

Harlow Council published Oflog metric data

Appendix E

Metric published by Oflog relevant to Harlow are provided below. The England Median (Districts) metric reflects the middle number when considering the metrics for all District Councils in England rather than the mean average. This means that 50% district councils in England have a value equal or lower to the median figure and 50% of district councils in England have a value higher or equal to the median figure. More information on the use of Median data as a tool can be found on the Oflog website: <https://oflog.data.gov.uk/methodology/> The data published by Oflog is made available to generate questions rather than make judgements. Context about the Harlow data for each metric is included in the table.

Indicator	Harlow	England median (Districts)
Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of net revenue expenditure (2021-22)	230.80%	146.40%
Comments: Shows Harlow's Council reserve levels are in a healthy position; Reserves are detailed within the medium term financial plan each year and are managed by a reserves strategy. Earmarked reserves are set aside for specific purposes. They either fund capital, services, or for risk mitigation purposes.		
Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of service spend (2021-22)	208.30%	131.00%
Comments: See above.		
Total core spending power per dwelling (2021-22)	£316.34	£242.19
Comments: Total Core Spending power is a Government calculation that includes estimated Council Tax income, Baseline business rates income (before growth) and a number of unringfenced grants. N.B. It is not the council's budgetted expenditure.		
Level of band D council tax rates (2021-22)	£288.90	£192.56
Comments: This shows Harlow's element of Council tax levied for Band D properties approved at full council. Harlow has a relatively low proportion of Band D properties compared to other authorities. Additionally Harlow differs from many District Council's in that there is no Town / Parish Council who can raise a council tax requirement in their own right.		
Council tax revenue per dwelling (2021-22)	£1,375.72	£1,556.44
Comments: this metric shows the average council tax received per dwelling including major preceptors – i.e. Essex County Council, Fire and Police compared to the median.		
Debt servicing as percentage of core spending power (2021-22)	8.50%	10.20%
Comments: Core Spending Power does not reflect all of the income the Council receives; therefore it is important to note that there are other income streams available to service the debt.		
Total debt as percentage of core spending power (2021-22)	2044.80%	457.50%
Comments: The metric uses Capital Finance Requirement (CFR) which includes debt for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Majority of Harlow's debt relates to self financing the Housing Revenue Account, undertaken in 2013, which is not comparable to Core spending power, as this only relates to the General Fund. Many district local authorities do not have a HRA.		

Council tax collection rates in year (2021-22)	94.20%	97.40%
<p>Comments: During the COVID-19 pandemic, many local authorities temporarily paused or reduced recovery or enforcement action in 2020-21 and were unable to get time in court due to court closures. For context this has affected both in-year collection rates and their collection of arrears in 2020-21. For 2021-22, the resumption of court services and recovery action was slow to resume and has continued to impact collection rates.</p> <p>There are a number of special factors which may affect the amount of council tax that local authorities should have been able to collect and the amount they actually collected. Information these can be found on gov.uk at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/collection-rates-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2022-to-2023/collection-rates-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2022-to-2023#special-factors.</p> <p>. A significant number of households were furloughed and those claiming universal credit and council tax support in Harlow increased during this period. In light of these circumstances the collection rate achieved in 2021-22 was higher than that expected.</p> <p>The service continues to collect unpaid council tax for prior years to achieve a 99% collection rate.</p>		
Nondomestic rates collection rates in year (2021-22)	94.20%	97.40%
<p>Comments: National & Local context in relation to this metric are the same as those for Council Tax rates as detailed above.</p> <p>Locally, whilst a significant number of businesses received Covid 19 government support this did not always translate into payment of non domestic rates. In light of these circumstances the collection rate achieved in 2021-22 was higher than that expected.</p> <p>The service continues to collect unpaid non domestic rates for prior years to achieve a 99% collection rate.</p>		

Indicator	Harlow	England median (Districts)
Percentage of major planning applications decided on time (2020-22)	96.60%	89.80%
Percentage of non-major planning applications decided on time (2020-22)	94.20%	88.20%
Comments: efficient practices embedded within the service provision ensures that both quality and timely decisions are made for our customers		
Percentage of major planning applications overturned on appeal (2020-22)	0.00%	1.40%
Percentage of non-major planning applications overturned on appeal	1.80%	0.70%
Comments: whilst this is slightly above the median for England, Harlow has very few appeals as we operate a proactive decision-making process and therefore the percentage figures can fluctuate greatly with just one decision. For context, nationally, only approximately 20% of all refusals are appealed and in respect of non major decisions there is approximately a 27% appellant success rate. The number of appeal decisions allowed is below the national average and gives no cause for concern.		

Indicator	Harlow	England median (Districts)
Number of upheld complaints (2021-22)	5.4 per 100,000 population	1.1 per 100,000 population
Comments: For this period the number of upheld complaints constitutes 25% of all complaints received during that time. A new complaint process was introduced in January 2022 to improve how we respond to and learn from complaints made.		

Indicator	Harlow	England median (Districts)
Household waste recycling rate (2021-22)	39.70%	41.90%
<p>Comments: The tonnage collected has dropped over the years due to various local and national causes, but this has not been at the same rate that the residual waste has been increasing. The volume of residual waste negatively impacts on overall recycling % performance.</p> <p>The council carries out educate and promotion activities around waste and recycling services with the resources we have available, these being; social media channels, Harlow Times and the website.</p> <p>The council has recently taken part in a food waste recycling campaign run by Essex County Council aiming to recycle any food waste rather than disposing of this in residual waste, and discovered through this that there seems to be many households that were not aware of the weekly separate food waste collection. As a result, we have seen the volume of food waste sent for recycling increase since the campaign started.</p> <p>Removing food waste from residual should reduce the amount of residual waste and increase the recycling rate.</p> <p>The council has been working with Veolia to rebuild the violation (hanger) process, as this is a monitoring scheme that enables us to help residents recycle as much as possible by managing the amount of residual waste presented which should also reduce the amount of residual waste collected and increase the recycling rate.</p>		

Residual household waste (2021-22)	460.7 kg per household	501.1 kg per household
<p>Comments: Residual household waste per household is lower than the median, this has been increasing in Harlow year on year where lower would be better. As mentioned above, the council has been working with Veolia to rebuild the violation (hanger) process, as this is a monitoring scheme that enables us to help residents recycle as much as possible by managing the amount of residual waste presented which should reduce the amount of residual waste collected and increase the recycling rate.</p>		
Recycling contamination rate (2021-22)	7.80%	5.50%
<p>Comments: Although higher than the English Council median level it is not in the worst performance range of 10% contamination rate, however as per the actions above in relation to the work carried out with Veolia to rebuild the violation (hanger) process this will help to ensure that only target materials are collected in the recycling which should help to improve the contamination rates as well.</p>		