
Report to Scrutiny Committee of 21 May 2009

Subject: End of Year Balanced Scorecard 2008/09

**Report by: Barry Dickson, Head of Business Improvement and
Information Technology Services**

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. This report provides elected members with a review of the Council's performance in relation to key areas of service delivery for 2008/09.
- 1.2. A breakdown of corporate and key performance measures is provided in Appendix A.
- 1.3. Balanced scorecards containing the full list of service measures are available in members' rooms.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Scrutiny Committee is asked to: -
 - Note key issues in the conclusions.
 - Note performance and agree management actions (See Appendix A).
 - Provide feedback on the effectiveness and presentation of measures to enable effective scrutiny of performance.

3.0 Considerations

Background

- 3.1. The scorecard is a management system that enables the Council to understand whether its vision and strategy translates into action by measuring a series of key performance measures.
- 3.2. The key focus of each scorecard is to ensure a balance of performance measures is developed within the Financial, Customer (Stakeholder), Internal Business Processes, and Learning and Growth areas. This is used to demonstrate the delivery of continuous improvement.
- 3.3. Business Improvement will continue to review performance measures with Heads of Service to ensure that the scope and presentation of performance measures to Committee is continuously improved.
- 3.4. Each graph in Appendix A provides an arrow indicator to highlight whether the trend is positive or negative.



A red downward arrow signifies that the trend is negative,



A green upward arrow signifies that the trend is positive,



A double ended blue arrow signifies that the trend is neither positive nor negative, and therefore that performance has remained static.

- 3.5. To ensure consistency, we have adopted the Audit Scotland convention for categorising static or similar performance. Anything within a tolerance of + or - five percent in performance is shown as a static or similar trend.
- 3.6. Each performance indicator is marked as to whether it is a national indicator, e.g. statutory performance indicator, or a local indicator set by the service.
- 3.7. Appendix A provides each performance indicator with the most recently available Scottish (or benchmark group) average figures as a green line in each graph (where available). Best in class performance is provided where available.
- 3.8. The indicators presented in this report include areas of concern previously highlighted by Scrutiny Committee.

Conclusions

During 2008/09, the Council:

- 3.9. Increased the percentage of invoices paid within 30 days by the Council to 88.6%. Performance is similar when compared to 2007/08 which was 86.5%. The target is 90%.
- 3.10. Recorded 8,219 uses of access learning centres or learning access points. Performance is favourable when compared with 2007/08 which was 6,370. The target is 4,750.
- 3.11. Maintained the percentage of calls resolved first time at the contact centre at 80%. Performance is similar to 2007/08 which was 80%. The target was to achieve 82%.
- 3.12. Saw a rise in the proportion of current tenants who owe more than 13 week's rent to 5%. The target is 4.5%. The Scottish Housing Best Value Network group average in 2007/08 was 5.5% and the Benchmarking Group average at the end of the Quarter 3 of 2008/09 was 5.2%.
- 3.13. Re-let 66% of empty houses within 4 weeks. Performance is favourable to 2007/08 which was 37%. The target is 47%.
- 3.14. Saw an increase in housing rent arrears to 6.3% of total rent due. Performance is unfavourable with the figure of 5.9% achieved in March 2007/08. The target is 6.1%. The Council performs favourably when compared with the Scottish Housing Best Value Network average of 7.9%.
- 3.15. Took on average 26 days to complete an assessment for homeless persons. The target is 21 days or less. According to a 2007/08 benchmarking report the

Council issued 75% of decisions within 28 days compared with the group average of 64%.

- 3.16. Saw an unfavourable decline in the percentage of Community Care referral responses completed within the target time to 56%. Performance for 2007/08 was 65%. The target is 80%.
- 3.17. Submitted 51% of child protection case conference reports within timescale. Performance is unfavourable when compared with the target of 75%.
- 3.18. Dealt with 46% of requests for initial health assessments within 10 days of a child being accommodated. Performance is favourable when compared with 2007/08 which was 32%. The target is 60%.
- 3.19. Ensured that 71% of children were seen by a supervising officer within 15 days of a supervision requirement being made. Performance is favourable when compared with 2007/08 which was 60%. The target is 100%.
- 3.20. Ensured that 80% of building warrants were responded to within 15 days. This is unfavourable with 2007/08 when 89% was achieved. The target is 90%.
- 3.21. Saw an unfavourable increase in sickness absence for all staff to 5.2% from 4.7% in 2007/08, against a target of 4.8%.
- 3.22. There are 3 indicators which have no comparison available with 07/08.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

- 4.1. There are no significant sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1. Financial Details

- 5.2. There are no significant financial implications arising directly from this report.

5.3. Staffing

- 5.4. There are no significant staffing implications arising directly from this report.

6.0 Exempt Reports Only - Reasons for Exemption

- 6.1. There are no exempt issues with this report.

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities 2008 - 2011** (Please tick)

- The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses
- Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive
- People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment
- Our communities are safer
- Vulnerable people and families are supported
- Substance misuse and its effects are reduced
- Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing
- The environment is protected and enhanced for all
- The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence

(2) Council Policies (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Not Required Yes No

9.0 Legality

9.1 In adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers Yes

APPROVAL/SIGNATURE	DATE
Head of Service: Barry Dickson	12/05/09
Director: Jeni Graham	12/05/09

REPORT TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To: Head of Administration and Legal Services, Greenfield, Alloa FK10 2AD

Report author: Barry Dickson

Service: Business Improvement & Technology Service

Report title: End of Year Balanced Scorecard 2008/09

Date of meeting: 21 May 2009

It is recommended that the attached report be:

1. **Given unrestricted circulation**
2. **Taken in private by virtue of paragraph ___ of schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973**

