

Harlow Council
**2015/16 Year End: Joint Finance and
Performance Report for the period ending
31 March 2016**

Foreword from the Leader of the Council



Report Summary from Jon Clempner, Leader of the Council

“This report highlights the key successes and actions of the Council during 2015/16.

This has been a year where, despite further significant Government funding reductions and challenges, the Council has shown that it is making the best use of the limited resources it has, to deliver improved outcomes for residents, businesses and visitors.

Residents want to know that the Council is on their side, continually striving to improve opportunities for them – whether this is through supporting more affordable and better homes, job creation, fighting for the infrastructure investment that Harlow needs, better education and skills, or tackling anti-social behaviour and crime.

As you will see from this report, the Council has continued to review and improve its services and to work effectively with other organisations to ensure Harlow Council continues to ‘Work together for Harlow’. You can find out more about the Council’s Plans and how its performing on the website, www.harlow.gov.uk/performance. The Council’s website will enable you to access both the 2015/16 Corporate Plan and the new Plan which will be effective for the 2016/17 Council year.

The financial challenges to both the Council and to individual residents will continue for the foreseeable future. Changes to welfare reform and the localisation of Council Tax have already taken place and further significant reductions in Government grants are expected during the coming years.

Despite all the challenges, the future of Harlow is looking bright, with Job opportunities being created by the Enterprise Zone and Public Health England in the coming years, and the potential investment in the town centre, housing, and skills, in and around Harlow.

The Council continues to be committed to doing all that it can to protect front line services and valued discretionary services, make a positive and visible differences to all those who live, work, or visit Harlow, and to make the best of the potential of Harlow, a town which we are justifiably proud of.

Councillor Jon Clempner
July 2016

Overview of performance from the Chief Executive



Report Summary from Malcolm Morley OBE, Chief Executive, Harlow Council

“The past year has seen Harlow Council continue to maintain and to improve its performance in a number of important areas despite many financial and operational challenges. The focus on continuous improvement in the financial and operational management of resources and services illustrates the commitment of all of the Council’s staff to do their best for Harlow. Indeed, I’m delighted that the Council remains amongst the highest of performers in a number of key areas.

A total of 96 per cent of project milestones were met, 93 per cent of targets were hit, and the Council’s General Fund budget was managed within a margin of less than 1.5 per cent. It is important to recognise that this is not a ‘one-off’ performance but a continuance of the track record of performance that the Council has delivered over many years. The Council has saved (insert amount) over the last ten years and continues to challenge itself on how to fulfil its roles as community leader, service commissioner and service provider. It continues to seek to be at the forefront of innovation and to respond positively to the many financial and operational challenges it faces, whilst always seeking to look forward and to understand the evolving strategic context within which it has, and will have, to work.

All of this has been achieved despite the exceptional level of change required from Councils by Government. In many ways 2015 was an exceptional year for Harlow and the challenges that it faced. The Traveller issue was an example of these challenges during the year. The Council responded positively to these challenges and in the case of the Travellers painstakingly collected evidence to enable the Council to obtain the Injunction preventing the creation of unauthorised encampments in Harlow. This was a first nationally and illustrates both the ambition of the Council and its focus to address the issues impacting the communities of Harlow. Whilst this important work created the need to divert resources from other service provision, and a huge amount of additional work, Council colleagues did all that they could to ensure that performance was maintained as illustrated above.

In the few areas where the Council has not performed to meet its aspirations the report sets out clear plans for improvement. The Council will continue to strive to perform to meet the objectives and priorities for Harlow. I would like to thank all of those colleagues who have, with their unremitting commitment and effort, enabled the Council to continue to improve and to so positively respond to the challenges faced by the community they serve. I know that we will all continue to respond positively to the challenges of the future.”

Malcolm Morley OBE
July 2016

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 Four

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

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">FINANCE</p>	<p>The final outturn position for 2015/16 is that the controllable General Fund revenue budget has under-spent by £862,200 on its gross controllable costs. This represents -1.25% of the Council's approved gross budget for the General Fund</p> <p>Key risks in relation to financial management continue to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risks and volatility associated with the Government's localisation of council tax support and business rates. • Variations in income from fees and charges as public spending habits respond to the economic climate. • Continued long-term austerity measures placed upon local government by central government. <p>In addition, there are potential risks and uncertainties in the light of the UK's recent Referendum result.</p>	<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 (%) • NI195c Street & Environmental Cleanliness (% land assessed having unacceptable levels of graffiti). 	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">PERFORMANCE</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">RISK</p>	<p>Exceptional risks (rated as high likelihood, high impact):</p> <p>A total of four risks are highlighted as exceptional for Year End: These relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's financial resilience • Suitable housing mix • Investment into the Town Centre and, • Investment for M11 motorway Junction 7A 	<p>The Council is on target to meet 96 per cent of its Corporate Plan milestones with 198 out of 207 key corporate milestones completed between April 2015 and March 2016.</p> <p>No milestones were at 'red' or 'not started' for the year end 2015/16.</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">CORPORATE PLAN</p>

