

**Corporate Issues
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

20 April 2015



**Quarter 3 2014/15
Performance Management Report**

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

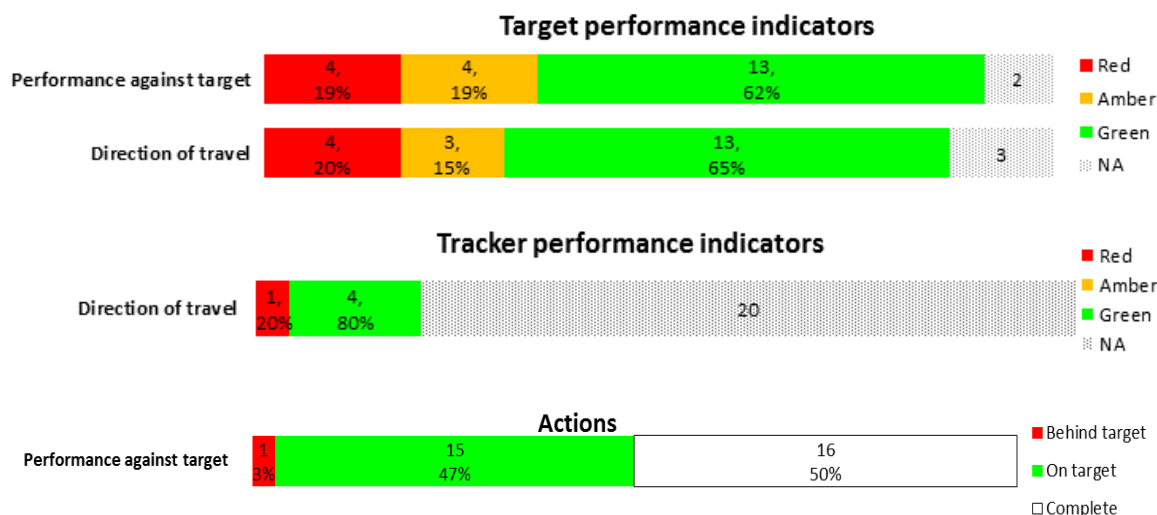
Purpose of the Report

1. To present progress against the council's corporate basket of performance indicators for the Altogether Better Council theme and report other significant performance issues for the third quarter of 2014/15 covering the period October to December 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. 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.
4. A corporate performance indicator guide has been produced which provides full details of indicator definitions and data sources. This is available to view from the intranet or can be requested from the Corporate Planning and Performance Team at performance@durham.gov.uk.

Altogether Better Council: Overview



Council Performance

5. Key achievements this quarter include:

- a. Between October and December 2014, 207,209 telephone calls were answered, which is 95% of all calls received, compared to 90% at the same period last year. 94% were answered within three minutes against the target of 80%. This was an improvement on the same period last year, when 87% were answered within three minutes. The volume of telephone calls shows a decrease in calls received this quarter (218,592) when compared with the previous quarter (244,074) and with the same period last year (235,064) (see Appendix 4, Chart 5). There were no additional automatic call distribution telephone lines added or removed this quarter, however there was less customer contact during December due to the shutdown over the festive period. There was also an 18% decrease in contact received via emails and web forms (14,323) compared to the same quarter last year (17,486). This was due to the Christmas closedown, the launch of the new website with customers getting used to navigating the new design and also some downtime was experienced due to technical issues with the web form links and a new platform.
- b. During quarter 3, 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 (95%). The figures show a decrease in customers from 57,763 in quarter 2 to 46,271 in quarter 3 as well as a decrease when comparing to the same period last year (60,479) (see Appendix 4, Chart 6).
- c. This quarter saw a high degree of activity in relation to business lettings within council owned factories and business support centres with 17 new lettings and nine tenants leaving, bringing the occupancy levels to 79.3%. Performance is above the target of 76.5% and the same period last year (76.5%). The increase in occupancy levels has resulted in increased income from council owned business space. Between April and December 2014 £2,367,000 was generated, better than the target of £2,265,000 and performance for the same time last year (£1,986,971).

