

Council Performance & Budget Summary

May 2013

The monthly performance summary outlines trends in information the Council uses to monitor and manage service delivery. Where relevant, it includes performance against targets set for the relevant period.

Overview

G	Budget – 0% projected risk of an overspend
G	Performance Indicators

Appendices

- A. Benefits Service
- B. Significant Planning Matters
- C. Appraisal Completion
- D. Customer Services
- E. Work Environment Programme
- F. Analysis of Recycling Rate
- G. Sports, Leisure and Heritage facilities
- H. St Albans Christmas Market
- I. Community Engagement

Commentary

The table below is provided for indicators where there has been significant change in performance and provides more detailed explanation for the performance levels and any action the Council is taking to improve performance where it is off track.

	Measure	Comments
R	% of rent loss due to voids	There has been a 10% increase in the number of voids (76 average during 2012-13 compared to 82 in April and 83 in May 2013).
R	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due (targets updated for 2013-14)	<p>The rent arrears at the end of May 2013 (£682,983) were 15% higher than the end of May 2012 (£596,470).</p> <p>Rent arrears remains high as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Debit payment cycle - for May the last payment falls in June • current economic climate • removal of the spare room subsidy leading to increased arrears • delays in benefit assessment <p>Managers and Housing Officers have weekly meetings to review arrear cases.</p>

	Measure	Comments
R	Number of households in temporary accommodation	The number of households in temporary accommodation has risen to 80, from 79 in April 2013. There were 30 homeless approaches during May 2013, up from 19 in April. 17 new households moved in to temporary accommodation in May 2013, 5 of which were emergencies (another 5 emergencies were managed without using temporary accommodation).
A	Visits to Tourist Information Centre and www.enjoystalbans.com	The number of visits to the Tourist Information Centre and the www.enjoystalbans.com website during May 2013 were 488 lower than May 2012 (2.8%). The visits to the tourism website in May 2012 were particularly high in the lead up to the Jubilee street party. The team also expect a comparatively lower figure for June 2013. This follows a high number of website visitors in June 2012 as a result of the St Albans Festival. For 2013, activities are spread across the summer.
G	% of benefit customers seen within 15mins	There has been improved service to customers during May 2013, with 94% of benefit customers seen within 15 mins, compared to 72% May 2012. There has also been a 10% increase in the number of benefit customers in May 2013, compared to May 2012 (1,779 and 1,609 respectively).
G	% of customers seen within 15mins (excl Benefits)	There has been improved service to customers during May 2013, with 96% of customers seen within 15 mins, compared to 85% May 2012. There has also been a 4% increase in the number of customers in May 2013, compared to May 2012 (3,070 and 2,942 respectively).

Key

The performance information is colour coded associated to the target or trend. For indicators with a target – Green is where a target is achieved, Amber is up to 10% worse than target and Red is worse than 10% from target. For indicators with trend analysis – Green highlights best performance and Red the worst performance.