List any appendices attached to this report (if there are no appendices, please state 'none')

1. **Appendix A: Council Performance 2008/09**
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

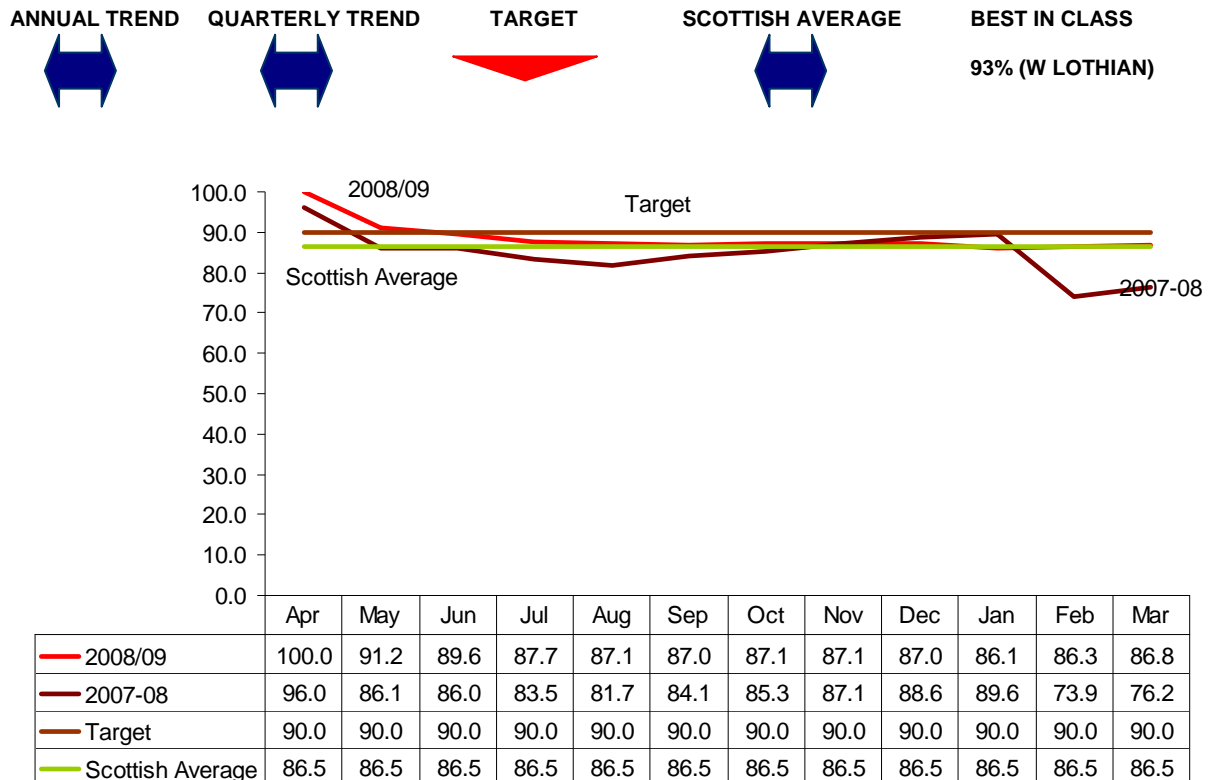
List the background papers used in compiling this report . If you have completed a sustainability checklist please add this to your list (if there are no background papers please state 'none')

1. **Services Balanced Scorecards in Members Rooms**
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Nb. All documents listed must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of the meeting at which the report is considered

APPENDIX A COUNCIL PERFORMANCE 2008/09

1. Invoices paid within 30 days by the Council (Statutory Performance Indicator)



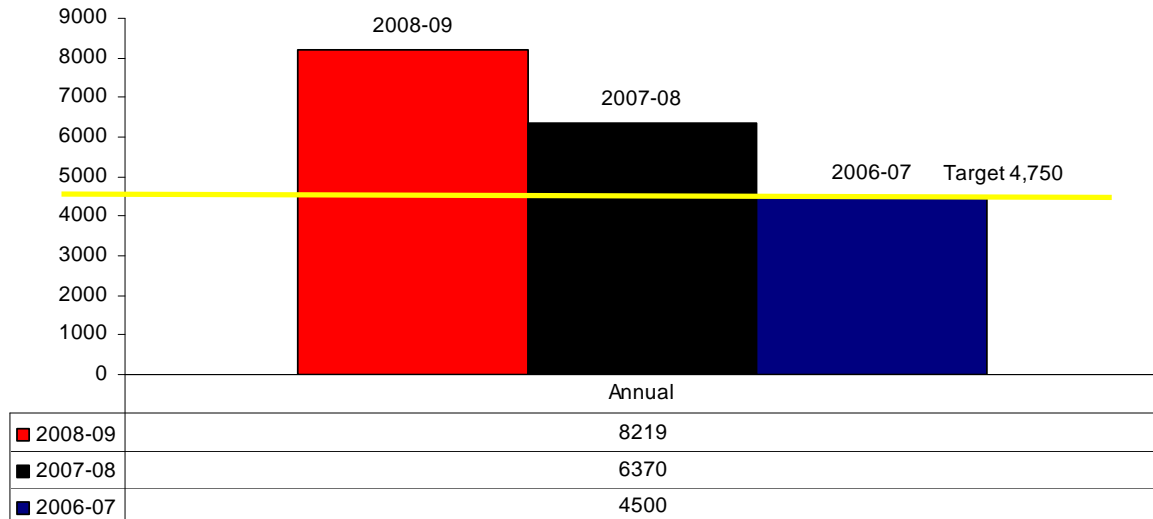
Key points:

- During 2008/09, 88.6% of invoices were paid within 30 days. This is consistent with the Scottish average which was 86.5%. Performance is similar to 2007/08 when 84.8% of invoices were paid within 30 days.
- During Quarter 4, 2008/09 86% of invoices were paid within 30 days. Performance is similar when compared with Quarter 3, 2008/09 which was 87%.
- Performance is unfavourable when compared with the target of 90%.
- Best in class for 2007/08 was West Lothian Council which paid 93% of invoices within 30 days.