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

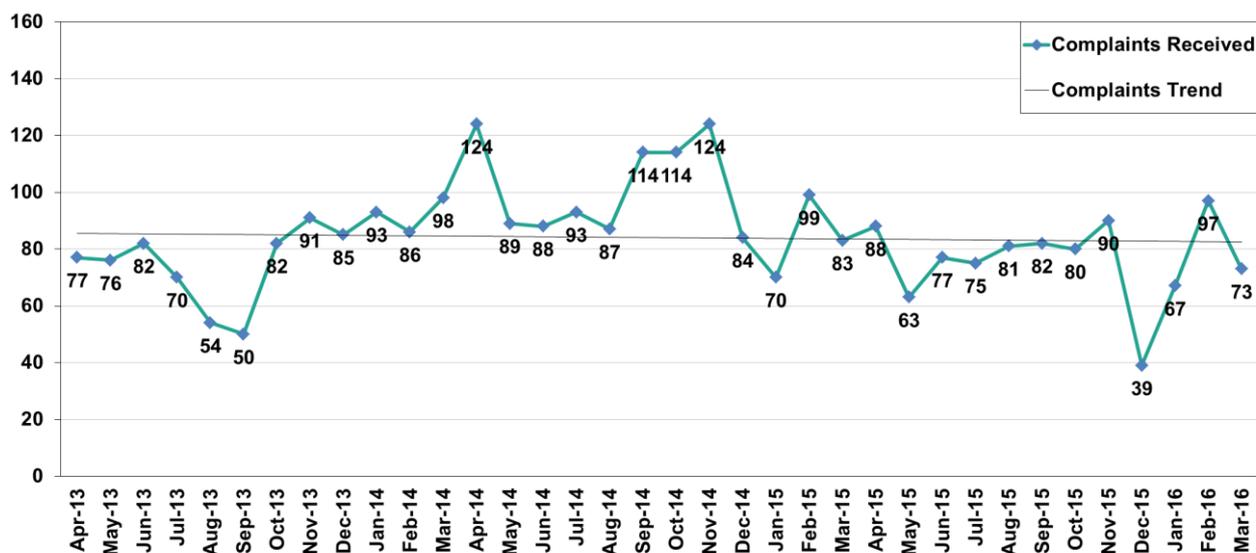
Summary:

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.

Harlow Council - Corporate Complaints



In quarter four (January to March 2016) there were 172 performance related complaints, 28 person related complaints and 37 policy related complaints. The main areas of complaint were 41 per cent Housing Services and 40 per cent Kier Harlow Ltd – Housing. Detailed information is fed back to service managers to ensure that lessons can be learned and improvements made where required.

During 2015/16 the Council received 899 complaints. Of these complaints, 153 (17%) were partially upheld, 271 (30%) were upheld and 475 (53%) were not upheld.

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 £3.1million over the MTFS period representing more than a 29% reduction against its overall net General Fund budget requirement. Reforms imposed in recent years by central government, especially in relation to local government funding, have also introduced a new level of volatility into the financial resources of councils' budgets. Much of this volatility arises from external factors such as the collection of Business Rates, which is now directly impacted upon by local business growth and decline.

Meanwhile, the contents of this report highlight the extremely tight financial control and restraint being exercised within existing budgets in order to maintain balanced resources; services are looking ahead and planning to manage lower funding levels before reductions actually take effect in future financial years.

The Service underspend on the controllable budgets in 2015/16 total £999,000 which is an underspend of -1.44% of the Council's gross revenue budget. When this underspend is adjusted for the carry-forward requests of £136,800, this leaves a net controllable underspend of only £862,200, or -1.25% of the Council's gross revenue budget.

The Council has been determined to continue to deliver key services to and for the benefit of Harlow residents despite the unprecedented Government funding cuts. Resources have continued to be made available to support some key discretionary services to be delivered into the future. This provides confidence that Council's services will strive to manage with ever-reducing funding levels as far as it is possible to do so whilst public services face enormous new uncertainties in the wake of the UK's recent Referendum result.

