by the Institute for Local Governance at Durham University with Northumbria and Teesside Universities for the Association of North East Councils (ANEC). The report considers the impact of the welfare reforms within the context of the North East and the wider economic circumstances.
- 113 The research estimates that around £380 million will be lost to the region from the changes to Council Tax Benefit, the benefits cap, the move from Incapacity Benefit (IB) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and the change to size criteria for Housing Benefit. This figures increased to around £940 million when taking into account the changes to Child Benefit and Child Tax Credits.
- 114 The most significant proportion of the loss is attributable to changes to the benefits of disabled people. It is estimated that over 70,000 people in the North East will be affected by the time-limiting of contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and the stricter eligibility criteria being applied to it. This will represent a cost to the regional economy of more than £175 million. The estimated loss to the region for the transition from Disabled Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payments is over £128 million, affecting nearly 33,000 people.
- 115 The government has explicitly stated that the aim of the welfare reform changes is to encourage claimants back into work. The weak economy in the North East makes this shift exceptionally challenging; the scale of this challenge is significant, for example in November 2012, there were 7.5 Job Seeker Allowance Claims for every unfilled job centre vacancy across the region.
- 116 The impacts from the welfare reform changes are already being experienced by communities in the North East, with anecdotal evidence of increased activity of pay day loan companies (including illegal money lenders) and increased take up of support from food banks and charities.
- 117 The impact of the social sector size criteria is particularly of note in the North East given the high percentage of tenants in social housing and high concentrations of under occupiers. For example, there are 12 wards in the North East with over 400 under occupiers - one ward in Newcastle has over 850 under occupiers. The root of this problem is a fundamental mismatch between housing availability and need. Social housing stock in the North East is skewed towards family sized property (over 75 per cent) with a much smaller number of one bedroom homes (22 per cent). In a typical year, fewer than 6,500 single properties become available, with over 45,000 registered on the waiting list. This situation means that there are not enough properties to accommodate relocations, leading to less saving on Housing Benefit than anticipated, leading to increased risk of empty properties and perverse allocation practices. Currently, there is already an increase in the number of bids for one bedroom properties and an increase in housing terminations.
- 118 Some analyses of the impact of the welfare reform changes have been based on the assumption that the current economic climate will remain relatively

steady. However, the Resolution Foundation has undertaken research that has identified that the number of families in Britain with perilous levels of debt repayments could more than double to 1.2 million if interest rates rise faster than expected in the next four years and household income growth is weak and uneven. The figures from the Foundation suggest that the ongoing squeeze on households could leave Britain seriously exposed if interest rates were to rise faster than expected, resulting in levels of debt as high as those last seen in the run up to the financial crisis. This could compound the impacts of welfare reform changes and push more individuals and families into greater financial difficulty.

- 119 The recent decision by the Bank of England to issue 'forward guidance' on interest rates, whereby rates will be held at the current level until the jobless rate has fallen to seven per cent or below (as at 15 August 2013 it stood at 7.8 per cent), is intended to avoid unexpected increases and to provide households with more certainty on future interest rate rises. To achieve the target a further 800,000 jobs will need to be created nationally.
- 120 It should be noted however, that there is significant variation in unemployment rates across the country and areas with high levels of unemployment and benefits dependency could still be affected if the interest controls were relaxed because the overall strength of the economy improved
- 121 The DWP has released the 'Local Authority insight survey: wave 24', this document collates responses from local authorities in relation to how they are managing current and future policy and regulation changes.
- 122 The report is wide ranging but there are a number of points, which are of interest in considering how the welfare reform changes are impacting on communities and how authorities are responding.
- 123 There is a reported increase in the proportion of local authorities saying that they awarded DHPs because the tenant was in rent arrears (with 52 per cent now compared with just one per cent in 2011).
- 124 In relation to the size criteria, 44 per cent of local authorities said they were finding the process of identifying cases affected by the removal of the size criteria difficult. Sixty-seven per cent of local authorities also observed an increase in the number of requests for direct payments by landlords on the grounds of arrears (an increase of seven per cent from last year).
- 125 Thirty per cent of local authorities, had seen an increase in the number of landlords letting properties as shared housing/houses in multiple occupation that were previously let to families or as self-contained accommodation, which is significantly higher than in 2011 (eight per cent).
- 126 It would appear that the changes to housing benefits is impacting on levels of homelessness, with more than half of local authorities (57 per cent) reporting that there had been an increase in homelessness among private rented sector tenants since the new regulations. Similarly, a third of local authorities have noticed an increase in the number of homelessness claimants moving into their area compared with just 21 per cent that said this last year.

Council preparations and planning for welfare reform

- 127 The council is continuing to respond and plan for the implementation of the various changes to welfare.
- 128 A key element in this response has been the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme, which has enabled the existing levels of Council Tax Benefit to be maintained for our residents so that no resident potentially impacted by this element of the welfare reform changes has had to pay any more council tax in 2013/14 than they did in 2012/13.
- 129 Public information on welfare reform has been published on the council's website and via Durham County News and all frontline staff including customer services, housing, and social workers have been briefed on the changes, so that they are better able to handle the increase in calls the council expects as the reforms continue to be implemented.
- 130 Information has also been made available in doctors' surgeries and other public places in order to increase awareness of the changes and encourage residents to respond where necessary to the changes being introduced.
- 131 The council's Welfare Rights service continues to provide advice and advocacy and an additional welfare rights worker has been funded through the Macmillan Trust. It is also proposed that the Welfare Rights team will be moved to sit alongside the Council's Benefits team, which should further improve our ability to target help to residents affected by the changes.
- 132 Working with local housing providers, the council has also introduced a triage service, to provide advice to welfare claimants and to help those who are experiencing difficulty with meeting their housing costs. Claimants receive housing, employment and financial management advice and help with planning how they can improve their own circumstances.
- 133 All of this activity is being monitored so we can build up a picture of how many residents are impacted, how they are choosing to respond and how the help being provided has improved individual circumstances for example by helping residents move house, support them in obtaining employment or through better financial management.
- 134 Presentations on welfare reform have been made to area action partnerships (AAPs), and a very successful County Durham Partnership partners' event attended by 150 people took place on 26 July 2013 to map support services and encourage greater coordination and collaboration between advice and support services operating across the county.
- 135 As outlined above, the benefit cap became applicable to claimants in the county from 15 July. The cap is applied through the council reducing the amount of Housing Benefit paid to tenants that have combined benefits exceeding the £500 a week cap. Affected households are identified by the Department for Works and Pensions and the council is notified of whom to apply the cap to and how much to reduce their housing benefit by.
- 136 The latest figures indicate that there are around 120 households affected by the cap in the county, with housing benefit entitlement reduced by a total of

over £6,800 per week from these cases. The average reduction is £57.43 per week, ranging from £143.73 per week to £3.65 per week. Given changing individual circumstances, the final number affected will not be known until the DWP provide confirmed details and the system has been in operation for a number of months.

- 137 In advance of the implementation, the council's benefits service contacted those households, which we believed would be affected and offered help from our Welfare Rights team to check their benefits. In addition, our Housing Solutions Team is visiting affected household to discuss the changes and to offer help and support. This includes advice on more affordable housing, budgeting to help tenants manage their household income, and employment and training advice, which may improve their chances of getting a job. Tenants are also advised on how they could become more involved with activities in their local community as well as support with improving confidence, motivation and personal skills should they wish. This work has been supported by both new burdens money from Government and from the DWP. In addition, officers from DWP have also been working with those affected to help secure employment opportunities.