Management Action: Change recording methods for invoice forms and ensure that all invoices which are more than 30 days old are signed-off by Directors.

2. Number of learning centre and learning access point users (Statutory Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND	QUARTERLY TREND	TARGET	SCOTTISH AVERAGE	BEST IN CLASS
	NOT AVAILABLE		NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE



Key points:

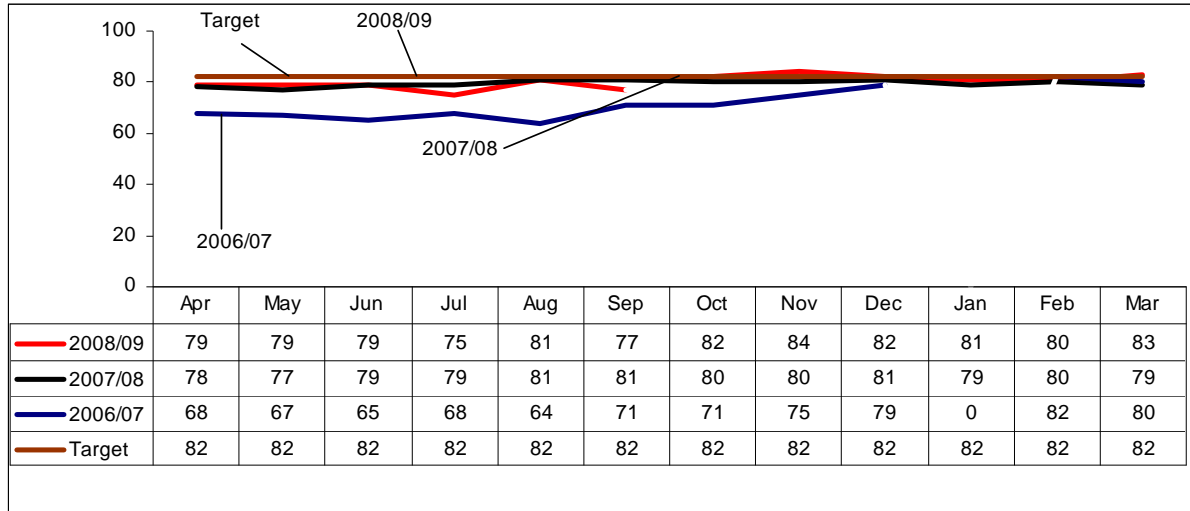
- 8,219 users accessed learning centres or learning access points during 2008/09. This represents an increase on 2007/08 when 6,370 were recorded.
- Performance is above the target of 4,750.
- The increase is due to better awareness of Council facilities and services available to residents, and the enhanced provision of two new ICT tutors available to undertake a variety of courses.

Management Action: Continue to market courses in line with government-backed initiatives such as Big Plus.

3. Percentage of calls resolved at first point of contact at the contact centre (Local Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND **QUARTERLY TREND** **TARGET** **SCOTTISH AVERAGE** **BEST IN CLASS**

 NOT AVAILABLE **NOT AVAILABLE**



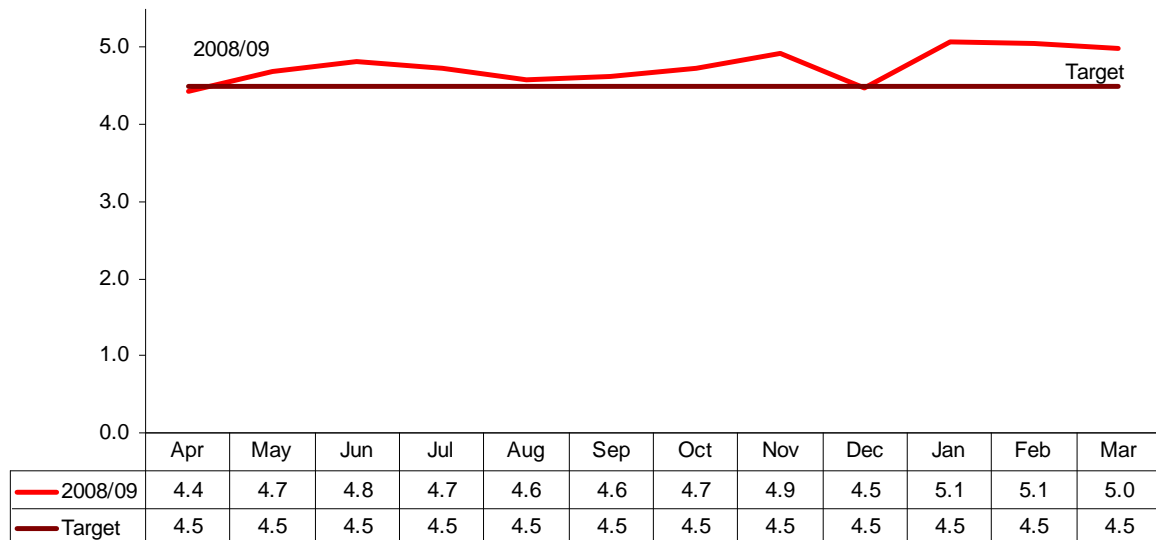
Key points:

- During 2008/09 80% of calls were resolved at first point of contact at the contact centre. This is similar to 2007/08 which was 80%.
- Performance is consistent with the target of ensuring that 82% were dealt with first time by March 2009.
- The service continues to implement a Knowledge Base solution, improving the accuracy of content relating to Council services, thereby enabling front line staff to answer more customer enquiries first time.