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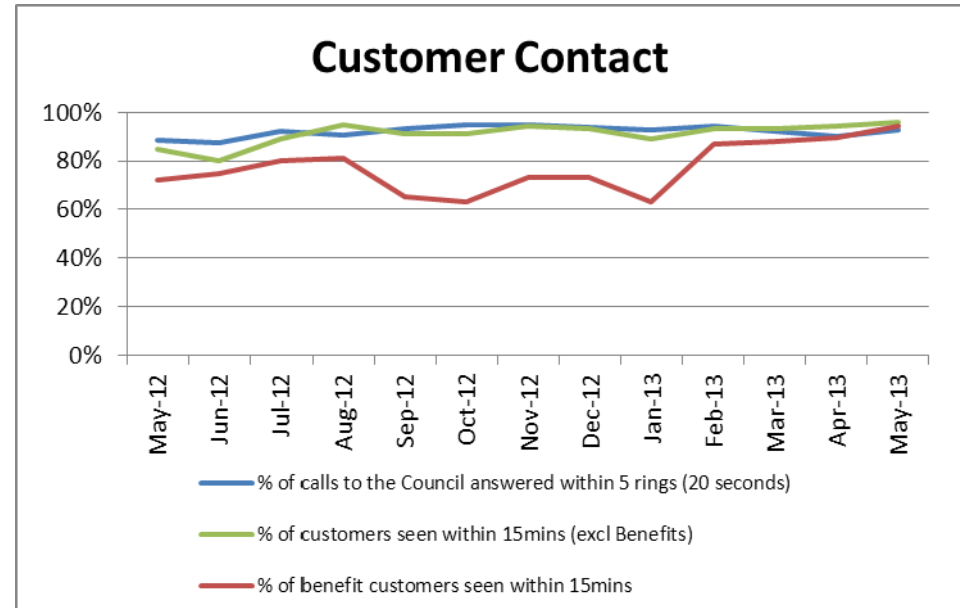
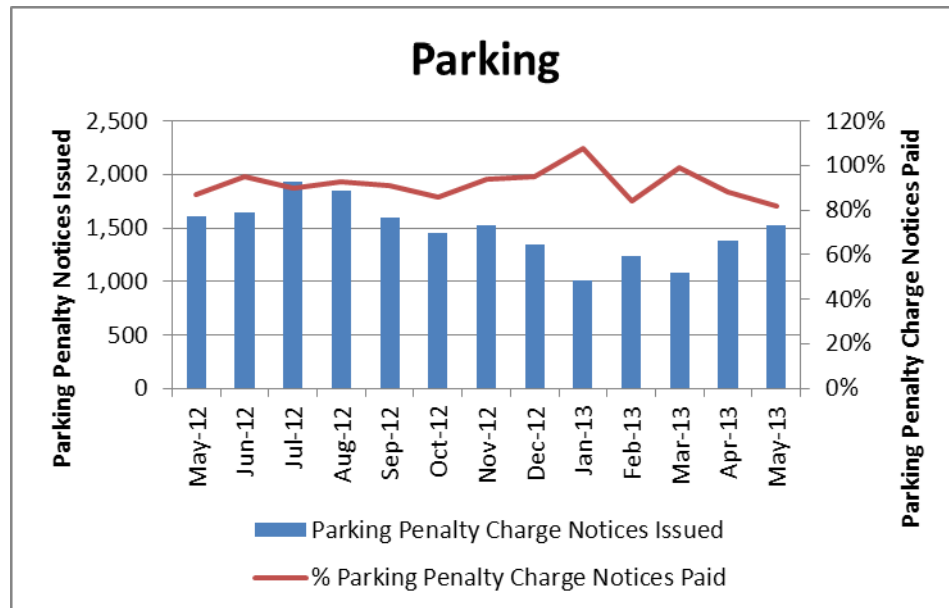
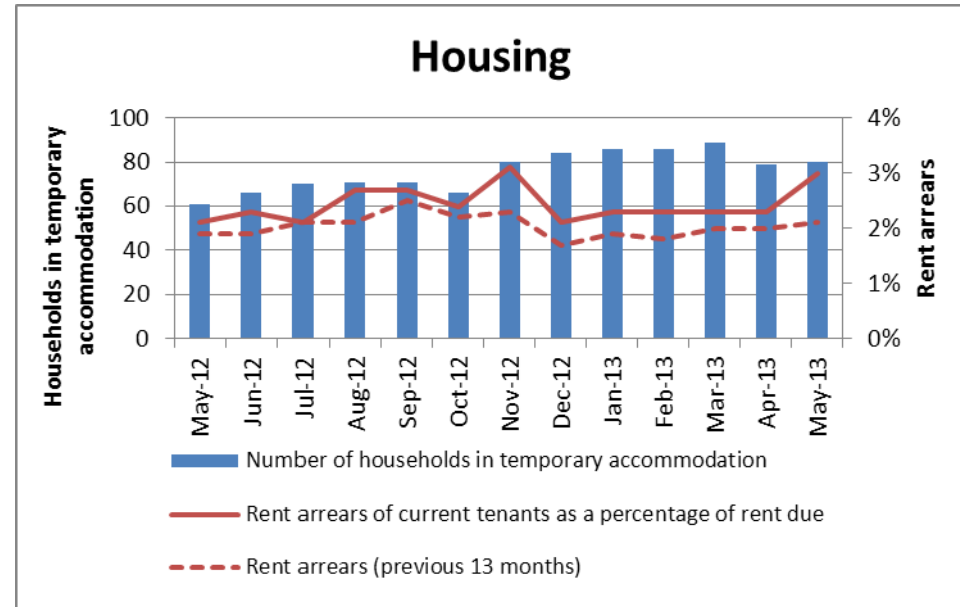
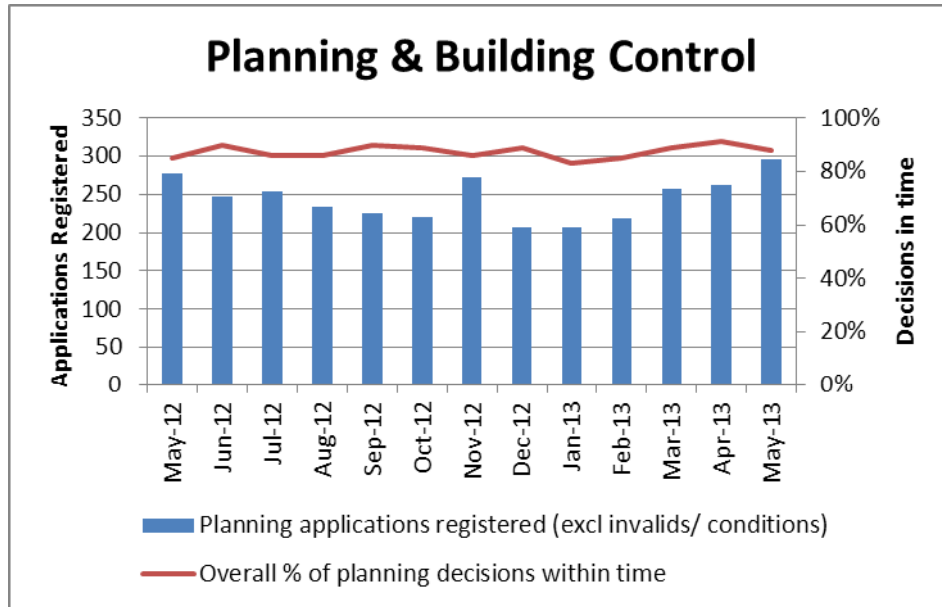
		Bigger or Smaller is Better	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	TARGET
Finance	Forecast budget variance at the year end (General fund for year in question)	Smaller	0%	-0.2%	0.0%	-0.1%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.75%	0.0%	-1.0%	-2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0%
Housing	Average time to re let dwellings (excluding sheltered and temporary accommodation changes) (Days)	Smaller	14.3	19	20	13.1	12.8	15.1	18	15	28	23	18	20	21.3	21
	% of rent loss due to voids	Smaller	1.22%	1.33%	1.36%	1.38%	1.38%	1.30%	1.38%	1.38%	1.44%	1.42%	1.39%	1.59%	1.55%	Trend
	Rent arrears of current tenants as a percentage of rent due (targets updated for 2013-14)	Smaller	2.1%	2.3%	2.1%	2.7%	2.7%	2.4%	3.1%	2.1%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	3.0%	2.5%
	Number of households in temporary accommodation	Smaller	61	66	70	71	71	66	80	84	86	86	89	79	80	Trend
	Average time in temporary accommodation (weeks)	Smaller	13.4	15.3	15.9	16.5	17.3	18	17.4	17	18.5	17.4	17.6	18.9	16.0	Trend
	% of repairs completed on time	Bigger	98%	100%	100%	99.6%	99.5%	98.3%	98.6%	98%	99%	98%	98%	99%	99.8%	98%
	Housing repairs satisfaction	Bigger	98%	98%	97%	99.4%	99.7%	97.8%	99.3%	98%	98%	99%	99%	99.8%	99.3%	90%
	Number of Benefit Applications	Smaller	148	202	274	311	255	312	269	357	251	326	293	263	241	Trend
	Days to process Council Tax/Housing Benefit new claims and changes	Smaller	22.61	18.57	12.94	11.9	18.32	15.81	27.51	25.42	20.47	19.87	24.2	34.57	32.14	14
	% of benefit customers seen within 15mins	Bigger	72%	75%	80%	81%	65%	63%	73%	73%	63%	87%	88%	89%	94%	70%
Planning & Building Control	All planning applications received		337	268	293	263	249	254	303	250	236	272	272	330	240	
	Planning applications registered (excl invalids/ conditions)		278	247	253	233	226	220	272	206	206	219	257	263	296*	
	Overall % of planning decisions within time	Bigger	85%	90%	86%	86%	90%	89%	86%	89%	83%	85%	89%	91%	88%	75%
Regulatory	Parking Penalty Charge Notices Issued	Smaller	1,614	1,646	1,929	1,852	1,601	1,455	1,522	1,347	1,008	1,238	1,079	1,380	1,530	Trend
	% Parking Penalty Charge Notices Paid	Bigger	87%	95%	90%	93%	91%	86%	94%	95%	108%	84%	99%	88%	82%	70%
Community Services	Graffiti and Fly-tipping Calls	Smaller	31	26	18	28	42	32	28	25	27	27	31	33	20	Trend
	% of households with missed waste collections	Smaller	0.07%	0.10%	0.11%	0.19%	0.09%	0.12%	0.09%	0.09%	0.03%	0.09%	0.12%	0.09%	0.09%	Trend
	Visits to Tourist Information Centre and www.enjoystalbens.com	Bigger	17,105	21,857	11,807	11,958	12,964	12,560	13,281	8,857	12,012	11,457	14,128	14,804	16,617	Year-on-year Trend
	Museums Visits	Bigger	14,421	18,897	21,278	18,177	10,036	15,784	10,371	7,218	9,223	12,968	13,148	14,078	15,072	Year-on-year Trend
Customer Services	% of calls to the Council answered within 5 rings (20 seconds)	Bigger	88.6%	87.5%	92.2%	90.5%	93.3%	94.6%	94.7%	93.6%	92.7%	94.5%	92.2%	90.2%	92.6%	80%
	% of customers seen within 15mins (excl Benefits)	Bigger	85%	80%	89%	95%	91%	91%	94%	93%	89%	93%	93%	94%	96%	80%
External	Claimant Count (% Proportion of Population)	Smaller	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%	Trend
	New Jobs (New and Unfilled Vacancies until Dec 2012)	Bigger	766	1,072	785	854	935	808	797	994	668	883	724	934	1,213	Trend
	All Crime (in month)	Smaller	409	418	439	440	430	479	441	383	435	411	380	483	427	Trend
	Anti Social Behaviour Incidents (in month)	Smaller	324	340	342	385	295	266	250	219	270	217	206	231	219	Trend