Simon Freeman, Head of Finance

Movements in General Fund Balance in 2015/16

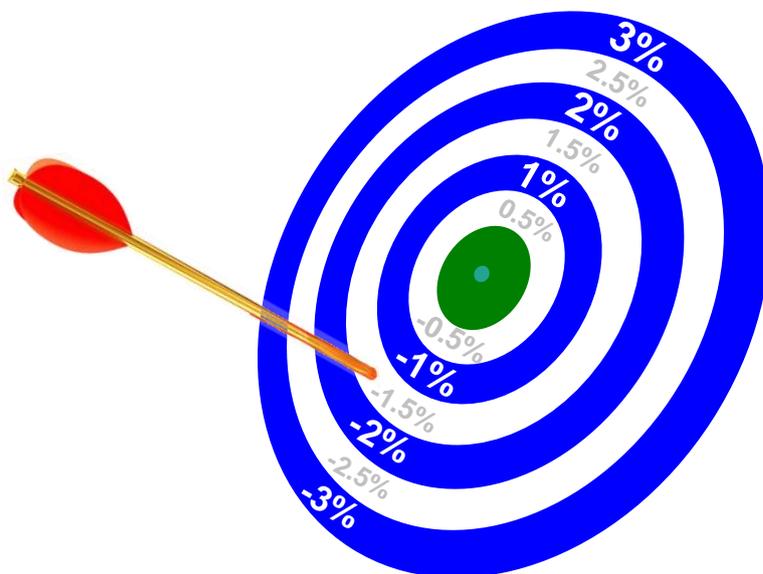
General Fund opening balance as at 1 Apr 2015	4,376
• Service budget variations (favourable)	999
• Budget carry-over from 2014/15 into 2015/16 (approved by Cabinet 23/7/15)	(224)
• Transfer to Severance Reserve*	(10)
• Transfer to Discretionary Services Fund in respect of Kier dividend*	(450)
• Transfer to Revenues and Benefits New Burdens Reserve*	(186)
• Transfer to Risk Management Reserve*	(34)
• Transfer to Street Lighting Reserve*	(54)
Sub-total before proposed movements to/ from earmarked reserves	4,417
Other variations	
Variations on Corporate Costs	287
Variations on costs attributable to the HRA	(379)
In –year movements in reserves and NNDR movements	(394)
Planned Use of General Fund Balance	(43)
Balance on General Fund at 31 March 2016	3,888

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

* denotes transfers previously approved by Cabinet and Full Council

2015/16 Outturn

The Council underspent by a margin of **-1.44%** on its gross controllable General Fund revenue budget.



Latest Financial Performance (Budget Variations / Exceptions):

Major Variances – Year End 2015/16:

Service	Adverse £000s	Favourable £000s	Net £000s	Main Contributing Factors to Variations
Community Wellbeing Services				
Regeneration Team		(89)	(89)	Reduced employee costs and running expenses (£20k) and the previous year's Harlow Enterprise HUB profit share (£50k).
Playhouse	91		91	Cover for maternity and sickness leave, increased production costs, reduced energy costs and reduced income from the Easter and September productions.
Sport Partnership		(143)	(143)	Reflects the better than expected performance of Harlow sports trust.
Other Minor Service Variances	42	(91)	(49)	
Total Community Wellbeing Services			(190)	
Place				
Latton Bush Centre		(91)	(91)	Reduced employee costs (£4k), energy costs (£5k), effect of new maintenance contract. (£11k), business rates £5k, increased rent (£17k), service charges income (£50k), lettings income (£11k) and other net running expenses £2k.
The Stow Shopping Centre		(36)	(36)	Net increased rent income and reduced business rates.
Car Parks		(129)	(129)	Increased income from Pay and Display.
Planning Services	66		66	Increased employee costs £43k, slippage in the Uniform upgrade (£23k) and legal costs £46k.
Civic Centre	43		43	Increased employee costs £16k, maintenance £15k, energy costs (£5k) and other running expenses £17k
Domestic Refuse		(31)	(31)	Reflects reduced inflation uplift, bin allowance and increased income.
Other Minor Variances	146	(202)	(56)	All other net variances across the service, including overspends on Licensing £20k, Northgate House £11k, Hackney Carriage £15k. These are offset by underspends on Public Conveniences (£17k) and Street Cleansing (£14k).
Total Place Service			(234)	

Housing (General Fund) Service				
Supporting People		(145)	(145)	Favourable variation due to the 2015/16 ECC Supporting People Grant allocation (£95k), reduced employee costs (£8k), increased care alarm income (£10k) and net running expenses (£7k).
Housing Options & Advice	146		146	Increased bed and breakfast costs £157k, reduced net employee costs and running expenses (£9k) and increased income (£9k).
Other Minor Service Variations	9		9	Includes £13k amenity cleaning due to increased cost of amenity contract.
Total Housing (General Fund) Service			10	
Finance Service				
Revenues and Benefits		(58)	(58)	Variations include a saving on transferring the Fraud service to the DWP in October 2015 (£53k).
Insurance		(155)	(155)	New insurance policy resulting in a saving of £78k and an under-spend on policy excesses (£67k).
Early Retirement Funding		(40)	(40)	Underspend on superannuation.
ICT		(96)	(96)	Employee vacancies (£61k), software licences underspend (£19k) and support and consumables underspend (£17k).
Other Minor Service Variances	19	(62)	(43)	Net of all other variances across the service.
Total Finance Service			(392)	
Governance Service				
Policy and Performance		(59)	(59)	Staff vacancies.
Land Charges		(20)	(20)	Search fee income.
Training and Development		(24)	(24)	Training budget under-spent
Freedom of Information and Data Protection		(28)	(28)	Staff vacancies.
Other Minor Service Variances	6	(61)	(55)	Includes HR consultancy fees (£18k) and Members' expenses (£17k).
Total Governance Service			(186)	
Corporate Service				
Other Minor Service Variances		(7)	(7)	
Total Corporate Services			(7)	
Service Specific Variations			(999)	Sub-total