Management Action: Continue to rollout Knowledge Base and a staff training programme. Undertake further service awareness sessions to help the Contact Centre resolve more enquiries first time.

4. Percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 week's rent (exclude <£250) (Statutory Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND	QUARTERLY TREND	TARGET	SCOTTISH AVERAGE	BEST IN CLASS
NOT AVAILABLE			NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE



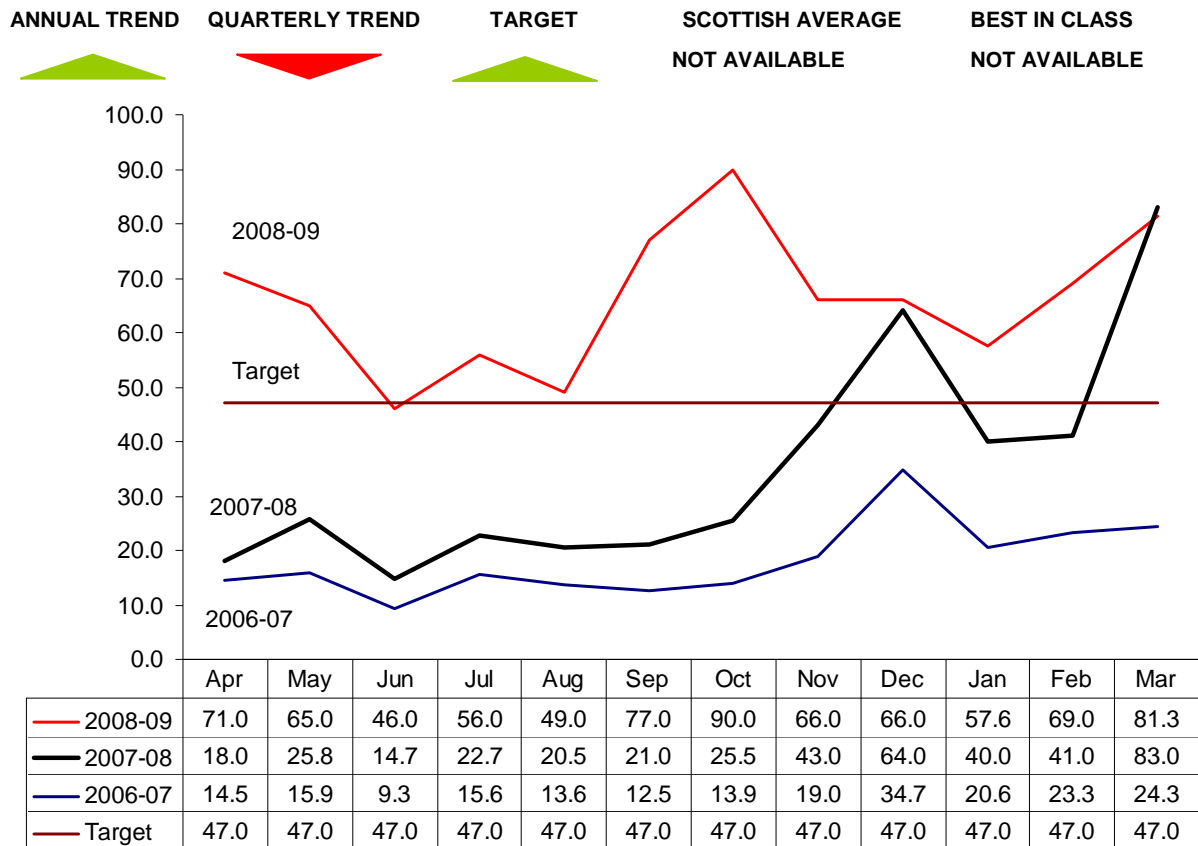
Key points:

- The percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 week's rent at the end of 2008/09 was 5.0%. This amounts to 250 arrears cases (12.5% of all rent arrears cases).
- Performance is unfavourable when compared with the period up to the end of Quarter 3, 2008/09 which was 4.5%.
- The percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent compares unfavourably with the target of 4.5%.
- The Scottish Housing Best Value Network group average in 2007/08 was 5.5% and the Benchmarking Group average at the end of the 3rd quarter of 2008/09 was 5.2%.
- The increase of 0.5% from the end of the last quarter equates to approximately 25 arrears cases. A change in the figure for this indicator is due to a number of factors e.g. some tenants may manage to reduce their level of arrears by maintaining a payment arrangement and fall out of this category, but some cases may move into this category if they fail to address their rent arrears at an early stage and the level of arrears increase. A large number will remain in this category over a long period of time due to the high amount of debt they owe, even if they do keep to a payment arrangement.
- This indicator has been subject to discussion at the Benchmarking Group meetings as it is understood that the original intent of this indicator was to measure the % of all tenants who had high arrears. However, the amount of £250 is a relatively low amount when considering that the Council's average weekly rent for 2008/09 was £47.58. 13 weeks of arrears at the 2008/09 average rent

figure equates to £618.54, however, this indicator reports on all arrears cases higher than £250.

Management Action: Proactive management of all arrears will continue to ensure that new arrears cases do not escalate to a level which would exceed £250 and fall into this category. Work will continue to focus on proactive work to ensure that those with mid to high arrears balances make and stick to payment arrangements.