* estimate

Performance Summary May 2013

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Performance Summary May 2013

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Appendix A: Benefits Service



Date From	Date To	Caseload (Including new claims)				Active/ awaiting			New claims					Backlog [^]		
		Brought forward	Incoming including new claims	Completed	Carried forward	Active claimant caseload	Active DWP Matching Workload (Atlas)	Awaiting customer response	Brought forward	New claims received	New claims processed	New claims (Sent for customer action)	Carried forward	Tray Active	Awaiting response from customer	Comments
04 Mar 13	10 Mar 13	2,109	912	709	2,312	1,460	378	473	287	55	50	76	292	392	210	Integrated Revenues and Benefits system closed for 3 days to allow end of year billing
11 Mar 13	17 Mar 13	2,312	830	322	2,820	1,927	574	319	292	59	40	27	311	437	200	
18 Mar 13	24 Mar 13	2,820	652	817	2,655	1,798	563	294	311	61	61	21	311	470	149	
25 Mar 13	31 Mar 13	2,655	624	959	2,320	1,328	508	484	311	55	37	38	329	495	212	
01 Apr 13	07 Apr 13	2,320	698	555	2,463	1,455	576	432	329	56	40	35	345	549	166	
08 Apr 13	14 Apr 13	2,463	767	1,130	2,100	1,588	80	432	345	60	95	59	310	589	205	
15 Apr 13	21 Apr 13	2,100	640	510	2,230	1,650	149	431	310	59	73	72	296	535	197	
22 Apr 13	28 Apr 13	2,230	1,086	784	2,532	1,544	565	423	296	62	76	51	282	463	172	
29 Apr 13	05 May 13	2,532	1,199	736	2,995	1,558	1,037	400	282	56	48	42	290	316	177	
06 May 13	12 May 13	2,995	674	719	2,950	1,468	1,095	387	290	41	64	39	267	325	192	
13 May 13	19 May 13	2,950	740	612	3,078	1,611	1,049	418	267	54	46	39	275	246	205	
20 May 13	26 May 13	3,078	860	530	3,408	1,723	1,353	332	275	48	35	47	288	409	183	
27 May 13	02 June 13	3,408	634	736	3,306	1,736	1,247	323	288	48	33	34	303	744	180	

[^] The backlog contains cases which are at least 30 days old and have not yet been processed

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Appendix A: Benefits Service



Update on Council Tax/ Housing Benefit

Cabinet on the 18 April 2013 requested commentary on the increase in the number of days taken to process Council Tax [Support] /Housing Benefit new claims and changes.

Caseload

The table below shows the comparative positions of the workload in the benefits section in June 2012 and June 2013. The Active Claimants Caseload is 38% higher than the same time in 2012, a total of 665 cases.

DWP/HMRC automatic updates (ATLAS) commenced in August 2012 and in June 2013 these were responsible for 1,298 items of work, not generated directly by customers.

	03 June 2012	02 June 2013	
Active Claimant Caseload	1,071	1,736	+665 (38%)
DWP/HMRC automatic updates (ATLAS)	n/a	1,298	
Waiting for the claimants to provide information	525	358	
TOTAL	1,596	3,429	

Impact of DWP/HMRC automatic updates (ATLAS)

Since August 2012, the team have received 9,493 DWP/HMRC automatic updates (ATLAS) up to the 02 June 2013; this requires the attention of 2 full-time officers.

A decision was taken not to automate Atlas immediately as a result of issues experienced by other local authorities. The review programme that had been undertaken since 2003 had not kept pace with claimants' changes. Automating ATLAS would have generated unnecessary letters to claimants, whose claims had not been reviewed for some time. This would have caused distress and confusion. Since ATLAS commenced the team has been dealing with these changes manually.

We have now reviewed every claim that had a DWP/HMRC automatic update (ATLAS) but had not been reviewed since April 2012. This process of annual review will continue and covers all claims other than Pension Credit Guarantee cases (approx. 2,300). This has taken time to complete and impacted on the time available for officers to process new claims and changes. However it does mean that we can now automate ATLAS, which will reduce the impact that ATLAS has had on officers' workload. The Council have raised the issue and impact of ATLAS with local and national representatives of DWP.

Backlog (claims over 30 days old)

This additional work led to the creation of a backlog of caseload. The peak in the backlog (cases over 30 days old) was on the 14 April 2013, when it reached 794 cases (589 in assessment and 205 of these were awaiting information from the claimant before we were able to proceed). As of the 02 June 2013, this now stands at 744, with 180 cases awaiting information from the claimant.

The team have been dealing with the backlog of older cases since April 2013. This has detrimentally impacted on the average days to process Council Tax/ Housing Benefit new claims and changes.

An additional temporary member of staff started work on the 22 May 2013 to assist in reducing the backlog further and part-time staff will continue to work increased hours to assist. A consultation with officers and UNISON on a proposed new structure for the team

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Appendix A: Benefits Service



has been completed and following feedback a new structure will be implemented as soon as possible.

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Appendix B: Significant Planning Matters



Strategic Local Plan

Work is progressing to timetable on the Greenbelt and Housing reviews. The consultants' formal reports are expected in September.

Building Research Establishment (BRE)

The BRE planning application (reference: 5/2013/0406) for the demolition of existing buildings and replacing with up to 100 new dwellings, was referred to Planning Referrals Committee on the 9 May 2013. The committee resolved to refuse permission.

The location of the site was considered unsustainable, particularly as it would be heavily car dependent. The proposal would also have an impact on existing infrastructure and place pressure on existing schools and health services in the locality.

