

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date: 23 February 2017
Title: TRANSITIONAL RESOURCES MONITORING REPORT
Portfolio Area: Cllr S Wright
Wards Affected: All
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

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RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the contents of the Transitional Resources monitoring report and the progress to date.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report will provide members with an update on the impact on services areas of the temporary, fixed-term transitional resources approved by council in June 2016 to improve customer satisfaction and public perception of the Council.
- 1.2 The report also provides an update on the current expenditure of the additional approved funds.

2. Background

- 2.1 Council approved £545,000 in June 2016, the funding is being used to recruit temporary fixed term staff to reduce 'failure demand'. Failure Demand is a term to describe the additional workload caused by the failure to deliver a service correctly in the first place, resulting in additional customer contact and dissatisfaction. This resulted in increased call volumes, increased call waiting times and service backlogs.
- 2.2 All temporary fixed term resources have now been recruited, these have been a mixture of agency staff, some already working at the council and new recruits. Staff have been deployed so that existing agency staff with experience have been given more complex work and new staff deployed in to less technical roles.
- 2.3 A transition improvement team led by the seconded manager from Support Services and supported by the managers of Case Management, Specialists, IT and Business Improvement, now meets fortnightly and is working through the action plan to improve processes and technology in each area.
- 2.4 Monthly call volumes had been at the highest levels for a number of years and as a result call waiting times were unacceptably long. Call volumes have consistently reduced since the peak of June 2016.
- 2.5 A number of services had backlogs of work, which in turn was generating increased call volumes and higher levels of customer dissatisfaction. The services of particular concern were;
- Planning
 - Waste
 - Car Parking
 - Council Tax
 - Housing Benefit
 - DFG's

3. Current status

- 3.1 Of the £545,000 of additional approved funds £335,000 (61% of total) has been spent as of end of December 2016. Expenditure has been front-loaded to gain the maximum service improvement as early as possible. Resources are being continually re-profiled and redeployed across the target service areas, this enables us to ensure that the temporary staff are released gradually and minimises the risk of further service disruption.

3.2 The new contact centre phone system has now been installed and is working well. In-Cab technology has now been deployed to the waste fleet and integrated with the council's workflow system.

3.3 The new cloud based website is now being tested. The website is 'transaction based' and designed around the key tasks that customers contact that the council. Channel shift technologies such as online direct debit, housing benefit and council tax forms compliment the new website. A new car parking management system is currently being implemented which will enable digital permits and a streamlined parking appeals process. A key publicity campaign will be launched in March to maximise public awareness of the ease of use of the council's online services.