- d. For the third consecutive quarter, 94% of Information Communication Technology (ICT) service desk calls were resolved on time, which is better than the 90% target. 86% of calls were answered within one minute.
- e. Better than target performance has been sustained for benefit claims processing for new claims and changes of circumstances during quarter 3. Processing times are better than the respective profiled target for quarter three and are better than the most recently reported national averages. During quarter 3:
 - i. New Housing Benefit (HB) claims were processed in 19.6 days on average, within the 21.3 day target and better than the same period last year (21). This compares favourably with the latest (quarter 2) national and nearest statistical neighbour figures of 23 and 21 days respectively. The volume of new HB claims processed decreased from 3,429 in quarter 2 to 3,174 this period (Appendix 4, Chart 1).
 - ii. New Council Tax Reduction (CTR) claims were processed in 20.9 days on average, within the 21.3 day target and 1.3 days quicker than the same period last year. There were 3,453 new CTR claims processed compared to 3,798 in quarter 2 (Appendix 4, Chart 2).
 - iii. Changes to HB claims were processed in 9.5 days on average, within the 10 day target, but 0.02 days slower than the same period last year. Performance was better than both the quarter 2 national and nearest statistical neighbour averages of 10 and 11 days respectively. The volume of change of circumstances for HB claims processed decreased from 27,308 in quarter 2 to 24,881 this period (Appendix 4, Chart 3).
 - iv. Changes to CTR claims were processed in 9.2 days on average, within the 10 day target and 0.85 days faster than the same period last year. During quarter 3, 27,090 change of circumstances for CTR claims were processed compared to 28,732 in quarter 2 (Appendix 4, Chart 4).

Efforts to improve the flow of information between different parts of the Revenues and Benefits Service have contributed to this improved position. This remains an area of focus as processes and procedures are reviewed.

- 6. The key performance improvement issues for this theme are:
 - a. Improving the management of attendance and reducing sickness absence continues to be a priority for the council. Data for quarter 3 show:
 - i. The average days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent (FTE) employee (including school based employees) for the rolling year has increased from 9.02 days at quarter 2 to 9.31 days at the end of quarter 3 2014/15, a deterioration of 3.22%. The target of 8.7 days has not been achieved.
 - ii. The average number of days lost to sickness absence per FTE (when excluding schools based employees) for the rolling year has remained at 11.97 days at the end of quarter 3 as at quarter 2. The target of 11.8 days has not been achieved.

- iii. During the rolling year, 47% of posts (excluding school based employees) had no sickness absence.
- iv. The percentage time lost to sickness absence (excluding schools) has remained at 4.73% at the end of quarter 3 as at quarter 2. A trend of less long and more short and medium term absence continued during quarter 3.

Work continues to ensure that all sickness absence is actively and consistently managed to achieve the improvement targets we set ourselves for 2014/15. Recent and forthcoming developments to manage reporting and support for managers across the organisation include:

- A streamlined draft Attendance Management Policy, including a 'rehabilitation' section, and a strengthened approach for the management of short term sickness.
 - Compulsory sickness absence training for managers (tiers 4 and 5).
 - The rollout of ResourceLink's leave management module has been completed across all service groupings except Children and Adult Services, which will follow from February 2015. This enables managers to input sickness absence directly via MyView and will improve the speed and accuracy of recording absence.
 - Sickness absence data including proportions of short, medium and long term sickness is being monitored at service level.
- b. Significant efforts during quarter 3 have resulted in a much improved employee appraisal rate with 81.7% of staff receiving an appraisal in the 12 months to December 2014. Whilst this is a significant increase of 24.5% compared to quarter 2 (65.6%) and more than double that of quarter 1 2012/13 (40.3%), the corporate target of 85% has not been achieved.

Human Resources will continue to provide support and encouragement to managers in relation to appraisal activity, developments and training, and promote the required improvements in this key organisational activity. Actions currently underway include:

- 'MyView Alerts' which assist managers and advise them when appraisals are due.
 - Performance appraisal training continues to be delivered
 - A new facility is available for managers to securely store electronic copies of performance appraisal documentation for their team in MyView.
- c. The percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers during quarter 3 was 91% which is a one percentage point improvement compared to the previous quarter, despite necessary interruption to business during the upgrade of the Oracle financials system. Performance however is one percentage point below the target of 92%. 73% of undisputed invoices were paid within ten days.
- d. The percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within 20 days was 74% this quarter, four percentage point deterioration from the previous

quarter (78%) and remaining below the national target of 85%. Several complex responses were handled in quarter 3 and the Christmas closure also delayed some responses (see Appendix 4, Chart 7).

