

# Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee

19 September 2014



## Quarter 1 2014/15 Performance Management Report

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### Report of Corporate Management Team Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive Councillor Simon Henig, Leader

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#### Purpose of the Report

1. To present progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators for the Altogether Better Council theme and report other significant performance issues for the first quarter of 2014/15 covering the period April to June 2014.

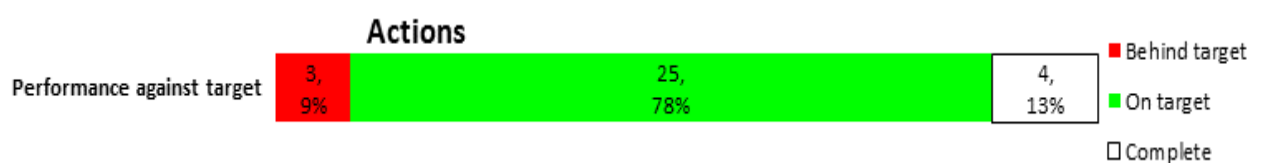
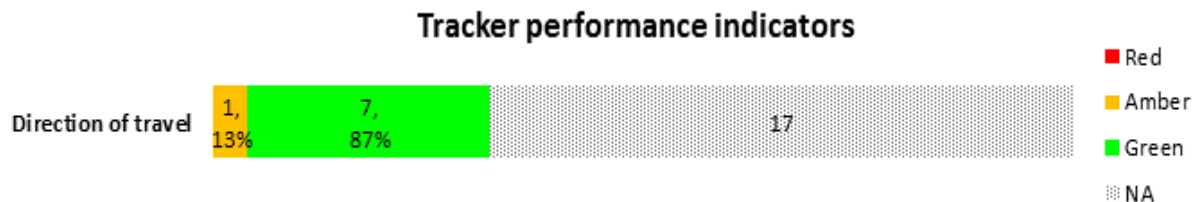
#### Background

2. The report sets out an overview of performance and progress for the Altogether Better Council 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 (see Appendix 3, table 1); 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 (see Appendix 3, table 2).
3. Work has been carried out by officers and members on developing a revised indicator set and targets for 2014/15 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.
4. The report continues to incorporate a stronger focus on volume measures in our performance framework. This allows us to better quantify productivity and to monitor the effects of reductions in resources and changes in volume of activity. Charts detailing some of the key volume measures which form part of the council's corporate basket of performance indicators are presented in Appendix 4.

#### Developments since Last Quarter

5. Corporate performance indicator guidance which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources will soon be available from the Councillors Intranet homepage at: <http://intranet/sites/Councillors/default.aspx>. Any queries relating to the definition manual can be directed to the Corporate Performance Team at [performance@durham.gov.uk](mailto:performance@durham.gov.uk).

## Altogether Better Council: Overview



### Council Performance

#### 6. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. Quarter 1 has seen the Revenues and Benefits Service maintain the improved claims processing performance delivered in the latter half of 2013/14. Whether new claims or changes of circumstances, housing benefit or council tax reduction claims, the processing time for each is better than the respective profiled target for quarter 1 and significantly better than the same point last year.
  - i. New housing benefit (HB) claims were processed in 21.9 days on average, 4.6 days more quickly than the same period last year, while new council tax reduction (CTR) claims were processed in 23.1 days on average, 7.4 days more quickly than the same period last year. Monthly performance has been within the 25 day quarter 1 profiled targets for all three months of this financial year. The volume of new HB claims processed decreased from 3,334 in quarter 1 of 2013/14 to 3,160 this period. During quarter 1, 3,531 new CTR claims were processed compared to 3,822 in quarter 1 of 2013/14 (see Appendix 4, Chart 1).
  - ii. The processing rate for changes of circumstances also improved significantly since 2013/14 with changes to HB claims being processed in 10.1 days on average, within the 12 day target and 9.1 days more quickly than the same period last year, while changes to CTR claims were processed in 10.7 days on average, within the 12 day target and 10.9 days more quickly than the same period last year. The volume of change of circumstances for HB claims processed decreased from 32,574 in quarter 1 of 2013/14 to 26,679 this period. During quarter 1, 27,570 change of circumstances for CTR claims were processed compared to 30,326 in quarter 1 of 2013/14 (see Appendix 4, chart 2).