Welfare Assistance Scheme

- 138 On 19 December 2012, Cabinet agreed to establish a new welfare assistance scheme to fill the gap created by the abolition of the Department of Works and Pensions' Social Fund. As reported to Members on 13 March 2013, following a procurement exercise, Civica, Five Lamps and the Family Fund were appointed as external partners to work with the council to implement the scheme.
- 139 Since then the council has worked with Civica, Five Lamps and the Family Fund to develop the Help and Advice Network Durham (HAND) to implement the council's new Welfare Assistance Scheme.
- 140 HAND has been established to ensure that there is a comprehensive picture of support on offer for Durham residents beyond the time limited Government funding provided to replace the Social Fund. It is therefore important that it acts as a signpost for support in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors.
- 141 As at 18 August, there had been over 3,800 telephone calls to HAND. Many of these were handled by signposting the callers to other organisations who could provide help appropriate to the need identified. A large number were put in touch with DWP as they have continued to provide a number of support schemes to help those affected by delays in benefit payments, which have accounted for many of the calls received by HAND. Others have been referred to partner organisations or were put forward for an award under the Council's Welfare Assistance Scheme.
- 142 As a result of the nature of the calls received, the number of awards actually made under the scheme has been significantly lower than had originally been expected. So far, approximately 370 of the telephone calls received have converted into an application for an award. As at 18 August there had been 125 awards made under the Welfare Assistance Scheme, totalling £36,730. This pattern is reflected across the region with all councils in the North East

reporting a lower number of applications than had been expected and numbers proportionately in line with our figures.

- 143 As part of an on-going review of the scheme any complaints received or queries about applications not accepted are followed up to ensure residents are not being declined for an award unnecessarily or to see if there are further changes required to the policy.
- 144 From this review and in order to improve the performance of the scheme, a delegated decision was taken to refine the policy to ensure that it is more effective. The key changes that have been made are:
- Removal of the requirement for claimants to have both a crisis and health issue ;
 - Increased settlement grant to £1,000;
 - Removal of the need to apply for DWP Budgeting Loan before applying for a settlement grant
- 145 The scheme is continually being reviewed and is being promoted amongst our partners to ensure they are fully aware of the details and to sign up partners under the scheme's 'Trusted Partner' arrangement, which can speed up the application for an award.
- 146 In light of the on-going review, it is proposed that Cabinet provide the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director Resources, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, delegated powers to amend the policy where opportunities are identified to improve this in line with demand for the scheme.

Discretionary Housing Payments

- 147 Cabinet agreed on 13 March 2013 to a revised Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) policy in the light of new guidance and regulations from government and to coincide with the introduction of wider welfare reforms including the social sector size criteria.
- 148 To support the revised policy and in recognition that DHP is short term assistance, the council also introduced closer working arrangements with local housing providers to provide initial assessment and 'triage' before formal applications for DHP are made. The support identifies what other sources of financial and other support may be available. This will help clients to help themselves, by improving or adjusting their financial circumstances through debt management, better budgeting or access to training and employment support, so that they are better able to meet their housing costs without being dependent on short term transitional assistance via DHP.
- 149 To date Housing Providers and the council's Housing Solutions team have seen over 1,250 tenants through the triage process. This is in addition to the general enquires received within Housing Solutions. Already we have identified that 20 tenants have successfully moved to a smaller house, 130 have received advice which has improved their financial situation so they can now afford the rent following the reduction in housing benefit and 140 are receiving additional support in finding employment.

150 Anecdotally it is understood that through the other interventions made by the Council in responding to the changes to welfare, particularly the Local Council Tax Support Scheme, a large number of tenants have to date been able to absorb the loss in housing benefit through the introduction of the social sector size criteria. This is partly borne out by the information below on arrears, which has been provided by the seven biggest housing providers within the County;

	March 2013	June 2013	July 2013
All tenants who are in arrears	15,233	15,968	15,007
Tenants who are under occupying who are in arrears*	n/a	3,585	3,427

* These figures include tenants who were in arrears before the introduction of the social sector size criteria

151 We are, continually monitoring the situation to ensure that tenants are provided with proactive advice and support in order to avoid them getting into financial difficulty, wherever possible.

152 As at 18 August, we had made 476 DHP awards under the new policy and a further 189 under the former policy where applications were received prior to 1 April 2013. This is an increase of over 80% on this time last year. DHP awarded to date totals over £205,000. In addition, the number of applications received has increased by over 150%. At 18 August, there were 195 DHP live applications in the system i.e. currently being processed / under consideration by the Benefits Service.

153 Following feedback on the progress of the DHP scheme, a number of amendments to the criteria of the scheme have been made since 1 April 2013.

- There has been an increase in the period of time that initial awards can be made from 13 weeks to 26 weeks on the condition that recipients continue to engage with their housing provider or the council;
- For those applicants who are experiencing a significant change trigger, which would affect under occupancy or housing benefit entitlement, they can now apply twelve months in advance of this event rather than six.

154 We are continuing to review the scheme with our housing providers and other stakeholders. In particular we are working together to determine how we manage those tenants who have received DHP help and will be coming to the end of the award from October when the awards granted in April for 26 weeks

close. Where it is appropriate we will look to extend the award for a further period, but given the limited funds available under the scheme we will need to be mindful of how we continue to make best use of the funds available.

- 155 It is again proposed that Cabinet provide the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director Resources, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, delegated powers to amend the policy where opportunities are identified to improve this in line with demand for the scheme.

Monitoring of impacts

- 156 A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed and included within the council's performance management framework so that we are better able to track the impact of the changes on the county, local communities and the council.
- 157 At a regional level, ANEC (Association of North East Councils) has been bringing member authorities together through the 'Assistant Chief Executive's Network' to develop a combined approach to managing and responding to the impact of the welfare reform changes. As such, ANEC is developing a North East monitoring framework, to enable relevant data to be brought together to develop a consistent and coherent picture to the impacts of welfare reform in the region. The proposed framework will focus on high-level key issues using existing quantitative performance data. The areas to be covered will include:
- Economy, employment and social impacts
 - Housing
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
 - Advice and support
 - Impact on groups
- 158 Whilst the council is undertaking extensive tracking of how residents are responding to the welfare reform changes, in many instances it is still too early to fully understand the impacts. However, it is already apparent that as the proposals start to bed in, a greater number of individuals will start to experience problems, and that there will be increased demand on council support services. It is important to note that the council's decision to maintain the previous level of council tax support through its Local Council Tax Support Scheme has helped to mitigate the impact of welfare changes on some people.
- 159 Alongside the monitoring, we are actively engaging and communicating with residents to help support them as well as raise awareness of the changes taking place. Housing providers and the council's Housing Solutions team are investing a significant amount of time and effort in visiting residents. Of the 8,000 tenants who we understand have been affected by the social sector size criteria over 6,700 have not been visited or have refused the offer of help made through the triage process. It is however, our joint intention to ensure everyone is contacted and offered help and advice and this work continues to be progressed as a matter of priority.