Other				
Costs chargeable to/from the HRA	379		379	
Insurance mechanism to offset service costs		(126)	(126)	Balance held in central budget to offset costs borne by individual services.
Interest variation		(85)	(85)	Variance due to additional interest receivable from the CCLA Property Investment Fund and the Council's financing support to the Enterprise Zone.
Finance miscellaneous		(134)	(134)	Write-off of Collection Fund adjustment (£60k) and external audit fee contract saving (£74k).
Additional Corporate Grants and Income		(330)	(330)	Additional income from ECC 2nd homes discount (£57k), Community Rights to Challenge (£27k), New Homes Bonus (£204k) and income from HCA.
Increase in Bad Debts Provision	395		395	
Total Variations			(900)	
Reserve Movements				
Insurance Fund	56		56	Insurance excesses are met by individual services against a central budget; this transfer to reserve represents the net underspend.
Invest to Save & Improve		(39)	(39)	To finance LATC.
MMI Reserve		(86)	(86)	Additional MMI Scheme of Arrangement costs offset by £50k annual addition to the reserve.
Severance reserve	10		10	Underspend on severance budget added.
Discretionary Services Fund	410		410	Net transfers to / from this reserve.
Debt Financing Reserve		(87)	(87)	Addition to this reserve is per the 2015/16 approved budget less £87k used to fund the cost of Educational Attainment (20k) and the cost of the Non- Housing stock condition survey (£67k).
Housing Benefits Subsidy Reserve	315	(315)	0	Underspend on Housing Benefit expenditure contributed to reserve.
Regeneration & Enterprise Reserve	186		186	Additional New Homes Bonus grant (approved 23/7/15).
Revenues and Benefits New Burdens Reserve	87		87	
Residual Land transfer	42		42	HCA Income added to reserve for future maintenance of parcels of land.
Risk Management Reserve	10		10	
Earmarked Grant Reserves and NNDR Movements	1,953	(1,385)	568	Includes transfer from the Business Rates Safety Net Reserve of £1.308m to offset the deficit on the Council's retained business rates.
Other Minor Variations		(36)	(36)	
Total General Fund Budget Variation (net overspend)			221	

**** Note: Figures in () are a credit e.g. income or underspend.**

Service Based Analysis

Community Wellbeing, Jane Greer:

Overall, financial control is good with the net underspend partly contributed to vacancy savings and a reduced contribution required for Harlow Sports Trust. Lower than expected bookings at the Playhouse during Easter and September and arrangements to cover maternity and sickness leave have had a negative impact on income and has contributed towards an overspend of the Playhouse budget.

Place, Graeme Bloomer:

Financial control 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 against an indication of a 35% increase in demand for temporary accommodation. The need to prioritise and target resources into the assessment and support of this increased demand continues.

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.

Supporting People commissioning arrangements are again to be reviewed. Funding has been reduced 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 continued to be maintained during the 2015/16 financial year with no major variations. Issues which have arisen are primarily staffing related either through the occurrence of vacancies leading to savings or the non-achievement of vacancy savings currently built into the service budget.

Finance, Corporate Services and other items, Simon Freeman:

The Finance Service has underspent by £392,000 in 2015/16 which is consistent with previous reporting to Cabinet during the year. The underspend is largely attributable to the vacancy levels within the Revenues and Benefits and ICT services during the first six months of the financial year and the ongoing improvement in the insurance claims history experience of the Council. Recruitment has now been successful in both the ICT and Revenues and Benefits Services and it is not anticipated that these savings will materialise in subsequent financial years.

Section Four: Performance

Harlow Council performed on target or above target for 53 out of 57 (93 per cent) of performance indicators. Sixty-five per cent of indicators have been maintained or improved compared to Quarter Four 2014/15.

Type	2014/15 Q4	2015/16 Q1	2015/16 Q2	2015/16 Q3	2015/16 Q4
Percentage of indicators within or better than target ●★	90%	84.4%	87%	90%	93%
Percentage of indicators improving or unchanged from the same period last year ✓↑✓↓➔	69%	64%	67%	71%	65%

Good Performance:

Harlow Council continues to improve performance in a number of areas. 18 out of 57 (32 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) CS50 Average waiting time of calls received by Contact Harlow	2015/16 Q4 Actual
★	A positive effect of the abandoned call rate reducing has meant that calls are being answered more quickly than previously anticipated. Whilst the abandoned call rate is low, it is expected that this would continue. (New PI for 2015/16 therefore data for comparison not available)	17 seconds
		2015/16 Q4 Target
		45 seconds
	(2) JVC 300 Emergency Housing repairs within 2 hrs (4.7) (%)	2014/15 Q4 Actual
★	Increased performance. This indicator is continuously monitored at monthly operations meetings.	99.58
✓↑		2015/16 Q4 Actual
		100
		2014/15 Q4 Target
		99
		2015/16 Q4 Target
		99