- b. Significant improvements have also been made since 2013/14 in the proportion of new claims being processed within 14 days of all the required information being received by the Revenues and Benefits Service. More than 81% of new housing benefit claims and almost 75% of new council tax reduction claims were processed within 14 days of all the required information being received. To further improve our responsiveness to claimants, additional work is planned during quarters 2 and 3 to streamline the process, enhance the flow of information, and thereby hopefully increase the proportion of new claims that are processed within 14 days of all the required information being received. At the same time as delivering an improved claims processing service to our claimants and associated stakeholders, a number of system enhancements have been developed and introduced, with more planned for the remaining months of 2014/15, including the introduction of a basic online form for the submission of changes of circumstances.
- c. Between April and June 2014, 226,173 telephone calls were answered which is 96% of all calls received compared to 82% at the same period last year. During quarter 1, 94% were answered within three minutes against the target of 80%, an improvement on the same period last year, when 62% were answered within three minutes. Volume of telephone calls shows a reduction in calls received this quarter (236,372) when compared with the previous quarter (257,158) and the same period last year (267,752) (see Appendix 4, Chart 3), although there has been a corresponding increase in contact received via emails and web forms of 18.3% (17,530) compared to the same quarter last year (14,815). This increase is in the number of emails received as the number of web forms has decreased.
- d. During quarter 1, the percentage of customers seen at a customer access point (CAP) within the 15 minutes target was 97%, better than the same period last year (92%). CAP figures have been revised this year to remove the library footfall to make it a more accurate reflection on the number of customers visiting our CAPs to request a service. Once the figures were amended this shows a decrease from 68,283 in quarter 4 to 62,388 in quarter 1 as well as a decrease when comparing to the same period last year (63,542) (see Appendix 4, Chart 4).
- e. The percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers during quarter 1 was 92.5% which shows a 3.5% points improvement against the previous quarter and is 0.5% points above the target of 92%. Although the target has been achieved this quarter, efforts to improve and consolidate performance will continue to ensure the recent improvement is sustained. Oracle Business Intelligence has been rolled out to key users within each service to enable pro-active monitoring and review of invoice holds and late payment trends analysis. Monthly improvement meetings are held, attended by representatives from all service groupings to discuss procure to pay developments, process changes, system enhancement and share best practice in order to sustain and improve performance. In addition service representatives meet monthly to discuss service specific issues and developments. An action plan has been developed in conjunction with ICT, Oracle systems support and the software provider in order to improve the responsiveness of the DBCapture system.

- f. This quarter saw a high degree of activity in relation to business lettings within council owned factories and business support centres with 25 new lettings and seven tenants leaving, bringing the occupancy levels to 76.1%. Performance is above the target of 75.5% and the same period last year (74.5%). In particular there were a significant number of new lettings at ViewPoint, Consett Business Park which brought the occupancy of these new units to 54%.
- g. Progress has been made with the following Council Plan and service plan actions:
  - i. Planning for the May 2014 European Union Election began in January 2014 with the creation of an in-house planning team including the Returning Officer, Electoral Managers and senior officers. The team met regularly to plan the election, monitor progress and risks, and record decisions and agreed actions. No major problems were encountered on polling day and the election ran in accordance with the plan. Likewise the verification process held at two separate centres on election night ran smoothly. Following a successful count held at Spennymoor Leisure Centre, the results were transferred to the Sunderland regional count centre as planned. Preparatory work is currently being undertaken for the Parliamentary Election in May 2015.
  - ii. Internal promotion of the Care Connect Lone Worker Platform has been undertaken resulting in approximately 400 additional staff utilising the service, including 230 One Point staff. External promotion has also been undertaken with housing providers and has resulted in securing a contract with Home Group for 105 staff.