7. A key Council Plan action which will not achieve the deadline of February 2016 relates to the office accommodation programme. This has now been delayed until April 2016. The scope of the Newton Aycliffe and Stanley CAP and Library projects has been redefined and a new completion date of April 2016 has been agreed. For both of these sites the design team is currently working on producing detailed designs prior to pricing. Following the decanting of Hopper House, it has now been decommissioned in preparation of the redevelopment of North Road. The CAP in Old Bank Chambers was closed on 23 December 2014. A new customer surgery opened in Bishop Auckland Library located in the Bishop Auckland Town Hall on 8 January 2015, where customers can see a customer services officer about council tax and housing benefits.
8. The key risks to successfully delivering the objectives of this theme are:
 - a. If there was to be slippage in the delivery of the agreed Medium Term Financial Plan (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, a programme management approach for key projects has been established and embedded across the council. Monitoring by Corporate Management Team and Cabinet provides assurance over the implementation of the agreed MTFP savings projects. 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 2019/ 20 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. This will also be a significant risk for at least the next four years.
 - 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. Lawyers, instructed through the Local Government Association on behalf of local authorities, have produced framework for settlement and this is currently being considered. It is hoped that settlement will be reached by the end of the 2014/ 15 financial year.
 - d. The council could suffer significant adverse service delivery and financial impact if there are delays in the implementation of the new banking contract. The new banking contract has been awarded and a project board established to ensure a smooth transition process.
 - e. If we were to fail to comply with Central Government's Public Services Network Code of Connection criteria, this would put some of our core business processes, such as revenues and benefits, at risk. An ongoing project is in place to ensure compliance. A backup ICT site is now in place. The equipment has been installed, data has been transferred, and a full test

is planned once remedial electrical work is carried out at the council's primary data site.

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

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

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

Performance against target

Latest reported data have improved from comparable period

GREEN

Performance better than target

Latest reported data remain in line with comparable period

AMBER

Getting there - performance approaching target (within 2%)

Latest reported data have deteriorated from comparable period

RED

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 N/A	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure N/A	Period covered
Altogether Better Council											
64	NS22	Percentage of calls answered within three minutes	94	Oct - Dec 2014	80	GREEN	87	GREEN			
65	NS24	Percentage of customers seen within 15 minutes at a customer access point	97	Oct - Dec 2014	95	GREEN	95	GREEN			
66	RES/038	Percentage all ICT service desk incidents resolved on time	94	Oct - Dec 2014	90	GREEN	91	GREEN			
67	RES/NI/18 1a1	Average time taken to process new housing benefit claims (days)	19.64	Oct - Dec 2014	21.33	GREEN	21.02	GREEN	23.00 GREEN	21** GREEN	Jul - Sep 2014
68	RES/NI/18 1a2	Average time taken to process new council tax reduction claims (days)	20.90	Oct - Dec 2014	21.33	GREEN	22.18	GREEN			
69	RES/NI/18 1b1	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for housing benefit claims (days)	9.47	Oct - Dec 2014	10.00	GREEN	9.45	RED	10.00 GREEN	11** GREEN	Jul - Sep 2014
70	RES/NI/18 1b2	Average time taken to process change of circumstances for council tax reduction claims (days)	9.20	Oct - Dec 2014	10.00	GREEN	10.05	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 N/A	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure N/A	Period covered
71	RES/001	Savings delivered against the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) (£m)	22.0	As at Dec 2014	23.0	Not comparable [1]	18.7	NA			
72	RES/002	Percentage of council tax collected in-year	82.94	Apr - Dec 2014	83.38	AMBER	82.90	GREEN	97.00 Not comparable	96.01* Not comparable	2013/14
73	RES/003	Percentage of business rates collected in-year	81.63	Apr - Dec 2014	80.69	GREEN	85.40	RED	97.90 Not comparable	97.76* Not comparable	2013/14
74	RES/129	Percentage of council tax recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.07	As at Dec 2014	98.50	GREEN	99.10	AMBER			
75	RES/130	Percentage of business rates recovered for all years excluding the current year	99.18	As at Dec 2014	98.50	GREEN	99.20	AMBER			
76	REDPI39	Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the annual rent debit	1.7	Oct - Dec 2014	2.45	GREEN	1.88	GREEN			
77	REDPI78	Percentage of capital receipts received	69.0	Apr - Dec 2014	75.0	RED	43.0	GREEN			
78	REDPI33	Percentage of council owned business floor space that is occupied	79.30	As at Dec 2014	76.50	GREEN	76.50	GREEN			
79	REDPI76	Income generated from council owned business space (£)	2,367,000	Apr - Dec 2014	2,265,000	GREEN	1,986,971	GREEN			
80	REDPI49b	£ saved from solar installations on council owned buildings	214,000	2013/14	Not set	NA	New indicator	NA			
81	REDPI68	Average asset rating of Display Energy Certificates in county council buildings	99.10	As at Dec 2014	98.00	AMBER	NA	NA			