Housing support

- 160 Further support for our residents is also being provided through the Housing Revenue Account medium term financial plan for 2013/17. A £500,000 ring fenced fund was created with the purpose of supporting tenants in council housing through the changes being made through welfare reform, particularly financial inclusion, and to help them develop financial skills and awareness to manage their money more effectively and minimise the council's income management costs.
- 161 Following discussions with three of the council's housing management bodies, a number of initial proposals have been developed, utilising this funding. Those which are being taken forward include:
- Two-year funding for six energy advisors posts – full two year funding dependent on the outcome of the energy tariff procurement (total cost £325,500);
 - Two year funding for an additional money advice post in East Durham Homes (total cost £60,000);
 - Project to improve digital access for tenants, including a 6 month training programme
- 162 Other ideas are currently being considered and will be introduced alongside those above shortly. This will add to the high level of support the Council has already been able to put in place to help residents manage the impacts of these changes.

Review of Local Council Support Scheme

- 163 The Government abolished the national Council Tax Benefits System on 31 March 2013, replacing it with a requirement for local authorities to work with their precepting bodies to establish a Local Council Tax Support Scheme with effect from 1 April 2013. The new schemes provide a 'discount' against the Council Tax charge, rather than a benefit entitlement.
- 164 The Government's Council Tax Support Scheme Grant replaced Council Tax Benefit subsidy and from April 2013 is now payable directly to the council and the major precepting bodies (Police and Fire). The funding made available to support the Local Council Tax Support Schemes in 2013/14 (90% of the previous funding available under the Council Tax Benefit System) now forms part of the council's formula funding arrangements. Whilst separate figures were published for this in 2013/14, from 2014/15 there is not yet any visibility over what level of funding is actually to be contained within the formula for Council Tax Support.
- 165 The council's grant payment includes an element relating to Town and Parish (T&P) Councils and whilst the Council has passed the grant on to the T&P Councils in 2013/14, there is no statutory requirement to do so.
- 166 In the absence of absolute figures as yet for 2014/15, and based on information to date, it is fair and reasonable to assume that the Government has applied pro-rata reductions in the Council Tax Support Grant element in

line with overall reductions in the formula funding, as published in the Spending Round on 26 June 2013.

- 167 Discussions have been held with Town and Parish Councils and it is proposed that from 1 April 2014 the Council will apply pro-rata reductions in the proportion of the grant, which relates to the Town and Parish Councils in line with the council's overall reduction in formula grant funding in 2014/15 onwards. Individual Town and Parish Councils have been written to regarding this issue to allow early financial planning to take place.
- 168 As Members are aware, the government reduced their funding contribution towards council tax support by 10 per cent nationally in 2013/14. By so doing, they also transferred the risk of any growth in the system through more council taxpayers becoming eligible for council tax support to local authorities by subsuming the new grant within the government's formula grant, which is a fixed amount. Councils now have discretion within some constraints, to design their own Local Council Tax Support Schemes. Pensioners, who account for around 50 per cent of the caseload in County Durham, have to be protected, with any reductions only being able to be applied to working age claimants. Councils are required to review and approve their schemes annually and have this agreed by a full council meeting before 31 January each year.
- 169 Members agreed to adopt a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2013/14, which mirrored the previous entitlement under the Council Tax Benefit System for all claimants. No council tax benefit claimants have therefore been financially worse off in 2013/14.
- 170 In approving the scheme for 2013/14, the council was mindful of the impacts of the wider welfare reforms and the fact that the additional Council Tax liabilities to individuals would be relatively small (around £250 a year) and were expected to be more difficult and costly to recover. There was a commitment to review the scheme on the grounds of MTFP affordability and ongoing austerity causing further MTFP pressures, as well as wishing to learn from experience (including recovery rates) in local authorities that have reduced entitlement for working age claimants.

Current Position

- 171 At this stage, there is a lack of meaningful intelligence available from authorities that have introduced Local Council Tax Support Schemes that reduced entitlement to their working age claimants in terms of impacts and performance in terms of recovery. Anecdotal feedback from other authorities indicates that the recovery rates, although below the general recovery rate, appear to be broadly in line with their expectations. The full range of welfare reforms (including the Benefit Cap where we have around 100 households affected) have yet to fully work through the system so any assumptions made now should be made with a degree of caution.
- 172 In terms of the council's financial forecast on the impact of retaining 100% entitlement to council tax support in 2013/14, the position at 30 June 2013 indicates that the planning assumptions in terms of setting the 2013/14 budget were prudent and remain within our planning assumptions.

- 173 For the reasons outlined above, it is recommended that the current scheme should be extended from April 2014 for a further year. This will allow a more detailed understanding of the impacts of the changes to benefits both within the county and across the region to be developed which can then help inform the decision for a scheme from April 2015.

Conclusion and recommendations

- 174 The government is continuing to progress its welfare reform programme, although there is increasing evidence to suggest that some changes most notably, Universal Credit will not be implemented as quickly as initially envisaged.
- 175 Whilst the government did not undertake a comprehensive impact assessment of its welfare reform programme, a number of studies and assessments of the impacts are now being published.
- 176 Researchers at Sheffield Hallam University identified that those local authority areas with the greatest levels of deprivation stood to be most impacted by welfare reform, losing most income as benefit payments are withdrawn and reduced, whilst having insufficient economic growth and employment opportunities to enable benefits claimants to move into work and off welfare.
- 177 Given the nature of the reforms and their impact on the county, the council continues to respond to the implementation of the government's welfare changes, through the provision of support and advice, its new welfare assistance scheme and revised Discretionary Housing Payments policy.
- 178 Cabinet is recommended to:
- a. note the contents of this report and further developments in government welfare reform;
 - b. note the latest analyses of the impact across the county;
 - c. note the progress with the new Welfare Assistance Fund scheme introduced in April 2013, the amendments to the scheme made under delegated powers and to allow further changes where necessary to be made under these delegated powers by the Assistant Chief Executive and Corporate Director Resources in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council
 - d. note the progress with the revised approach to Discretionary Housing Payments, implemented from April 2013, the amendments to the scheme made under delegated powers and to allow further changes where necessary to be made under these delegated powers by the Assistance Chief Executive and Corporate Director Resources in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council
 - e. note the review of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and recommend to Council that the current scheme be extended for a further year for 2014/15 with a full review in early 2014/15 to inform our approach from April 2015;

- f. confirm that the Council Tax Support Grant currently passported to the town and parish councils be reduced in line with the reductions made in the overall funding available to the Council.

OSMB Recommendation

- 179 OSMB Members are asked to note and comment on the content of the report and its implications for scrutiny, including the update on government policy, local impact and the council's ongoing work in responding to welfare reform.

Background papers

[Cabinet, 19 December 2012, Local Council Tax Support Scheme, Review of Discretionary Council Tax Discount on Unoccupied Properties & Calculation of Council Tax Base 2013/14 – report of Corporate Director Resources](#)

[Cabinet, 19 December 2012, Welfare Reform Update – report of Assistant Chief Executive](#)

[Cabinet, 13 March 2013, Welfare Reform Update – report of Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate Director Resources and Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development](#)

[Cabinet, 5 June 2013, Implications for Durham County Council of the Government's policy programme – report of Assistant Chief Executive](#)

Contact: Roger Goodes Tel: 03000 268050

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Payments /awards made under the council’s Welfare Assistance Scheme (£26,730 to 18 August 2013) and Discretionary Housing Payments Policy (£205,500 to 18 August 2013) are monitored closely and remain within budget.

The latest estimate of the overall financial impact of welfare reforms on the county is that benefit income will be reduced by £188 million a year.