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

- a. Quarter 1 has seen the introduction of a broader suite of sickness-related measures and for the first time, sickness is being reported both excluding and including schools, each against target. Accepting that current sickness levels remain too high and need to be reduced, it is encouraging to report that the overall trend of sickness is reducing:
  - i. The average days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent (FTE) employee (including school based employees) for the rolling year decreased from 9.0 days at quarter 4 2013/14 to 8.96 days at the end of quarter 1 2014/15, an improvement of 0.44% but above the target of 8.7 days.
  - ii. The average number of days lost to sickness absence per FTE (when excluding schools based employees) for the rolling year decreased from 12.08 days at quarter 4 2013/14 to 11.93 days at the end of quarter 1 2014/15, an improvement of 1.24% but slightly above the target of 11.8 days.
  - iii. The reducing trend is also reflected in the total number of FTE days lost, which improved from 99,883 in the rolling year to quarter 1 2013/14 to 93,343 for quarter 1 2014/15. Likewise, the percentage of time lost to sickness for the rolling year, another of the additional sickness measures introduced into quarter 1 reporting, reduced from

4.93% in quarter 1 2013/14 to 4.71% in quarter 1 2014/15. During the rolling year to quarter 1, 48.14% of posts had no sickness absence.

- b. The percentage of employee performance appraisals completed over the 12 months to June 2014 was 64%. This is a decrease of 6.6% compared to quarter 4 2013/14 (69%) and is below the target of 85%. Notwithstanding substantial efforts to encourage, enable and support an increase in appraisal activity across the council, the rate for employee appraisals carried out in the last year remains persistently below the 85% target for 2014/15. Indeed the council average has deteriorated for three consecutive quarters since quarter 2 2013/14. However there has been a marked improvement in performance when compared to the same period in 2013/14. The percentage of performance appraisals completed has improved by 13.7% when compared to the rolling year at quarter 1 2013/14 (56.5%). This improvement is attributable to a review and reinforcement of the performance appraisal scheme together with improved recording arrangements.
  - c. The percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within 20 days was 79% this quarter, a nine percentage point improvement from the previous quarter (70%) but remains below the national target of 85%. The number of requests received has reduced this period to 281 compared to the previous quarter (347) but is higher than the same period last year (227) (see Appendix 4, chart 5).
  - d. Key Council Plan actions which have not achieved target in this theme include:
    - i. Improving customer access to online services. Development of a new website to improve access to customer information and services, due by August 2014, has been delayed until October 2014. The scope of the project has been increased to include web forms which have necessitated an extension to the project.
    - ii. Improving complaints reporting and monitoring. Completing corporate complaints pilots to inform the revised process was due by June 2014. The initial pilot was completed in April 2014 and the remainder will be completed by October 2014.
    - iii. Increasing the level of external funding attracted. The development of a community led local development structure to maximise involvement of Area Action Partnerships to increase resources for local actions, due by September 2014, has been delayed until March 2015. The implementation of this action depends on the receipt of funding. The decision on whether the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) will be included in the final agreed European funding package is expected by December 2014.
8. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:
- a. *If there was to be slippage in delivery of the agreed MTFP savings projects, this will require further savings to be made from other areas, which may result in further service reductions and 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 delivery plan is closely monitored by the Assistant Chief Executive

on behalf of Cabinet. It should be recognised that this will be a significant risk for at least the next four years.

