

Harlow Council
2015/16 Q3: Joint Finance and Performance
Report for the period ending
31 December 2015

The Council's aim for 2015-16 :-

“to improve Harlow for residents, businesses and visitors”

The Council's priorities:

1. More and better housing



2. Regeneration and a thriving economy



3. Wellbeing and social inclusion



4. A clean and green environment



5. Successful children and young people



How to use this report

You may wish to consider the following questions to form an idea on how well the Council is doing in achieving its priorities and objectives.

Questions which the reader may wish to consider:





1. What are the reasons for the performance being below target?
2. What is the Council's expenditure on this service?
3. Has performance fluctuated between quarters and what are the reasons for this?
4. Is it anticipated that the target will be met by the end of the year?
5. What are the proposed actions to improve performance and achieve the target and when will this be done by?
6. How well is the Council responding to gaps in performance or shortfalls in income?

Other areas for consideration could include:

7. Is the indicator a high priority for the Council? Is this reflected in the budget?
8. How does the service compare to other local authorities in terms of value for money – how does the Council's expenditure on this service and performance achieved compare to similar local authorities?
9. What are other Council's doing to improve performance in this area?
10. Are there any overspends/underspends in the budget area within which the under performing indicator sits?
11. Are there any future projects planned that will enhance existing performance?
12. How severe or likely are risks associated with lower level performance?






Performance Symbols:

Harlow Council uses the below symbols when reporting performance.

Below Target: e.g. more than 5% worse than target	On Target: e.g. within 5% of target	Above Target: e.g. more than 5% above target	Data not yet available: e.g. survey information pending
			

Direction of Travel (DOT) Symbols:

The direction of travel is from the same quarter in the previous year.

Going up and getting better e.g. % of rent collected	Going down and getting better e.g. crime levels	Exactly the same as previous year	Going up and getting worse e.g levels of litter	Going down and getting worse e.g. income generated
				

Section One: Key considerations for Quarter Three

The key issues relating to the Council's finances, performance, risks and corporate projects (excluding the HRA):

FINANCE	<p>The outturn position for Quarter three 2015/16 is that the controllable General Fund revenue budget is forecast to under-spend by £738,000 which represents -1.07% of the Council's approved gross budget for the General Fund. More detail is provided in section three of this report.</p> <p>Key risks in relation to financial management continue to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability to meet the annual income targets set for services. • The ongoing austerity measures set by the Government. • The impacts of localised Council Tax Support and Business Rates. • Adequacy of the Council's Bad Debt Provision - a full-scale review of the Council's debtors will occur during 2016/17 in respect of managing amounts deemed uncollectable. 	<p>Four performance indicators did not meet their performance target, these include:</p> <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BV 012 Average number of working days/shifts lost to sickness and absence <p>Place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BV 082ai Household Waste Recycled (%) • BV 082bi Household Waste Composted (%) • JVC 207d Tree works carried out within 80 working days (4 months) (%) 	PERFORMANCE
RISK	<p>Exceptional risks (rated as high likelihood, high impact):</p> <p>One risk has been highlighted as exceptional at Quarter Three:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ongoing threat of austerity measures. 	<p>The Council is on target to meet eighty-six per cent of its Corporate Plan milestones with 96 out of 112 key corporate milestones completed for the period to December 2015.</p>	CORPORATE PLAN

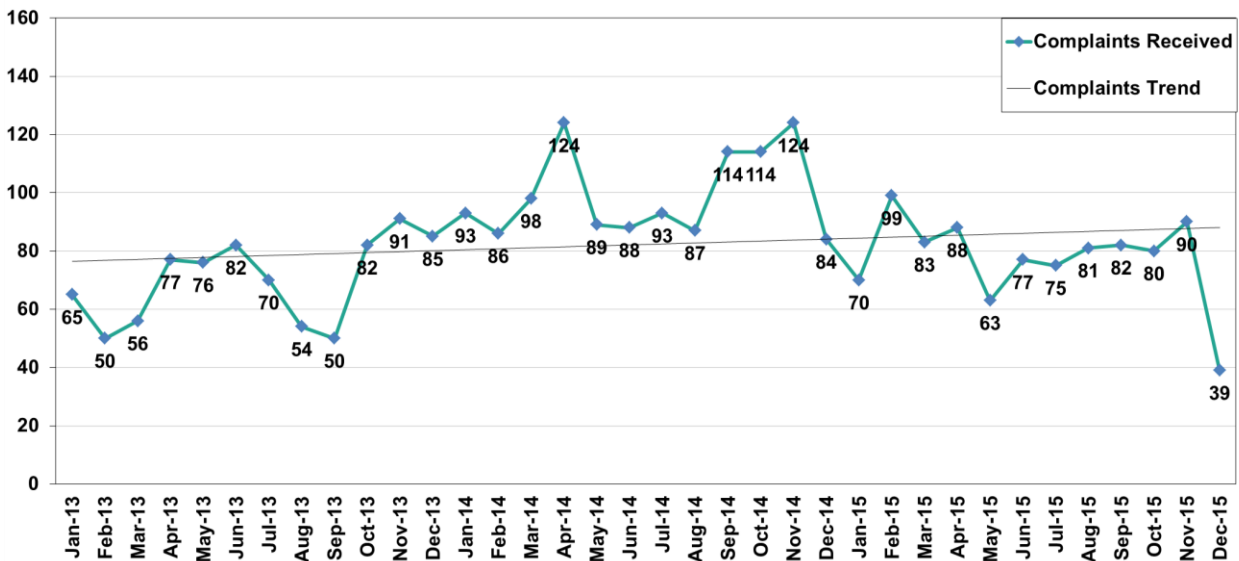
Section Two: What our customers are telling us (complaints)

Summary:

The Council provides and commissions a large number of services to a population of over 84,000 residents. In its role as a Housing Provider with over nine thousand properties, each year it undertakes in excess of 600,000 housing transactions, deals with hundreds of thousands of enquiries at Contact Harlow and provides Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support administration for a caseload of over nine thousand benefit claimants.