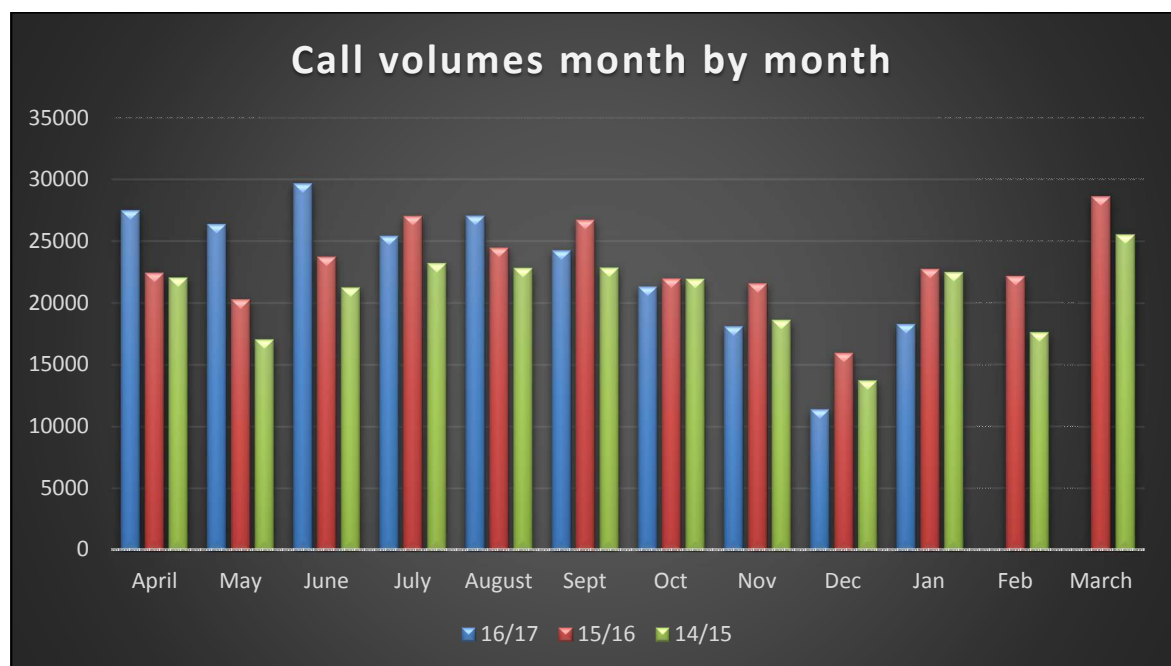
4. Service by Service update

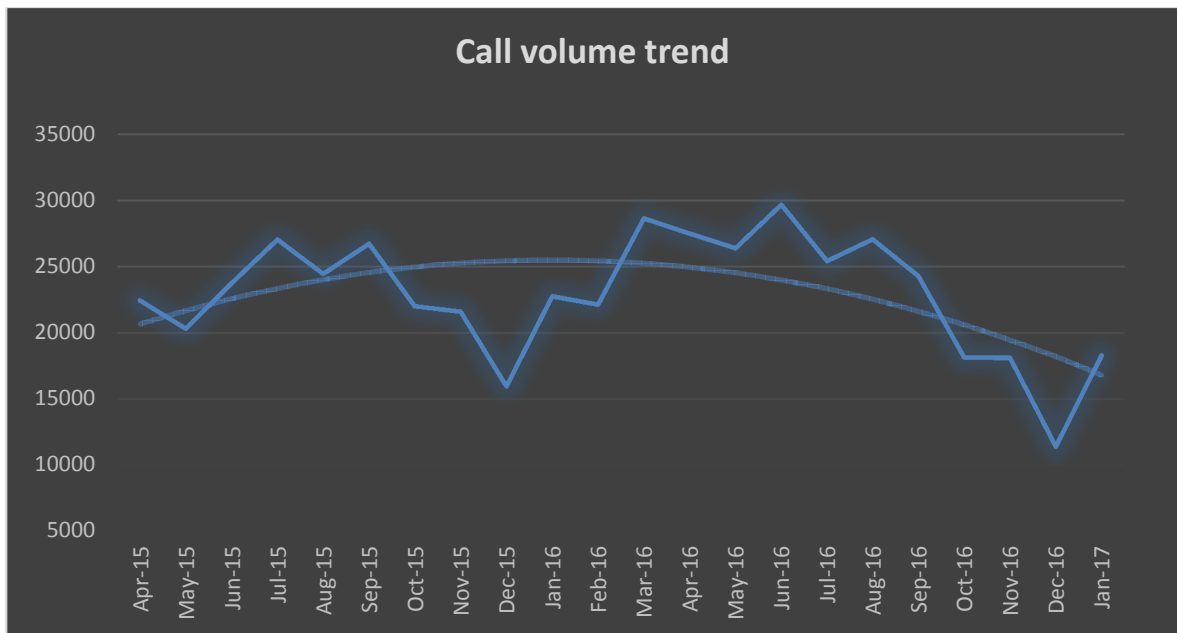
4.1 Contact Centre Performance

Contact centre performance has improved steadily over the last 6 months. This is evidenced by the latest Contact centre performance report which shows that;