In the Spending Review on 26 June 2013, the government announced that for the first time, it would introduce a cap on the country’s welfare spending. The cap will apply to over £100 billion of welfare spending.

Staffing – Through the New Burdens funding provided by Government alongside the changes additional staff have been recruited to help with the work on responding to the changes. All other work being undertaken is being managed within existing resources.

Risk – the implementation of welfare reform is included as a strategic risk in the corporate risk register.

Equality and Diversity – Changes to the policies have been subject to an equality impact review and any future changes will also be reviewed. Some of the changes being introduced by Government are having direct impacts on certain groups for example disabled tenants and where it is possible, the Council is providing help to mitigate these impacts

Accommodation – not applicable.

Crime and Disorder – not applicable.

Human Rights – not applicable.

Consultation – not applicable although a consultation will be undertaken next year if changes to the existing Local Council Tax Support Scheme are proposed.

Procurement –not applicable.

Disability issues – See comments under Equalities and Diversity.

Legal Implications – legal advice was sought on delivery options for the new Welfare Assistance Fund and the revised approach to Discretionary Housing Payments.

Appendix 2: Impacts of wider welfare reforms

		County Durham	North East	Great Britain
Housing Benefit: Local Housing Allowance	No. of households affected	12,600	63,400	1,350,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	13	70	1,650
	No. of households affected per 10,000	560	560	520
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	39	40	40
Housing Benefit: Under occupation	No. of households affected	8,700	50,000	660,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	5.9	30	490
	No. of households affected per 10,000	390	440	260
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	18	20	10
Non-dependent deductions	No. of households affected	3,100	16,000	300,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	3	20	340
	No. of households affected per 10,000	140	140	120
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	10	11	10
Household benefit cap	No. of households affected	250	1,500	56,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	1.2	5	270
	No. of households affected per 10,000	11	15	20
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	4	4	5
Council Tax benefit	No. of households affected	-	140,000	2,450,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	0	20	340
	No. of households affected per 10,000	-	1,190	950
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	0	10	9
Disability Living Allowance	No. of households affected	5,700	27,000	500,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	17	80	1,500
	No. of households affected per 10,000	170	160	130
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	52	45	40
Incapacity benefits	No. of households affected	16,500	74,000	1,250,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	57	260	4,350
	No. of households affected per 10,000	500	440	310
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	172	155	110

		County Durham	North East	Great Britain
Child Benefit	No. of households affected	63,400	320,000	7,600,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	22	110	2,850
	No. of households affected per 10,000	2,830	2,860	2,960
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	68	65	70
Tax Credits	No. of households affected	42,000	220,000	4,500,000
	Estimated loss £m per year	34	180	3,660
	No. of households affected per 10,000	1,880	1,940	1,750
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	102	105	90
One per cent uprating	Estimated loss £m per year	33	170	3,430
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	99	100	90
Total impact	Estimated loss £m per year	188	940	18,870
	Financial loss per working age adult £ per year	565	560	470

Source: Sheffield Hallam estimates based on official data

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

13 September 2013

Cabinet

11th September 2013

Update on the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan 3



Report of Corporate Management Team

Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council and all Cabinet collectively

Purpose of the Report

- 1 This report provides an update on the progress made at the end of June 2013 on the delivery of the 2013/14 to 2016/17 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP 3).

Background

- 2 Cabinet has received regular updates on the progress made by the Council in delivering the financial targets within MTFP 1 which covered the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 and within MTFP 2 which covers the period 2012/13 to 2015/16. These updates have also outlined the approach being taken to ensure the Council has a rigorous programme management framework in place to make certain we meet our duties under the Equalities Act, we comply with our duties as an employer and we consult on and communicate the changes being made.
- 3 MTFP 3 agreed by Council takes the overall savings target for the period from 2011/12 to 2016/17 to over £188m.

Progress to date

- 4 Savings of this level continue to be a major challenge for the Council. However through detailed planning and robust decision making, we have continued to meet the savings targets agreed by members.
- 5 Progress on the savings for the current year of MTFP3 has been significant and against the target set for the year of £20.87m we have achieved £15.12m by 30 June 2013 which represents 72% of the 2013/14 target. This means that the council has delivered £108.6 m savings since 2011

6 This progress reflects the work undertaken already on delivering the previous MTFPs and the high level of savings this year that are from projects and changes implemented previously. These include restructures across a number of the Council's service groupings including CAS, RED, HR, ICT and Legal and Democratic Services. Other savings have come from the changes to home to school transport, waste collection and disposal services and the on-going management of vacancies.

7 The amount delivered to date and the amounts still required over the coming few years are shown in the graph below.

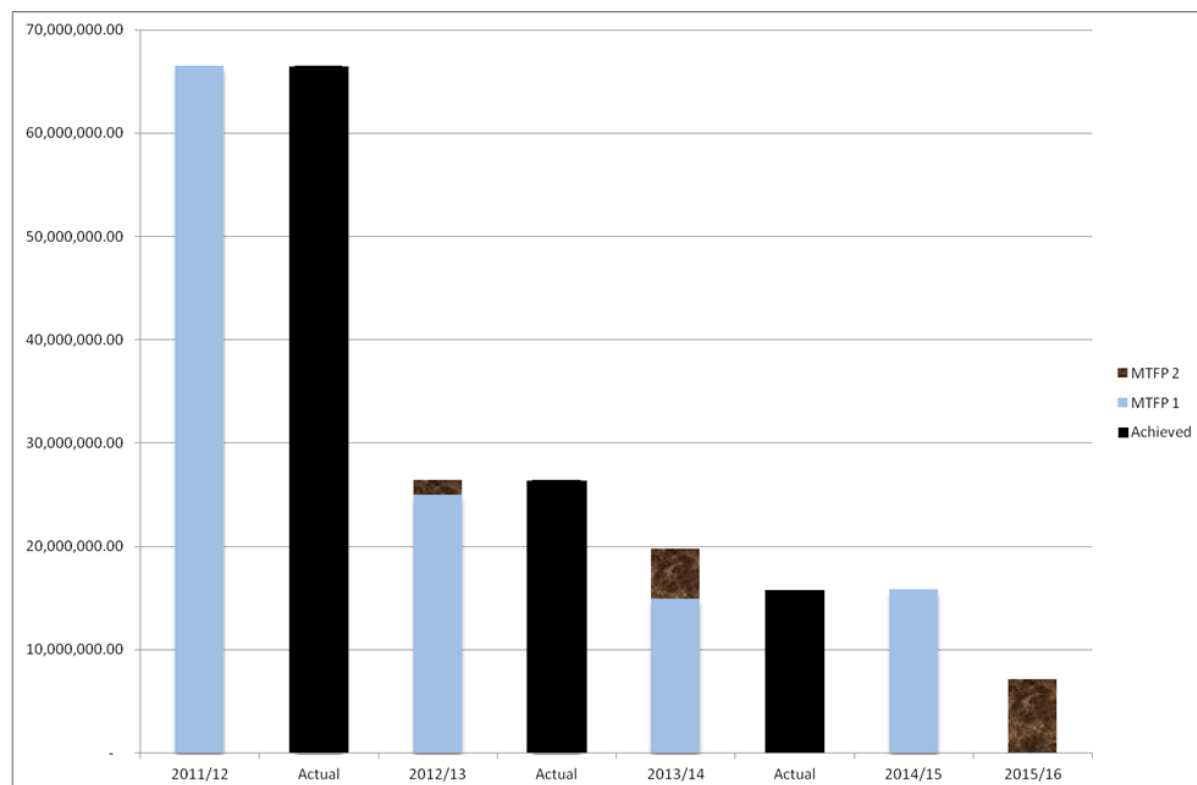


Figure1. MTFP 1, 2 and 3 savings targets and achievements

8 As part of the on-going delivery of the MTFP it is occasionally necessary to introduce a range of mitigating actions. These have been needed when an existing MTFP proposal has either been delayed or due to changed circumstances, has had to be revised. These additional/mitigating actions ensure the overall savings target is still being delivered through replacing planned proposals with other planned projects or initiatives.