5. Percentage of empty houses that were re-let within 4 weeks (Local Performance Indicator)

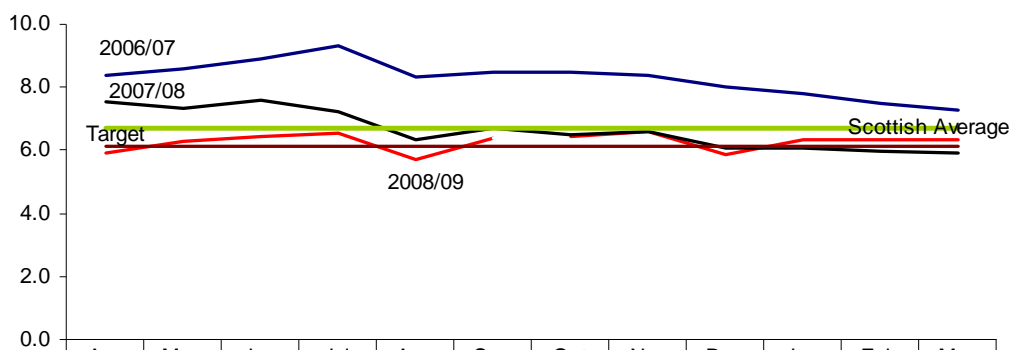


Key points:

- 81.3% of empty housing were re-let within 4 weeks in March 2009. This is similar when compared with 2007/08 which was 83%.
- Although the % of voids let within the 4 week period target has varied throughout the year from month to month, the % of voids let in 4 weeks or less has been consistently more than in previous years. This is due to the revised processes and procedures that have been implemented including joint working with Property Contracts Unit to focus on voids as a priority.
- Of the 362 voids that were let in 2008/09, 66% (239 voids) were let in 4 weeks or less. This exceeds the target for the year which was to let 47% or more voids within the 4 week period. This compares favourably with the previous year when a total of 488 voids were let in 2007/08, of which only 37% (179 voids) were let within 4 weeks or less.
- The recently issued report from the Scottish Housing Best Value Network showed analysis of Housing Management Performance for 2007/08. In the report, the results show that 'eleven authorities have improved steadily on this measure since 2004/05. Aberdeen, Clackmannanshire and Edinburgh Council, for example, cut their average relet intervals by well over half during this period.' By 2007/08 Clackmannanshire and Edinburgh were 'strongly out-performing the national median value.'

Management Actions: Joint working with PCU will continue to ensure that voids are a priority.

6. Housing rent arrears percentage (net) (Statutory Performance Indicator)



	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2008/09	5.9	6.3	6.4	6.5	5.7	6.4	6.4	6.6	5.9	6.3	6.3	6.3
2007/08	7.5	7.3	7.6	7.2	6.3	6.7	6.5	6.6	6.1	6.1	6.0	5.9
2006/07	8.4	8.6	8.9	9.3	8.3	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.0	7.8	7.5	7.3
Target	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1
Scottish Average	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7

Key points:

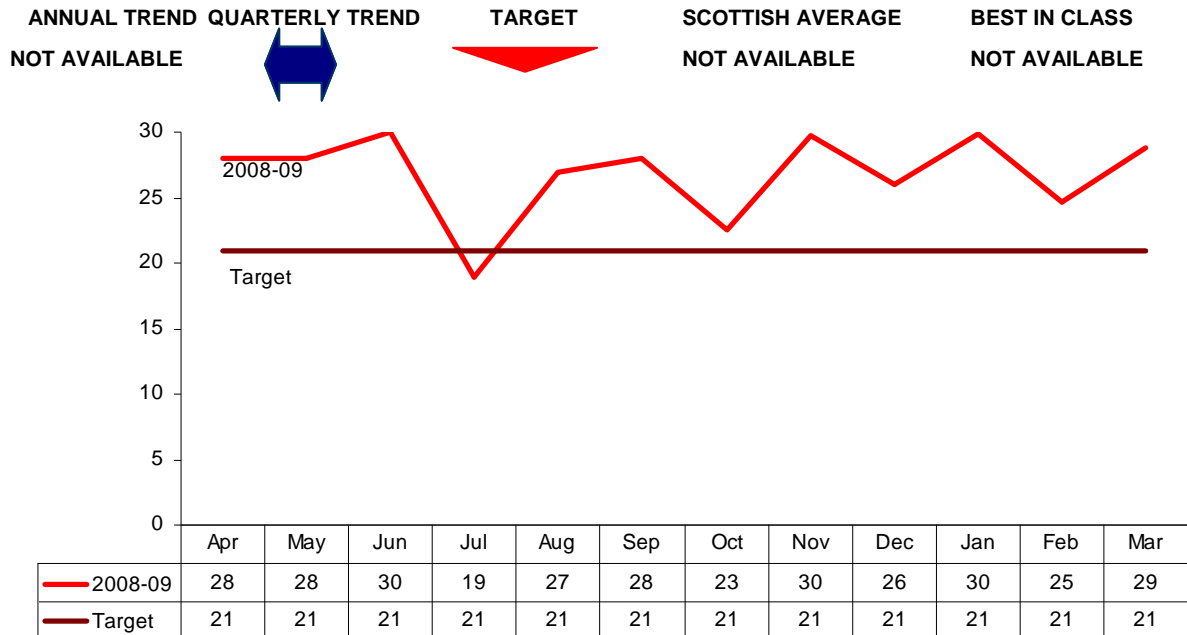
- At the end of 2008/09, the Council had rent arrears of 6.3%. This is unfavourable when compared to last year which was 5.9%. There are currently 1,989 tenants in arrears amounting to £417,245.
- The percentage rent arrears is similar to the target of 6.1%.
- The Council performs favourably when compared with the Scottish Housing Best Value Network average of 7.9%.
- The Income Control Team has so far reduced the level of Current Rent Arrears dramatically from a high of 9.3% in July 2006 to 6.3% in March 2009. Although the arrears figure can vary from month to month, (due to rent free weeks the arrears figure reduces) the overall trend is that the arrears have remained static.
- A comparison with the arrears debt in 2006 shows that the level of high arrears cases has reduced. In 2006, 132 accounts owed more than £1000. This accounted for £250,000 which made up 50% of the total arrears figure. In 2009, 92 accounts fall into the over £1000 band.
- This is now the smallest category of arrears cases (92 cases) totalling £131,267 and contributing to 31.4% of the total arrears debt. This reduction in cases falling into the over £1000 band shows the success of the current procedures. Over 60% of tenants in this category are maintaining a payment arrangement or are having deductions taken from their benefit to repay the arrears. These outstanding debts are not increasing and are therefore under control, however the repayment amounts vary dramatically with the lowest being the direct payment amount of £12.20 per month. This means that cases in this category will