4.1.1 Call volumes are decreasing (see table below)

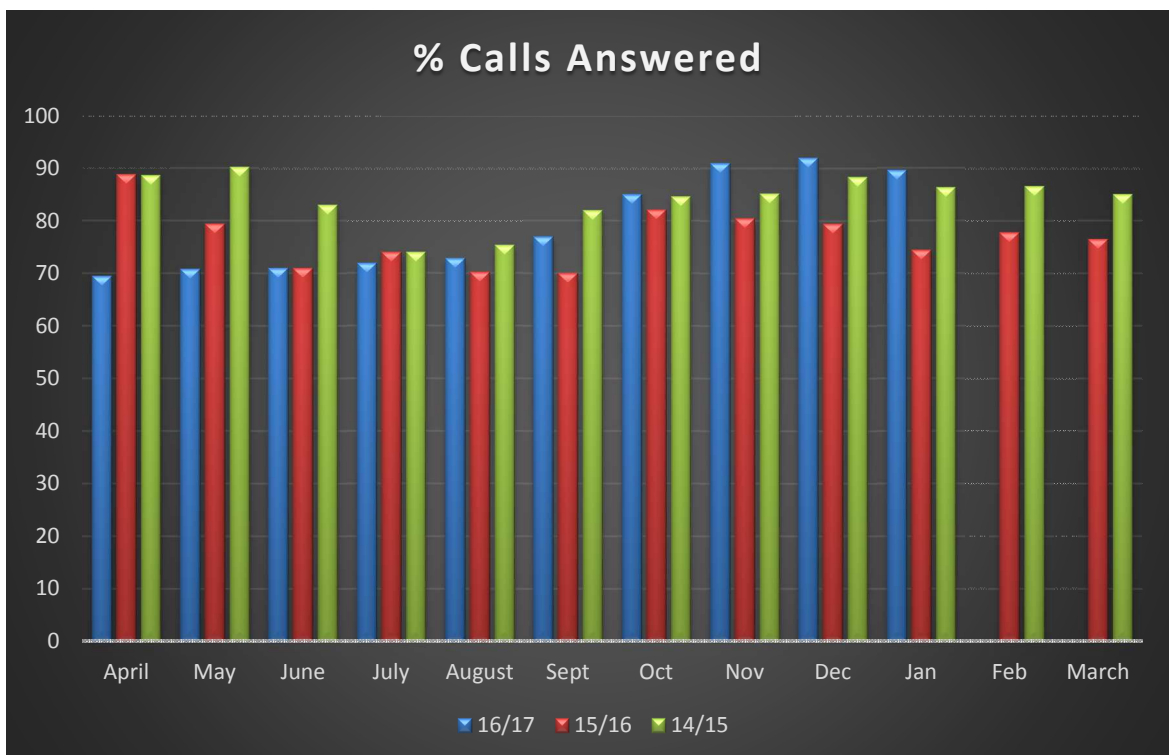
	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
2016/17	27501	26390	29694	25420	27072	24274	21332	18108	11394	18300
2015/16	22436	20309	23744	27049	24461	26723	21995	21586	15961	22762
2014/15	22050	17060	21250	23239	22841	22863	21949	18630	13736	22501