9 The programme management approach used as part of the MTFP ensures where mitigation is required, these savings are monitored robustly.

Consultation

10 As a result of the nature of the savings already delivered during the first quarter of 2013 the level of public consultation activity has been low in this quarter, although a number of staff consultations have been undertaken.

11 Work is currently underway to design an extensive consultation of residents and partners on the overall MTFP as we look to identify further savings

required after 2015 through to 2017 when it is expected the overall target since 2011/12 for the Council will be in excess of £222m.

- 12 The AAPs will be a key focus of this during October and November and each AAP is planning to host a Participatory Budget event at which residents and partners will be able to provide their feedback on how the Council should deliver the additional savings required.
- 13 Full details of these events will be publicised during September.

HR implications

- 14 The impact on the Council's workforce continues to be in line with the original MTFP estimates in 2011. At that time it was anticipated that approximately 1,600 staff posts would be removed from the establishment together with a further 350 vacant posts deleted over the period from 2011 to 2015.
- 15 During the first quarter of this year 43 employees have left through redundancy or early retirement related to MTFP and 60.5 vacant posts deleted.
- 16 The Council has continued to support employees affected by the MTFP including offering staff affected alternative employment through the Council's redeployment process.
- 17 Employees are also continuing to apply for ER/VR and to date we have over 170 expressions of interest which we are actively managing.
- 18 The impacts on employees are also considered as part of the equality impact assessment process. It should be noted that although the information below does not relate solely to MTFP decisions, the majority are the result of MTFP and this offers a useful indication of the impact on staff across the authority.
- 19 Of those leaving through voluntary redundancy or early retirement just over 45% were male which is relatively high compared to our overall workforce profile. The proportion of employees recorded as having a disability accounted for 9% which is also high compared to our overall workforce profile, around 82% had not disclosed whether or not they had a disability. The majority (94%) were recorded as white British whilst the remainder had not disclosed their ethnicity. Working pattern information shows that 73% were full-time and 27% part-time.
- 20 Of those employees made compulsorily redundant almost 56% were female and just over 44% male which is a relatively higher proportion of men compared to our overall workforce profile. The proportion of employees in this category recorded as having a disability was 11% which again is high compared to our overall workforce profile, although 72% had not recorded whether they had a disability or not. Just over 94% were white British and the remainder had not disclosed their ethnicity. Around 61% worked full-time and almost 39% worked part-time.

Equality Impact Assessments

21 In order to ascertain ongoing impacts the council has examined the effects of efficiencies across MTFP1-3 with updates provided below on several key proposals during this period:

- An early MTFP proposal related to the review of respite services for people with learning disabilities (LD). After extensive consultation with service users, carers and staff it was recommended to close Dean Lodge, consolidate in-house services at Hawthorn House and explore alternative provision to provide wider choice in respite care. All of the actions identified within the EIA as part of the proposal have been completed. For example specific issues around transition, transport, older carers' needs and communication have been addressed. All service users who have an assessed need for respite are continuing to have those needs met. Additionally the council has ensured that increased options for respite are available.
- A number of CAS EIAs aimed to mitigate some of the potential negative impact of proposals through utilisation of the in-house reablement service. The service aims to give people over the age of 18 the opportunity, motivation and confidence to relearn/regain some of the skills they may have lost as a consequence of a physical, sensory or learning disability including mental health needs. Data suggests that on average 60% of people require no ongoing care after accessing a period of reablement. The support and recovery team have discharged over 90 people during 2012 with positive outcomes in terms of independence, education and employment.
- Regarding the review of adult day services all venue changes have now been made according to schedule. Consultation feedback was acted upon and the service has worked closely with service users and carers to improve plans, for example, extending spaces and layouts within new venues and improving access such as parking facilities and changing areas. Anecdotal feedback is positive with services users stating they prefer the new arrangements and, because services are based within public venues, this increases a feeling of involvement with their local community. All new units have a 'quiet room' for use if people need a retreat, for example, some older people found the lunch period noisy and preferred to eat their meal in a quieter area. Feedback is continually sought and acted upon as necessary.
- The review of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) resulted in the closure of some sites, reduced opening hours at remaining sites and the appointment of a new contractor from 1st June 2013. Proposals were widely consulted upon including consultation with Disability Partnership in December 2011. Actions within the EIA regarding proactive assistance and prominent signage have been addressed within the contract specification. The action regarding mobile provision is still being considered. Complaints and issues are monitored on an ongoing basis and acted upon in conjunction with the contractor where necessary.

Conclusions

- 22 The Council's approach of planning early and delivering the savings through robust programme management continues to be an important aspect in overcoming the significant challenge of delivering the MTFP.
- 23 The Council has delivered £15.12m of the 2013/14 MTFP target of £20.87m by the end of June.
- 24 Work is now underway to enable a major consultation exercise to be undertaken in October and November on how future savings for MTFP 4 should be delivered.

Recommendations

- 25 Members are recommended to note the contents of this report and the progress being made in delivering the £20.87m of savings for 2013/14 where 72% of the savings have been delivered by 30 June 2013.

Contact: Roger Goodes, Head of Policy & Communications
Tel: 03000 268050
Jenny Haworth, Head of Planning & Performance
Tel: 03000 267801

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The delivery of the MTFP involves cumulative saving of approximately £222m over the period from 2011 to 2017 of which £66.4m was delivered in 2011/12 and £26.4m delivered during 2012/13. In the current year we have already delivered 72% of the target of £20.87m, which brings the total amount saved to date to over £107m.

Staffing – Where the proposals affect staff, full consultation is undertaken and the trade unions consulted. Wherever possible, staff reductions are done through voluntary means. In addition, there has been a proactive management of vacancies to lessen the impact on staff and the Council has a redeployment process which continues to find alternative employment for a number of staff

Risk – The delivery of the MTFP is highlighted as one of the Council's strategic risks and is monitored through the corporate risk management process. In addition, risks for individual proposals are being monitored through the work undertaken to deliver the proposal.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken for the original 4 year MTFP plan and additional screening was undertaken for the 2012/13 proposals and any other changes made to the original plan. In addition, for each proposal an EIA is undertaken as part of the decision-making before the proposal is implemented.

Accommodation As proposals are planned the impact on accommodation is ascertained, with staff being consulted on any moves as part of the process. The anticipated loss of 1600 posts from the Authority will mean a requirement for less accommodation and the Office Accommodation Team has built this into the Office Accommodation Strategy.

Crime and Disorder – N/A

Human Rights – N/A

Consultation – A full consultation with a range of stakeholders was undertaken on the MTFP prior to its agreement. In addition, where appropriate for individual proposals, internal and external consultation plans are developed so that consultation informs the decision making process.

Procurement – A number of the proposals involve the changing of existing contracts and this work is being taken forward through the Council's agreed procurement processes.

