



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 28th November, 2013

7.00 pm

Town Hall, Watford

Publication date: 20 November 2013

CONTACT

If you require further information or you would like a copy of this agenda in another format, e.g. large print, please contact Sandra Hancock in Democracy and Governance on 01923 278377 or by email to legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk .

Welcome to this meeting. We hope you find these notes useful.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor K Collett (Chair)

Councillor A Khan (Vice-Chair)

Councillors J Aron, N Bell, S Greenslade, K Hastrick, S Johnson, A Lovejoy and R Martins

AGENDA

PART A - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2013 to be submitted and signed. *(All minutes are available on the Council's website.)*

4. CALL-IN

To consider any Executive decisions which have been called in by the requisite number of Members.

5. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS AND QUESTIONS (Pages 1 - 10)

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the outstanding actions and questions from previous meetings.

6. REVENUES AND BENEFITS UPDATE (Pages 11 - 16)

Report of the Director of Finance

This report provides an update on the revenues and benefits service and the current performance of the benefits service.

7. UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND MEASURES - END OF QUARTER 2 (JULY-SEPTEMBER) 2013/14 (Pages 17 - 28)

Report of the Partnerships and Performance Section Head

This report presents an update on the council's performance indicators at the end of quarter 2 (July-September) 2013/14.

8. EXECUTIVE DECISION PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 29 - 40)

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the latest edition of the Executive Decision Progress Report and consider whether any further information is required.

9. HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Martins, the Council's appointed representative to the County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee to provide an update.

Scrutiny Panels and Task Groups

10. MANAGEMENT OF DISABLED PARKING BAYS - CABINET RESPONSE AND UPDATE (Pages 41 - 46)

The report sets out the Task Group's original recommendations, Cabinet's response and an update provided by officers on the recommendations.

11. WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST - RESPONSE FROM WATFORD COMMUNITY HOUSING TRUST (Pages 47 - 54)

The report sets out the Task Group's original recommendations and Watford Community Housing Trust's response.

12. BUDGET PANEL

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Budget Panel has met on the following occasion –

- Tuesday 29 October 2013

The minutes are available on the Council's website – www.watford.gov.uk/budgetscrutiny

The Chair of Budget Panel to provide an update to the Scrutiny Committee.

13. OUTSOURCED SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel met on the following occasion –

- Tuesday 19 November 2013

The minutes will be available on the Council's website -

<http://watford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=223>

The Chair of Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel to provide an update to the Scrutiny Committee.

14. COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TASK GROUP

Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Community Safety Partnership Task Group has met on the following occasion –

- Monday 30 September 2013

The minutes are available on the Council's website -

<http://watford.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=209>

The Chair of the Community Safety Partnership Task Group to provide an update to the Scrutiny Committee.

15. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Thursday 19 December 2013 (For call-in only)
- Wednesday 22 January 2014
- Thursday 6 February 2014 (For call-in only)

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Outstanding Actions and questions

Action to be carried out	Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer	
Performance Report					
PI 33	<p><u>CS16 – Number of private sector units secured for use under HomeLet</u></p> <p>Do landlords have to be registered to participate in the scheme? Please provide further information about HomeLet.</p>	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Housing Section Head	26 September 2013	November 2013	The Housing Section Head advises – “There is not a landlord accreditation scheme attached to HomeLet. However there are minimum lettable standards which must apply to a property before it is let and our officers visit the property before letting and a few weeks later as a settling in visit to the tenant.”
PI 34	<p><u>CS17 – Number of households in bed and breakfast and nightly lets</u></p> <p>Where are the B and B and nightly lets located, in Watford or outside the area?</p>	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Housing Section Head	26 September 2013	November 2013	The Housing Section Head advises – “The nightly lets are based in Watford. Most of the B&B units the Council uses are in Watford. In an emergency, if a household presents as homeless and there are no Watford vacancies the Council may make use of B&B units in either Hemel, St Albans or Borehamwood for a few nights until a vacancy arises in Watford. It is the Council's priority to move households back to Watford as soon as possible.”

Action to be carried out		Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
PI 35	<u>Street cleaning</u> What powers does the Council have to enforce the clearing of rubbish from front gardens?	Committee and Scrutiny Officer / Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head -	26 September 2013		The response is attached as Appendix 1 to this update.
Housing Benefit update					
HB 2	Further update to be provided to the Scrutiny Committee	Head of Revenues and Benefits	21 November 2012 27 June 2013	May/June 2013 January 2014 November 2013	Included on agenda for 27 June 2013 Added to rolling work programme At its meeting on 26 September, the Scrutiny Committee requested that the Shared Director of Finance, Head of Revenues and Benefits and Portfolio Holder be invited to the meeting in November and not January. An update report is included on this agenda.

Action to be carried out		Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
Affordable Housing Review					
AHR 7	Review the first and second quarters' performance of the new Nomination Policy	Committee and Scrutiny Officer/ Housing Section Head	19 September 2012	November 2013 Revised to March 2014	Added to rolling work programme Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to defer this item as the policy has yet to be approved by Cabinet. This policy has been removed from the Notice of Executive Decisions for the foreseeable future, as indicated on the Executive Decision Progress Report elsewhere on this agenda.
AHR 8	Recommendation 2 – piecemeal developments and Section 106 obligations – to be further reviewed in two year's time	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	21 November 2012	November 2014	Added to rolling work programme
Work Programme and Task Groups					
WP 8	Community Safety Partnership Task Group to be asked to review the provision of drug treatment in the borough	Committee and Scrutiny Officer and Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer	24 November 2011	1 December 2011	Referred to the Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer supporting the Community Safety Partnership Task Group. An all-Member briefing is being arranged to cover this topic. The potential date is Wednesday 27 November 2013.