- b. *Ongoing Government funding cuts which now extend to at least 2017/18 will continue to have an increasing major impact on all council services.* Management consider it highly probable that this risk could occur, and to mitigate the risk, sound financial forecasting is in place based on thorough examination of the Government's red book plans.
- c. *Potential restitution of search fee income going 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. A framework for settlement has been produced and this is currently being considered.
- d. *The council could suffer significant adverse service delivery and financial impact if there are delays in the procurement and implementation of the new banking contract.* Pre-procurement meetings will be held with alternative providers to establish what services can and cannot be provided. Awareness-raising will take place at Tier 4 Manager level that banking arrangements are due to change. The new contract is expected to be in place by September 2015 to ensure a smooth transition.
- e. *If the council were to fail to comply with Central Government's Public Services Network (PSN) Code of Connection criteria, this would put some core business processes, such as Revenues and Benefits, at risk.* An ongoing project is in place to maintain compliance.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

- 9. That the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive the report and consider any performance issues arising there from.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**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 issues.

**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 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** - Employees with a disability are monitored as part of the performance monitoring process.

**Legal Implications** - Not applicable

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## Appendix 2: Key to symbols used within the report

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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	PI 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
<b>Altogether Better Council</b>											
63	NS22	Percentage of calls answered within 3 minutes	94	Apr - Jun 2014	80	GREEN	62	GREEN			
64	NS24	Percentage of customers seen within 15 minutes at a Customer Access Point	97	Apr - Jun 2014	95	GREEN	92	GREEN			
65	RES/038	Percentage all ICT Service Desk incidents resolved on time	94	Apr - Jun 2014	90	GREEN	94	AMBER			
66	RES/NI/1 81a1	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims (days)	21.93	Apr - Jun 2014	25.00	GREEN	26.53	GREEN	23	25**	Jan - Mar 2014
									Not comparable	Not comparable	
67	RES/NI/1 81a2	Average time taken to process new council tax reduction claims (days)	23.10	Apr - Jun 2014	25.00	GREEN	30.46	GREEN			
68	RES/NI/1 81b1	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for housing benefit claims (days)	10.11	Apr - Jun 2014	12.00	GREEN	19.18	GREEN	5	6**	Jan - Mar 2014
									Not comparable	Not comparable	
69	RES/NI/1 81b2	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for council tax reduction claims (days)	10.65	Apr - Jun 2014	12.00	GREEN	21.59	GREEN			
70	RES/001	Savings delivered against the MTFP (£m)	14.2	As at Jun 2014	23.0	<a href="#">Not comparable [1]</a>	15.1				

Ref	PI 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
71	RES/002	Percentage of council tax collected in-year	28.63	Apr - Jun 2014	28.35	GREEN	28.20	GREEN	97.00 Not comparable	96.01* Not comparable	2013/14
72	RES/003	Percentage of business rates collected in-year	33.36	Apr - Jun 2014	34.34	RED	35.90	RED	97.90 Not comparable	97.76* Not comparable	2013/14
73	RES/129	Percentage of council tax recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.0	As at Jun 2014	98.5	GREEN	98.9	GREEN			
74	RES/130	Percentage of business rates recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.11	As at Jun 2014	98.50	GREEN	99.20	RED			
75	REDPI39	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit	2.01	Apr - Jun 2014	2.45	GREEN	3.39	GREEN			
76	REDPI78	Percentage of capital receipts received	7.0	Apr - Jun 2014	25.0	RED	8.5	RED			
77	REDPI33	Percentage of council owned business floor space that is occupied	76.10	As at Jun 2014	75.50	GREEN	74.50	GREEN			
78	REDPI76	Income generated from council owned business space (£)	746,000	Apr - Jun 2014	750,000	AMBER	760,662	RED			
79	REDPI49 b	£ saved from solar installations on council owned buildings	214,000	2013/14	Not set	NA	New indicator	NA			
80	REDPI68	Average asset rating of Display Energy Certificates (DECs) in county council buildings	98.00	As at Jun 2014	98.00	GREEN	99.70	GREEN			
81	RES/LPI/ 010	Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers	92.5	Apr - Jun 2014	92	GREEN	91.5	GREEN			