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 N/A	*North East figure **Nearest statistical neighbour figure N/A	Period covered
82	RES/LPI/010	Percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days to our suppliers	91.0	Oct - Dec 2014	92.0	AMBER	91.0	AMBER			
83	ACE006	Percentage of Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests responded to within statutory deadlines	74	Oct - Dec 2014	85	RED	80	RED			
84	RES/LPI/012	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services including school staff	9.31	Jan - Dec 2014	8.70	RED	8.92	RED			
85	RES/LPI/012a	Days / shifts lost to sickness absence – all services excluding school staff	11.97	Jan - Dec 2014	11.80	AMBER	12.03	GREEN			
86	RES/011	Percentage of performance appraisals completed (excluding schools)	81.7	Jan - Dec 2014	85.0	RED	73.3	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
Altogether Better Council											
183	NS43a	Number of customer contacts- face to face	46,271	Oct - Dec 2014	57,763	NA	60,479	NA			
184	NS43b	Number of customer contacts-telephone	218,592	Oct - Dec 2014	244,074	NA	235,064	NA			
185	NS43c	Number of customer contacts- web forms	3,654	Oct - Dec 2014	4,352	NA	4,196	NA			
186	NS43d	Number of customer contacts- emails	10,669	Oct - Dec 2014	12,839	NA	13,290	NA			
187	NS20	Percentage of abandoned calls	5	Oct - Dec 2014	5	AMBER	9	GREEN			
188	NS100	Number of complaints recorded on the Customer Relationship Management database (CRM)	898	Jul - Sep 2014	617	RED	856	RED			
189	RES/013	Staff aged under 25 as a percentage of post count	5.59	As at Dec 2014	5.63	NA	5.45	NA			
190	RES/014	Staff aged over 50 as a percentage of post count	38.42	As at Dec 2014	38.16	NA	37.79	NA			
191	RES/LPI /011a	Women in the top five percent of earners	52.32	As at Dec 2014	52.30	NA	52.11	NA			
192	RES/LPI /011bi	Black and minority ethnic (BME) as a percentage of post count	1.5	As at Dec 2014	1.53	NA	1.40	NA			
193	RES/LPI /011ci	Staff with disability as a percentage of post count	2.73	As at Dec 2014	2.75	NA	2.90	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	Not reported	Oct - Dec 2014	506	NA	557	NA			
195	REDPI 79a	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given employability advice	Not reported	Oct - Dec 2014	33	NA	38	NA			
196	REDPI 79b	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given debt advice	Not reported	Oct - Dec 2014	33	NA	48	NA			
197	REDPI 79c	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers who were given income advice	Not reported	Oct - Dec 2014	65	NA	57	NA			
198	REDPI 79d	Percentage of triaged tenants of the seven main housing providers that have been rehoused	Not reported	Oct - Dec 2014	Not reported	NA	5.0	NA			
199	RES028	Discretionary Housing Payments - value (£) for customers affected by social sector size criteria	934,274	Apr - Dec 2014	813,326	NA	353,417	NA			
200	RES029	Discretionary Housing Payments - value (£) for customers affected by local housing allowance reforms	115,379	Apr - Dec 2014	84,430	NA	69,433	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
201	ACE016	Percentage of children in poverty (quarterly proxy measure) (Also in Altogether Better for Children and Young People)	23.3	As at May 2014	23.6	AMBER	24.4	GREEN	17.6	24*	As at May 2014
202	ACE017	Percentage of children in poverty (national annual measure) (Also in Altogether Better for Children and Young People)	22.7	2012	23.0	GREEN	23.0	GREEN	18.9	23.4*	2012
203	RES/034	Staff - total headcount (including schools)	18,039	As at Dec 2014	17,453	NA	17,577	NA			
204	RES/035	Staff - total full time equivalent (FTE) (including schools)	14,110	As at Dec 2014	14,076	NA	14,211	NA			
205	RES/052	Percentage of posts with no absence (excluding schools)	46.66	Jan - Dec 2014	46.58	GREEN	Data not available	NA [1]			
206	RES/020	Percentage of time lost to sickness in rolling year (excluding schools)	4.73	Jan - Dec 2014	4.73	AMBER	4.75	GREEN			
207	RES/036	Number of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	11	Oct - Dec 2014	18	N/A	21	NA			