Sewell Park (Hunston)

The decision by the Inspector dated 12 March 2013 dismissing an appeal by Hunston Properties Ltd against the Council's refusal of planning permission for 116 houses and a 72 bed care home has been challenged by the Appellant in the High Court.

There are two challenges; one under Section 288 of the Town and Country Planning against the decision to dismiss the appeal and the second by way of Judicial Review against the Inspector's decision to make a partial costs award in favour of the Council. The Secretary of State is the First Defendant and the Council is the Second Defendant. Both claims are to be considered in the High Court, Manchester on 1st and 2nd August 2013.

Railfreight

Helioslough Ltd have applied for a Judicial Review against the Secretary of State seeking a High Court Order that a final decision on the appeal be issued forthwith. Helioslough have also applied for a High Court declaration that their approach to the condition 33 issue is correct in law (this issue relates to a condition put forward by Helioslough at the 2009 Public Inquiry) and there is no rational basis for the Secretary of State not to adopt it. The Claimant is also seeking an urgent interim injunction preventing the Secretary of State from engaging in any other procedural steps or engaging in any further rounds of representations before issuing the final decision and an Order for an expedited hearing date. The Council has been served as an Interested Party in the proceedings and has filed Summary Grounds of Defence in response to the application.

The Council has applied to the High Court to conjoin our Judicial Review application with Helioslough's so that both can be heard by the same High Court Judge. We have also applied for our Judicial Review to be expedited.

Oaklands College Smallford

No planning application has yet been submitted. Two public exhibitions have been held for additional education facilities and residential development (approx 350).

Former HSBC, Bricket Wood

No planning application has yet been submitted. Public exhibition has been held for potential residential development (approx. 175).

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Appendix B: Significant Planning Matters



Lea Industrial Estate, Batford Harpenden

No planning application has yet been submitted. A public exhibition has been held for redevelopment of site to provide mix of offices (approx 2000m²) and residential development (approx 70).

Ridgeview, London Colney

Planning application (5/2013/0011) for retail development still under consideration and will be reported to referrals in due course.

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Appendix C: Appraisal Completion



Department	Number of appraisals expected	Number of meetings held	Signed appraisal received by HR	% appraisals signed-off and sent to HR
Legal, Democratic & Regulatory	57	57	57	100%
Policy & Partnership	21	21	21	100%
Finance	39	39	39	100%
Housing	82	82	82	100%
HR, Customer Services & IT	31	31	31	100%
Planning & Building Control	50	50	50	100%
Chief Executive's Board	6	6	6	100%
Community Services	67	67	67	100%

Notes:

The above list excludes cases where appraisals were not held due to valid reasons being given e.g. maternity leave.

Dated: 20 June 2013

Review of peak demand during March and April 2013

The period between mid-March to mid-April historically sees an increase in customer contact both face to face and through the telephone. This is due to the annual mailing of Council Tax bills and council tenant rent increase notifications.

This year the peak period in customer contact coincided with two Easter bank holidays which routinely generate an additional increase in customer enquiries about refuse and recycling. In addition to this there was the national publicity about the government changes to the welfare benefit scheme in April 2013. The impact of the welfare benefit changes created the potential to increase the number of benefit related enquiries during a time of increased demand for the team.

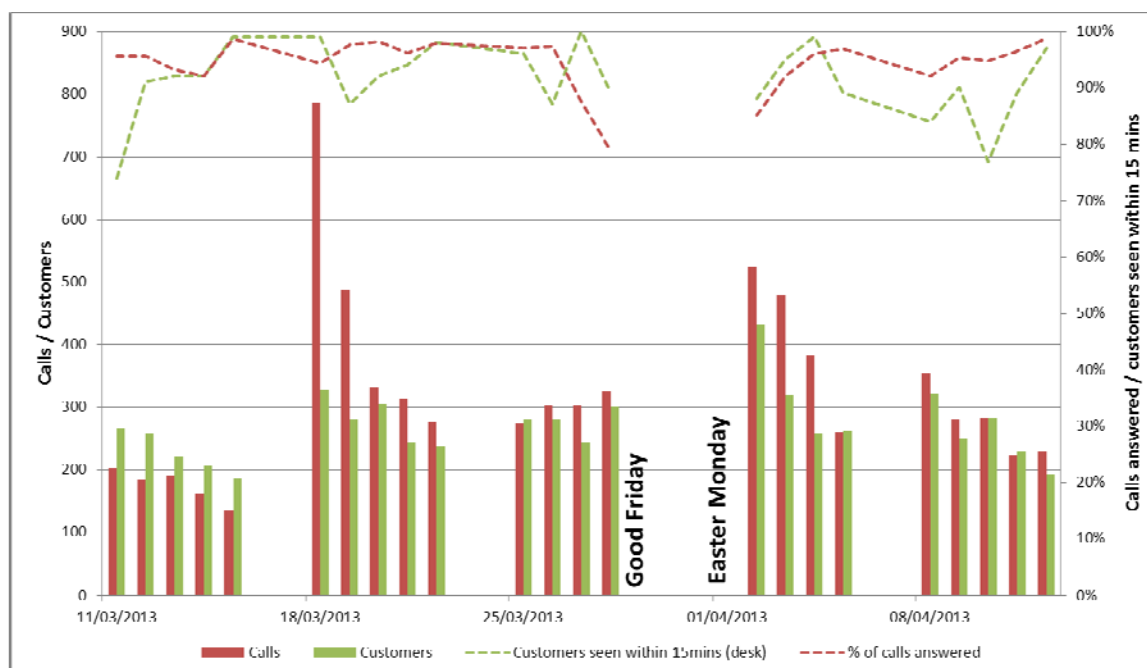
To respond better to the increase in customer contact, the opening hours of the Council's contact centre were extended. Specifically, the Council extended its opening times of the Customer Contact Centre to 8 pm on 4 days in March and opened the Contact Centre on three Saturdays.

During these extended opening times, customers were able to make enquires about their Council Tax bill, housing benefits and council tax reductions (previously Council Tax benefit) as well as making payments for their rent and Council Tax.

In addition a plan was put in place across the organisation to ensure adequate staffing levels and leave was restricted across the period.

Analysis and Findings

For the four week period from 18th March to 12th April there was a 26% increase in visits to the Council offices compared to the same period last year. There was also a 4% increase in call volumes.



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Appendix D: Customer Services



On the busiest day in the Telephone Contact Centre, Monday 18th March, 786 calls were received with 94% being answered by a Customer Service Advisor. This compares to a previous high of 497 when 72% of calls were answered.

110 calls were received during the extended telephone hours, 84% of which were received between 5.00pm to 7.00pm. Incoming calls reduced significantly after 7.00pm.