(3) JVC 308 Routine Housing Voids meeting standards (4.25) (%)		2014/15 Q4 Actual	2015/16 Q4 Actual
★ →	Recently there has been additional training carried out and improved communications maintaining good performance of this indicator.	100	100
		2014/15 Q4 Target	2015/16 Q4 Target
		100	100

(4) NI154 Net additional homes provided		2014/15 Q4 Actual	2015/16 Q4 Actual
★ ✓↑	The increase in performance for this NI reflects the continued build out of the major strategic housing site at New Hall where the developers are building out on more than one land parcel. In addition a number of small individual plots comprising 1- 4 dwellings have been completed which is an increase on past years.	201	225
		2014/15 Q4 Target	2015/16 Q4 Target
		130	125

(5) NI157a Processing of major applications within 13 weeks (%)		2014/15 Q4 Actual	2015/16 Q4 Actual
★ →	The Service has been proactive at both pre-application stage and actual application assessments by working with Developers to secure amendments early to address issues raised in consultation and prevent delay to the determination of applications.	100	100
		2014/15 Q4 Target	2015/16 Q4 Target
		60	60

(6) NI195a Street & Environmental Cleanliness (% land assessed and having unacceptable lvls of litter)		2014/15 Q4 Actual	2015/16 Q4 Actual
★ ✓↓	Kier Harlow Ltd have worked to improve performance of this KPI over time and positive results are welcome. The KPI is measured by a sampling process designed to produce representative results over the course of an entire calendar year taking into account seasonal variations and so a cumulative year's results should be considered before definitive judgements are reached.	3	1.78
		2014/15 Q4 Target	2015/16 Q4 Target
		4	4

Performance of Key Contracts:

Kier Harlow Ltd (JVCO):

Housing and commercial repairs, street cleaning, and grounds maintenance



In 2015-16 Kier Harlow Ltd met 96 per cent of its 59 monthly major and minor targets. The four key areas performed as follows:

Housing: 98% success rate for 18 indicators. One key performance indicator saw an improvement – ‘Remove Dumped Rubbish within Five Working Days of Notification.’

Street Scene: 97% success rate for 15 indicators. Kier Harlow Ltd have maintained a high level of compliance in dealing with graffiti, dumped rubbish, litter bins and abandoned vehicles. Performance has improved for four indicators including ‘NI 195 (a) - Cleaning of Streets’, ‘Customer Satisfaction with Street Cleaning Service’ and ‘Decreasing the Average Time to Remove Fly Tips’.

Grounds Maintenance: 95% success rate for 12 indicators. The frequency of grass cutting on highway verges has been increased alongside this change. Performance in the control of vegetation to facilitate use of footpaths and roads has increased, and effective action has been taken to ensure that targets for performance on tree works carried out within 80 working days are achieved.

Non-Housing: 93% success rate for 8 indicators with improvements in performance for ‘Statutory Tests for Inspections Completed Prior to Due Date’ and ‘Customer Satisfaction with Non-Housing Repairs Service’. A consistently high level of performance has been maintained in relation to removing dumped rubbish within the target time and attending a site to make it safe within two hours of a report.

Veolia:

Waste and Recycling services



Veolia Environmental Services collect domestic recycling, and food waste, and residual (black bag) waste town-wide; ancillary services including bulky, green, and nappy/incontinence waste, are also provided. The Veolia team works closely with the Council’s client and communications teams to ensure consistent service delivery, and to minimise service disruption due adverse weather, bank holidays, and similar events. Veolia have proven flexible and adaptable to requirements for change. The collection methodology introduced with the current contract continues to ensure high rates of diversion of waste from landfill.

Westerleigh: Crematorium



Westerleigh Group leases the Cemetery and Crematorium site from the Council and take responsibility for all operations and maintenance. Access to industry expertise, a wider pool of equipment and staff resources within the group, and to capital resources enabled much needed investment in site infrastructure and a wide ranging upgrade to the customer experience. Customer response has continued to be overwhelmingly positive during 2015/16, and business has exceeded projections with a corresponding benefit to rental income for the Council.

A full list of indicator descriptions and performance data is available at www.harlow.gov.uk/performance

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.