[1] Frequency changed and past data not available

Appendix 4: Volume Measures

Chart 1 – Housing Benefits – new claims

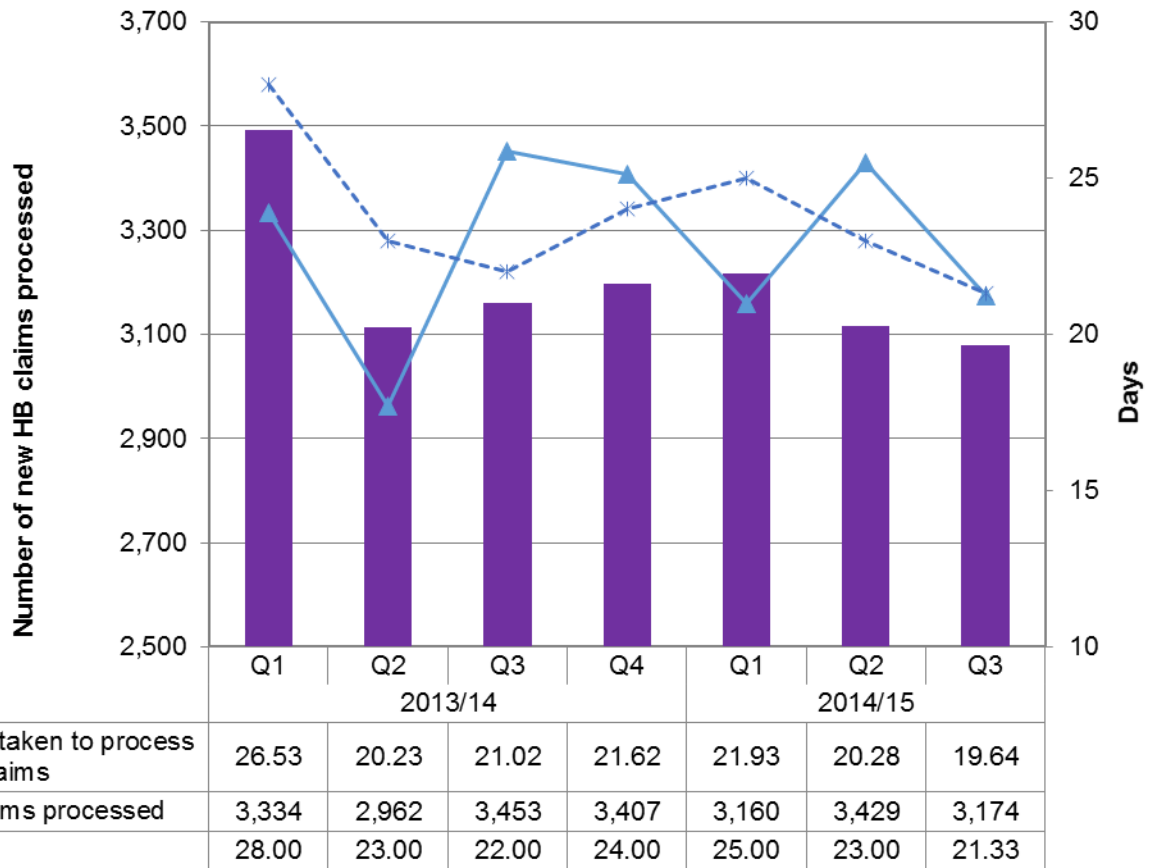


Chart 2 – Council Tax Reduction – new claims

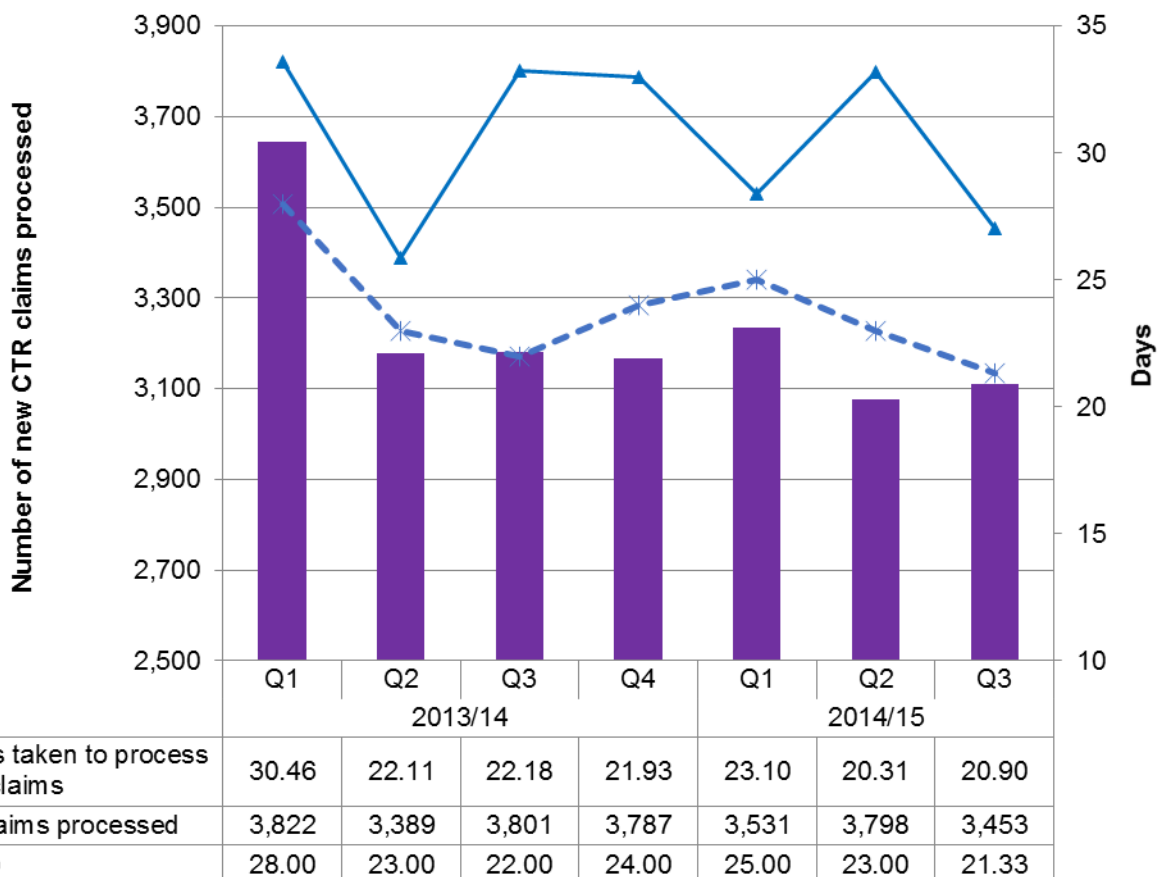


Chart 3 – Housing Benefits – changes of circumstances

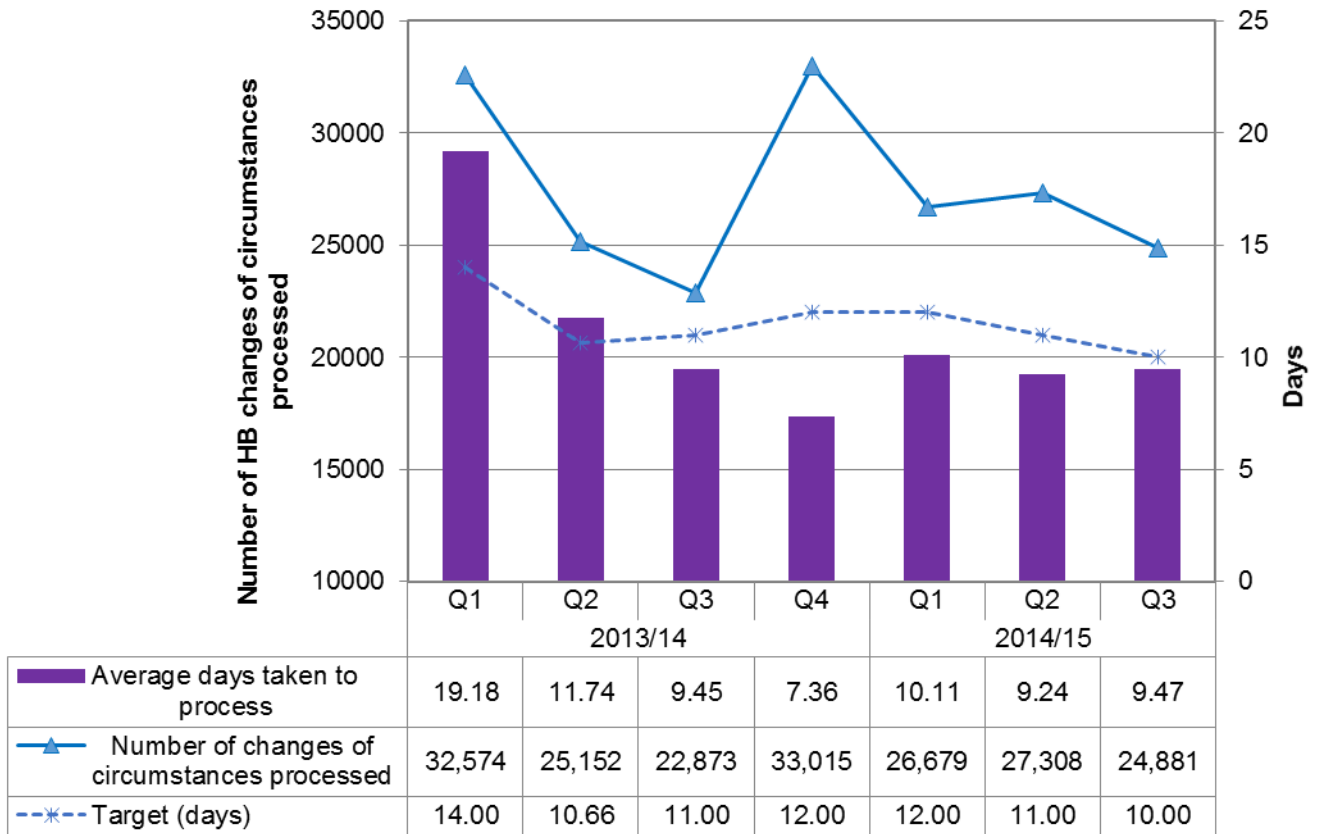


Chart 4 – Council Tax Reduction – changes of circumstances