Disability Issues – Any disability impacts are being picked up through the Equality Impact Assessments undertaken.

Legal Implications – The legal implications of any decisions required are being considered as part of the delivery of the proposals.

**Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

13 September 2013



Notice of Key Decisions

**Report of Corporate Management Team
Colette Longbottom, Head of Legal and Democratic Services**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To consider the list of key decisions that is scheduled to be considered by the Executive.

Background

- 2 New rules in relation to Executive decisions were introduced by The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, which came into force on 10 September 2012.
- 3 The regulations took away the requirement for the Executive to produce a Forward Plan of key decisions, however introduced that the decision maker cannot make a key decision unless a document has been published at least 28 clear days before the decision is taken, unless either a general exception or special urgency requirements have been met. The document which has to be published must state:
 - a) that the key decision is to be made on behalf of the relevant local authority
 - b) the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made
 - c) where the decision maker is an individual, that individual's name and title if any and where the decision maker is a decision making body, its name and list of its members
 - d) the date on which or the period within which the decision is to be made
 - e) a list of the document submitted to the decision maker for consideration in relation to the matter of which the key decision is to be made
 - f) the address from which, subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure copies of, or extracts from any document listed as available

- g) that other documents relevant to those matters may be submitted to the decision maker
 - h) the procedure for requesting details of those documents (if any) as they become available.
- 4 The requirements also apply to an exempt matter as previously it did not strictly have to be included in the Forward Plan. Now a publicity document must contain particulars of the matter, but may not contain any confidential exempt information or particulars of the adviser or political adviser or assistant.
- 5 Notices of key decisions that are being produced meet the legal requirements of publication, as well as continuing to provide information for a four month period. Members will therefore be able to consider key decisions as previously for the four month period.

Current Notice of Key Decisions

- 6 The notice of key decisions that is attached to the report at Appendix 2, is the latest to be published prior to the papers for the Board being dispatched to members. The notice complies with the requirements for Cabinet to be able to take key decisions on 11 and 18 September 2013. It also contained information on those key decisions that are currently scheduled to be considered by the Executive up to 31 December 2013.
- 7 The information in the Notice of Key Decisions provides the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with the opportunity of considering whether it wishes to seek to influence any of these key decisions, or to request further information. Members are asked to note that this version of the Notice has been amended and includes a column which has been added to advise of the relevant Scrutiny activity.
- 8 In responding to the request of the Board for further information to be provided on any items that are removed from the previous notice without being considered by Cabinet, this information will be provided at the meeting.
- 9 If the Board wished to examine any of the key decisions, consideration would need to be given as to how this could be accommodated in the Overview and Scrutiny Work programme.

Recommendation

- 10 You are recommended to give consideration to items listed in the notice.

**Contact: Ros Layfield, Committee Services Manager Tel: 03000 269708
Jenny Haworth, Head of Planning and Performance, ACE
Tel: 03000 268071**

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance : Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Staffing: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Risk: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Equality and Diversity/ Public Sector Equality Duty: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Accommodation: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Crime and Disorder Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Human Rights: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Consultation: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Procurement: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Disability Issues: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

Legal Implications: Will be reflected in each individual key decision report to Cabinet.

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SECTION ONE - CORPORATE

Ref. No.	Date of Decision (i.e. date of Cabinet meeting)	Description of Decision to be Made	Background Documents	Lead Cabinet Member	Main Consultees & Means of Consultation	Contact details for further information	Scrutiny Involvement
CORP/R/13/03	To Cabinet 11 September 2013	Welfare Reform and Review of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme	Localisation of Council Tax Benefit: Introduction of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme - Cabinet 18 April 2012, 12 September 2012 & 19 December 2012 & Council 09 January 2013	Leader		Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive Tel 03000 268060 Don McLure, Corporate Director, Resources Tel 03000 261945	Report going to OSMB on 13th September 2013.
CORP/R/13/04	To Cabinet 18 December 2013	To consider / approve the Council's Tax Base for 2014/15		Portfolio Holder for Finance		Jeff Garfoot, Head of Corporate Finance Tel 03000 261946	

**SECTION TWO -
CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES**

Ref. No.	Date of Decision (i.e. date of Cabinet)	Description of Decision to be Made	Background Documents	Lead Cabinet Member	Main Consultees & Means of Consultation	Contact details for further information	Scrutiny Involvement
CAS/02/13	11th September 2013	To seek Cabinet approval to change the age range of Ouston Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1st January 2014 to create a Primary School and to close Ouston Infant School from 31st December 2013.	No background documents	Councillor Ossie Johnson	Portfolio Holders, Local Members, MPs, Governors of Schools involved, Staff, Parents, Pupils, Trade Unions, Diocese and the Local Community	Sheila Palmerley, Strategic Manager, School Places and Admissions Tel. 03000 265 731	

SECTION THREE - REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Ref. No.	Date of Decision (i.e. date of Cabinet meeting)	Description of Decision to be Made	Background Documents	Lead Cabinet Member	Main Consultees & Means of Consultation	Contact details for further information	Scrutiny Involvement
R&ED/01/13	09/10/13	Shildon Regeneration Masterplan - to seek approval	Masterplan	Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	The Economy and Enterprise OSC received at the meeting on the 19th November an overview of the various masterplans for County Durham. As part of the refresh of the work programme for the Committee an update on the progress of the various masterplans was received at the meeting on 24 June, 2013 with a further update scheduled for committee on the 9th December, 2013.
R&ED/02/13	09/10/13	Newton Aycliffe Regeneration Masterplan - to seek approval	Masterplan	Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	See as Shildon above
R&ED/03/13	09/10/13	Peterlee Regeneration Masterplan - to seek approval	Masterplan	Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	See as Shildon above

SECTION THREE - REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R&ED/04/13	09/10/13	Energy Reduction Proposals for Chilton: Creation of a Social Enterprise		Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets 03000 267 334	An overview was provided at the Environment Osc on the 21st June, 2013 of the County Durham Climate Change Delivery Plan and it is intended that an update on the further development of the plan is provided to members at a future meeting of the Committee.
R&ED/07/13	18/09/13	Durham City Regeneration Masterplan - to seek approval	Masterplan	Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	See as Shildon above
R&ED/08/13	09/10/13	Seaham Colliery Housing Masterplan - to seek approval	Masterplan	Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	See as Shildon above
R&ED/11/13	TBC	Spennymoor Regeneration Masterplan - to seek approval	Masterplan	Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	See as Shildon above
R&ED/12/13	09/10/13	Adoption of Climate Change Strategy		Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets 03000 267 334	An overview was provided at the Environment Osc on the 21st June, 2013 of the County Durham Climate Change Delivery Plan and it is intended that an update on the further development of the plan is provided to members at a future meeting of the Committee.