The Council takes all complaints seriously and aims to respond to and resolve all stage one and stage two complaints within ten working days and stage three complaints within 15 working days.

The trend line on the chart below shows that the overall number of complaints logged has slightly increased since 2012, mainly due to the significant amount of work being done as part of the Housing Modern Homes programme since 2013 and the additional correspondence that it has generated. The current year complaint levels have fallen and remain fairly static which is as a result of improved processes and information to deal with the requests.



In quarter three (October to December 2015) there were 33 policy related complaints, 147 performance related complaints and 17 person related complaints. The main areas of complaint were 27% Housing services and 48% Kier Harlow Ltd - Housing. Detailed information is fed back to service managers to ensure that lessons can be learned and improvements made where required.

Section Three: Latest Financial Performance

The Council continues to face extreme financial challenges as identified within its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It faces budget reductions of over £3.4million over the MTFS period representing more than a 40% reduction against its overall net General Fund budget.

The contents of this report highlight the extremely tight financial control being placed upon existing budgets and the degree to which services are looking ahead and planning to manage budgets to help absorb lower funding levels before they take effect in future years.

This is reflected by services' contributions to the schedule of savings built into the 2016/17 budget, which was approved in February 2016. Savings worked into budgets during 2015/16, and amounting to £277,000, have been added to the base budget schedule of savings, offset by £160,000 of new service budget pressures emerging during 2015/16.

Services are currently forecasting underspends on their controllable budgets for 2015/16 of £546,000 or 0.79% of controllable budget. After adding back the effect of reduced contributions to the HRA of £325,000, net savings applied to future budgets of £117,000, offset by additional bad debt provision of £250,000, the total net forecast underspend is £738,000 or 1.07% of gross budget. The underspends are largely accounted for by the success of the Sports Trust, additional income and staffing vacancies across a number of service areas.

The Council has been determined to continue to deliver key services to and for the benefit of Harlow residents despite unprecedented Government funding cuts. Contributions have been made to support some key discretionary services to be delivered into the future. The recently-approved budget for 2016/17 provides confidence that Council's services continue to strive to manage with ever-reducing funding levels wherever possible.

Simon Freeman, Head of Finance

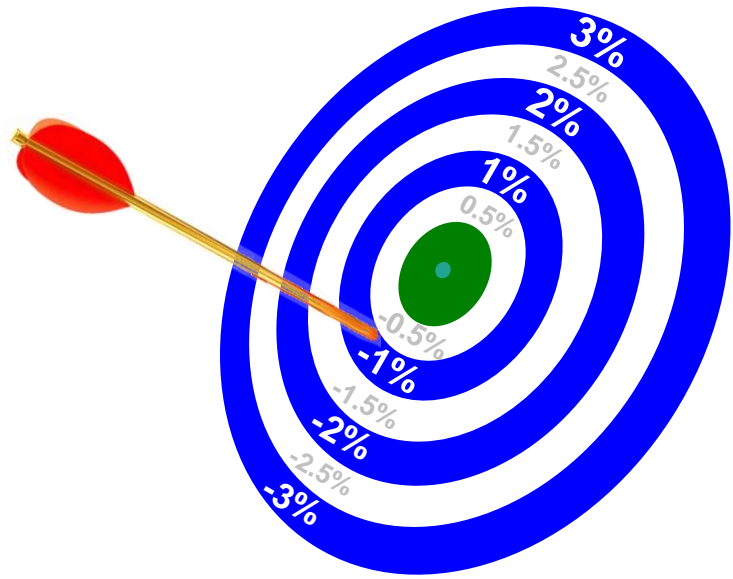
**Forecast Movements in General Fund Balance in 2015/16
as at Quarter 3 of the financial year**

£000s	
General Fund opening balance as at 1 Apr 2015	4,376
• Service budget variations (favourable)	546
• Budget carry over from 2014/15 into 2015/16 (approved Cabinet 23/7/15)	(224)
• Transfer to Early Retirement/Underfunding Reserve	(10)
• Transfer JVCo Income to Discretionary Services Reserve	(450)
• Transfer to New Burdens Grant Reserve	(186)
• Transfer to Insurance Reserve	(34)
• Transfer to Street Lighting Reserve	(54)
Sub-total before proposed movements to/from earmarked reserves	3,964
Other variations	
Variations on costs attributable to HRA	325
Increase in Bad Debt Provision	(250)
Variations adjusted in Base Budget incorporated into 2016/17 budget	117
Closing General Fund Balance as at 31 March 2016 (Projected)	4,156

* Note: Figures in brackets () reduce the projected General Fund Balance

2015/16 Projected Outturn

The Council projects to underspend by a margin of **-1.07%** on its gross controllable General Fund revenue budget.