Action to be carried out	Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer	
Previous Reviews Updates					
PR 6	<u>3-year Grant Funding Programme Review – Watford Muslim Community Project</u> The CAB evaluation into the outreach service to be shared with Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Commissioning Manager	25 July 2013	November 2013	Attached as Appendix 2 to this update.
PR 7	<u>3-year Grant Funding Programme Review – Watford Muslim Community Project</u> Further update to be provided in November.	Commissioning Manager	25 July 2013	November 2013	WBC officers (Property Services and Corporate Strategy and Client Services) met with the Chair of the trustee board of Watford Muslim Community Project on 2 August 2013 at 15 Harwoods Rd. The purpose of the meeting was to enable a handover of keys and for Property Services to carry out a dilapidations inspection.
PR 9	<u>Voluntary and Commissioning Sector Commissioning Framework</u> A further review of the Small Grants Fund to be carried out in one year.	Commissioning Manager	25 July 2013	July 2014	Added to rolling work programme
HCC Health Scrutiny Committee					

Action to be carried out		Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
Management of Disabled Parking Bays Task Group					
DPB 2	Final report to be submitted to Cabinet in September	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	27 June 2013	October 2013 (previously September)	The Cabinet meeting due to take place in September was cancelled. The Task Group's final report was presented to Cabinet in October. A follow up report is included elsewhere on this agenda.
DPB 3	Cabinet's response to be reported to Overview at its next available meeting.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	27 June 2013	November 2013 (previously September)	A follow up report is included elsewhere on this agenda.
Watford Community Housing Trust Task Group					
HT 3	Send the Task Group's final report to the Housing Trust and ask for their comments about the recommendations.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	26 September 2013	11 October 2013	The Task Group's final report was sent to the Housing Trust's Chief Executive by email and post. The initial response is included elsewhere on this agenda.
HT 4	Ask the Housing Trust's Chief Executive and Chair of the Board to come to a meeting in three months time to provide a formal response to the recommendations.	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	26 September 2013	January 2014	The Housing Trust's Chief Executive has accepted an invitation to attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting in January.

	Action to be carried out	Responsibility	Committee Date	Deadline	Comments/officer
HT 5	<p>The Task Group's final report to be sent to the following –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watford Community Housing Trust • Tenants who participated in the review • Residents' and Tenants' Associations • Watford Borough Council's Cabinet • All WBC Councillors (electronically) • Three Rivers District Councillors who have Housing Trust property within their ward • Head of Community and Customer Services 	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	26 September 2013	18 October 2013	<p>Completed.</p> <p>The report is to be formally reported to Cabinet at its December meeting.</p>
HT 6	The Task Group's final report to be added to the Council's website (under Library)	Committee and Scrutiny Officer	26 September 2013	18 October 2013	Completed

Question: Street cleaning – What powers does the Council have to enforce the clearing of rubbish from front gardens?

Response from Environmental Health Manager (West)

“The statutory powers available to enforcement officers in relation to rubbish in front gardens enable waste accumulations and litter that attract/harbour pests and/or that have a detrimental effect on the visual amenity to be tackled. Officers respond to all complaints that may fit these criteria and work informally with residents and property owners to resolve issues, treat for pests and clear the land. Where rats or mice are thought to be present our Animal Control Officers, will carry out test baiting and treatment as required. Where property owners/occupiers are uncooperative in clearing the garden formal Notices can be served, these Notices have a right of appeal to a Magistrates Court of between 21 and 28 days. Works in default can be carried out and the costs reclaimed, including a fixed penalty of £100 in relation to a notice dealing with refuse or litter that is reducing the quality of the local environment within a neighbourhood.

In the majority of cases, of which there have been 70 since January 2013, not including waste in alley ways and fly tips on private land, an informal resolution has been achieved. Where formal action is required this can take a number of months given the need to allow for an informal resolution and then the appeal period that must be allowed. Customers are kept up to date of progress throughout the process. Where pests are present these cases are prioritised and members should note that treatment for rats is free throughout the borough for domestic premises.

In addition, in relation to Houses in Multiple Occupation there are regulations that require landlords to proactively keep their gardens and yards clear and in good order. Officers will proactively deal with any problems found during their routine inspections. Where recurrent issues from properties such as these are found, a prosecution can be brought.

Any reports of accumulations in gardens should be notified to Customer Service Centre on 01923 2378503 or enquiries@watford.gov.uk who will record the complaint and pass it to the Environmental Crime team for investigation.

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West Watford Outreach Project

Background

Watford CAB was asked to set up a culturally sensitive outreach service based in West Watford primarily to mitigate any negative impact on the West Watford community if the Muslim Community Project were to cease providing a service in the local area.

The funding for the outreach service was for one year and commenced in July 2012. As this was a new service, there was an initial 'set up' period (sourcing suitable accommodation, recruiting staff, publicising the service). It was considered prudent to have the outreach in place from September 2012 as it was not clear when or if the Muslim Community Project would cease providing services.

Considerations of the project from a CAB perspective during the 'set up' period

- Of utmost importance was to maintain CAB aims and principles: free, independent, confidential and impartial advice
- Careful consideration was given to ensure that outreach locations allowed clients to access the service in a confidential way
- The location of the service needed to be selected with the target audiences in mind
- The outreach centre operational principles needed to be in keeping and complimentary to CAB and vice versa
- The outreach worker needed to be confident and capable of working in an outreach capacity
- A risk assessment of the venue and general working conditions needed to be undertaken

Venue

The CAB chose Westfield Children's Centre which was considered to be a suitable venue as it was known that young Muslim women already accessed it for other purposes. However it did have some constraints due to its distance from West Watford (and therefore not being totally suitable for those with mobility difficulties). Whilst there was a telephone advice service operating, it was felt that a second venue would enhance the service..

A doctor's surgery in Upton Rd was approached and would have been a suitable, however despite considerable efforts to secure this, it never came to fruition. This was in part due to the Practice Manager leaving during the negotiations.

Marketing

There were a number of mechanisms used to market the outreach service including the following:

- Sharing posters and emails with other voluntary sector organisations
- Attending parent and baby/ toddler groups in and around West Watford (approx. 10 visited)
- Using Children's' Centre networks to publicise with all local schools
- Asking local Drs surgeries to display poster of service

Ward Councillors were contacted in Nov and Dec via email asking for their assistance in engaging the community as the take up of the project had been slow. There were no responses. However one councillor did agree to meet with us after the CAB Chair spoke to him at an unconnected event. A further email was sent to the councillor suggesting suitable dates but no reply was forthcoming.

Service Statistics for the Outreach Project

The project was operational from September 2012 (following the 'set up' period) until July 2013.