SECTION THREE - REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

R&ED/13/13	09/10/13	Conservation Area Character Appraisals; Endorsement		Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets 03000 267 334	
R&ED/14/13	18/09/13	County Durham Plan Supporting Evidence and Documents		Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Stuart Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets 03000 267 334	The Economy and Enterprise OSC has received updates on the development of the County Durham Plan and Overview and Scrutiny has fed into the various consultation exercises. It is intended that an Overview and Scrutiny workshop will be arranged for the next stage of consultation on the Plan.
R&ED/15/13	09/10/13	Auckland Castle Update		Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration	Key individuals and organisations by meeting and correspondence	Sarah Robson, Head of Economic Development 03000 267 332	

SECTION FOUR - NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Ref. No.	Date of Decision (i.e. date of Cabinet meeting)	Description of Decision to be Made	Background Documents	Lead Cabinet Member	Main Consultees & Means of Consultation	Contact details for further information	Scrutiny Involvement
NS/19/13	11-Sep-13	To consider proposals relating to the garden waste service.	None	Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships	Consultation through a survey and other feedback mechanisms with current service users and key stakeholders	Alan Patrickson Head of Projects and Business Services Tel 03000 268165	To be considered by the Environment OSC at the meeting on 26th September 2013.
NS/20/13	11-Sep-13	To consider a review of the school crossing patrol service	School Crossing Patrol Guidance June 2012	Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships	Consultation through a survey and other feedback mechanisms with current service users and key stakeholders	John Reed Head of Technical Services Tel 03000 267454	

**Overview and Scrutiny
Management Board**

13 September 2013



Update in relation to Petitions

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with the quarterly update in relation to the current situation regarding various petitions received by the Authority.

Background

2. Following the introduction of The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, the administration of the petitions process was passed to Democratic Services.
 - 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Management Board have received update reports on petitions since September 2008.
 - 2.2 From the 15 December 2010, the Authority has provided a facility for members of the public to submit e-petitions on the Council's website.

Current Position

- 3 To-date 34 e-petitions have been submitted. Of these, 19 have been accepted and 13 rejected, 3 as they were duplicates of e-petitions already received, 10 as they did not qualify under the Council's Petition Scheme. 2 e-petitions did not go ahead at the request of the Petitioner, 1 of which did not "go live" on the Council's website. Of the 19 e-petitions accepted, 16 have now completed the petition process.
 - 3.1 Since the last update, 6 new paper petitions have been submitted and 12 petitions have completed the petition process. A list giving details and current status of all active petitions is attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

Recommendation

4. Members are requested to note the update report on the status of petitions and e-petitions received by the Authority.

Contact: Ros Layfield, Committee Services Manager
Tel: 03000 269 708 E-mail: ros.layfield@durham.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance : None

Staffing: None

Risk: None

Equality and Diversity/ Public Sector Equality Duty: None

Accommodation: None

Crime and Disorder: None

Human Rights: None

Consultation: Petitions which refer to a consultation exercise are reported to committee for information and forwarded to the relevant officer for consideration

Procurement: None

Disability Issues: None

Legal Implications: None

UPDATE

PETITIONS STILL ACTIVE AND NEW PETITIONS RECEIVED

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
Petition 34 Closure of Walkways on Woodhouse Close No. of signatures - 73 Petition received 05.08.09	B Kitching, Policy and Asset Manager, Neighbourhoods	Planning Inspectorate made their decision, with 2 of the 3 closures to go ahead. A Meeting was held as regards the works that are to go ahead, and those works have now commenced.	Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 11.07.13 Petition CLOSED .
Petition 112 Proposed Relocation of New Gym Equipment from Recreation Ground on Colliery Road, Bearpark, to The Wood No. of signatures - 539 Petition received 09.03.11	N Dodds, Strategic Manager, Outdoor Sport and Leisure / C Stephens, Outdoor Sport and Leisure Officer (Central and East), Neighbourhoods	The skatepark has now been installed, there are some landscaping works, extra drainage and installation of junior football goals still to be undertaken over the coming weeks, however, a launch event was held on Friday 26 July, at which the Chairman of Durham County Council/Mayor of Durham officially opened the skatepark.	Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 05.07.13 Petition CLOSED .

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 133</p> <p>Petition for the adoption of Wellfield Park Estate, Wingate</p> <p>No. of signatures - 92</p> <p>Petition received 12.7.11</p>	<p>J Collins – Highway Adoptions Team Leader, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>In order to serve a Default Notice and reclaim bond money so that the County Council can complete the adoption of this and other McInerney developments we need an estimate, bill of quantities and drawing showing the work required.</p> <p>I am expecting to carry out a site inspection within the next two weeks and send out the default notice shortly after that. There is a statutory period of 28 days for the bondsman to respond, and after that the works can begin as soon as a contractor is appointed. I hope to be on site by the middle of October this year.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 14.08.13</p>
<p>Petition 198</p> <p>Former Stanley Board School, Front Street, Stanley</p> <p>E-petition - No. sigs 70</p> <p>Petition received 5.11.12</p>	<p>D Collins, Estates / G Darby, Assets, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>E-petition made live on the Council's website 09.11.12.</p> <p>Petition asks for the building to be "for the use of the local community". E-petition closed for collection of signatures 15.02.13.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 29.08.13</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
Petition 198 cont.		Petitioner informed that the building was sold subject to contract and the private investor was proposing to renovate the existing structure and bring it back into use, albeit the end use was unconfirmed and would be subject to planning consent.	
Petition 207 Against Closure of First Class Childcare, Burnhope, Durham No. signatures – 764 Petition received 26.04.13	D Todd, Grant and Childcare Places Lead / N Waugh, Early Years Development Officer / S Fall, Strategic Manager / C O'Neill, Head of Education, Children and Adults Services	Petitioner informed of the decision of the Directors of Burnhope First Class Childcare to close the company. Petitioner informed of work of DCC with Burnhope Primary School to ensure some childcare services can still be offered.	Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 05.07.13 Petition CLOSED .
Petition 208 Pedestrian Safety and Amenity for Sedgfield Resident No. signatures – 125 Petition received 09.05.13	K Jameson, Area Traffic and Comm. Engagement Manager / D Battensby, Ass. Traffic and Comm. Engagement Manager / T Smith, Special Projects Officer, Neighbourhoods	Petitioner informed of existing crossing provision and given information relating to an assessment for a formal crossing, noting the proposal did not meet the necessary Department for Transport criteria.	Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 07.06.13 Petition CLOSED .

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 209</p> <p>Resurface road at Greenbank Street, Chester-le-Street</p> <p>No. signatures – 22</p> <p>Petition received 10.05.13</p>	<p>T Smith, Special Projects Officer, Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Petitioner informed of reasons why bollards were not possible at the location, and information as regards resurfacing works for 2013/14, noting that the while the area would be not be included, it would be included in the evaluation process for possible inclusion in the 2014/15 capital works programme. Works to potholes were completed.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 07.07.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>
<p>Petition 210</p> <p>Car Park to alleviate traffic problems on Lightfoot Road, Newton Aycliffe</p> <p>No. signatures – 67</p> <p>Petition received 14.05.13</p>	<p>T Smith, Special Projects Officer, Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Petitioner informed of verge hardening works that had been carried out in 2012 to deter parking in the immediate area of the bend and of the presence of underground public utility pipes and cable in the verge that meant further works could not be carried out to create a parking area.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 04.06.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>
<p>Petition 211</p> <p>Community Petition to save the Walls of Barnard Castle</p> <p>E-petition -</p> <p>Petition received 14.05.13</p>	<p>S Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>Petitioner informed of a positive meeting between the parties involved, with all involved noting the importance of working together to attempt to resolve the issue.</p>	<p>Regular update sent, with the last one being dated 27.06.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
Petition 211 cont.		It was agreed for a structural survey of the cliff be undertaken and all parties to keep public and other interested parties up to date. Further discussions would take place after the survey and the Council would in the meantime reinforce fencing at the area.	
Petition 212 Change to the Parent and School Parking at Westlea Primary School / Winslow Crescent, Seaham No. signatures – 29 Petition received 15.05.13	I Henry, Travel Planning Team Leader and L Mowbray, Team Leader - Major Traffic Projects, Regeneration and Economic Development	Petitioner was informed that it would be for school management as regards regulation of parents driving onto school grounds; however, this was not encouraged unless there was a specific accessibility requirement issue. Creating specific car parking on school premises for parents was against Council policy and it was noted that schools, within their School Travel Plans, could look put in place schemes, such as a “5 Minute Walking Zone” to help displace parental parking from the immediate area of the school.	Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 04.06.13 Petition CLOSED .