Latest Financial Performance (Budget Variations / Exceptions):

Major Variances – Quarter three 2015/16:

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
Community Wellbeing & Regeneration				
Regeneration Team		(82)	(82)	The year-end variation reflects a staff vacancy in the Regeneration Team (£32k) and Council's share of the last year's profit from Harlow Hub (£50k).
Playhouse	73		73	This reflects increased production costs, and reduced income from the Easter and Summer productions. Also the cost of cover for maternity leave and for sickness absence. These are partially offset by energy savings.
Sport Partnership		(101)	(101)	This reflects the better than expected performance of Harlow Sports Trust, which has confirmed that it requires no further contribution from the Council this year.
Other Minor Service Variances	52		52	
Total Community Wellbeing & Regeneration			(58)	
Place				
The Stow Shopping Centre		(17)	(17)	Reduced Business Rates and increased rental income.
Latton Bush Centre		(48)	(48)	Includes (£20k) service charge income. There are savings on energy (£16k) and maintenance (£11k), offset by an increase in Business Rates of £4k.
Domestic Refuse		(21)	(21)	This reflects reduced inflation, bin allowance and increased income.
Highways		(54)	(54)	The agreement to retain street lighting after midnight came into effect at the end of October, rather than 1 April as originally budgeted for. The resulting cost saving to be contributed to a new earmarked reserve (approved Full Council 4/2/16).
Property and Facilities		(31)	(31)	Vacant employee post (£40k), reduced running expense (£11k), offset in part by increased cost of valuation £25k and other minor variances.

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
Un-adopted highways	29		29	The variation reflects outputs from the Housing Strategy. This additional cost will be shared with the HRA.
Cemetery and Crematoria	52		52	Costs associated with land transfer to Westerleigh for cemetery extension.
Car Parks		(91)	(91)	The variation reflects net increased income from Pay and Display.
Planning	41		41	The variation reflects net increased employee costs.
Other Minor Service Variances	127	(83)	44	
Total Place			(96)	
Housing (General Fund)				
Housing Options and Advice	89	(24)	65	25% forecasted overspend on temporary accommodation , overspend on employees £9k partially offset by increased income (£24k).
Supporting People		(45)	(45)	Forecasted reduction in the Supporting People grant received from ECC not materialised
Total Housing (General Fund) Service			20	
Finance				
ICT		(27)	(27)	Underspend from staff vacancies (now filled), offset by software licences.
Insurance		(126)	(126)	Policy and excesses underspend.
Revenues and Benefits Support	200	(325)	(125)	Salary savings due to vacancies combined with the transfer of Benefits Fraud service to DWP (£53k); additional income in respect of legal costs (£65k).
Early retirement funding		(34)	(34)	Projected underspend on superannuation.
Other Minor Service Variances		(46)	(46)	
Total Finance Service			(358)	
Governance				
Policy and Performance		(6)	(6)	Staff vacancies

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
Data Protection and FOI		(26)	(26)	Post currently occupied part-time.
Other Minor Service Variances		(18)	(18)	
Total Governance Service			(50)	
Corporate Services				
Other Minor Service Variances		(4)	(4)	
Total Corporate Services			(4)	
Service-Specific Variations			(546)	Sub-total
Other				
Costs chargeable to/ from the HRA	(325)		(325)	This reflects the adjustment required to the HRA for the actual spends as shown above. £400k relates to Garage revenue contribution to capital.
Increase in Bad Debt Provision	250		250	Pending a full-scale review of the Council's debtors (to occur during 2016/17), a preliminary provision adjustment is required in respect of amounts deemed uncollectable.
Variations adjusted in Base Budget incorporated into 2016/17 budget setting	160	(277)	(117)	Construction of the 2016/17 budget, approved by Full Council in February 2016, reflects a range of variations that emerged during 2015/16. The service variations, above, acknowledges this and have been adjusted for these amounts on the basis that they will not occur after the current year.
Total General Fund Budget Variations			(738)	

Exception level: £25k

Service Based Analysis

Community Wellbeing, Jane Greer:

Overall, financial control is good with a net underspend partly contributed to vacancy savings and a reduced contributions required for Harlow Sports Trust. However, poor bookings at the Playhouse during Easter and September, arrangements to cover maternity and sickness leave and additional security measures have had a negative impact on income and has contributed towards an overspend of the Playhouse budget, which continues to be monitored closely.

Place, Graeme Bloomer:

Financial control for the last three quarters has been good and there are no indications from this quarter's results that would point towards areas of concern. The cost rise in Planning reflects an increase of one post to deal with major planning applications and is partially offset by an increase in application fees. Car parks income has risen above expectation due in part to the mild weather – i.e. no snow or ice that would otherwise restrict customer usage.

Housing, Andrew Murray:

Resources for Housing Need continue to reduce with the need to prioritise and target resources accordingly to assess and support increased demand. There is an indication of a 25% increase in the ongoing demand for temporary accommodation.

Efficiencies continue being realised from the ongoing re-procurement of temporary accommodation. This together with continuing to prioritise homelessness prevention initiatives reduce the cost of housing need and homelessness, thereby reducing the Council's statutory provision and overall costs.

New Supporting People commissioning arrangements confirmed. This has reduced the level of funding for 2016/17 requiring the passing on of support charges to recipients, and or a reduction in the services provided. It is expected that the total Supporting People grant will be removed in the coming years.