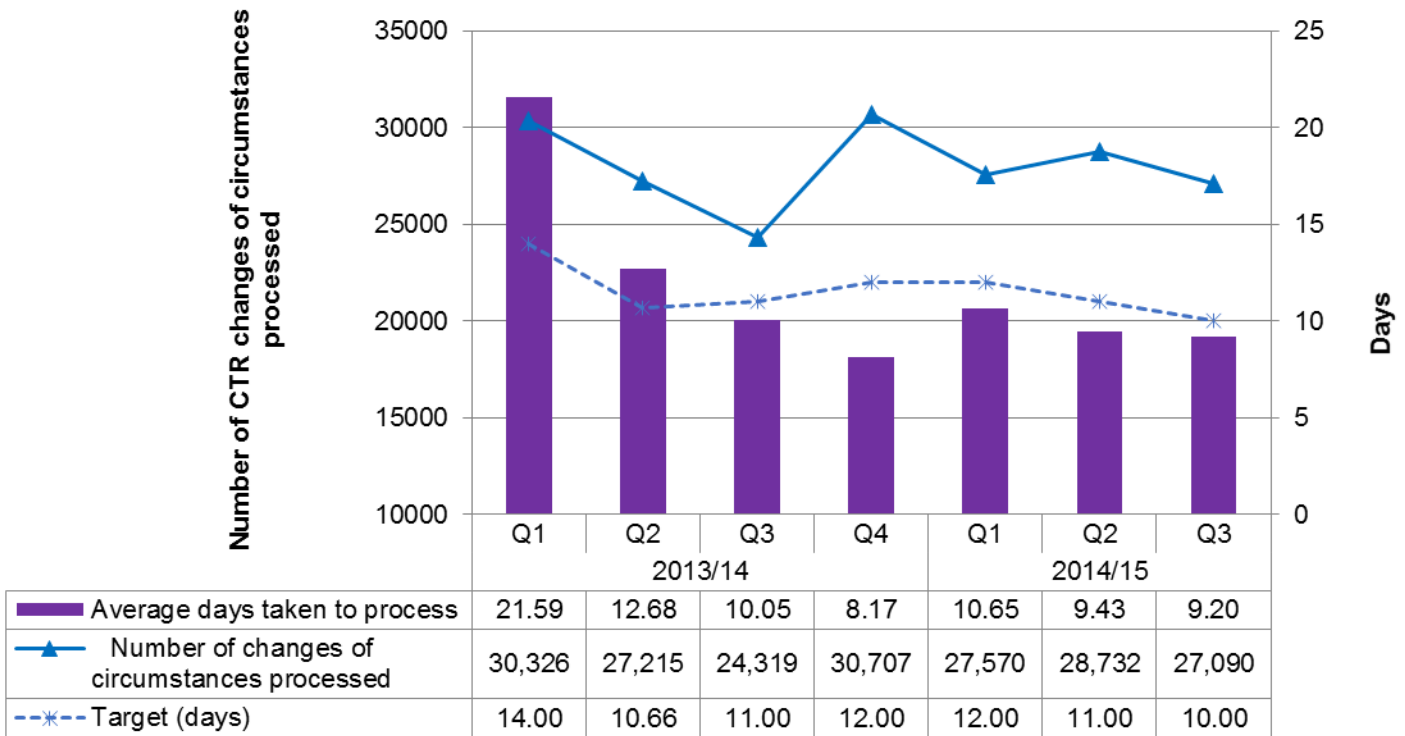


Chart 5 - Telephone calls

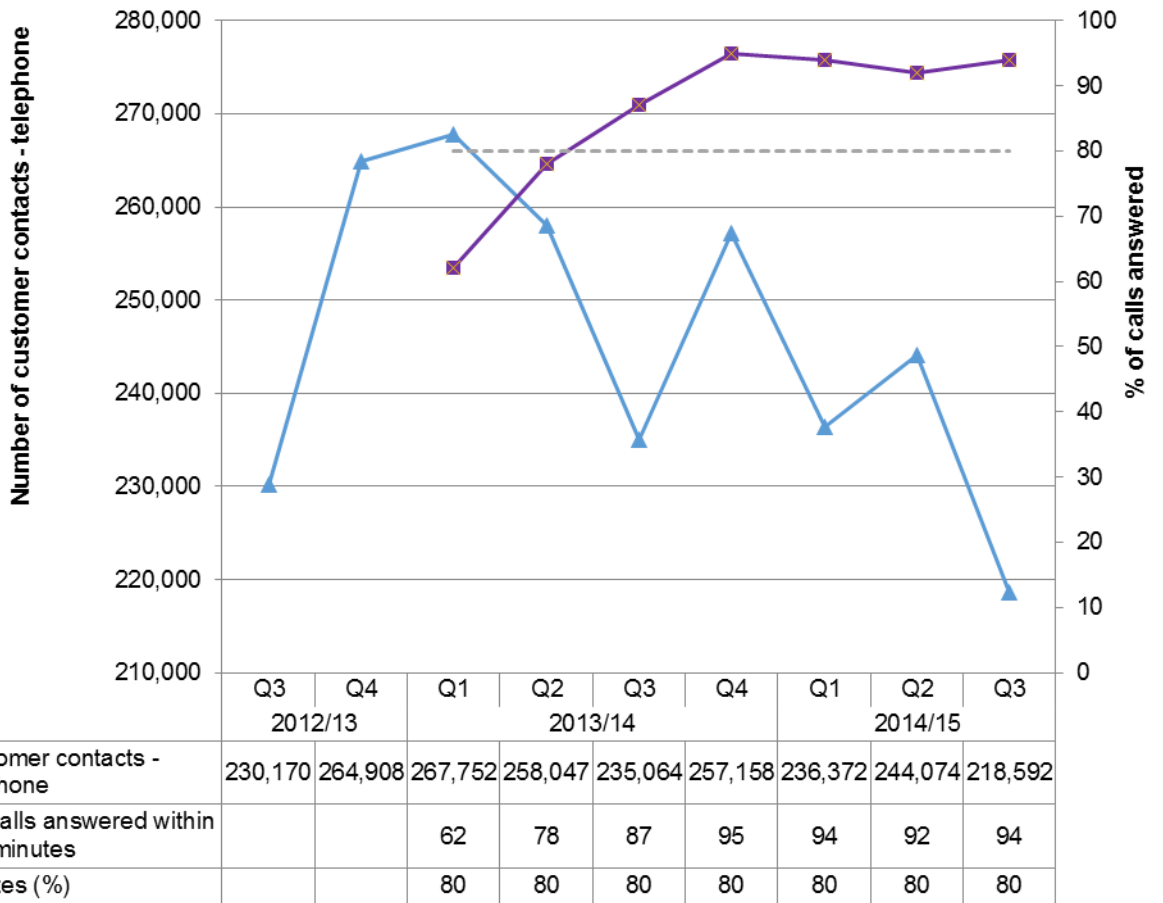


Chart 6 – Face to face contacts