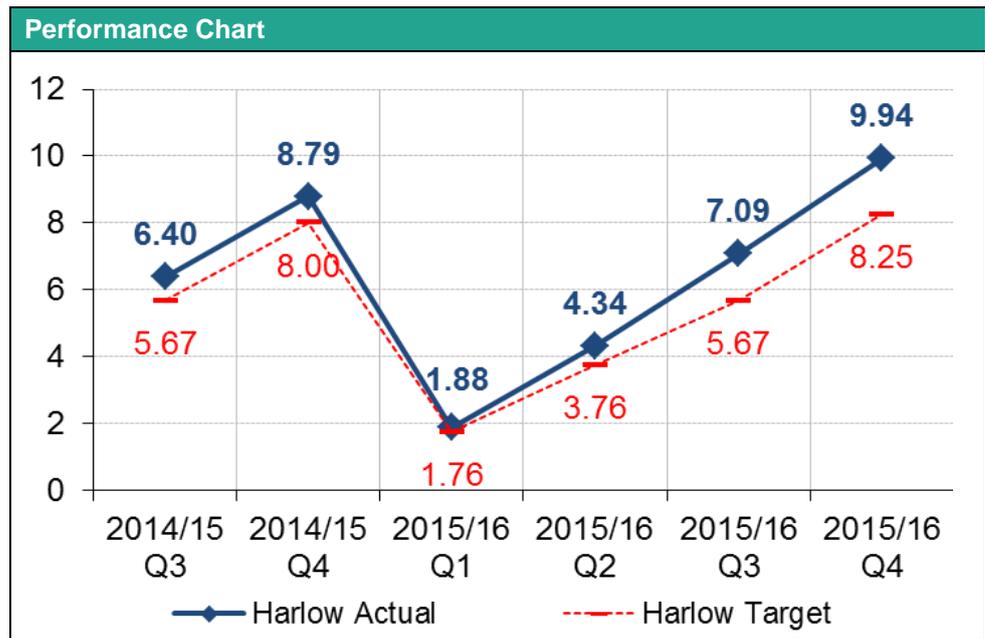
Performance Indicator		QTR 4 14/15	QTR 1 15/16	QTR 2 15/16	QTR 3 15/16	QTR 4 15/16
Street Scene	JVC 104 Customer satisfaction with Street Scene	●	▲	●	●	●
	NI195c Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	●	▲	★	★	▲
Grounds Maintenance	JVC 207d Tree works carried out within 80 working days (four months) (3.14d) (per cent)	●	●	●	▲	●
Housing	BV202 People sleeping rough (numbers)	▲	●	●	★	●
Waste & Recycling	BV082ai Household waste recycled (%)	●	▲	▲	▲	▲
	BV082bi Household waste composted (%)	▲	▲	▲	▲	▲
Miscellaneous	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		5	7	6	4	4

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
BV012 Average number of working days / shifts lost to sickness and absence	2015/16 Q4		14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3	15/16 Q4
		Harlow Actual	6.40	8.79	1.88	4.34	7.09	9.94
		Harlow Target	5.67	8.00	1.76	3.76	5.67	8.25

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 1.15 per FTE up to 9.94 FTE (Quarter 4) compared with 8.79 per FTE for the same period last year.

Sickness absence statistics are broken into short term: (5.39 FTE 2015/16 compared with 5.10 FTE 2014/15) showing a slight increase in short term sickness of 0.29 for Quarter 4. Long term (i.e. four continuous weeks (20 days) 4.55 FTE 2015/16 compared with 3.69 FTE 2014/15 showing an increase in long term sickness of 0.86 per FTE.

The statistics demonstrate that the main reason for the increase in sickness absence for the year is attributable to long term sickness. During 2014/2015 there were 22 employees whose absence was classified as long term within the Council's Sickness Absence Management Policy which equated to 1166 days in total. For the same period 2015/16, there was a notable increase to 29 employees who were long term sick which equates to 1380 days in total. This is an increase of 214 days for long term sick year on year.

What practical steps are being taken to improve?

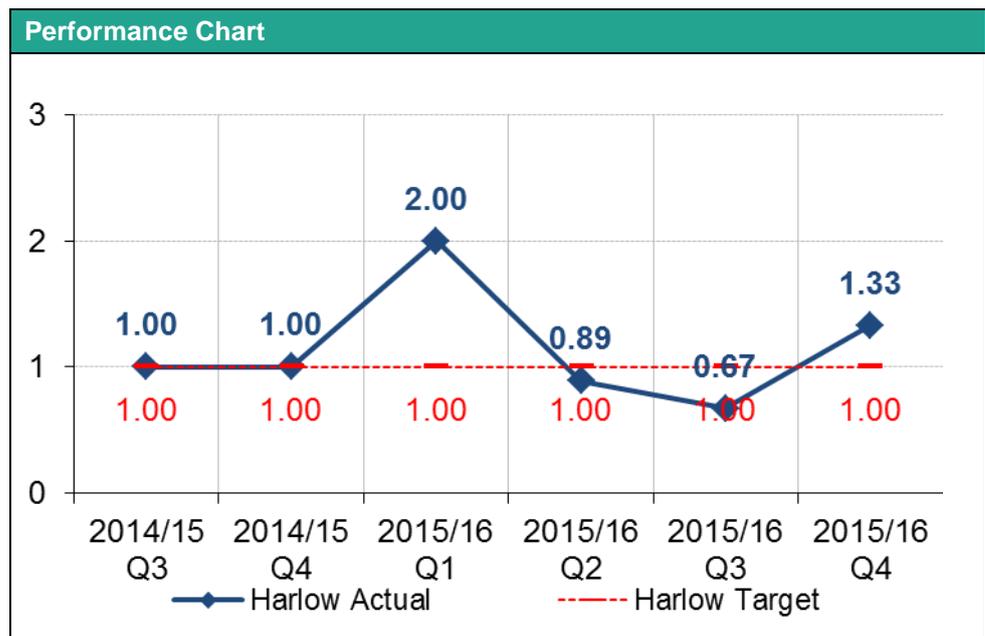
- The Council has implemented a range of policies over the past few years including Special Leave, Flexible Working, Homeworking, Maternity, Shared Parental Leave, Paternity Leave, Sickness Absence Management, Adoption Leave, and Dignity at work.
- Continue to use the absence management process to reduce the numbers of days lost.
- Ongoing close management and support continues to be provided to line management by HR in long term sickness cases.
- Encouraging/reminding management to complete return to work interviews.
- Implement improvement action plans in accordance with the Sickness Absence Management Policy, where applicable.
- Review the categorisation of sickness absence data which should enable improved analysis and comparison.
- Review the Sickness Absence Management Policy.
- Review Absence Management Services Frameworks.