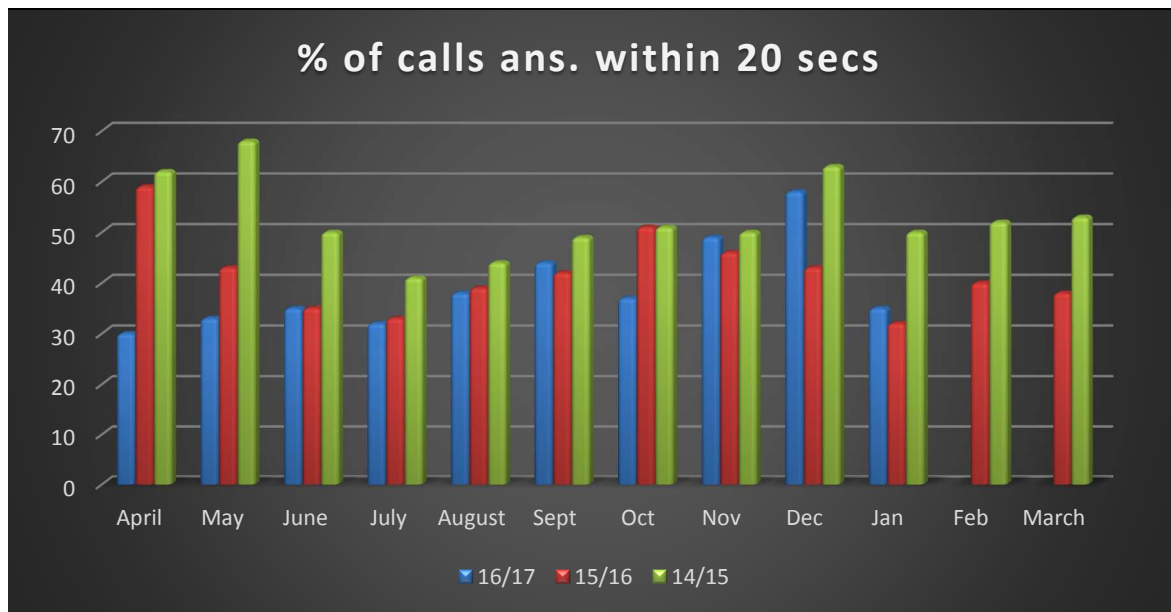
4.1.2 The % of calls answered is increasing (see table below)

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
2016/17	69.5	70.8	71	71.9	72.8	77	85	91	92	89.6
2015/16	88.8	79.4	71	74	70.2	70	82.1	80.5	79.5	74.4
2014/15	88.6	90.2	83	74	75.3	82	84.6	85.2	88.4	86.3



4.1.3 The % of calls answered in 20 seconds is slowly improving. (see table below)

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
2016/17	30	33	35	32	38	44	37	49	58	35
2015/16	59	43	35	33	39	42	51	46	43	32
2014/15	62	68	50	41	44	49	51	50	63	50

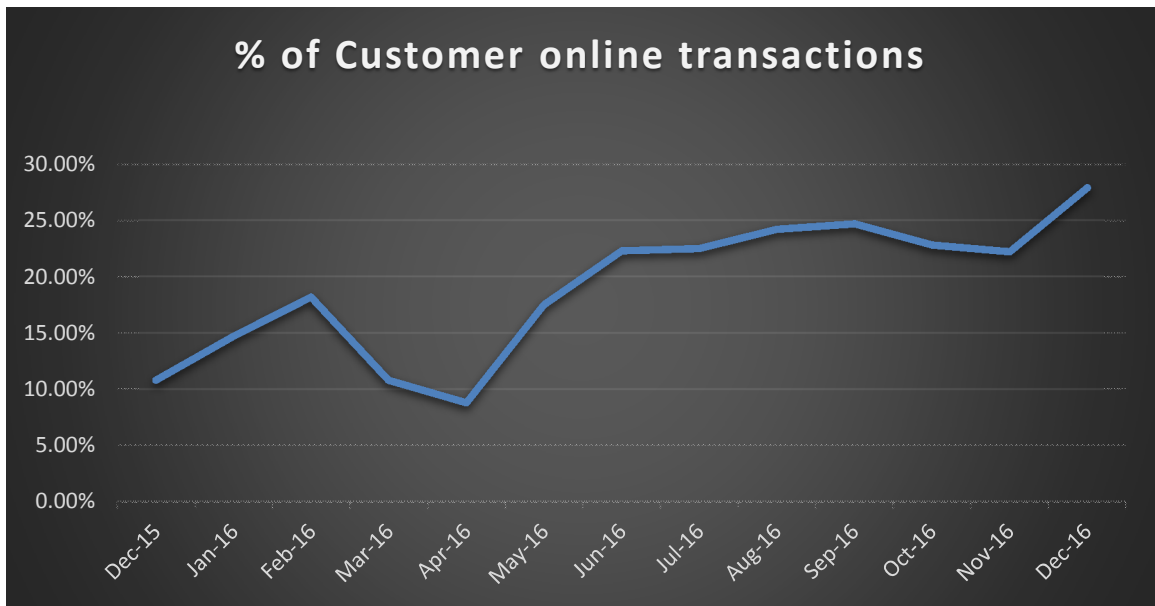


4.1.4 Previously we have recorded the percentage of calls that have taken over 7 minutes to be answered, since October we have begun recording the % of calls answered with 5 minutes. These figures are shown below