Number of sessions held	76
Total number of clients	38 (one per week the project was available) see below
Number of full appointments	30

Client demographics

- 60.5% were from West Watford
- 92% from Watford (as some people living in other local boroughs attended Westfield Children's Centre
- 84% were women
- nearly 8% disabled
- 47% were from non-White ethnic backgrounds
- 26% were from non-White British backgrounds.

Potential reasons for low take-up

- The Muslim Community Project continued to operate a service until March 2013. Users from that part of the community who would have accessed the Muslim Community Project would not have necessarily needed to have used the services of the CAB outreach project during the same period
- Location was a factor and will be key in future outreach initiatives
- The constraints of having a time limited project which had to be operational in a short timeframe had an impact due to the lack of time for robust planning and preparation

Future Outreach Projects – Lessons Learned and Future Considerations

- It is worth taking more time to source multiple venues at the start of a project
- Considerable time and effort is needed to be spent publicising the project and venues
- Significant resources are needed to engage with the community and develop awareness and trust
- The reputation of the project is focused on the workers delivering it and must be of the highest quality
- The resources taken away from Bureau activities to support the project may be greater than might be expected

Caron Williams
Watford CAB
Bureau Manager
October 2013

Agenda Item 6

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny
Date of meeting: 28th November 2013
Report of: Director of Finance
Title: Revenues and Benefits Update

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the revenues and benefits service and current performance of the benefits service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The report is noted and members invited to comment on its contents

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact Joanne Wagstaffe, Director of Finance, telephone 01923 727200, email joanne.wagstaffe@watford.gov.uk

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 The following report outlines the current performance of the Watford Borough Council benefits service. It also provides an update on the Revenues and Benefits service.

4.0 BENEFIT PROCESSING TIMES

4.1 The current benefits processing times are shown in the table below.

Month	Target	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Combined Speed		89.95	56.83	42.20	27.57	22.53	20.15	14.54
New Claims	22	25.43	19.35	19.49	14.47	14.15	20.34	16.55
Changes	15	102.71	64.17	45.65	29.28	24.05	20.12	14.13

This shows an improvement in the year for both new claims and changes in circumstances.

New claims have seen a significant improvement since the beginning of the year, although this increased slightly in September. This increase is due to a swapping of resources onto the processing of changes in circumstances.

Processing of Changes in Circumstances has also improved significantly since the beginning of the year.

Both of these indicators are below the target for processing times, however, it is anticipated that these may rise slightly over the next month or so as some of the older cases are closed down. This will increase the average times. The oldest date for new claims in the system is now the 30th September 2013 (as at 18th November 2013).

4.2 One of the large factors in the historically high claims processing times has been the ATLAS system, and the number of items outstanding which still needed to be processed.

The benefits team has now completed all of the outstanding work and is now only having to manage the workload coming through ATLAS on a daily basis. Whilst the amount of data being received on a daily basis will vary, the team have now essentially completed the backlog work and this will mean that changes are more up to date.

There is still some improvements to flow through the processing statistics, following the improvement in the ATLAS backlog and we should see these working their way through over the next couple of months.

5.0 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT RECOVERY

- 5.1 Housing Benefit overpayments are inevitable when dealing with housing benefit claims. The Council can reclaim grant on an element of this, in the form of Housing Subsidy. In addition the Council is able to recover the full amount of the overpayment from the claimant.

In 2012/13 the Housing benefit overpayment recovery rate achieved by the Council was 68.81%. A comparison of this in relation to other Hertfordshire Councils can be seen in Appendix 1. This shows that not only has Watford's recovery rate increased by 12% since 2011/12 but that it is also the second best in Hertfordshire.

The current rates for collection of Housing Benefit Overpayments are 66.06% for the current year – against a target of 60% and 21.85%, against a target of 5% for all years. This indicates that Watford is expecting another good year for recovery of the overpayments.

- 5.2 "The Council is also looking at ways in which we can improve the recovery rates, both for this year, and overpayments raised in previous years. We are now able to undertake an Attachment of Earnings order on those claimants who are now in PAYE employment. This is a new enforcement tool granted to us by the DWP. So we will be progressing this and looking at historic cases where we now have employment details.

We also hope to have LoCTA a tracing tool on a free trial for 3 months which we can use to obtain employment details.

We are also looking at placing Charging Orders on properties, where the claimant is lease or freeholder of the property. We would look into this if we have a high value debt that needs to be repaid. We will be testing this shortly"

6.0 STAFFING

- 6.1 The Head of Revenues and Benefits left the Council at the end of September 2013. Since this time we have been running without a Head of Service. We are looking to replace the Head of Service role on a temporary basis until the end of March.

We are undertaking interviews in the week commencing 14th October 2013 and so will be able to update Budget Panel at the meeting following the conclusion of these interviews.

We have also appointed an Interim Revenues Manager who will be starting with us on the 2nd December 2013..

During this time we will look at the resourcing requirements for the service, based on current caseload levels and performance targets.

7.0 SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

- 7.1 We are currently looking at ways in which we can improve the service delivery for both revenues and benefits. We will consider a range of solutions which improve efficiency and improve the service delivery to our customers.

We have already started this process and are currently providing training on a new version of the Academy system and we will go live with the new system shortly. We are

also looking at a range of other improvements which we are implementing as we agree solutions. Many of these improvements are small improvements in a part of a process and these changes are being implemented as we go along. Examples of these smaller improvements include changing how emails are dealt with, considering whether tasks need to be completed, correcting issues with the system and implementing new recovery methods for those who owe the Council money. All of these will improve the efficiency of the service.

We are also working with the Customer Services Centre to look at how we can improve the service to our customers.