Ref	PI 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
82	ACE006	Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within statutory deadlines	79	Apr - Jun 2014	85	RED	73	GREEN			
83	RES/LPI/012	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services including school staff	8.96	Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	8.70	RED	9.35	GREEN			
84	RES/LPI/012a	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services excluding school staff	11.93	Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	11.80	AMBER	12.42	GREEN			
85	RES/011	Percentage of performance appraisals completed	64.3	Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	85.0	RED	56.5	GREEN			

[\[1\] Annual target](#)

**Table 2: Key Tracker Indicators**

Ref	PI 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
<b>Altogether Better Council</b>											
183	NS43a	Number of customer contacts- face to face	62,388	Apr - Jun 2014	68,283	NA	63,542	NA			
184	NS43b	Number of customer contacts-telephone	236,372	Apr - Jun 2014	257,158	NA	267,752	NA			
185	NS43c	Number of customer contacts- web forms	3,991	Apr - Jun 2014	5,390	NA	4,455	NA			
186	NS43d	Number of customer contacts- emails	13,539	Apr - Jun 2014	15,505	NA	10,360	NA			
187	NS20	Percentage of abandoned calls	4	Apr - Jun 2014	4	AMBER	18	GREEN			
188	NS100	Number of complaints recorded on the Customer Relationship Management database (CRM)	686	Apr - Jun 2014	774	GREEN	930	GREEN			
189	RES/013	Staff aged under 25 as a percentage of post count	5.47	As at Jun 2014	5.59	NA	5.47	NA			
190	RES/014	Staff aged over 50 as a percentage of post count	38.02	As at Jun 2014	38.34	NA	36.41	NA			
191	RES/LPI/011a	Women in the top 5 percent of earners	51.44	As at Jun 2014	51.02	NA	51.60	NA			
192	RES/LPI/011bi	Black and minority ethnic (BME) as a percentage of post count	1.47	As at Jun 2014	1.42	NA	1.41	NA			
193	RES/LPI/011ci	Staff with disability as a percentage of post count	2.79	As at Jun 2014	2.85	NA	2.94	NA			

Ref	PI 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
194	REDPI 79	Number of tenants of the seven main housing providers seen through the triage process	587	Apr - Jun 2014	813	Not comparable [2]	874	Not comparable [2]			
195	REDPI 79a	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given employability advice	34	Apr - Jun 2014	35	RED	24	GREEN			
196	REDPI 79b	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given debt advice	37	Apr - Jun 2014	37	AMBER	30	GREEN			
197	REDPI 79c	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given income advice	54	Apr - Jun 2014	41	GREEN	39	GREEN			
198	REDPI 79d	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers that have been rehoused	4	Jan - Mar 2014	5	RED	New indicator	NA			
199	RES028	Discretionary Housing Payments - value (£) for customers affected by social sector size criteria	629,272.88	Apr - Jun 2014	832,006.57	NA	61,610.44	NA			
200	RES029	Discretionary Housing Payments - value (£) for customers affected by Local Housing Allowance Reforms	62,342.77	Apr - Jun 2014	125,977.46	NA	18,165.24	NA			
201	ACE016	Percentage of children in poverty (quarterly proxy measure) <b>(Also in Altogether Better Council)</b>	23.6	As at Feb 2014	23.5	RED	24.7	GREEN	17.9	24.3*	As at Feb 2014
									RED	GREEN	