The Customer Contact Centre saw the highest number of visitors on Tuesday 2nd April with 433 customers coming in to seek advice, request a service or make a payment. This compares to a previous high of 334. Overall in the period, 91% of customers visiting were seen within 15 minutes compared to 70% last year.

Over the three Saturdays that the Council offices were open a total of 68 customers visited the offices.

Telephone breakdown

	19 March – 13 April 2012	18 March – 12 April 2013	% change
Animal Welfare	78	77	-1%
Cleaner Greener (e.g. flytipping reports)	41	77	88%
Complaints	10	4	-60%
Council Tax	2,162	3,657	69%
Electoral Reg	769	743	-3%
Pest Control	209	205	-2%
Refuse Collection	1,491	1,928	29%

Customer Contact Centre breakdown

	19 March – 13 April 2012	18 March – 12 April 2013	% change
Benefits	1,209	1,334	10%
General Customer	716	755	5%
Housing	854	867	2%
Payments	1,204	1,298	8%
Planning	211	143	-32%

Planning for March and April 2014

Building on the lessons learnt this year and as part of the normal business planning process for Customer Services, the Council will routinely extend the opening hours for the Customer Contact Centre during known peak periods. The dates for the extended customer contact will be based on previous trends in customer behaviour and timed to reflect the date(s) where the greatest impact is expected.

Extended telephone contact up to 7pm was popular with residents and will form part of the planning for March and April 2014. Resourcing plans will also be in place to ensure that there are enough staff across the Council to meet the increase in customer demand. These plans will include limiting leave in key service areas during the peak period.

The low take up and type of enquiries made during the Saturday opening does not justify providing this same service next year.

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Appendix E: Work Environment Programme



This programme focusses on improving the working environment for staff and councillors through better utilisation of space and more efficient ways of working. The freed up accommodation space will be marketed as rental space for a tenant.

The project team includes staff from the Operational Principal Officer (OPO) group, (the largest management group in the Council). The rest of the OPO group are also involved in the programme, completing specific tasks related to their service areas. The main outcomes of the staff work environment survey prioritised kitchen and toilet improvements.

The proposal for the staff moves and any required works on the first and second floor was agreed by Council on the 26 February 2013. Council agreed borrowing up to £600,000 providing payback within 5 years. Work to date includes:

- Launch of a dedicated Working Environment Programme Webpage
- Launch of a methodology for Storage Reduction called FAB (File, Archive, Bin)
- Completion of Staff Survey and FAQs
- Work styles Questionnaire categorising staff into work groups (90% complete)
- 1st Draft Floor plan layout including new Councillor space
- Delivery of Councillors Consultation Workshops (6, 20 June and 4 July)
- Workshop for the Operational Principal Officers
- Estimated view on costs vs Budget and payback period

The programme has an additional strand which is considering the need for a corporate electronic mail storage solution. The initial research phase has highlighted a need to bring the mail room and Housing scanning team together. The move of teams is underway alongside work to improve the processes aimed at reducing the handling of post by scanning at source. The review has not recommended the need to introduce a new corporate electronic mail storage solution. The work stream will develop a plan that schedules reviews of each department's paper handling and post in a systematic way. This has the aim to make better use of the functionality of the current systems we have in place in the Council.

Next stages

Item	Date
Issue furniture tender documents	14 June 2013
Business case and technical analysis complete for staff	17 June 2013
Draft tender for building works	30 June 2013
Set up model office	30 June 2013
Councillor consultation workshops complete	4 July 2013

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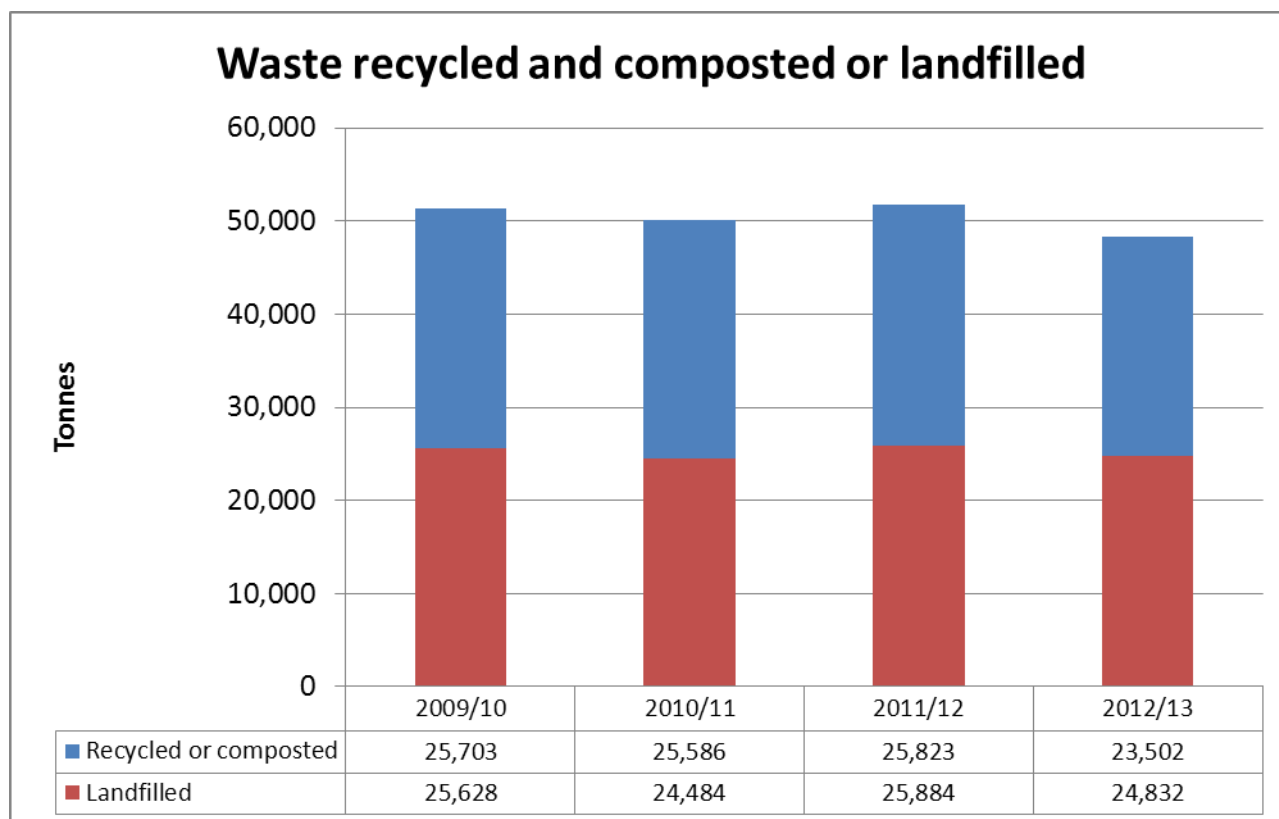
Appendix F: Analysis of Recycling Rate



The Council agreed the priority project to “accelerate recycling beyond 60% (by 2015)” within the Corporate Plan for 2013-14. To achieve this level of recycling, from May the Council has been rolling out a collection scheme which increases the materials people can recycle and separates cardboard from green waste.