Alongside this we are also starting to develop a more robust performance management system, which will provide information which will help the service to identify

Appendix 1

Comparison of Watford with other Hertfordshire Councils

2011/12										
LA	Broxbourne	Dacorum	East Herts	Hertsmere	NorthHerts	St Albans	Stevenage	Three Rivers	Watford	Welwyn Hatfield
HB Caseload	5932	9285	6247	6127	8097	5949	7592	4523	6300	7637
Speed - New	25	24	35	n/a	19	30	28	38	35	16
Speed - Changes	9	12	6	n/a	6	n/a	9	27	30	4
HB O/P Raised	£1,788,000	£2,691,000	£1,231,000	£1,770,000	£1,512,000	£1,335,000	£1,628,000	£1,560,000	£2,975,000	£1,598,000
HB O/P Recovered	£1,242,000	£1,667,000	£1,003,000	£1,168,000	£1,094,000	£798,000	£1,328,000	£711,000	£1,690,000	£1,072,000
% Collected	69.46%	61.95%	81.48%	65.99%	72.35%	59.78%	81.57%	45.58%	56.81%	67.08%

2012/13										
LA	Broxbourne	Dacorum	East Herts	Hertsmere	NorthHerts	St Albans	Stevenage	Three Rivers	Watford	Welwyn Hatfield
HB Caseload	5985	9338	6487	6282	8119	5997	7758	4598	6505	7817
Speed - New	23	32	36	20	19	34	39	26	25	17
Speed - Changes	7	9	18	10	5	n/a	45	38	34	8
HB O/P Raised	£2,088,000	£2,585,000	£1,783,000	£2,787,000	£1,699,000	£2,518,000	£2,156,000	£1,606,246	£3,083,400	£1,680,000
HB O/P Recovered	£1,620,000	£1,695,000	£1,207,000	£1,631,000	£1,122,000	£1,314,000	£1,242,000	£1,005,139	£2,121,794	£978,000
% Collected	77.59%	65.57%	67.69%	58.52%	66.04%	52.18%	57.61%	62.58%	68.81%	58.21%

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*PART A

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 28 November 2013
Report of: Partnerships and Performance Section Head
Title: Update on the council's performance indicators and measures – end of quarter 2 (July-September) 2013/14

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Watford BC's Corporate Plan 2013-17 sets out the council's priority areas for delivery over the next four years. These are supported by a suite of performance measures that help identify where performance is meeting or exceeding targets or where it is below target. In these latter cases, consideration needs to be given to the reasons for under-performance and to steps that might support improvement.
- 1.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinise and comment on the performance of these indicators on a quarterly basis. This report, therefore, presents an update on the council's performance indicators at the end of quarter 2 (July-September) 2013/14.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Note and comment on the performance of the council's performance measures for 2013/14 at the end of quarter 2.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact:

Kathryn Robson, Partnerships and Performance Section Head

telephone extension: 8077 email: kathryn.robson@watford.gov.uk

3.0 Background information

Watford Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2013-17 sets out a medium term delivery plan of the council's work and areas for development. These are then translated into projects and areas of work for services to deliver and are reflected in individual service plans. These are regularly monitored for progress and achievement.

To support the delivery of these projects and areas of work, the council also identifies a number of performance measures or indicators, which provide regular information on progress against agreed targets.

A range of these are set out in Appendix A.

Committee to note that from 1 July 2013, the council implemented a new corporate structure that resulted in changes to the service areas responsible for reporting the performance measures. These changes are reflected in the quarter 2 report.

Furthermore, this is the first performance report to Committee since the outsourcing of waste and recycling, street cleansing and parks and open spaces. Committee to note that indicators relating to these services are now reported to, and monitored by, Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel.

3.1 **End of quarter 2 2013/14 performance report overview**

3.1.1 Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report at the end of quarter 2 2013/14 (July-September) is attached as Appendix A.

Those performance measures that are not performing against target are indicated either by a 😞 (under-performing by up to 10%) or by a ! (under-performing by over 10%). Where a measure is performing well (on or above target) it is highlighted with a 😊 even if this is over 10%.

Areas to note from the progress report:

- Housing performance in relation to homelessness has performed well in quarter 2 despite the pressures on the service
- Benefits has consolidated its improved performance since last year – two indicators are now within target, with the third (change of circumstances) showing continued improvement
- The council sickness absence figures for quarter 2 have been amended to reflect the transfer of staff to Veolia
- The council is working with services to improve its performance relating to complaint handling to ensure that service standards are met across all service areas

3.1.2 **Performance against target**

Of the 23 performance measures reported to Committee for quarter 2 2013/14:

- 10 are above target
- 10 are below target
- 3 are annual indicators so not reported at quarter 2

3.1.3 **Performance trends - quarterly (quarter 2 compared to quarter 1 2013/14)**

Of the 23 performance measures reported to Committee for quarter 2 2013/14:

- 11 show improved performance from quarter 1
- 4 show declining performance from quarter 1
- 2 show maintained performance from quarter 1

The remaining 6 measures are annual measures (so there is no result for quarter 2) or are ones where performance cannot be measured as a trend.

3.1.4 **Performance trends – annually (quarter 2 2013/14 compared to quarter 2 2012/13)**

Of the 23 performance measures reported to Committee for quarter 2 2013/14:

- 8 show improved performance from quarter 2 last year
- 7 show declining performance from quarter 2 last year

The remaining 8 measures are annual measures (so there is no result for quarter 2), are ones where performance cannot be measured as a trend or are new for 2013/14 so there is no comparison data.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS.**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 The Head of Finance comments that there are no financial implications within this report at this stage in the year.

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications within this report.

Appendix





Appendix A – Watford BC - Measures of Performance – Progress report as of end of quarter 2 2013/14

Background papers: Corporate Plan 2013-17

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WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – MEASURES OF PERFORMANCE

July - September 2013 (Quarter 2) 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q1 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES									
CCS1	CO2 reductions from local authority operations	- 27% for year	-	-	-	-	-	Community and Customer Services	Annual indicator.
CCS2	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of fly tipping)	Effective	N/A	-	-	-	-	Community and Customer Services	Reports of fly tips by Veolia have been steady for the months of July and August. The statistics show that a rating of 'effective' is predicted for the year end.
CCS3	Affordable homes on identified sites	66 up to Q2 105 for the year	52 Up to Q2	21%		N/A	↓	Community and Customer Services	Now projecting 105 in the year as 28 units will be delayed from March 14 to July 14 (St Albans Road next to Park Inn). Note that a significant proportion (43 units) will be shared ownership. Completions: St Albans Road, Stanborough View 14 units (10 affordable rent, 4 shared ownership) Origin







¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.

Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report as of quarter 2 - 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q1 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
									<p>Leggatts 28 units (4 social rent, 24 shared ownership) HPCHA Cassio Campus 10 (shared ownership) HPCHA</p> <p>14 units at Gammons Farm delayed by one week and therefore will fall into Quarter 3 which is why the quarter 2 target has not been met.</p> <p>Still expecting: Upton Road 23 units (18 affordable rent, 5 shared ownership) Home Group Gammons Farm 14 units (14 affordable rent) Affinity Sutton Croxley View 16 units (6 social rent, 10 affordable rent) Affinity Sutton</p>
CCS4	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	115	108	6.0%		↑	↓	Community and Customer Services	<p>Last year 189 decisions of whom 54% equivalent were accommodated at year end.</p> <p>Quarter 1 this year 61 decisions, Quarter 2 45 decisions pointing to an increase. We are seeing</p>








¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.

Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report as of quarter 2 - 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q1 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
									an increase in ending of private sector tenancies. Rent arrears/mortgage arrears did not feature this quarter. Continuing discussions with partners to expand baseline of temporary accommodation.
CCS5	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority	10	15	N/A		N/A	↓	Community and Customer Services	
CCS6	Number of households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local authority's housing advice service(s), and for who housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation	38	57	50%		↑	↑	Community and Customer Services	
CCS7	Number of private sector units secured for use under Homelet	15	10	50%		↔	N/A	Community and Customer Services	HomeLet launched on 1 July 2013 to offer a new range of incentives to private sector landlords. Continuing competition from other boroughs. Further landlord incentives planned for November and December as part of pre-Christmas temporary accommodation planning.




¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.

Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report as of quarter 2 - 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q1 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
CCS8	The number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation and nightly lets who are pregnant/with dependent children	2 B&B 18 Nightly lets 20 in total	8 B&B 12 Nightly lets 20 in total	0		↓	N/A	Community and Customer Services	<p>Aim is to reduce B&B which will necessitate an increase in nightly lets. These units are slightly higher cost but offer better facilities to households e.g. the ability to prepare and cook food as they are self contained.</p> <p>Initial nightly let opportunities now taken up. Focus moving to commissioning hostel places by conversion/refurbishment of council or partner assets.</p>
CCS9	CSC service levels - 80% calls answered in 20 secs	80% calls answered in 20 seconds	73%	8.8%		↑	↓	Community and Customer Services	
CCS10	CSC service levels - 95% all calls answered	95% all calls answered	97%	2%		↑	↓	Community and Customer Services	
CCS11	Calls resolved at first point of contact	90%	84 % excl transfers	6.7%		↓	↑	Community and Customer Services	Reduction in resolved at FPC figures following outsourcing of waste and recycling service.




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Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report as of quarter 2 - 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q1 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
CCS12	Complaints resolved at stage one	90%	52%	42%	!	↑	↓	Community and Customer Services	39 of 75 Complaints Resolved at stage 1 We are working with services to improve performance. Anticipate an improvement in Q3.
CCS13	% of stage 1 complaints resolved within 10 days	80%	37%	54%	!	↑	n/a	Community and Customer Services	Customer Services is working with services to improve performance. Anticipate an improvement in Q3.
CCS14	Attendance at: Harwoods APG + Harewoods APG + Play Rangers	9,609	12,306	28%	😊	↑	n/a	Community and Customer Services	Working to increase awareness, marketing. Very successful Play Day.




¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.




Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report as of quarter 2 - 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q2 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT									
RD1	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' applications (% determined within 13 weeks)	85%	66.67%	21.6%	!	↑	↓	Regeneration and Development	Only 6 applications fell within this category
RD2	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' applications (% determined within 8 weeks)	90%	96.97%	7.7%	😊	↑	↑	Regeneration and Development	
RD3	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' applications (% determined within 8 weeks)	90%	99.22%	10.24	😊	↓	↑	Regeneration and Development	
RD4	Planning appeals allowed	-	33.33% (4 out of 12)	-	-	-	-	Regeneration and Development	

¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.







Appendix A - Watford BC - Measures Of Performance – Progress report as of quarter 2 - 2013/14

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q2 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE									
DG1	Voter registration	96%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Legal and Property services	This will be reported in Q4.

Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q2 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
HUMAN RESOURCES									
HR1	Sickness absence (working days lost)	2.5 days	3.9 days	56%	!	↓	↑	Human Resources	<p>This is the cumulative result for the year to the end of quarter 2.</p> <p>The statistics have been amended to reflect current workforce profile for Qtr 1</p>




¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.

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Ref	Measure	Target for Q2 2013/14	Actual at end of Q2 2013/14	% variance ¹	  	Trend since last period (Q2 2013/14)	Trend since last year (2012/13)	Service Lead	Comments
REVENUES AND BENEFITS									
RB1 KPI1i	Av time to process benefits claims	22 days	19.66 days	11%		↑	↑	Revenues and Benefits	
RB2 KPI1ii	Av time to process change of circs	15 days	50.86 days	239%		↑	↑	Revenues and Benefits	Average for the first 6 months is higher due to backlog of Atlas files. These are now clear. This is shown by the result for September which is 20.12 days.
RB3	New claims – average time to process from receipt of all information	15 days	11.20 days	25%		↔	↑	Revenues and Benefits	

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Key to performance against target

-  on target **or** above target
-  not on target but there is no cause for concern at this stage.
-  not on target/ more than 10% variance and is a cause for concern.

¹ Variance: difference between actual performance and profile for quarter as a percentage of the profile.