Governance, Brian Keane:

Good financial control continues to be maintained during the third quarter of the 2015/16 financial year with no major variations to be reported at this stage of the year. Issues which may arise will generally be staffing related, through unfilled vacancies or the occurrence of vacancy savings currently built in to the service budget. Income from Land Charges will be monitored closely as this will be largely determined by the housing market locally. The national increase in court costs is also an extra pressure for the service

Finance, Corporate Services and other items, Simon Freeman:

The current forecast for the Finance Service is that it will underspend by £358,000 in 2015/16. The underspend is largely attributable to the high level of vacancies within the Revenues and Benefits and ICT services during the first 6 months of the financial year and the ongoing improvement in the insurance claims history experience of the Council. Recruitment has now been successful in the ICT Service and with the restructure in Revenues and Benefits largely complete further recruitment is currently underway.





Section Four: Performance



Harlow Council performed on target or above target for 42 out of 47 (90 per cent) of performance indicators. Seventy-one per cent of indicators have been maintained or improved compared to Quarter Three 2014/15.



Type	2014/15 Q2	2014/15 Q3	2014/15 Q4	2015/16 Q1	2015/16 Q2	2015/16 Q3
Percentage of indicators within or better than target ●★	83%	86%	90%	84.4%	87%	90%
Percentage of indicators improving or unchanged from the same period last year ✓↑✓↓➔	63%	65%	69%	64%	67%	71%



Good Performance:

Harlow Council continues to improve performance in a number of areas. 21 out of 47 (45 per cent) performance indicators performed significantly above their target. Listed below is a selection of KPIs which are contributing towards the achievement of the Council's priorities.

(1) JVC 100 Average time to remove fly tips - hours		2014/15 Q3 Actual	2015/16 Q3 Actual
 	This performance measure will always be subject to some variability due to the individual nature of each case, and although there has been a modest increase in the average time taken to remove reported fly-tips, compared to the same quarter last year, performance remains well within the challenging target set for this indicator.	1.85	1.99
		2014/15 Q3 Target	2015/16 Q3 Target
		3.50	3.50
(2) NI 157b Processing of minor applications within 8 weeks (%)		2014/15 Q3 Actual	2015/16 Q3 Actual
 	Processing within 8 weeks is a statutory timescale. Report templates for minor applications have been recently updated to align them with revised statutory requirements, streamlining our process.	83.33	88.89
		2014/15 Q3 Target	2015/16 Q3 Target
		65	65

(3) NI 195c Street and Environmental Cleanliness (% land assessed having unacceptable levels of graffiti)		2014/15 Q3 Actual	2015/16 Q3 Actual
 	This performance measure is assessed from a sample of sites that were clear at the time of visit. This measure is aggregated annually, and variability from quarter to quarter may not indicate a significant change in performance.	1	0.67
		2014/15 Q3 Target	2015/16 Q3 Target
		1	1

(4) JVC 305 Housing appointments made and kept (%)		2014/15 Q3 Actual	2015/16 Q3 Actual
 	Staff training under the Kier Harlow Ltd Customer Services Charter programme places high emphasis on improving communication with residents at the first point of contact. Previously appointments were generated automatically however, with the introduction of the new IT system (Orchard) appointments can now be made at a mutually convenient time at first point of call.	98.43	99.74
		2014/15 Q3 Target	2015/16 Q3 Target
		98	98

(5) JVC 306 % Housing Tenant satisfaction with work undertaken		2014/15 Q3 Actual	2015/16 Q3 Actual
 	More emphasis has been placed on dealing with feedback. With the introduction of the new IT system (Orchard) Kier Harlow Ltd are better placed to diagnose faults first time and provide the correct operative.	95.41	97.36
		2014/15 Q3 Target	2015/16 Q3 Target
		94	94

Section Five: Improvement Action Plans

Harlow Council keeps track of any indicator which has been subjected to an Improvement Action Plan (IAP) during the past 12 months. The table below illustrates how each indicator subjected to an IAP has performed over time.