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
% of calls answered within 5 minutes	66	81	83	74		

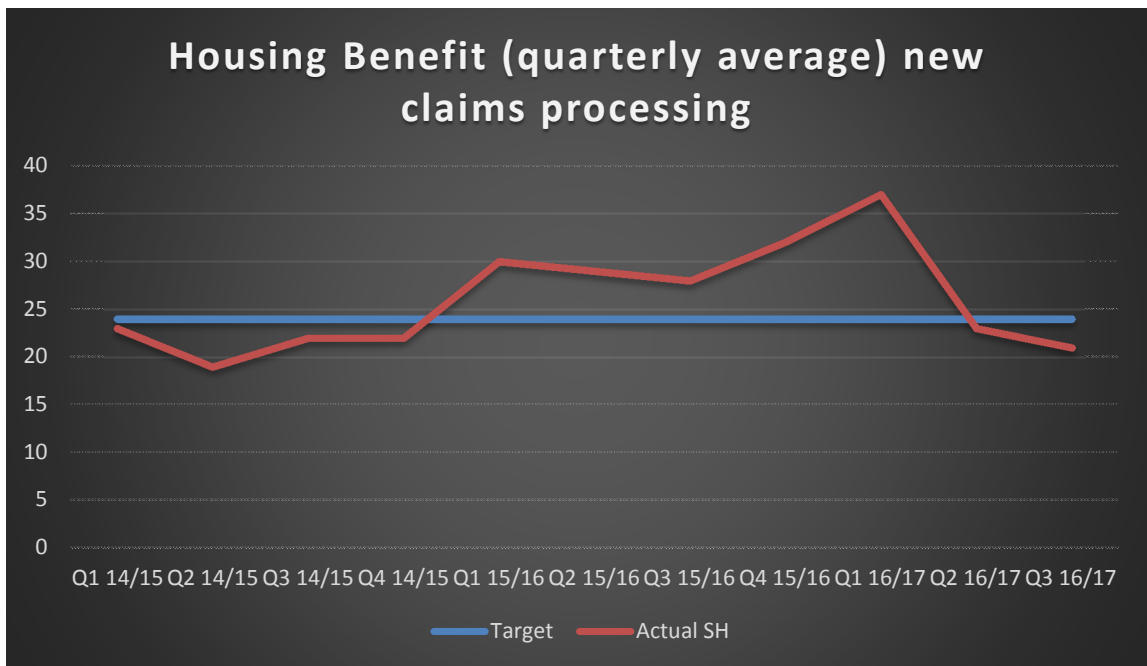
4.2 Channel shift.

The graph below shows the number of customer transactions submitted via our website. It should be noted that this increasing number of transactions is measured as a % of the number of transactions input by council officers. This is despite the current website being slow. This improving picture is in part due to the transition improvement team focussing on improving the customer journey/experience.