Watford Borough Council

Executive Decision Progress Report

May 2013 – May 2014

Contact Officer: Sandra Hancock
Committee and Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: 01923 278377

Email: legalanddemocratic@watford.gov.uk

All officer decisions relating to Traffic Regulation Orders and other Borough Council Highways matters are available on the Council's website – <http://watford.moderngov.co.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?bcr=1>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Appointment of Ground Control Ltd after a PQQ and ITT procurement process for the Watford Parks Improvement Programme (Part B)	Community Services	Head of Community Services	June 2013	Key decision This decision was taken in private due to the content of the report. It is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it included financially and commercially sensitive information as part of the procurement process. Approved by the Head of Community Services on 20 June 2013 Not called in
To consider the 2012-2013 Financial Outturn for the Authority	Finance	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in
Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy 2013-2017	Finance	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in
New Watford Market Update	Legal and Property Services	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Future delivery of Building Control service	Planning	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in
Approval of the Conservation Areas Management Plan	Planning	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in
Agree to take forward a Compulsory Purchase Order to deliver the Watford Health Campus and associated road infrastructure (Part A)	Corporate Management	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in
Agree to take forward a Compulsory Purchase Order to deliver the Watford Health Campus and associated road infrastructure (Part B)	Corporate Management	Cabinet	July 2013	Key decision This decision was taken in private due to the content of the report. It is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it included financial information relating to compensation and negotiation with interested parties. Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
To approve the waste collection policy for Watford	Environmental Services	Cabinet	July 2013	<p>Key decision</p> <p>In accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rule 15 the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee was notified.</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Revocation of out of date Supplementary Planning documents	Planning	Cabinet	N/A	<p>Non-key decision</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Streetscape design guide	Planning	Cabinet	N/A	<p>Non-key decision</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Watford Credit Union loan guarantee scheme	Community Services	Cabinet	N/A	<p>Non-key decision</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 8 July 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Level 2	Regeneration and Development	Managing Director	N/A	<p>Updated</p> <p>Non-key decision</p> <p>Agreed by Managing Director on 5 August 2013.</p> <p>Noted by Cabinet on 7 October 2013</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Awarding 5 year contract for the provision of CCTV monitoring staff	Regeneration and Development	Head of Regeneration and Development	August 2013	<p>Key decision</p> <p>This decision was taken in private due to the content of the report. It is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, as it included commercially sensitive information within the evaluation report.</p> <p>Agreed by Head of Regeneration and Development on 9 August 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Authorisation to formally advertise inviting representations in relation to proposals for the introduction of parking controls for various roads within Watford	Regeneration and Development	Head of Regeneration and Development	September 2013	<p>Key decision</p> <p>Agreed by Head of Regeneration and Development on 13 September 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Memorandum of Understanding – Quality Bus Network Partnership	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	September 2013	<p>Updated</p> <p>Decision taken by the Mayor on 29 August 2013.</p>
Management of Disabled Parking Bays Task Group report	Democracy and Governance	Cabinet	N/A	<p>Updated</p> <p>Non-key decision</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 7 October 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
To write off irrecoverable debts	Revenues and Benefits	Cabinet	October 2013	<p>Updated</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>This item had been deferred from April.</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 7 October 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Approval of the revised Homelessness Strategy	Community and Customer Services	Cabinet	October 2013	<p>Updated</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Previously proposed to be taken in June and then September 2013</p> <p>Agreed by Cabinet on 7 October 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
Investors in People	Human Resources	Cabinet	October 2013	<p>New</p> <p>Non-key decision</p> <p>Noted by Cabinet on 7 October 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>
To agree a charge can be made to premises for the collection, storage and return of abandoned shopping trolleys	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	October 2013	<p>New</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Approved by Cabinet on 7 October 2013</p> <p>Not called in</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Adoption of the Watford Green Spaces Strategy	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	November 2013	Updated Key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 Not called in
Agreed amendments to the Allotment FAQs	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	November 2013	Updated Key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 Not called in
New Watford Market Update	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	November 2013	New Key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 One recommendation to Council on 20 November 2013 Not called in
Appointment of Greenhill's Asset Manager and for approval to enter an agreement with the Local Enterprise Partnership	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	November 2013	New Key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 Not called in

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Appointment of a Town Centre Manager, approval for the allocation of funds to the Town Centre Partnership and the establishment of the One Stop Business Advice Centre	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	November 2013	New Key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 Not called in
Period 6 Finance Digest	Finance	Cabinet	November 2013	New Non-key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 Not called in
Irrecoverable write-offs	Revenues and Benefits	Cabinet	November 2013	New Non-key decision Approved by Cabinet on 11 November 2013 Not called in
To award a contract for the Town Centre CCTV control room relocation	Regeneration and Development	Head of Regeneration and Development	November 2013	New Key decision

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
To approve the appointment of a sole supplier for the provision of Statutory Compliance Tests and Inspections to Council operated properties.	Democracy and Governance	Cabinet	December 2013	New Key decision
Consideration of WBC signing up to the LGA's Climate Local Initiative	Community and Customer Services	Cabinet	December 2013	New Key decision
Controlled Parking Zones – high level review	Regeneration and Development	Cabinet	December 2013	New Key decision
Watford Community Housing Trust	Democracy and Governance	Cabinet	December 2013	New Non-key decision

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Herts Waste Partnership Tendering Process (Part B)	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	December 2013	<p>New</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>This decision did not meet the 28 day notice required.</p> <p>This decision is covered by Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A, which refers to information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information). It contains commercially sensitive information.</p> <p>The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the matter could be dealt with in accordance with Access to Information Procedure Rule 16 of the Constitution, "Special Urgency".</p>
To note the progress on the Allotments Investment Programme and Farm Terrace Update	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	January 2014	<p>Amended</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Previously proposed to be taken in November 2013</p>
Update on the progress of Cassiobury Park Heritage Lottery Fund Project and to sign off and approve current designs	Corporate Strategy and Client Services	Cabinet	January 2014	<p>Amended</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Previously proposed to be taken in November 2013.</p>

Decision	Department	Decision maker	Date Key Decision to be taken (as shown on the Notice of Executive Decisions)	Status
Approval of the revised Housing Nominations Policy	Community and Customer Services	Cabinet	November 2013	<p>Deleted</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Previously proposed to be taken in June, then September and then November 2013</p> <p>This matter has been delayed for the foreseeable future.</p>
Approval of the Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy	Community and Customer Services	Cabinet		<p>Deleted</p> <p>Key decision</p> <p>Previously due to be taken by February, then June 2013</p> <p>This matter has been delayed for the foreseeable future.</p>

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Review Update (Response and Follow up)

Review:	Management of Disabled Parking Bays
Committee/Task Group:	Management of Disabled Parking Bays Task Group
Committee/Task Group Chair:	Councillor Rabi Martins
Final report published:	27 June 2013
Cabinet/Executive response:	7 October 2013

Recommendation 1:	That information be sent to those residents who have a Disabled Parking Bay explaining the rules which allowed for these bays to be established outside residents' homes.
Cabinet response:	Agreed the recommendation
Latest update:	Letter sent plus information included as part of any new application and as part of three yearly review

Recommendation 2:	That information be sent to residents with a Disabled Parking Bay explaining who could and who could not use the bays.
Cabinet response:	Agreed the recommendation
Latest update:	Included in 1 above included as part of any new application and as part of three yearly review

Recommendation 3:	That information be sent to all ward councillors detailing where Disabled Parking Bays have been established within their wards.
Cabinet response:	Agreed the recommendation
Latest update:	All Councillors have been provided with details of the marked bays within their wards.