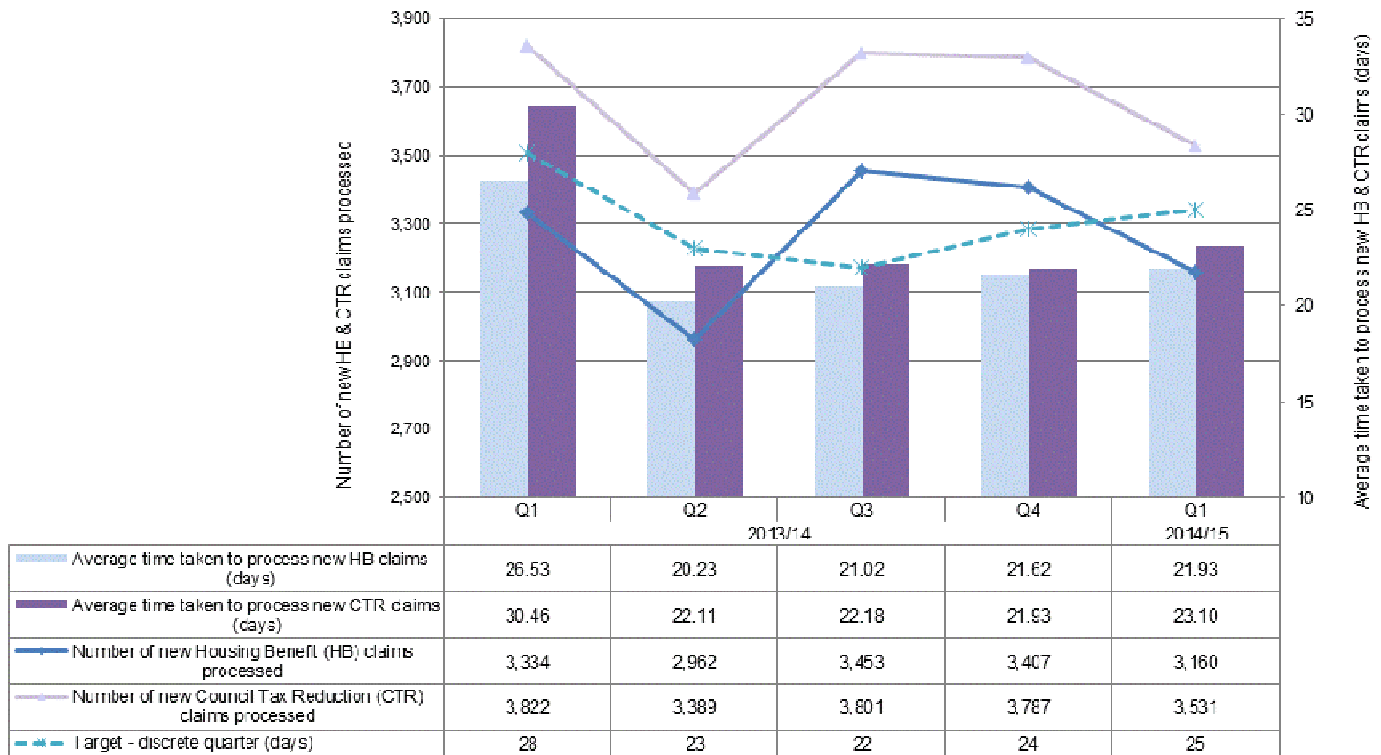
Ref	PI ref	Description	Latest data	Period covered	Previous period data	Performance compared to previous period	Data 12 months earlier	Performance compared to 12 months earlier	National figure	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure	Period covered
202	ACE017	Percentage of children in poverty (national annual measure) <b>(Also in Altogether Better Council)</b>	23.0	2011	23.0	<b>AMBER</b>	23.0	<b>AMBER</b>	20.6	24.5*	2011
									<b>RED</b>	<b>GREEN</b>	
203	RES/034	Staff - total post count (including schools)	17,951	As at Jun 2014	17,581	NA	17,546	NA			
204	RES/035	Staff - total full time equivalent (FTE) (including schools)	14,068	As at Jun 2014	14,225	NA	14,164	NA			
205	RES/052	Percentage of posts with no absence (excluding schools)	48.14	Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	Data not available	NA [3]	Data not available	NA [3]			
206	RES/020	Percentage of time lost to sickness in rolling year (excluding schools)	4.71	Jul 2013 - Jun 2014	4.76	<b>GREEN</b>	4.93	<b>GREEN</b>			
207	RES/036	Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	11	Apr - Jun 2014	11	NA	15	NA			