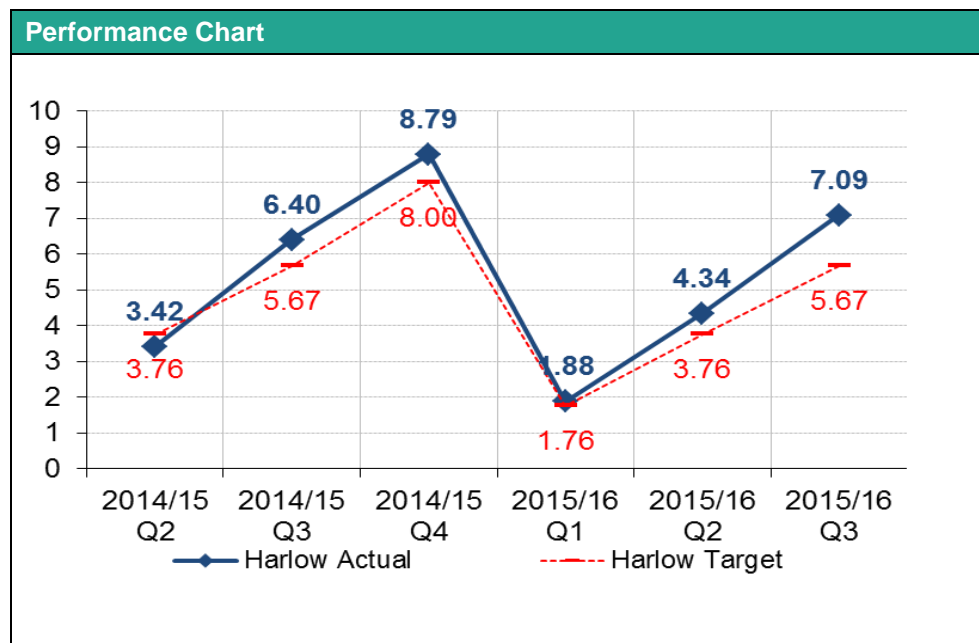
Performance Indicator		QTR 3 14/15	QTR 4 14/15	QTR 1 15/16	QTR 2 15/16	QTR 3 15/16
Street Scene	JVC 104 Customer satisfaction with Street Scene	★	●	▲	●	●
	NI195a Improved street and environmental cleanliness (litter)	●	★	★	★	★
	NI195b Improved street and environmental cleanliness (detritus)	▲	★	★	★	★
	NI195c Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	●	●	▲	★	★
Grounds Maintenance	JVC 114 Litter bins not over flowing (2.15) (%)	▲	●	●	●	●
	JVC 207d Tree works carried out within 80 working days (four months) (3.14d) (per cent)	▲	●	●	●	▲
Housing	BV202 People sleeping rough (numbers)	★	▲	●	●	★
Waste & Recycling	BV082ai Household waste recycled (%)	●	●	▲	▲	▲
	BV082bi Household waste composted (%)	●	▲	▲	▲	▲
Contact Harlow	CS25q Per cent of customer complaints responded to within target time	●	▲	▲	▲	●
	BF005 Average days to process new claims	▲	▲	▲	▲	●
	BF006 Average days to process change events	▲	★	●	▲	●
	BV012 Average number of working days / shifts lost to sickness & absence	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Number of under-performing indicators		6	5	7	6	4

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
BV 012 Average number of working days / shifts lost to sickness and absence	2015/16 Q3		14/15 Q2	14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3
		Harlow Actual	3.42	6.40	8.79	1.88	4.34	7.09
		Harlow Target	3.76	5.67	8.00	1.76	3.76	5.67

Description

The total number of working days lost due to sickness absence, including industrial injury, irrespective of whether this is self-certified, certified by a GP or long-term



Direction of Travel:

✘ ↑

What is the performance situation?

The number of total working days lost to sickness absence recorded within the Council has increased by 0.69 per FTE up to 7.09 FTE (Qtr 3) compared with 6.40 per FTE for the same period last year.

Sickness absence statistics are broken into short term: (3.68 FTE 2015/16 compared with 3.93 FTE 2014/15) showing a reduction in short terms sickness of 0.25 for Qtr 3. Long term (i.e. 4 continuous weeks (20 days) 3.41 FTE 2015/16 compared with 2.47 FTE 2014/15 showing an increase in long term sickness of 0.94 per FTE.

The statistics demonstrate that the main reason for the increase in sickness absence as at Qtr3 is attributable to long term sickness. During 2014/2015 (Qtr3) there were 18 employees whose absence was classified as long term within the Council's Sickness Absence Management Policy which equated to 773 days in total. For the same period 2015/16, there was a small increase to 19 employees were long term sick which equates to 1065 days in total. This is an increase of 292 days for long term sick for the same period.

Of those employees, 14 employees have subsequently successfully returned to work with various mechanisms of support i.e. Occupational

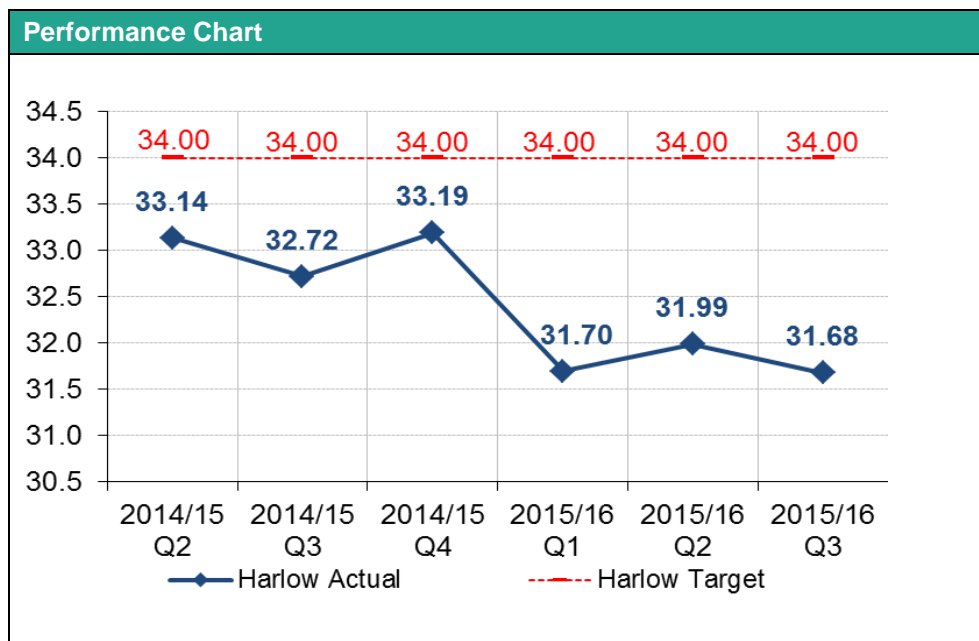
	<p>Health, reasonable adjustments, workplace stress assessments and phased return etc.</p> <p>Whilst 14 of the 19 employees have subsequently returned to the workplace the impact on the recorded statistics will affect the PI's going forward for period 2015/16.</p> <p>Two long term sick employees have left due to ill health retirement and two employees have resigned from the organisation.</p>
<p>What practical steps are being taken to improve?</p>	<p>The Council has implemented a range of policies over the past few years including Special Leave, Flexible Working, Homeworking, Maternity, Shared Parental Leave, Paternity Leave, Sickness Absence Management, Adoption Leave, and Dignity at work.</p> <p>Continue to use the absence management process to reduce the numbers of days lost.</p> <p>Ongoing close management and support continues to be provided to line management by HR in long term sickness cases.</p> <p>Encouraging/reminding management to complete return to work interviews.</p> <p>Implement improvement action plans in accordance with the Sickness Absence Management Policy, where applicable.</p> <p>Review the categorisation of sickness absence data which should enable improved analysis and comparison.</p> <p>Review the Sickness Absence Management Policy and Review the Absence Management Services Frameworks.</p>

