

# REPORT TO THE Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report No.11

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>24/01/08</b>
<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>Poorly Performing Performance Indicators Update</b>
Link to Corporate Priorities	
Public Report	YES

## Summary of Report

This report provides information on performance indicators (PIs) that, when compared with all district councils, are or were recently amongst the worst 25% of performers. Progress updates are also given for PIs that were previously reported on in November's meeting.

Information is provided on any actions that are planned to improve performance and projections are given for future levels of performance.

## Officer Recommendations

That the report is noted and used to inform members of the proposed actions to improve poorly performing performance Indicators.

That any areas of concern are the subject of future monitoring reports to assess progress against any proposed improvement initiatives.

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Graham Wilkie Performance Management Officer 01249 706614 gwilkie@northwilts.gov.uk
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides information on performance indicators (PIs) that, when compared with all district councils, are or were recently amongst the worst 25% of performers. Progress updates are also given for PIs that were previously reported on in November's meeting.
- 1.2 Information is provided on any actions that are planned to improve performance and projections are given for future levels of performance.

## 2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 Option 1: The report is noted and used to inform members of the proposed actions to improve poorly performing performance Indicators.
- 2.2 Option 2: Any areas of concern are the subject of future monitoring reports to assess progress against any proposed improvement initiatives.

## 3. Background Information

- 3.1 This report follows up progress for PIs that were previously reported on in previous quarterly updates and identifies any other PIs that are in the bottom quartile. The report outlines the reasons for current performance for the identified PIs, predictions for future performance, and planned actions and timescales to achieve acceptable levels of performance.
- 3.2 For the purpose of this report, bottom quartile refers to the worst 25% performers of all district councils and top quartile the best 25% performers of all district councils.

## 4. BVPI 78a and b – Speed of processing benefits claims

- 4.1 Both BVPI 78a (time to process new benefit claims) and BVPI 78b (time to process new changes in circumstances) have improved further in the third quarter of 2007/08 and are on target to achieve performance amongst the top 50% district council's for 2007/08. For the third quarter, processing time for new benefit claims is in the top quartile and processing time for changes in circumstances is above average.

### BV78a – Speed of Processing New Claims

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
2006/07	63.65	60.97	51.48	40.85	53.8
2007/08	34.68	26.48	20.54		
Target	38	32	24.5	24.5	29

### BV78b – Speed of Processing Change in Circumstances

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual
2006/07	42.65	41.81	39.37	7.29	20.6
2007/08	21.89	15.3	9.98		
Target		15	10	3.5*	9.5

\*target is low due to year-end adjustment process

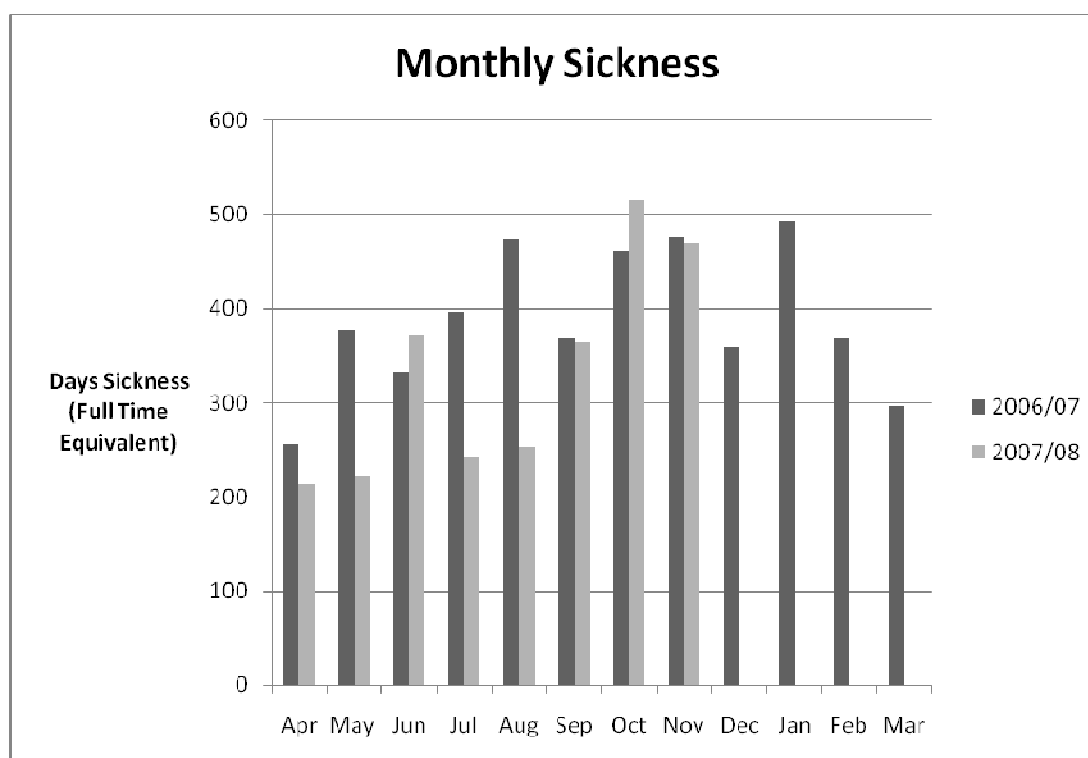
**5. BVPI 12 – Average number of working days lost to sickness per employee**