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
NI195c Street & Environmental Cleanliness (% land assessed having unacceptable levels of graffiti)	2015/16 Q4		14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3	15/16 Q4
		Harlow Actual	1.00	1.00	2.00	0.89	0.67	1.33
		Harlow Target	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Description

This is reported as the percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of graffiti and fly-posting that fall below an acceptable level



Direction of Travel:

✘ ↑

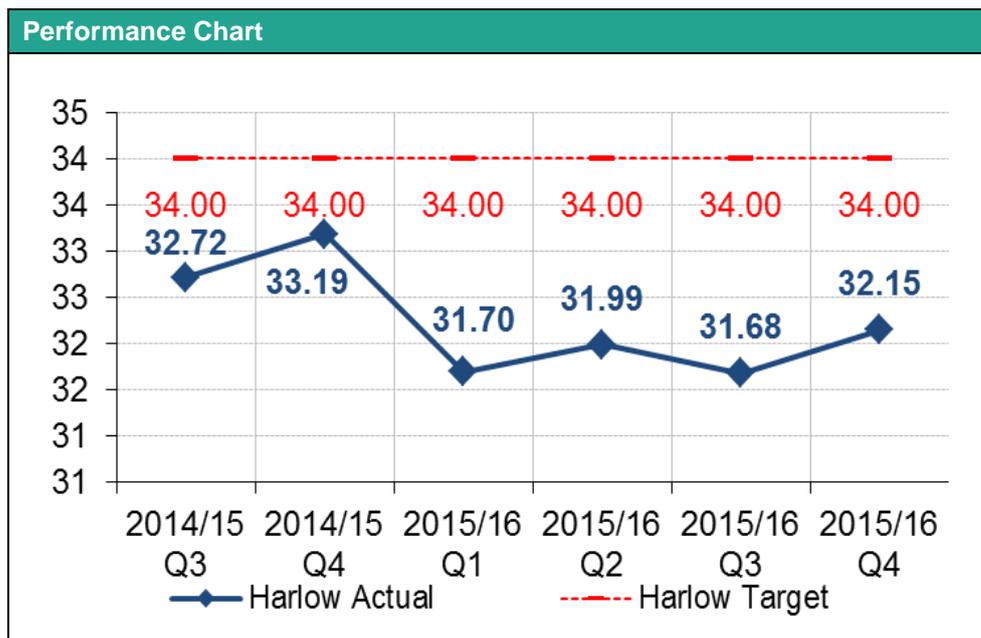
What is the performance situation?	The target is set at a high standard such that compliance is sensitive to a very small number of adverse findings which could cause reported performance to drop below target. Graffiti on private land that is not in Council control, where the Council has no direct influence, can cause the target to fail. Performance on clearing reported graffiti within a short timescale remains strong.
What practical steps are being taken to improve?	The Council will liaise with Kier Harlow Ltd over any particular hot-spots that may require specific attention and the PI will be monitored to ensure that the adverse deviation is not indicating a trend.