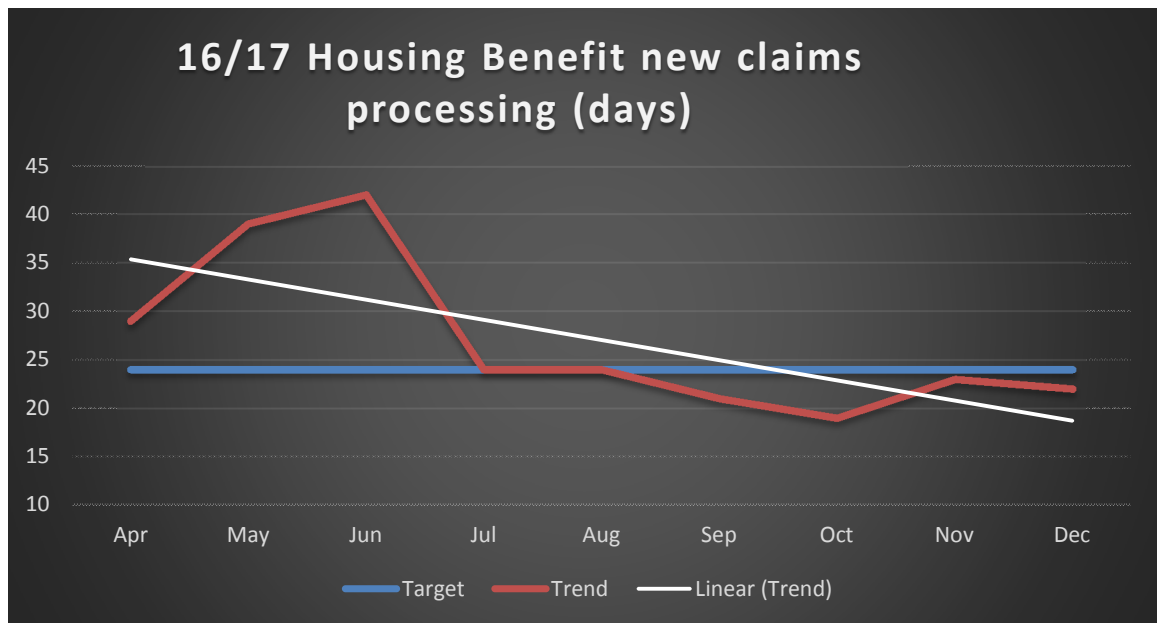


4.3 Housing Benefit

The first graph shows how performance began to deteriorate from 14/15 and shows an improvement in the last 6 months.