- 5.1 The average number of days sickness per employee (BV12) increased from 9.44 days in 2005/06 to 13.27 days in 2006/07, moving performance from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the bottom quartile. This was attributed to an increase in long-term sickness absences, with all areas of the Council seeing an increase in sickness.
- 5.2 A number of actions to reduce sickness levels were outlined in the 2006/07 Annual Monitoring Report that went to PLA on 3 September 2007. Managers are now receiving monthly absence reports for the new structure, which provide detail of the amount and type of sickness absence in their service areas.
- 5.3 In November’s meeting, Members asked for an updated comparison for sickness absence for this year and the similar period last year. This is given in the table below.

	Apr - Nov 2006	Apr - Nov 2007
FTE* days sickness	3,142	2,652
Average FTEs for period	365.90	368.66
Days sick per FTE	8.59	7.19
Annual Days sick per FTE	12.88	10.79

\*FTE: Full time equivalent

- 5.4 For the period April to November 2007, there has been a decrease of 470 days sickness compared to the same period in the previous year. If this is repeated for the remainder of the year, the average number of days sickness would be 10.87 days for 2007/08, which would move performance to the borderline of bottom and third quartile performance.



- 5.5 The above chart shows days sickness by month for the current and previous years. Whilst the general trend shows a reduction in sickness levels on the previous year, October and November 2007 have shown marked increase. This can partly be

attributed to a large number of (11) cases of long-term sickness, 6 of which have now returned to work. It is, therefore, anticipated that sickness levels will reduce in January.

- 5.6 The target of 10 days for 2007/08, which would move performance out of the bottom quartile is still regarded as being achievable.

**6. BVPI 9 and 10 – Percentage of Council Tax and NNDR collected in the year**

- 6.1 For 2006/07, collection of Council Tax (BVPI 9) and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) were in the bottom quartile. Based on this data and cost considerations the Revenues Service was highlighted as a priority area for improvement in the recently revised Transitional Corporate Plan.

- 6.2 Current year performance (shown in the table below) shows an improvement of almost 2 percentage points for Council Tax and 1 percentage point for NNDR, which suggests we are on target to achieve 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile performance for 2007/08. This improvement is due to increased staffing levels, a reduction of the mail backlog, prompter billing, regular reminders & summonses, and more debt recovery action.

	December 2006	December 2007
Council Tax	84.79%	86.60%
NNDR	87.66%	88.70%

*Table to show in-year collection rates*

- 6.3 A review of the Revenue Service using a Lean approach is underway to improve processes, performance and the Council's revenue position.

**7. BVPI 109a,b&c and 204 – Speed of processing Planning Applications and Appeals allowed**

- 7.1 Speed of determining major planning applications (BVPI 109a) was close to bottom quartile performance in 2006/07. For the current year, 88.10% of major applications are determined within 13 weeks, which is top quartile performance.

- 7.2 Minor applications determined in 8 weeks (BVPI 109b) was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile for 2006/07. Performance improved over the first 2 quarters of 2007/0887, but dropped in the most recent quarter, with overall performance lying in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile (see chart overleaf). Development Services have investigated every application that missed its target date and found that delays occurred due to applications going to committee, negotiations on complex applications and Section 106 agreements being required. Closer monitoring is now in place and it is anticipated that the annual target will still be met.

- 7.3 "Other" planning applications determined in 8 weeks (BVI109c) has dropped significantly from 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile performance in 2006/07, to bottom quartile for the current year (see chart overleaf). This is due, in part, to staff sickness. Performance has improved over the year and it anticipated to continue to improve.