Recommendation4 :	That an article be written in 'About Watford' informing residents that the survey has been conducted and advising on actions residents could take in the event of encountering problems.
Cabinet response:	Agreed the recommendation
Latest update:	To be completed and distributed by the end of November 2013

Recommendation 5:	That all Councillors keep a data log of information on all parking problems received from residents regarding their 'Disabled' marked parking bays. Councillors will then pass this information on a quarterly basis to the Senior Admin Officer in the Planning section.
Cabinet response:	Agreed the recommendation
Latest update:	Senior Admin Officer has not received any information on parking problems to-date.

Recommendation 6:	That information arising from the survey be forwarded to Disability Watford.
Cabinet response:	Agreed the recommendation
Latest update:	The report, which included the results of the survey, has been forwarded to Disability Watford.

An extract of the Cabinet minutes is attached as an Appendix.

CABINET

7 October 2013

Present:

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill	(Strategic partnerships/external relationships and community safety)
Cllr D Scudder	(Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Strategy & Client Services.
Cllr Crout	(Community & Customer Services Portfolio Holder)
Cllr Sharpe	(Regeneration & Development Portfolio Holder)
Cllr Watkin	(Democracy & Governance Portfolio Holder)

Councillors Councillors Martins (Lib Dem Chair of the Disabled Parking Task Group),
Bell (Labour) Connal (Labour) Khan (Labour) and Meerabux (Independent)

Officers: Managing Director
Shared Director of Finance
Legal & Democratic Section Head
Head of Strategy & Client Function (for minute nos 17,18,19 and 26)
Head of Community & Customer Service
Housing Section Head
Client Manager – waste & re-cycling (for minute nos 17,18,19 and 26)
Housing Strategy Officer
Democratic Services Manager

24 MANAGEMENT OF DISABLED PARKING BAYS

At its meeting on 21 November 2012, Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task Group to investigate Councillor Martins' scrutiny proposal regarding 'Disabled' marked parking bays.

The final report, incorporating the Task Group's recommendations, was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2013. Cabinet received a copy of the report and was asked to review and comment on each of the recommendations for referral back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Martins introduced the report and outlined the background to the review. He commented that the level of responses to the survey indicated that there was an issue. The reason the level of complaints had been low was that these were mainly referred to the Parking Shop and not passed on. There were two problem areas; disabled parking in CPZ

schemes and areas where there was no CPZ, with the main problems occurring in CPZ areas. The Panel had agreed to keep a watching brief on the situation and carry out another survey in one year's time.

In response to a question from the Mayor about re-claiming disabled bays, for example when someone died, Councillor Martins advised that whilst there was no specific brief, the situation was kept under review by officers.

Councillor Sharpe commented that one option would be to go for a more formal system of designated bays regulated by traffic orders but agreed that on balance it was probably best to keep the situation under review. He endorsed the work done by the Task Group which he described as a useful piece of work that had also dispelled a number of misunderstandings about the system.

Councillor Martins said there was also a need to look at the criteria for issuing badges. People with severe mobility problems required parking very close to their homes whereas others were able to walk further.

Councillor Sharpe added that there were a number of ways of addressing these problems but it was necessary to ensure that whatever solution was put in place did not have a negative impact elsewhere.

Councillor Bell commented on the difficulties of assessing individual needs and enforcement. He agreed that it was important to keep a watch on situations where bays may no longer be required.

The Mayor concluded the discussion by stressing the need for complaints received by the Parking Shop to be passed on. She also endorsed the view that those with a genuine need must be protected and that there may be a need for greater enforcement further down the line.

RESOLVED

that Cabinet agrees the following recommendations as proposed by the Task Group:

Recommendation 1

That information be sent to those residents who have a Disabled Parking Bay explaining the rules which allowed for these bays to be established outside residents' homes.

Recommendation 2

That information be sent to residents with a Disabled Parking Bay explaining who could and who could not use the bays.

Recommendation 3

That information be sent to all ward councillors detailing where Disabled Parking Bays have been established within their wards.

Recommendation 4

That an article be written in 'About Watford' informing residents that the survey has been conducted and advising on actions residents could take in the event of encountering problems.

Recommendation 5

That all Councillors keep a data log of information on all parking problems received from residents regarding their 'Disabled' marked parking bays. Councillors will then pass this information on a quarterly basis to the Senior Admin Officer in the Planning section.

Recommendation 6

That information arising from the survey be forwarded to Disability Watford.

ACTION: Committee & Scrutiny Officer

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Review Update (Initial response)

Review	Watford Community Housing Trust
Committee/Task Group	Watford Community Housing Trust Task Group
Chair	Councillor Asif Khan
Final report published	26 September 2013
Response	Received by email 30 October 2013 and by post 4 November 2013

Recommendation		Response
Communication		
1.	All new tenants should be visited by an officer of the Trust to ensure that they are satisfied with their living arrangements.	This is currently undertaken by staff. If there have been individual problems, please make us aware of the case(s) and we will investigate.
2.	To inform residents that their neighbourhood teams are available to clarify any issues.	This is undertaken on a regular basis via our quarterly newsletter, Gateway News.
3.	The handbook must be made more user-friendly, updated regularly and accessible to all residents.	We are currently in the process of reviewing our handbook and will take on board the comments made by the Task Group.
4.	To improve clarity in presentation of bills sent to residents ensuring that all charges are clearly itemised.	As explained at the meeting there is a legal requirement to provide information in a prescribed format. However, we work with our residents in a number of ways to make these more meaningful. We signpost our residents to our staff and also other agencies for assistance if necessary.