[\[2\] Not comparable due to changes in welfare reform](#)

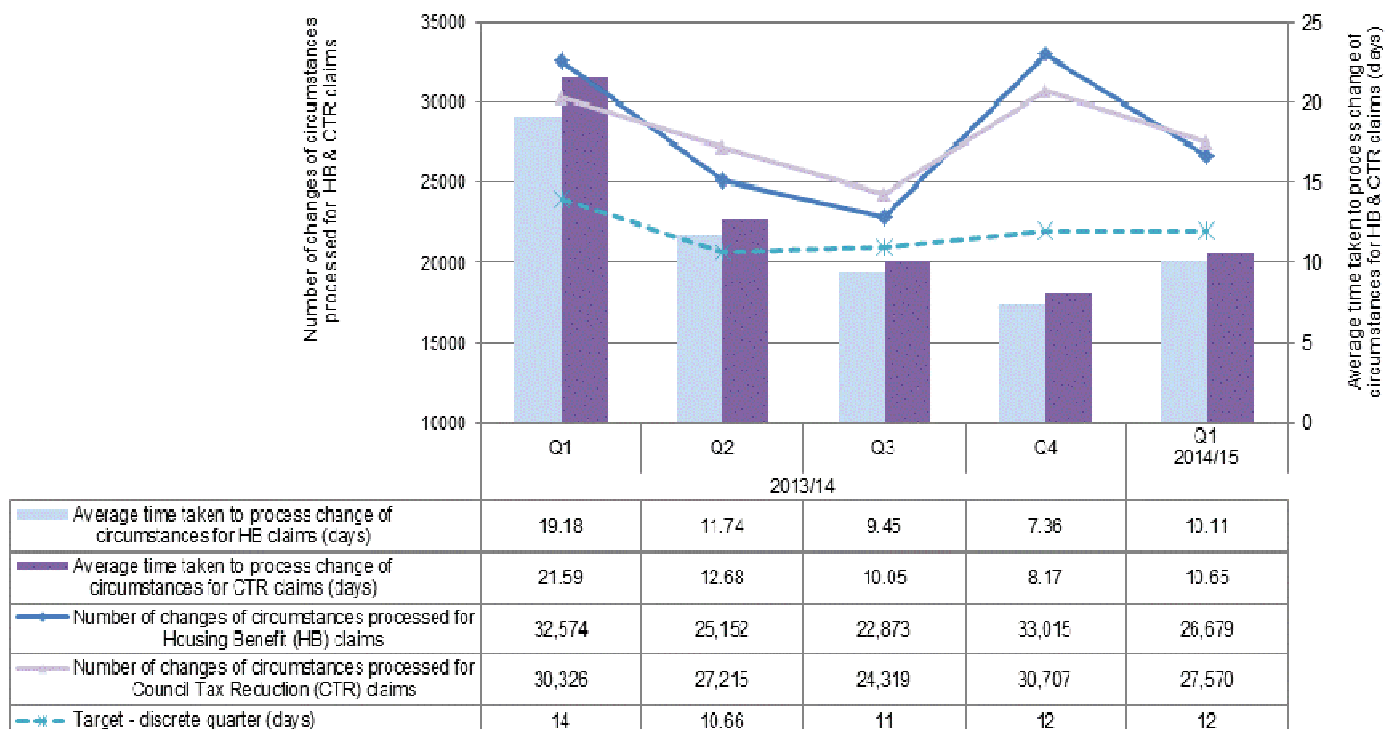
[\[3\] Frequency changed and back data is not available](#)

## Appendix 4: Volume Measures Chart numbers

### Chart 1 – Benefits – new claims



### Chart 2 – Benefits – changes of circumstances



**Chart 3 - Telephone calls**



**Chart 4 – Face to face contacts**