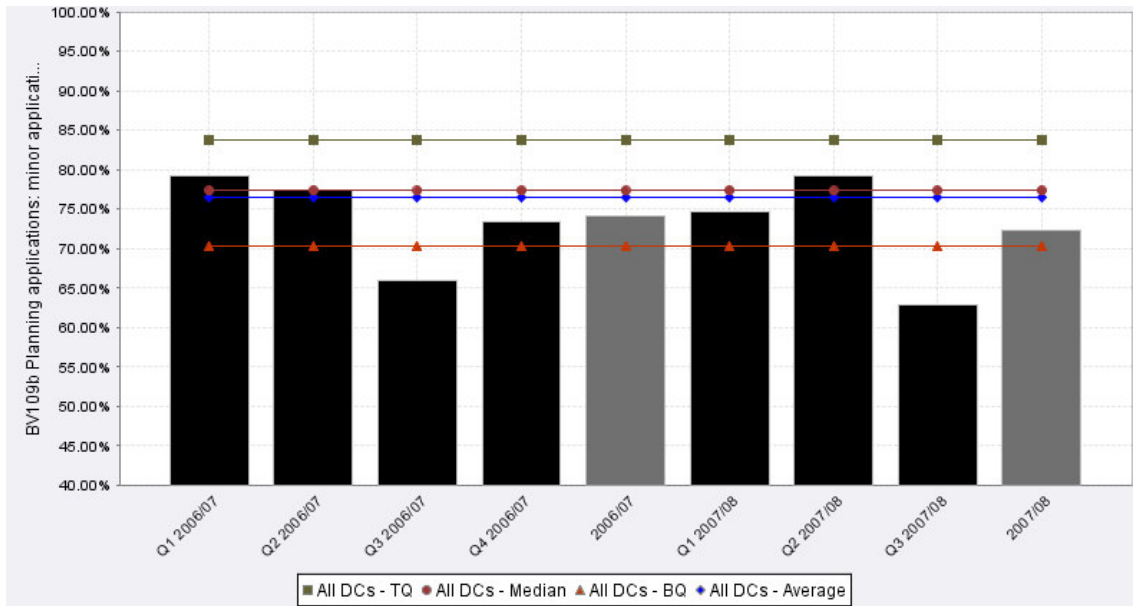


Chart to show no. of minor planning applications processed in 8 weeks

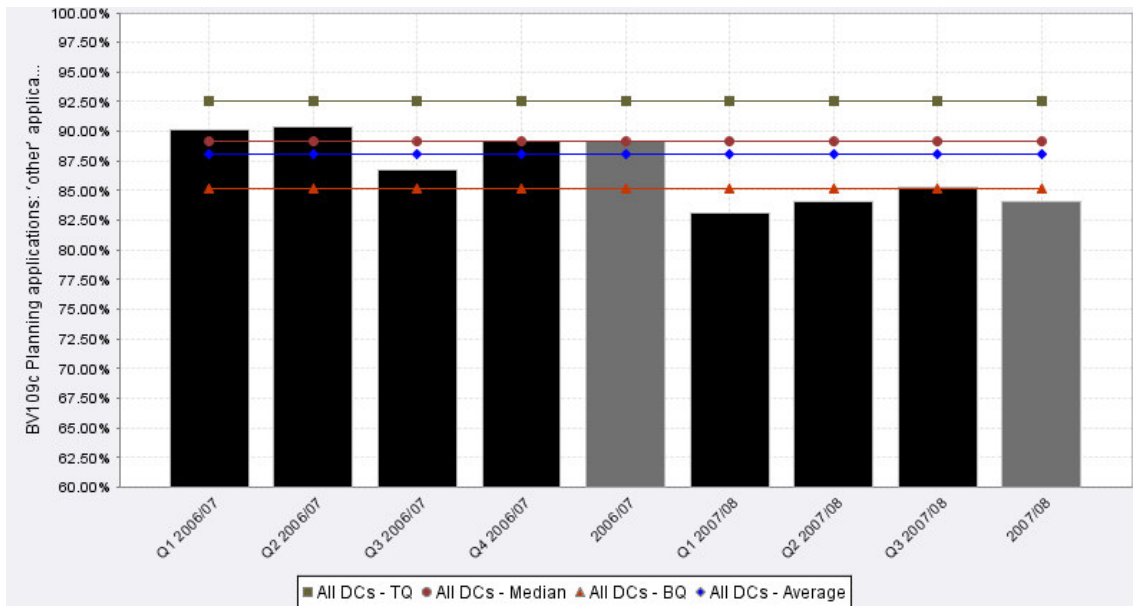


Chart to show no. of "other" planning applications processed in 8 weeks

7.4 The number of planning appeals allowed against the Council's decision as a percentage of all appeals (BVPI204) has greatly improved (reduced) over the last 3 quarters. Performance has moved from bottom quartile performance in 2006/07 to top quartile for the current year. Similar numbers of refusals and appeals over the period indicates that this improvement is due to improved decision making.

## 8. Implications

8.1 None under the given headings, see Risk Analysis at section 9..

## 9. Risk Analysis

- 9.1 If the Council and its services perform poorly there is a risk that the Council will be re-categorised to a lower CPA rating if a further corporate assessment was undertaken by the Audit Commission. Direction of Travel and Corporate Assessments will also so be adversely affected.
- 9.2 Services that are regarded as performing poorly may be negatively affected in the transition to the unitary council.

<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:</b>	<b>None</b>

### Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

<b>Report</b>	<b>Committee &amp; Date</b>	<b>Minute Reference</b>
None		