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
BV 082ai Household Waste Recycled (%)	2015/16 Q3		14/15 Q2	14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3
		Harlow Actual	33.14	33.72	33.19	31.70	31.99	31.68
		Harlow Target	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00	34.00

Description

% of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for (recycling.)



Direction of Travel:

x ↓

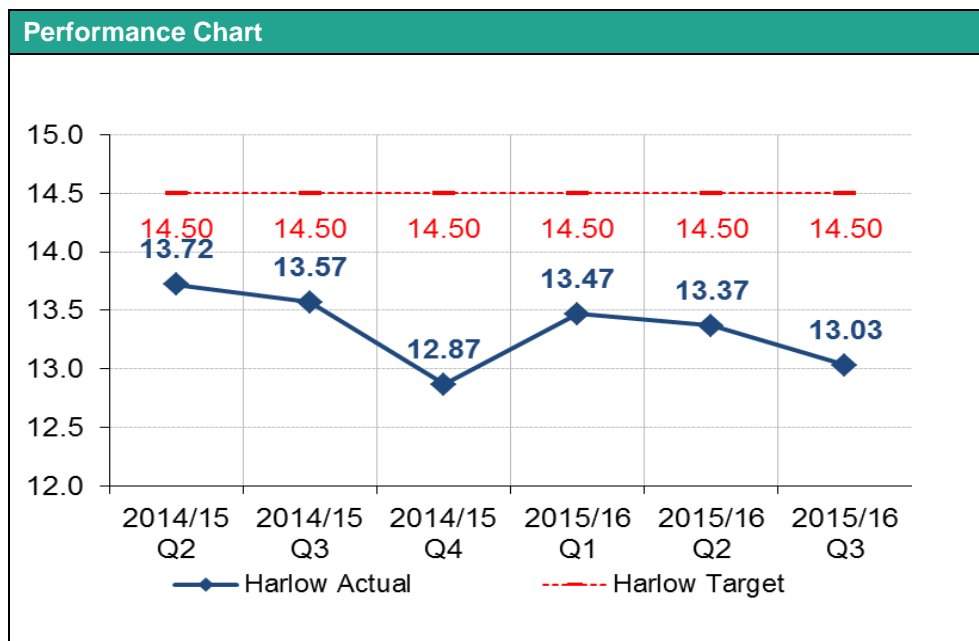
What is the performance situation?	<p>This PI shows the proportion of waste sent for recycling out of actual tonnage collected. Actual tonnage of total material collected for recycling remains good compared to target. For example this quarter reached 6172.065 tonnes (target 6000). Variations to waste recycled are likely to be due to societal issues.</p> <p>There has been a national trend towards reduction in the volume of recycling collected, and a significant increase in the volume of residual (non recycling) waste collected this year. This is likely to be associated with perceived gradual recovery from recession. If the tonnage of recyclable material collected remains broadly constant while residual waste increases the percentage of total waste recycled will be depressed.</p>
What practical steps are being taken to improve?	<p>The Council promotes its recycling service in order to encourage residents to increase the amount of waste they recycle and reduce the amount of refuse, although resources are limited. The Council is working with Essex County Council on County wide waste minimisation communication campaign that will support its own minimisation messages.</p>

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
BV 082bi Household Waste Composted (%)	2015/16 Q3		14/15 Q2	14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3
		Harlow Actual	13.72	13.57	12.87	13.47	13.37	13.03
		Harlow Target	14.50	14.50	14.50	14.50	14.50	14.50

Description

The % of household waste sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion.



Direction of Travel:

✘ ↓

What is the performance situation?

This PI shows the proportion of waste composted out of overall tonnage collected. This quarter's actual tonnage collected was 2566.090 (target 2625) and close to target.

The green waste service continues to be popular, and there are currently over 490 households subscribed to the premium service. The service is reduced to three days per week over the winter period as the volume of green waste is lower at this time of year. There has been a slight reduction in the volume of food waste collected.

Due to the town wide coverage of the food waste service and ongoing national publicity, some residents may be more mindful of food wastage and may have amended their purchasing habits accordingly. There has been a significant increase in the volume of household refuse collected this year. If the tonnage of compostable material collected remains broadly constant while residual waste increases the percentage of total waste recycled will be depressed. This appears to be the most significant factor affecting this indicator.