Performance so far

The total waste collected across the district has declined since 2011/12, by 6.52%, and is at the lowest level for the last 4 years.



The total recycling and composting rate for 2012/13 was 49%. This is a decrease of 1% on the 2011/12 performance (where 50% of waste was recycled or composted).

This overall decline can be broken down as:

	2011/12 (Tonnes)	2012/13 (Tonnes)	Change (Tonnes)	% change
Dry recycling (Paper, glass, metal etc)	10,348	10,791	443	+ 4.28%
Green Waste	15,475	12,711	-2,764	- 17.86%
Total composted and recycled	25,823	23,502	-2,321	- 8.99%
Landfilled	25,884	24,832	-1,052	- 4.07%
TOTAL	51,707	48,334	-3,373	- 6.52%

As can be seen above, there is an increase in the amount of dry recycling (paper, glass, plastic and metal) collected of 4.28% and a decline in the quantity of waste landfilled.

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Appendix F: Analysis of Recycling Rate

These improvements were overshadowed by a large decline in the amount of green waste collected for composting.

Garden waste - seasonal variation

The composition of the waste recycled and composted varies across the year, most significantly being affected by the growing season and increases in the amount of garden waste collected for composting. During 2012/13 the amount of green waste collected during the growing season was much lower than previous years – as illustrated below.



As a result of the wetter and colder than normal year in 2012/13 there was less garden waste collected for composting.

	Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun)	Quarter 2 (July – Sep)	Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)	Quarter 4 (Jan – Mar)	Overall
2009/10	4,647	4,245	3,356	2,481	14,729
2010/11	4,528	3,952	3,658	2,453	14,591
2011/12	4,365	4,419	3,985	2,706	15,475
2012/13	3,831	3,792	2,657	2,431	12,711

During 2011/12 Garden Waste represented 30% of all waste collected, in 2012/13 this dropped to 26% of the waste collected. This relative decline in the quantity of garden waste collected, especially during quarters 1 and 2 for 2012/13, amounted to a total of 1,161 tonnes lower than 2011/12. This ultimately impacted on the overall recycling and composting rate – as below.

	Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun)	Quarter 2 (July – Sep)	Quarter 3 (Oct – Dec)	Quarter 4 (Jan – Mar)	Overall
2009-10	54%	53%	51%	43%	50%
2010-11	54%	52%	51%	46%	51%
2011-12	52%	53%	49%	46%	50%
2012-13	50%	51%	49%	44%	49%

Composting Issue

In conjunction with a lower than expected quantity of Garden Waste collect, there has been the issue of waste which has been collected for composting being rejected.

Officers were made aware of a stockpile of waste at the Agrivert site in early 2012. This stockpile was created as a result of:

- an increase in unsuitable cardboard content (printed card) from all 5 local authorities using Agrivert
- lower quantities of garden waste collected during 2012/13. Garden waste is required to adequately compost the cardboard

This has resulted in material being rejected by Agrivert.

The Herts Waste Partnership, with Waste Aware, created information on the separation of unsuitable cardboard from the composting material in March 2012. The Portfolio Holder believed that the message was confusing and a change to the collection regime was more suitable. A pilot for a new collection regime, which separated cardboard from the green waste, began in Redbourn in October 2012.

As a result of Agrivert rejections, a total of 2,645 tonnes is being dealt with by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). The official statistics have removed the 2,645 rejections from our total waste, and where this should have been composted, counting to the overall recycling figure, it has been disposed of by HCC.

If the 2,645 tonnes of rejected waste were able to be composted, the overall percentage of waste recycled or composted would have been 54% for 2012/13.

New collection scheme

The pilot of the new collection scheme, in Redbourn, has seen dramatic increases in the quantity of recycling materials collected, with the proportion of waste recycled/composting during the pilot at approximately 54%.

The Council has been successful in a bid to Hertfordshire County Council to support the removal of cardboard from the garden waste, adding this to the paper collection. This will remove issues with rejections from Agrivert.

Although the combined collection is less valuable than a paper only collection, modelling with current prices indicates that the increase in quantity of the combined paper/cardboard collection should offset the drop in value of the material.

The Council will also provide households with kitchen caddies, and an initial supply of bags, to help residents separate their food waste into their green waste. Food waste is over 30% of the waste sent to landfill.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix F: Analysis of Recycling Rate



The roll-out of the new collection scheme is underway and a summary of the progress, by ward, is below.

Ward Roll-out	
Ashley	Completed by end of July 2013
Batchwood	Completed by mid-August 2013
Clarence	Completed by end of July 2013
Colney Heath	Completed by end of July 2013
Cunningham	Completed by end of July 2013
Harpenden East	Complete
Harpenden North	Complete
Harpenden South	Complete
Harpenden West	Complete
London Colney	Completed by mid-July 2013
Marshalswick North	Completed by end of August 2013
Marshalswick South	Completed by end of August 2013
Park Street	Completed by mid-September 2013
Redbourn	Complete
Sandridge	Completed by July 2013
Sopwell	Completed by mid-September 2013
St Peters	Completed by end of August 2013
St Stephen	Completed by mid-September 2013
Verulam	Completed by mid-July 2013
Wheathampstead	Completed by July 2013

N.B. the roll out of the food caddies will occur once they have been delivered.

Progress on rebuilding Batchwood Centre and Golf and Bowls clubs

Following Cabinet's agreement on 17th January 2013 for the Batchwood centre project to be delivered through the Scape Framework, officers have progressed the project with Willmott Dixon to the pre-construction phase which required the Council to commit to spending £326,408.27 out of a total project cost of £6.2m, to cover the following scope of works:

- Design fees from RIBA stage D to stage E/F
- Underground services and ground investigations
- Pre-construction orders for gas, electrics, BT and Steelwork early design and procurement order

Planning consent

Following the Cabinet decision in April, the facility has been reduced in size through value engineering. A minor amendments application has been completed and was approved, subject to Secretary of State consent. We expect this to be confirmed shortly.

PV (solar panels) application

As part of the changes to the building, it is proposed to include PV panels. While these are not visible in close proximity to the building it is the more distant views of the building where the PV panels may be more visible. A full application for the PV panels is required because it is a material change to the consented scheme.

A full application has not yet been submitted to planning due to the requirement to discharge the conditions of the consented application. The application for the PV panels will be submitted on the 15 August 2013 and will be considered by Planning Referrals Committee in the autumn. It will also need Secretary of State consent. This will not affect the overall programme for the delivery of the Batchwood Centre.