Improvement Action Plan

Performance Indicator	Reporting Period	Performance						
BV 082ai Household Waste Recycled (%)	2015/16 Q4		14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3	15/16 Q4
		Harlow Actual	32.72	33.19	31.70	31.99	31.68	32.15
		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:

✘ ↓

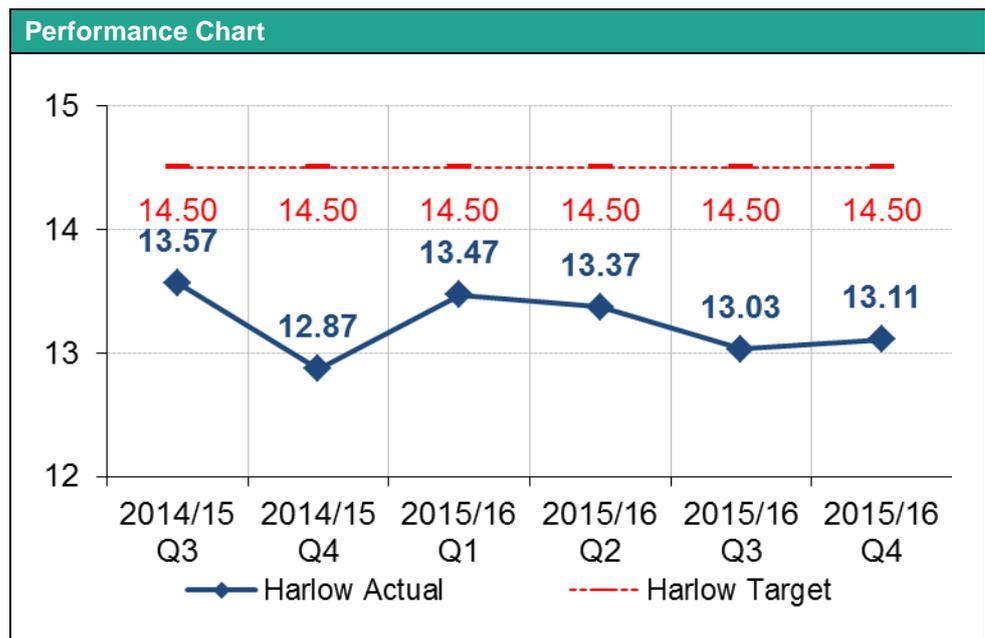
What is the performance situation?	<p>Collection service performance remains good as demonstrated by the actual tonnage collected compared to quarterly targets. For example this quarter reached 8358.303 tonnes (target 8000). Variations are likely to be due to societal issues.</p> <p>There has been a national trend towards reduction in the volume of recycling collected, and a significant increase in the volume of residual 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 of Waste Composted (%)	2015/16 Q4		14/15 Q3	14/15 Q4	15/16 Q1	15/16 Q2	15/16 Q3	15/16 Q4
		Harlow Actual	13.57	12.87	13.47	13.37	13.03	13.11
		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?	<p>Collection service performance remains good as demonstrated by the actual tonnage collected compared to the set target this quarter. For example this quarters actual tonnage collected was 3408.170 (target 3500) and close to target.</p> <p>The green waste service continues to be popular, and there are currently around 490 households subscribed to the premium service. 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 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.</p>
What practical steps are being taken to improve?	<p>Roll out of the food waste service to flat blocks is now complete and the Council continues to seek opportunities to extend the service to primary schools. The green waste service returned to five days from the end of February 2016. 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</p>

	<p>collection, however resources are limited. 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.</p>
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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>

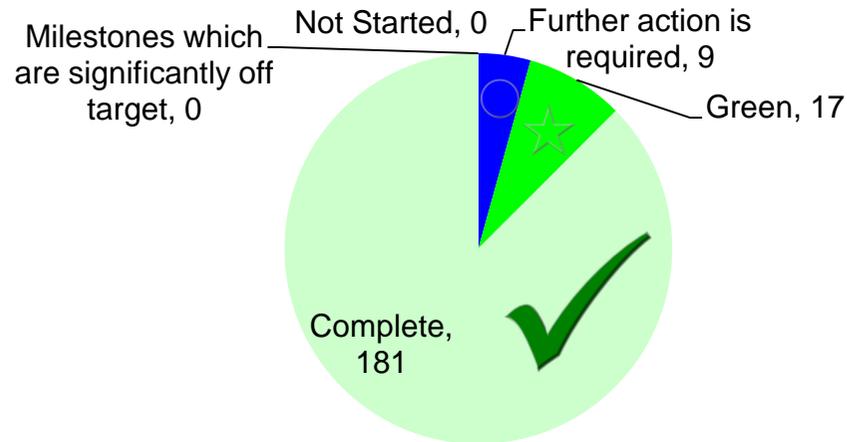
Risk Owner & Description	Likelihood	Impact	Control already in place	Additional actions to mitigate risk	Residual Risk score
<p>Head of Place – PLC01 – If priority allocation and funding by the Highways Agency and Government is not achieved then the timely delivery of M11 Junction 7a will be put at risk.</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>Head of Community Wellbeing – 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 and a place for inward investment.</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 Four 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 March 2016.



Ninety-six per cent (198 out of 207) of all Corporate Plan milestones are self-assessed as being complete or green (i.e. successfully delivered or implemented in 2015/16 and on-going) as at 31 March 2016.

Four per cent (9 out of 207) of milestones have lapsed or 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	181	87
On Track (Green) Milestones	17	8
Further action required to get back on track	9	4
Milestones which are significantly off target and where further action is needed (Red)	0	0
Not Started Milestones	0	0