Recommendation	Response
Communication (continued)	
5.	To provide a clear process for residents to query any charges with which they disagree.
6.	To reduce the waiting time for residents to an 'industry acceptable' service. The telephone should be answered within six rings.
7.	A free phone number should be introduced for residents to call the Trust.
8.	The Trust website must be updated daily to ensure its contact details are current.
9.	The Trust website must reflect the needs of its tenants and its aims and strategies.
10.	Staff who communicate with residents must have regular training.
11.	A clear process needs to be put in place where vulnerable residents are recognised and services provided to them to meet their individual needs.

We encourage customer feedback and any queries are dealt with via this process. Further details are available on request. If there have been individual problems, please make us aware of the case(s) and we will investigate.

As explained at the meeting we are currently reviewing the performance of our Customer Service Centre and this will be picked up as part of this process.

This is already in place, the number is 0800 218 2247.

Noted.

The current website was procured with a team made up of staff and tenants. There is no plan to replace the current website.

As noted in our recent Investors in People Gold accreditation we have a committed and well-trained staff team. We continue to provide training to our staff as necessary.

We have undertaken a significant amount of work on the profile of our tenants and are aware of the support needs of a number of tenants. We tailor our services as necessary.

Recommendation		Response
Communication (continued)		
12.	The process to communicate with vulnerable residents must be clear. Staff should be proactive in dealing with vulnerable residents.	See 10 and 11 above.
Service Charges		
13.	Service Charges must be constantly reviewed.	Already in place.
14.	Service Charges should be itemised for each individual property and items clearly defined.	Already in place.
Repairs		
15.	The 'first time' satisfaction rate must be increased substantially.	As explained at the meeting this is one of our "Top 5 KPIs" and the direction is positive.
16.	A much more vigorous monitoring of contractors by managers must be undertaken.	Our new Organisation structure ensures this now takes place.
17.	Residents to be positively encouraged to return satisfaction surveys.	Noted although as we are sure members are aware it is difficult to get people to complete surveys.
18.	The Trust must be much more accountable to its residents and stakeholders.	Noted, however the Board and membership have agreed our Business Plan 2012 - 2017, which clearly states our 4 corporate objectives.

Recommendation		Response
Performance		
19.	The Trust should demonstrate to tenants that they are working towards joining the top quartile group of its peers.	As indicated at the meeting, the Trust is working on its Top 5 KPIs.
20.	The Trust should reaffirm its commitment that the development of 500 new homes in the areas of Watford and Three Rivers by 2016 is a main objective of its business plan.	One of the Trust's Corporate Objectives is to deliver 500 new homes by 2017.

Appendix

Copy of response from Watford Community Housing Trust

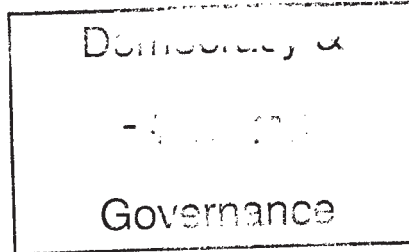
Appendix



Better homes friendlier communities...
together

30th October 2013

Sandra Hancock
Committee & Scrutiny Officer
Watford Borough Council
Town Hall
Watford
WD17 3EX



Dear Sandra,

Watford Community Housing Trust Task Group

Thank you for your letter dated 21st October 2013 on the above.

It was a pleasure to meet with the Task Group in August and explain the Trust's position.

As requested, please find attached the Trust's initial response to the various recommendations raised.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me direct.

I look forward to meeting with the Group in January 2014.

Yours sincerely,

Tina Barnard
Chief Executive

Enc

Cc John Swinney, Chair of Trust

Registered Office

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Our members' views shape our actions,
if you would like to get involved please contact us.

Initial Response to WBC's Task Group's Recommendation

Communication

1. **Visit by Staff for New Tenants** – This is currently undertaken by staff. If there have been individual problems, please make us aware of the case(s) and we will investigate.
2. **Availability of Neighbourhood Teams** – This is undertaken on a regular basis via our quarterly newsletter, Gateway News.
3. **User-friendly Handbook** – We are currently in the process of reviewing our handbook and will take on board the comments made by the Task Group.
4. **Clarification of Bills** – As explained at the meeting there is a legal requirement to provide information in a prescribed format. However, we work with our residents in a number of ways to make these more meaningful. We signpost our residents to our staff and also other agencies for assistance if necessary.
5. **Clear Process to query bills** – We encourage customer feedback and any queries are dealt with via this process. Further details are available on request. If there have been individual problems, please make us aware of the case(s) and we will investigate.
6. **Answering the telephone** – As explained at the meeting we are currently reviewing the performance of our Customer Service Centre and this will be picked up as part of this process.
7. **Free phone number** – This is already in place, the number is 0800 218 2247.
8. **Updated Website** – Noted
9. **Website** – The current website was procured with a team made up of staff and tenants. There is no plan to replace the current website.
10. **Staff Training** – As noted in our recent Investors in People Gold accreditation we have a committed and well-trained staff team. We continue to provide training to our staff as necessary.
11. **Vulnerable Tenants** – We have undertaken a significant amount of work on the profile of our tenants and are aware of the support needs of a number of tenants. We tailor our services as necessary.
12. **Dealing with Vulnerable Tenants** – see 10 and 11 above.

Service Charges

- 13 **Service Charges Review** – Already in place.
- 14 **Itemised Service Charges** – Already in place.

Repairs

15. **Right First Time** – As explained at the meeting this one of our “Top 5 KPIs” and the direction is positive.
16. **Monitoring of Contractors** – Our new Organisation structure ensures this now takes place.
17. **Satisfaction Survey** – Noted although as we are sure members .are aware it is difficult to get people to complete surveys.
18. **Accountability** – Noted, however the Board and membership have agreed our Business Plan 2012 -2017, which clearly states our 4 corporate objectives.
19. **Top Quartile** – As indicated at the meeting, the Trust is working on its Top 5 KPIs.
20. **500 New Homes** – One of the Trust’s Corporate Objectives is to deliver 500 new homes by 2017.

TB
29/10/13