Golf and Bowls Pavilions

Integra Buildings Ltd have started on site to undertake the ground works for the golf and bowls pavilions. The modules, constructed offsite, will arrive on the week commencing 27 June 2013 for the bowls club and 1 July 2013 for the golf club.

The bowls pavilion is due for completion and handover in the week commencing 29 July 2013. The golf pavilion is due from completion and handover in the week commencing 12 August 2013.

Cotlandswick

Planning

DC Leisure submitted a full planning application which was approved on the 17th December 2012.

Change to DC Leisure ownership

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix G: Sports, Leisure and Heritage matters



DC leisure was bought by Places for People, a not-for-dividend organisation in December 2012. DC Leisure will continue to operate as a separate entity and will retain its current board and identity.

Contract

DC Leisure put on hold any further discussion on the contract until after the planning application was approved. There has been no further contract discussion to date.

Project cost increase

Two meetings have been held with DC Leisure to discuss how the increased project costs could be addressed. These include changing the funding between the Council and the developer. These discussions are continuing.

It was agreed that both parties would aim to conclude the financial discussions by the end of June. Should they be successful the aim would be to complete contract negotiations by end of August for a start on site in September 2013.

Old Town Hall

The council met with the project's Advisory Group on 21st May 2013 to provide feedback on the outcome of the first Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application. Councillors stressed the importance of maintaining the stakeholder commitment to the project and all groups represented re-affirmed their support for the New Museum and Gallery (NMG) project in the Town Hall. In the next month the council will be meeting with key partners and stakeholders to discuss and agree some high level principles setting out a 25 year vision for the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of our heritage. This will be included with a revised application for the NMG project to be submitted to the HLF by the 8th August 2013 deadline.

Westminster Lodge tile replacement

The replacement of the faulty tiles at Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre is on schedule. Officers are communicating and engaging with stakeholders.

Phases 1, 2, 3 and 4 are complete – these include part of the changing facilities and the training and children's pool.

The replacement work is due for completion by the end of July.

Grounds Maintenance

The current grounds maintenance contract for the District is due to expire on 31 December 2013 and the procurement of a new contract has begun. The new contract is mostly performance based (maintenance to kept to a certain standard) with a few frequency items (maintenance to be carried out at set occasions). The specification is very similar to the existing contract with only slight changes. One of the changes includes reducing the number of cuts for highways grass verges to the level of income received from HCC Highways for grass verges work.

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix G: Sports, Leisure and Heritage matters



A number of the District's Parish Councils have expressed interest in being included into the Contract. It is envisaged that this will bring a cost saving due to economies of scale and the expertise that usually accompany larger grounds maintenance contractors. The key milestone dates are shown in the table below. We have received expressions of interest from 11 firms and are currently evaluating these with a view of inviting 5-8 firms to tender.

Procurement Stage	Date
Publish advert for companies to express interest in tendering	April 2013
Issue pre-qualification questionnaire	May 2013
Shortlist companies to tender	June 2013
Evaluate tenders	August –Sept 2013
Award tender	October 2013
Commencement of contract	1 January 2014

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix H: St Albans Christmas Market



In the 2013/14 Corporate Plan the council agreed to adopt a long term development plan for the market service. Our aim is enhance our twice weekly markets and monthly Farmers' market and to investigate opportunities for new markets to contribute to the local economy. To formulate the development plan, the council will be consulting with traders, customers, City centre retailers and other interested stakeholders during the months of July and August. In addition, officers will visit other successful markets to see if there are lessons we can apply to strengthen our market offer in St Albans. Our aim is to discuss the plan at the Council's Cabinet in December 2013.

It is also part of Council's Corporate Plan to develop the visitor economy. Our research identified that a German style, festive market at Christmas will attract new visitors, benefit existing retailers, market traders, pubs and restaurants. Developing a Christmas market in 2013 is a key first year action in the strategy for the visitor economy. It is supported by key stakeholders in the visitor economy including the Cathedral and the Retail Forum amongst others.

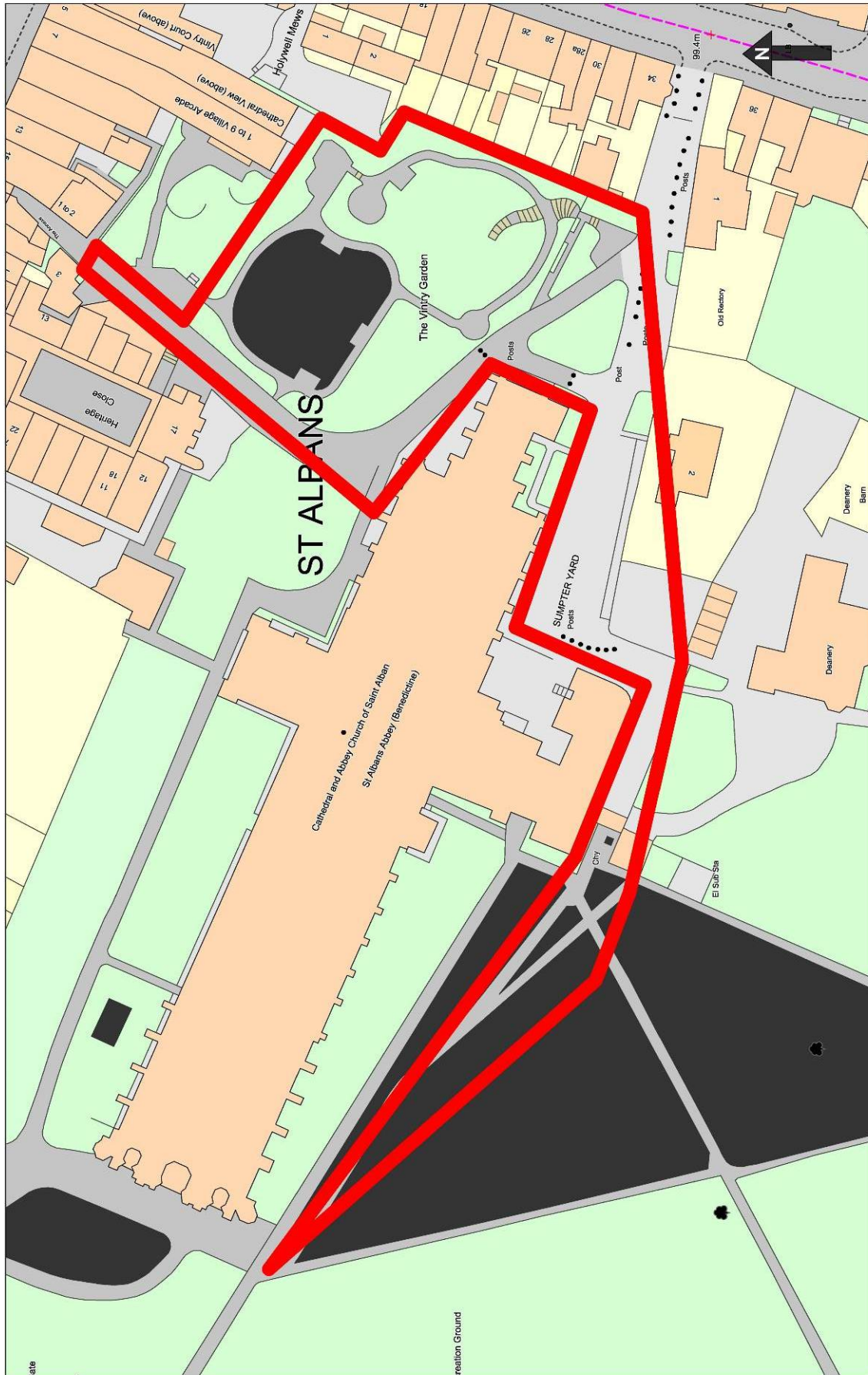
Experience elsewhere shows that visitors are drawn by a distinctive Christmas experience, offering produce such as mulled wine, stollen or hand-made goods, complementing the normal retail offer. Other towns and cities hosting Christmas markets find increased numbers visit their shops, existing adjacent markets and restaurants. In addition, visitors to Christmas markets are often first time visitors to a destination and are encouraged to visit again. Visitors to the proposed Christmas market will contribute to the shared aspiration held by the council and partners in the visitor economy to increase the number of people visiting and spending in the district.