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
Petition 212 cont.		<p>Petitioner informed of the powers Durham Constabulary have in respect of “parking causing unnecessary obstruction” and that parking restrictions were usually considered where road safety was being compromised and any such restrictions in this instance would impact on residents as well and parents, therefore it was hoped that parking problems would be managed by the school rather than by introducing more punitive measures.</p>	
<p>Petition 213</p> <p>Grass cutting and create car parking at Fowler Road, Newton Aycliffe</p> <p>No. signatures – 11 Petition received 03.05.13</p>	<p>K Jameson, Area Traffic and Comm. Engagement Manager / T Smith, Special Projects Officer, Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Petitioner informed of the powers Durham Constabulary have in respect of “parking causing unnecessary obstruction”, and of the nature of “first come, first served” basis when parking on the highway outside of properties. Petitioner also informed of Government directions towards promoting alternative forms of travel and potential of not decreasing speeding issues by providing additional parking.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 26.06.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 214</p> <p>Save The Praxis Site, Ferryhill</p> <p>E-petition - No. signatures – 6 electronic 500 paper signatures Petition received 03.06.13</p>	<p>S Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets / G Darby, Assets Services Manager, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>E-petition submitted 03.06.13 – only 6 e-signatures received prior to close of collection period – further submission of paper copies from Dene Bank Residents Association received via Councillor P Crathorne 06.08.13.</p> <p>Petitioner given information of a meeting with the Residents Association 5.8.13, with a presentation given and informing the Residents Association of future opportunities, working with Partners, such as Livin and Four Housing Group.</p> <p>The Petitioner was also informed of a Council Interactive Residents Meeting to be held in October 2013 which will also be attended by key partners and will provide opportunity for all residents of Dean Bank to attend. Further details to be confirmed closer to the time.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 29.08.13</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 215 Parking/Loading Bay at Greenwell Road, Dalton Way and Faulkner Road, Newton Aycliffe</p> <p>No. signatures – 987 Petition received 11.06.13</p>	<p>D Wafer, Strategic Traffic Manager, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>Petitioner given information as regards the traffic regulations in place, how any monitoring / enforcement process is carried out and as regards the loading bay. It was noted within correspondence to the Petitioner that the Council could look at amending the bay and the Petitioner could contact a member of the Strategic Traffic Team as regards this. Upon receipt of further correspondence from the Petitioner, a further response was sent setting out information as regards various restrictions and regulation orders in place in the area, and reiterating the offer to look at amending the bay upon contacting Strategic Traffic.</p> <p>The latest update from the service to the Petitioner set out information relating to taxi provision and TROs at the locations mentioned, loading bays and restrictions. The Petitioner was offered the opportunity to discuss the issues of the loading bay further with Officers from Strategic Traffic.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 21.08.13</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 216</p> <p>“Where is the layby for Lumley Close, Newton Aycliffe”</p> <p>No. signatures – 17</p> <p>Petition received 19.06.13</p>	<p>K Jameson, Area Traffic and Comm. Engagement Manager / T Smith, Special Projects Officer / P Stannard, Area Traffic and Comm. Engagement Ass. Eng. (Area 2), Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Petitioner informed of visit by Local Member and Traffic and Community Engagement Officer on 18 June 2013.</p> <p>Petitioner informed of trial hole to determine location and depth of public utilities, and depending upon results a scheme could be drawn up. The Petitioner was informed of funding being sourced from Local Members in this regard. Upon receipt of public utility information a meeting with Local Members was arranged, with Petitioner to be informed so that they may attend also.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 27.08.13</p>
<p>Petition 217</p> <p>Reinstate Public Pool and Chester-le-Street</p> <p>E-petition - Petition received 12.07.13</p>	<p>P Irwin, Outdoor Sport and Leisure Manager / N Dodds, Strategic Manager, Outdoor Sport and Leisure / S Howell, Head of Sport and Leisure, Neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Petition to reinstate the use of paddling pool at Chester-le-Street. Pool was reopened 14.08.13.</p>	<p>Acknowledgement 12.07.13, made live on website 22.07.13</p> <p>Regular update sent, with the last one being dated 19.08.13</p> <p>Petition marked as completed on website 19.08.13.</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 218</p> <p>Petition with regard to "The Loading Only Bay" at Baliol Street, Barnard Castle</p> <p>No. signatures – 84</p> <p>Petition received 12.07.13</p>	<p>L Mowbray, Major Projects Team Leader – Strategic Traffic, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>Petitioner informed that sign regarding loading bay removed in light of change of use of nearby premises, and order placed to have lines and text removed from the road surface in due course.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 12.07.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>
<p>Petition 219</p> <p>Save Our Fields Campaign – Trimdon Station</p> <p>No. signatures – 353 (at 26.07.13)</p>	<p>S Timmiss, Head of Planning and Assets Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>Petition as regards allocation of area of land at Trimdon Station for housing development.</p> <p>Petition falls outside of the petition scheme as "e-signatures" collected via another website, not DCC, however, Head of Planning and Assets responded noting:</p> <p>"I was invited to attend a meeting with residents, together with a Local Member, Councillor Lucy Hovvels, regarding this issue.</p>	<p>Update e-mail sent 16.08.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
		<p>I was made aware of the concerns raised by residents and explained the Council's position at this time relating to planning policy and that the site in question was not allocated for housing. At this time we have not received an application to build on the site and therefore we can only monitor the situation and provide clarity on issues relating to the planning process. If an application is received all of the issues raised by residents will be considered as part of the process".</p>	
<p>Petition 220 Peterlee A19 Traffic Lights E-petition - Petition received 28.07.13</p>	<p>A White, Head Of Transport and Contract Services / D Wafer, Strategic Traffic Manager / D Lewin, Traffic Management Section Manager / M Sinclair, Team Leader Traffic Signals and UTMC, Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>Petition to have traffic lights at the A19 roundabout at Peterlee operated on a part time basis.</p>	<p>Acknowledgement 28.07.13, made live on website 02.08.13</p>

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 221</p> <p>Land at the top of Harelaw Gardens, Catchgate, Stanley</p> <p>No. signatures – 53</p> <p>Petition received 08.08.13</p>	<p>O Sherratt – Head of Direct Services / A. Lambert, Special Projects Officer, Neighbourhoods / M Ogden, Access and Rights of Way Team Leader , Regeneration and Economic Development</p>	<p>Petition for untidy and high weeds to be cut and maintained.</p> <p>Petitioner informed that vegetation would be cut back in September, and once the initial cut was undertaken, the ground would then be able to be assessed and if good added to the programme of routine maintenance work. If this was not feasible, then the vegetation would be cut twice yearly to stop the vegetation from growing.</p>	<p>Regular update letters sent, with the last one being dated 27.08.13</p> <p>Petition CLOSED.</p>