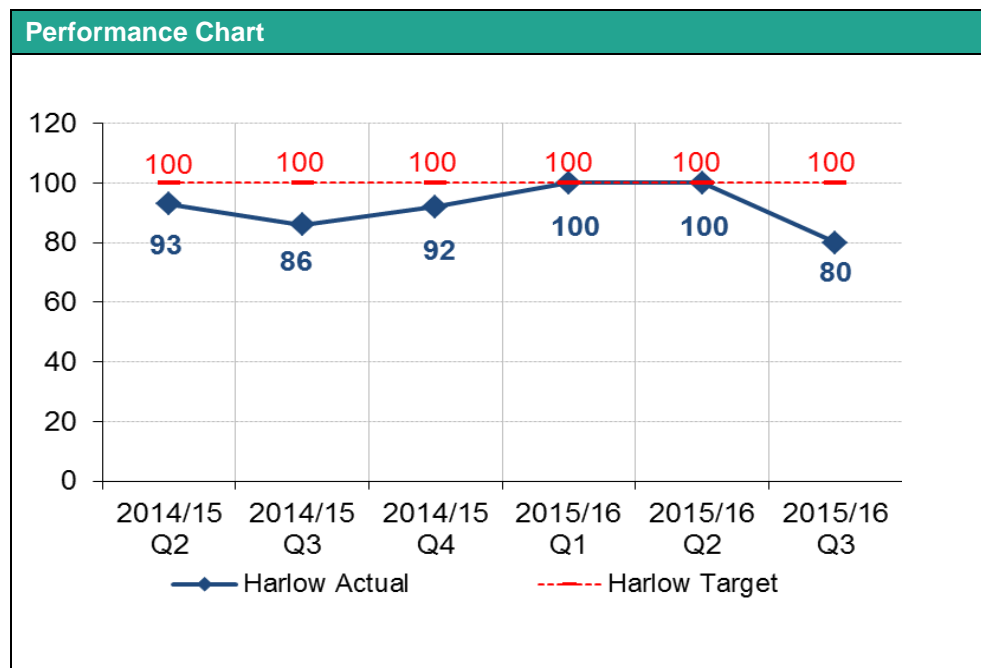
What practical steps are being taken to improve?

Roll out of the food waste service to flat blocks is complete and the Council continues to seek opportunities to extend the service to primary schools. The Council is promoting its subscription green waste collection service which continues to increase in popularity; use of the food waste collection service from flat blocks is being promoted to maximise collection, however resources are limited. With the Christmas tree collections in January, the mild weather and the return to five day collections from March, the volumes of green waste should improve from Qtr 4. The Council is working with Essex County Council on County wide waste minimisation communication campaign that will support its own messages on correctly segregating waste.

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
JVC 207d Tree works carried out within 80 working days (4 months)	2015/16 Q3		14/15 Q2	14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3
		Harlow Actual	93	86	92	100	100	80
		Harlow Target	100	100	100	100	100	100

Description
Tree Works – Percentage of work carried out with 80 workings days (4 months)



Direction of Travel:

What is the performance situation?	<p>The reduced performance in quarter three (October to December 2015) is due to the high volume of enquiries received (and work raised) during the summer of 2015, this was compounded further by staff sickness, emergency work during the windstorm season; and the supply chain struggling to reduce the workload within specified timescale.</p> <p>As a result, the monthly performance was recorded at 96% in October and 62% in November due to the increased enquiries resulting from the storm damage. In December performance improved to 96%.</p>
What practical steps are being taken to improve?	<p>A mitigation plan was put in place in December 2015 with agreed timescales for completing outstanding jobs. The Plan has been reviewed and revised timescales agreed for completion by the end of March 2016. This is to ensure the outstanding enquiries are updated to keep customers informed, and the agreed actions are achieved.</p> <p>The Kier Harlow Ltd Tree Team to identify fewer non-essential/cosmetic jobs to enable the Team to complete all the outstanding delayed work, whilst ensuring that no further jobs run out of time without appropriate justification.</p> <p>It is envisaged by the next quarterly reporting period performance will be back to 100% and the backlog of outstanding jobs completed.</p>

Section Six: Key Corporate and Financial Risks

The following risk areas are assessed as 'exceptional', that is, scoring 20 or higher on a scale of 1-25, 1 = low likelihood, low impact, 25 = high likelihood, high impact. These risks are regularly reviewed through the Council's Risk Management Group and managed by the Council at senior management level and by relevant services.

Risk Owner & Description	Likelihood	Impact	Control already in place	Additional actions to mitigate risk	Residual Risk score
<p>Head of Finance – CR01 - The Government's fiscal policy in respect of deficit reduction reducing public sector funding combined with the Council's limited ability to raise income could result in the Council's financial resilience being at risk.</p>	<p>Options for increasing revenue to enable the Council to compensate for reduced Government Funding are becoming extremely limited. Raising Council tax to meet the shortfall beyond the levels already included within the MTFS is unlikely to be an option. Given the budget reductions already made further budget savings will be extremely challenging if services are to be protected. Impact of recent government announcements on General Fund and HRA budgets.</p>	<p>The impact of Significant budget cuts to enable a balanced budget to be delivered could have a major impact on delivery of the Council's corporate objectives. Impact on Council meeting statutory responsibilities and community aspirations in respect of discretionary services.</p>	<p>MTFS and detailed planning of future budgets undertaken early in the financial year. Budget Monitoring process. However, for the period of the MTFS there are substantial budget reductions required to meet the Governments funding cuts which may impact on this in the medium to long term forecasts.</p>	<p>The majority of issues relating to the Council's finances are dictated by Government. However, the Council's financial situation continues to be monitored at a high frequency. The Administration will continue to be provided with options concerning the work of the Council and will decide upon how these financial challenges can be faced. Scrutiny review of discretionary services (Playhouse and Pets Corner).</p>	<p>21</p>