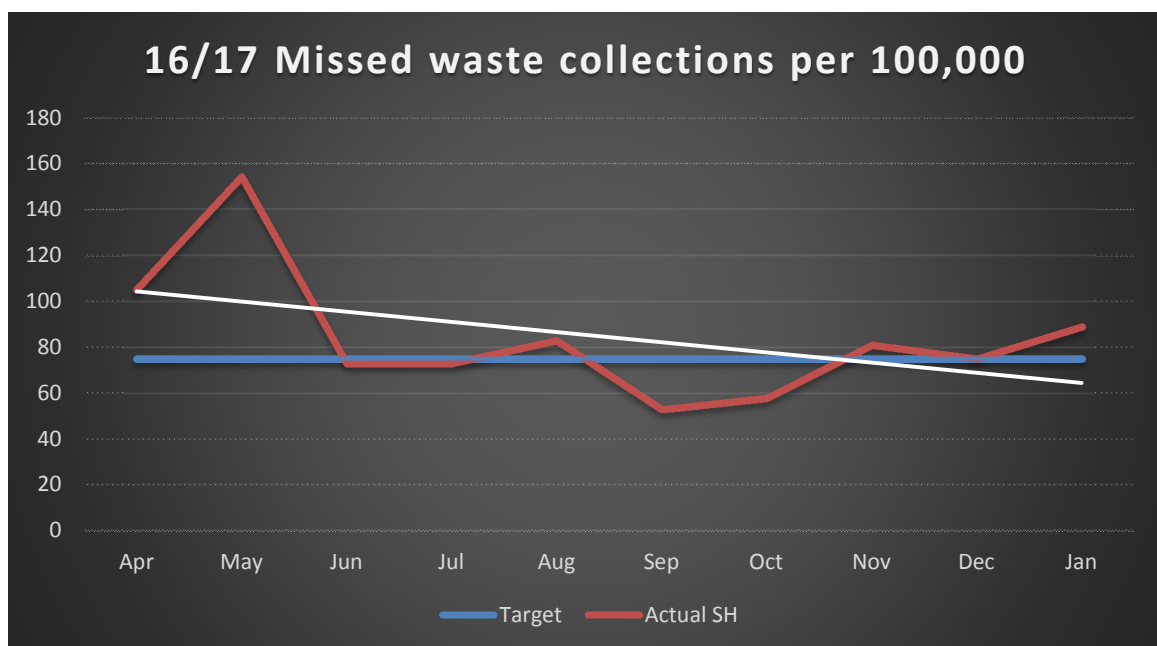


4.3.1 The graph below shows the month by month performance of the housing benefit service.



4.4 Waste

Focus has been given to simplifying processes and freeing up supervisor and case management resources to manage the workforce and work more effectively. The chart below shows the improvement from the beginning of the year in the number of missed waste collections that exceed the 'collect within 2 days' target. The deployment of in-cab technology and its subsequent integration with the case management system should result in further improvements.



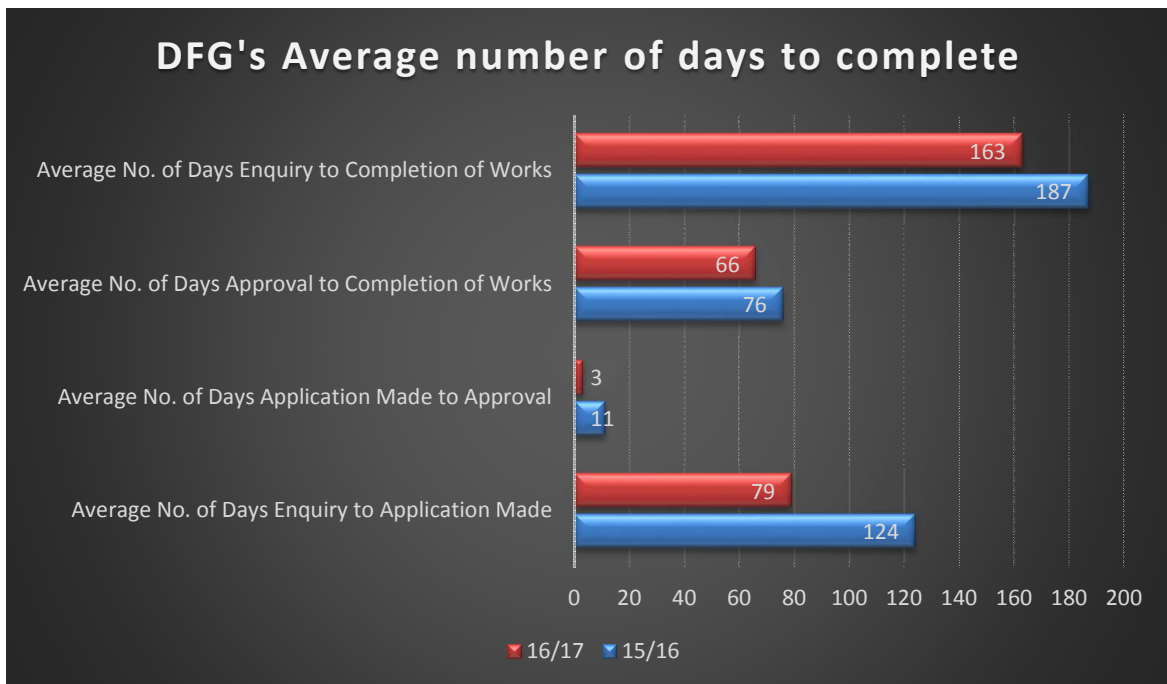
4.5 Disabled Facilities Grants

We measure our progress by 4 key parts of the process:

- Enquiry to Application Made*
- Application Made to Approval Sent**
- Approval Received to Works Complete
- Enquiry to Works Complete

Our Grants are categorised into 3 different areas – Danger, Deterioration and Difficulty, with Danger being the most urgent and Difficulty the least.