For example, the cathedral city of Salisbury introduced a Christmas market in 2012. That Christmas market attracted 94,000 visitors who contributed £3.6m to the local economy. Like St Albans, Salisbury is a Charter Market town with two markets every week. Visitors to Salisbury's Christmas market were mostly new people who would not normally have visited the city. These visitors spent an average of £28 per person in the Christmas market and a further £35 per person in the surrounding market, shops and hospitality sector.

The Council:

- Has agreed with the Cathedral to use the Vintry Gardens and some of the area around the Cathedral as a suitable location for a Christmas market. This location has the dual advantage of providing a festive atmosphere and of being close to the existing market and retail centre. The site for the proposed market is overleaf and the stalls will be chalet-type market stalls.
- Will investigate the possibility of locating some chalets near the Clock Tower to link the Christmas market to our regular Wednesday, Saturday and Farmers' Markets.
- Will use signage so visitors to the Christmas market are directed to the retail centre and visitors to the retail centre are directed to the Christmas market.

The Council can run a market for up to 14 days without planning permission, but if we wish the Christmas market to run for longer, we will need to secure planning permission. Setting up the Christmas market will require some initial investment in 2013. Revenue projections based on the performance of other markets indicate that the initial investment is recovered in the second year and will generate significant net income in future years.



St Albans Festive Christmas Market 2013

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix I: Community Engagement



Over the past 12 months the Council has delivered a variety of Community Engagement initiatives which aim to improve the lives of local people. Our Community Engagement activity has focused on strong partnership working. This document provides some headline updates on some of the engagement projects that the Council is either directly delivering, or enabling to be delivered, through funding and support. Specifically it covers:

- Support for older people
- Support for younger people
- Supporting faith & cultural communities
- Funding to the Voluntary & Community Sector
- Engagement work with Parishes and villages

Older People

- The Older Peoples Forum has been developed to give older people an opportunity to have their say on important issues that affect their lives.
- The Forum was launched at an event in October 2012 which coincided with National Older Peoples Day. The event saw more than 120 older people come together to find out about the different activities on offer to them in the district.
- At the event, Older People had the opportunity to take part in activities such as yoga and received information about volunteering, adult learning and wider support opportunities in the district. As a result of the event, an additional yoga class for over 50's has been established and the Countryside management team has had 5 new volunteers.
- The Forum itself meets on a quarterly basis at different locations across the district. To date there have been three forums which have engaged over 100 older people and involved various professionals.
- The themes coming out through the forums have focused on health & wellbeing. As a result, feedback from the Older Peoples forum will become a standing item on the agenda of the Health & Wellbeing Partnership meeting.
- Following the comments received at the forum meetings, a Health & Wellbeing programme has been developed. This programme has been running since March 2013 and includes healthy eating workshops, practical cookery classes and reminiscence sessions. So far the Health & Wellbeing programme has engaged over 100 older people.
- We are now partnering with HCC to explore what a dementia friendly community should consist of. We have set up a dementia alliance and are currently piloting two areas, Southdown and Marshalswick, to ascertain what the local appetite is to work on this pilot project.
- The next project in our older peoples work is to produce an 'A-Z directory of for older people services'. These directories will be printed and distributed across the district.

Young People

- The Youth Action Group, which brings together local youth organisations, has been developing its priorities for the year. The group will focus on the following four areas:
 - An Interactive directory promoting youth provision

Council Performance & Budget Summary

Appendix I: Community Engagement



- Co-ordinated approach to youth volunteering and youth unemployment initiatives
- Programme of events to give young people a voice i.e. Local Democracy week.
- Summer Sounds music event for young people in 2014 including a programme of preceding mobile DJ/music workshops around the district.
- We are supporting a Youth forum which has been set up by Youth Connexions. This forum aims to give young people from a variety of backgrounds a voice and opportunity to identify issues affecting their lives. 20 young people have been regularly attending the forum.
- The development of a new Youth Café is progressing well. The Youth Café will provide young people in Redbourn with a place to hang out with friends. It will be based at the Redbourn Recreation Centre and will formally open on 28 June.
- The ONSIDE, youth diversionary project, has been allocated funding until March 2015 through the Council's Voluntary & Community Sector Fund. The project steering group has been re-established and will work to increase participation in the project and increase links with local sports clubs.

Faith & Cultural groups

- The St Albans & District Faith & Culture Enterprise (FACE) was set up to explore new and innovative ways of working with and bringing together the diverse communities in St Albans District.
- FACE currently engages a wide range of faith and cultural organisations including Christian churches, Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques.
- These groups come together each month to discuss common issues and ways to work more closely together.
- In addition to the support given through the FACE project we have also supported other projects through our Voluntary Sector Funding. Most recently this has included funding to the local Polish association to deliver a food and music event and support to deliver committee member training to local Mosques.

Voluntary & Community Sector funding

- A key aspect of our community engagement work is providing funding to community groups to enable them to deliver excellent initiatives in the heart of communities.
- Each year the Council distributes c£500k to community groups and projects. The Community Grants Fund in particular has distributed c£120k to local projects in the past 12 months. The Community Grants Fund criteria, which are set out below, help target vulnerable people and disadvantaged areas.
 - Benefit the local community
 - Increase local peoples' engagement/interest in local democracy
 - Promote involvement in community life
 - Bring together people from different backgrounds
 - Reduce inequalities
 - Support individuals with disabilities
 - Engage young people in positive activities
 - Support the needs of older people