Risk Owner & Description	Likelihood	Impact	Control already in place	Additional actions to mitigate risk	Residual Risk score
<p>Head of Place – CR03 - The town requires a suitable housing mix to attract new and retain existing residents for an evolving and sustainable community. Supply must be balanced with demand and housing need, taking into account National Housing and Planning policies. As part of that mix, housing for local people that is genuinely affordable remains a high priority for the Council.</p>	<p>Lack of funding to build new homes. Lack of available land. Low land values. Lack of Local Plan (or non-approval due to failure to demonstrate Duty to Cooperate). Reluctance of housing developers to build out approved schemes will limit the supply of affordable housing as a proportion of private developments. Government policy in relation to social housing may limit the supply of affordable housing.</p>	<p>Lack of Local Plan could create lack of local control or direction, Lack of suitable housing may lead to people moving out of area. Inability to generate sufficient affordable housing. Impact on right population mix.</p>	<p>Duty to cooperate discussions. Housing studies including joint ones to support the Local Plan.</p>	<p>Implement Local Development Plan</p>	<p>21</p>

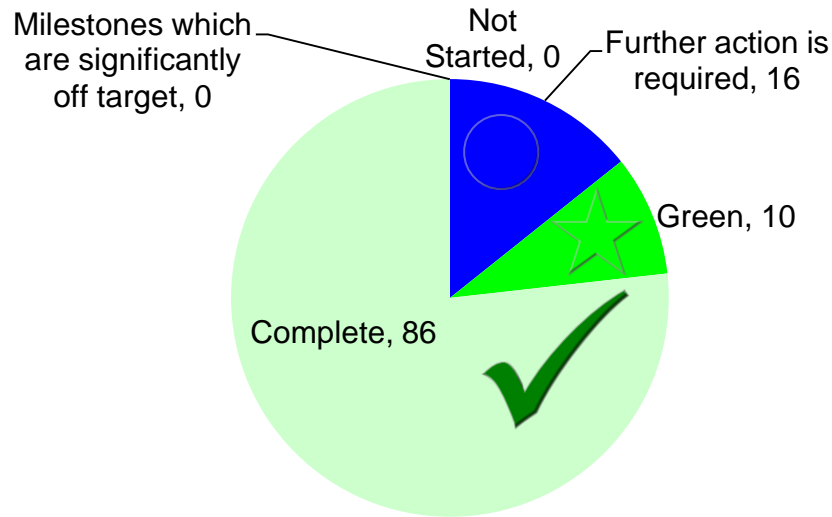
Risk Owner & Description	Likelihood	Impact	Control already in place	Additional actions to mitigate risk	Residual Risk score
<p>Head of Place – PLC01 – If priority allocation and funding by the Highways Agency and Government is not achieved then the timely delivery of M11 Junction 7a will be put at risk.</p>	<p>Although junction 7a is high on the agenda for both SELEP and ECC, it has yet to be accorded required funding and/or recognition by the Government/ High ways agency.</p>	<p>Without the new junction the Highways Agency’s cap on new jobs growth e.g. Enterprise Zone will not be lifted in the absence of alternative highways improvements. The lack of a new junction is also known to be a deterrent to the retention and expansion of current and new businesses. Housing growth will be constrained due to capacity of the current junction.</p>	<p>Continued lobbying of Government, SELEP, Highways Authorities and co-operation with relevant interests (e.g. West Essex Alliance, London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor Consortium).</p>		<p>21</p>

Risk Owner & Description	Likelihood	Impact	Control already in place	Additional actions to mitigate risk	Residual Risk score
<p>Regeneration Manager – COM11 - If there is a lack of private sector investment and/or disinvestment by retailers and landowners in the Town Centre then this could lead to a further decline in its attractiveness as a shopping and leisure destination.</p>	<p>The macro economic impact on the retail sector is very uncertain.</p>	<p>Damaged reputation and perception towards the town. Potential loss of jobs and employment and potential failure to deliver regeneration.</p>	<p>The Council maintains frequent contact with the current landowners to encourage investment into the Town Centre. The Council will need to consider alternative options for the future of the Town Centre.</p>		<p>21</p>

Section Seven: Progress in delivering the Corporate Plan

Corporate Priorities Milestone Tracker (Quarter Three 2015-16)

The Corporate Plan includes an Action Plan setting out the milestones the Council needs to complete in order to deliver its objectives. Below is a status update of how well the Council is doing in delivering its Plan as at 31 December 2015.



Eighty-six per cent (96 out of 112) of all Corporate Plan milestones are self-assessed as being complete or green (i.e. successfully delivered or are on track to be implemented in 2015/16) as at 31 December 2015.

Fourteen per cent (16 out of 112) of milestones require further action to ensure they are completed during 2015/16.

No milestones are significantly off target and will not be complete in 2015/16.

No milestones are currently in “not started” phase.

Milestone RAG Status		
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Completed Milestones	86	77
On Track (Green) Milestones	10	9
Further action required to get back on track	16	14
Milestones which are significantly off target and where further action is needed (Red)	0	0
Not Started Milestones	0	0