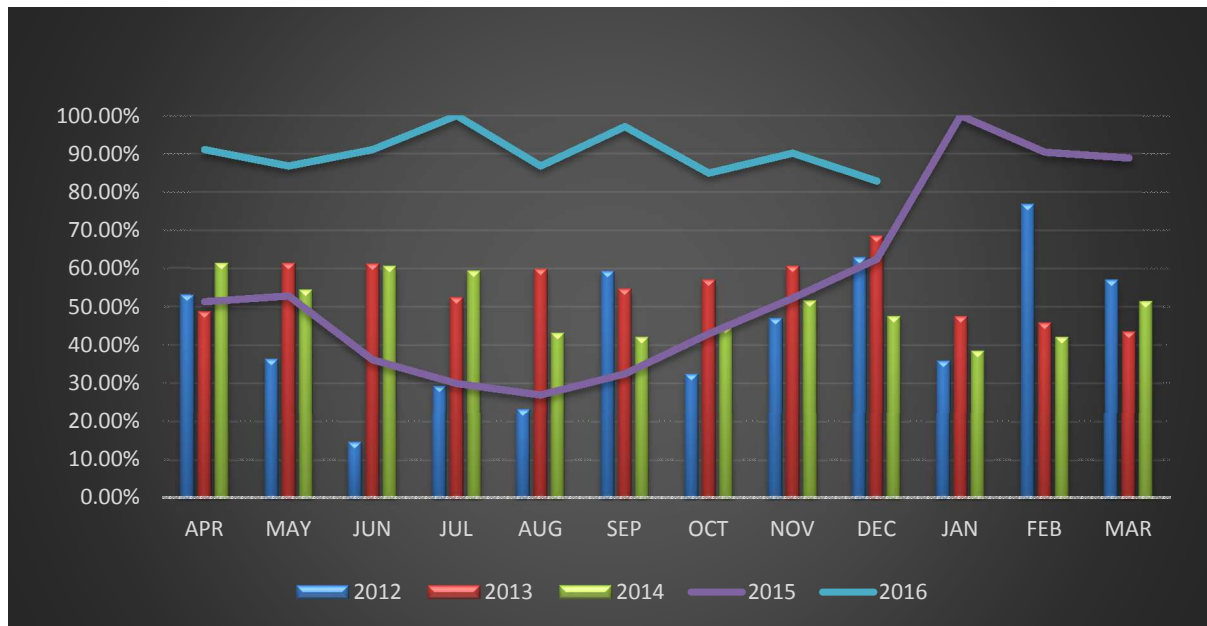
It should be noted is that only 80 DFG's were approved in the year 2015/2016, however, so far in 2016/2017 we have already approved 115. The table below shows the improving performance, with an increasing volume.



4.6 Planning

A 12% increase in application numbers has put a huge pressure on staff who have exceptionally high caseloads. Whilst determination performance is still above target, customer complaints volumes remain high. This has been reflected in the recent request for a permanent increase in posts and the additional request for a further £100,000 of temporary funding for case management in 17/18. The transition improvement team continue to focus on the planning service and a comprehensive performance dashboard is now reported to the Development Management Committee on a monthly basis. The following table shows the last 5 years of performance for determination of minor

applications as a percentage against target. This highlights the sustained improvements despite an increase in volumes.



5 Financial Implications

5.1 Transitional resources are within the additional approved budget and remain on target as stated in paragraph 3.1. There are no new financial implications. Appendix A shows a breakdown by service area of the costs to date. It should be noted that this 'profile' may change to mitigate against the risk stated in paragraph 6.2.

6 Risks

6.1 That service improvements are not sustainable when transition resources are removed. The transition improvement team are prioritising service improvement work accordingly so that incremental improvements mean that transition resources can be redeployed as backlogs are reduced.

6.2 That service performance will suddenly deteriorate when transition resources are removed. Temporary resources are reviewed monthly. A number have already left and these savings from within the transition budget are being used to extend other transition resources posts. This will enable a smooth transition to business as usual resources over the next 6 months.

7 Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	None
Financial	Y	See Section 6.
Risk	Y	See Section 7.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	None
Safeguarding	N	None
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	None
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	The report recognises staff welfare concerns and the proposals will support permanent staff.
Other implications	N	None