range between 1 to 18 years for the outstanding balance to clear. 22% of cases owing over £1000 are subject to ongoing legal action. The remaining high level arrears cases fall into categories where work is ongoing relating to outstanding issues such as Housing Benefit or Social Work involvement.

- Tenants owing between £200 and £1000 make up 45% of the arrears debt. (23% of these cases are between £201 and £500 and 22% of cases are between £501 and £1000). At this level of arrears, the majority of the recovery work is carried out and the account is under constant scrutiny.
- In the year 2006/07, 61 cases were passed to Legal Services for Conjoined or Repossession action. In 2008/09 114 cases were passed for Conjoined or Repossession action. Out of these 114 actions, 27 resulted in Decree for eviction.
- 1,457 of the 1,989 tenants in arrears owe less than £200 which accounts for 24% (£98,000) of the total arrears figure. With more than half of the accounts in arrears owing less than £100, it is evident that paying in arrears is common practice. Many of these small balances may be due to tenants failing to pay rent in advance in accordance with their tenancy agreement.

Management Action: Further detailed analysis of the arrears debt is underway to establish where teams need to focus to tackle the current level of arrears cases. In particular some work has been done to identify the various reasons for so many tenants having low arrears balances so that a strategy for reducing the number of cases can be implemented. A number of actions are already in place such as more emphasis on paying rent in advance and advice and assistance on applying for Housing Benefit for new tenants to ensure they avoid falling into arrears at the start of their tenancy. The strategy will include a sharpened focus on the serious cases where tenants owe between £200 and £1000, with each account under constant scrutiny. More cases are already being passed for legal action to ensure arrears are not left to spiral before a resolution is sought. Action will include increased visits and stepping up tenant Case Review meetings (where tenants are required to attend a formal meeting to discuss their arrears and agree to a payment arrangement) and swift progress to legal action when necessary.

7. Homelessness - Average time to complete assessment (days) (Local Performance Indicator)



Key points:

- This indicator measures the time from when the homeless applicant presents as homeless to the time the assessment is complete and a decision is made. The decision will include whether the applicant is homeless or not homeless and if homeless, whether priority or non priority, and whether intentional or unintentional.
- The average time to complete an assessment for homeless persons during 2008/09 was 26 days.
- The average time of 26 days compares unfavourably with the target of 21 days or less. This was an ambitious target to set as in 2007/08 two thirds were complete within a 28 day period, but one third took between 4 to 8 weeks to complete.
- The Homeless Code of Guidance recommends a target of 28 days and the general target used for Benchmarking purposes is 28 days so the overall performance exceeds the national target.
- According to a 2007/08 benchmarking report the Council issued 75% of decisions within 28 days compared with the group average of 64%.
- The Council typically assessed a higher than average proportion of cases in less than 2 weeks e.g. in 2007/08 44%, compared with the group average of 39%. However, we continue to have a relatively high proportion of high complexity cases which take between 4 to 8 weeks and these affect the overall performance figure. An example of this is assessing the needs of Schedule 1 offenders.
- From the end of the 3rd Quarter 2008/09, the number of homeless presentations doubled. For example the January 2009 figure of 60 is double that of November 2008 of 30.

- The overall performance for the year on this indicator is good against national benchmarks in spite of an unusually high sickness absence rate for the team in 2008/09.

Management Action:

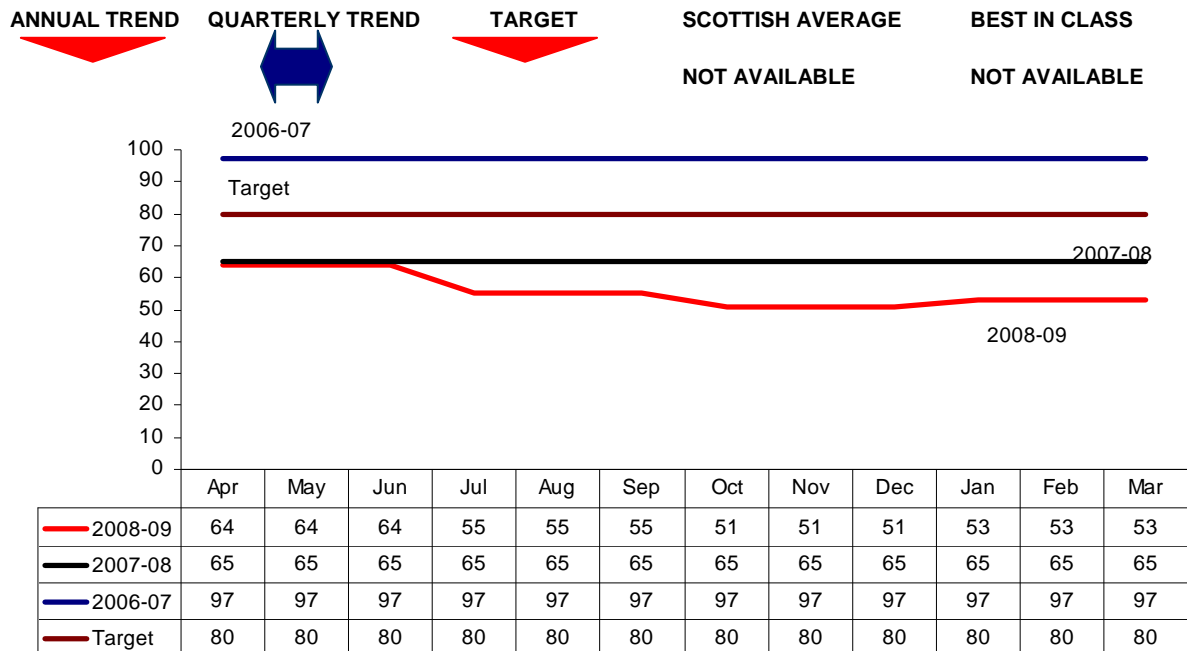
Staff training

All case work staff have been trained to Homestart Level 2. In addition all homeless staff were trained in MAPPA procedures (Multi-Agency Public Protection Agency). Staff have also undergone joint training with Childcare Services. The service is working towards a full set of up to date Protocols with Social Work, Health and Criminal Justice Agencies. These measures will improve joint working for all casework staff.

A more robust framework for monitoring and evaluation of homelessness is underway. Information from this will be used to inform future priorities and targets.

Most of the absence issues have been resolved and key personnel are now back in the team.

8. Percentage of Community Care referral responses within target times (Local Performance Indicator)



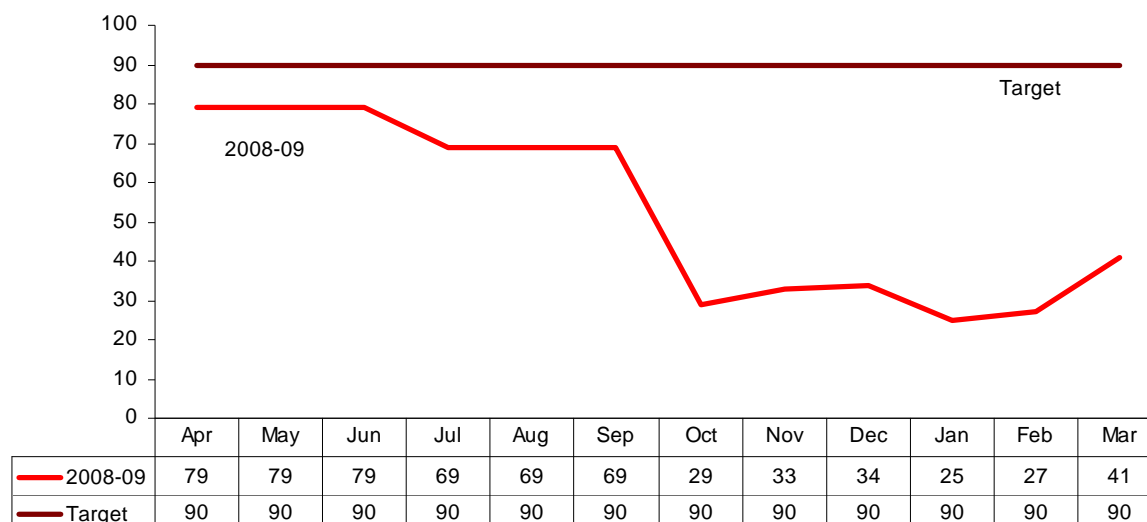
Key points:

- During 2008/09, 56% of Community Care referral responses were within the target time. This is unfavourable with 2007/08 which was 65%.
- During Quarter 4, 53% of Community Care referral responses were made within target times, which is similar to performance achieved in Quarter 3.
- Performance continues to compare unfavourably with the target of 80%.
- Continuing delays in response times relate to increases in demand: performance will be reviewed and the improvement target will be revised for 2009-2010.

Management Action: Set new targets and review measure for 2009/10.

9. Percentage of child protection case conference reports submitted within timescale (Local Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND	QUARTERLY TREND	TARGET	SCOTTISH AVERAGE	BEST IN CLASS
NOT AVAILABLE			NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE



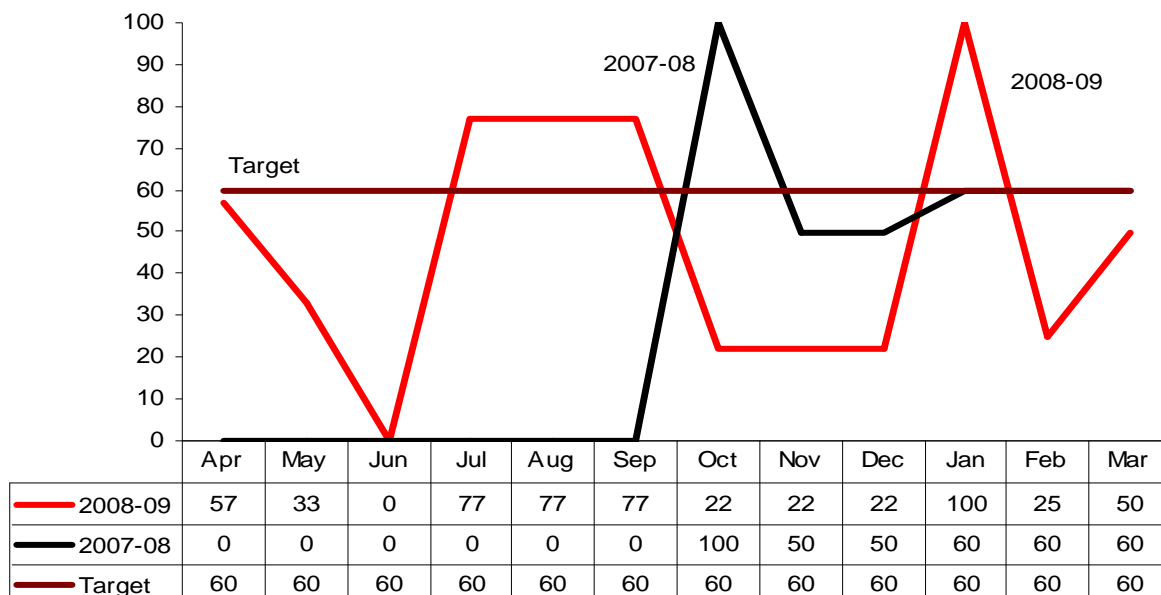
Key points:

- 51% of child protection case conference reports were submitted on time during 2008/09.
- The percentage achieved is unfavourable against the target of 90%.
- The increase in the number of children on the register continues to be sustained with the baseline numbers of child protection (CP) referrals increasing considerably: 78 CP referrals in 2007/08 and 138 in 2008/09. This is partly to do with more accurate record keeping and partly because the numbers of children where Social Work, Police and Health have jointly investigated concerns has increased considerably.
- There were 91 reports for initial and review case conferences in 2008/09, with the last two quarters accounting for 55% of reports. The continuing trend of increasing numbers of conferences and reports being required will have an impact on the ability of staff to provide reports within timescales, given that staff resources have not increased in line with demand.

Management Action: All vacancies within Childcare will be filled in the near future; staff sickness is reducing in the first quarter of 2009/10 with staff returning to work. Every effort will be made to prioritise the completion of reports within the agreed timescales. Childcare evaluation work is nearing its completion and recommendations for improved structures will be acted on.

10. Proportion of requests for initial health assessments made within 10 days of the child being accommodated (Local Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND ▲ QUARTERLY TREND ▲ TARGET ▼ SCOTTISH AVERAGE NOT AVAILABLE BEST IN CLASS NOT AVAILABLE

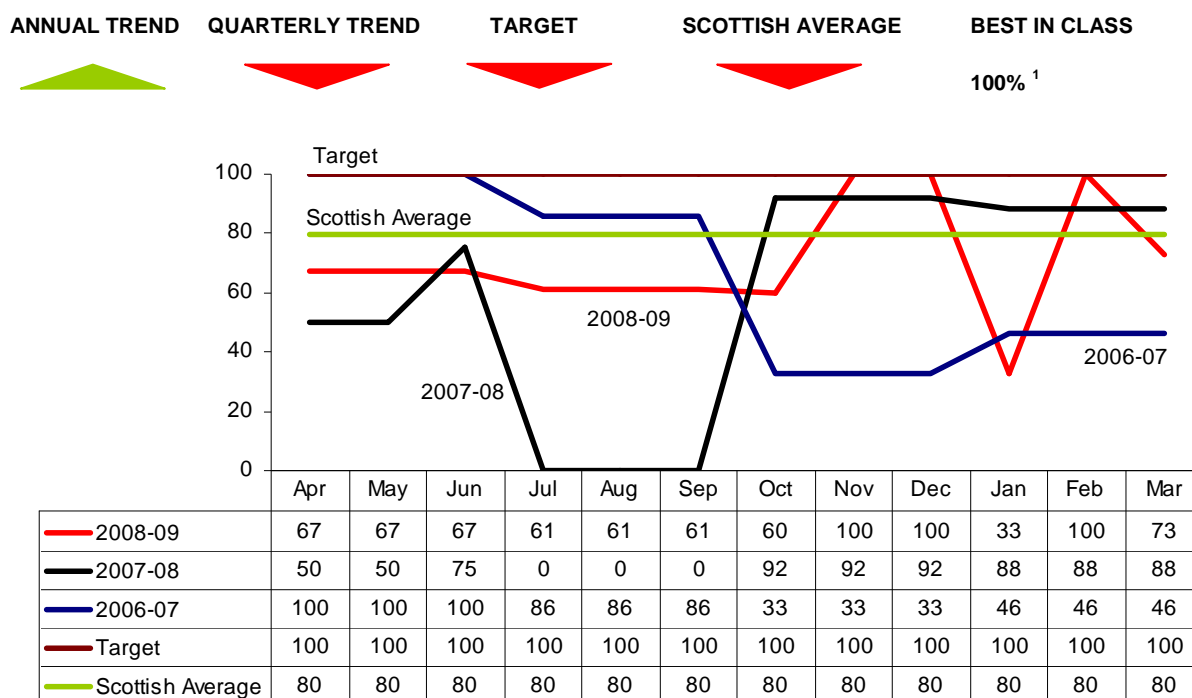


Key points:

- The proportion of requests for initial health assessments made within 10 days of the child being accommodated during 2008/09 was 46%. This is favourable when compared with 32% for 2007/08.
- The proportion achieved during Quarter 4, 2008/09 was 58%. This is favourable when compared with 22% for Quarter 3, 2008/09.
- Performance is unfavourable against a target of 60%.

Management Action: The quarter average of 58% relates to 2 referrals involving 4 children. The two young people missed were placed with grandparents and the staff did not understand they required to be referred for health assessments. This has now been rectified.

11. Proportion of children seen by a supervising officer within 15 days of a supervision requirement being made (Statutory Performance Indicator)



Key points:

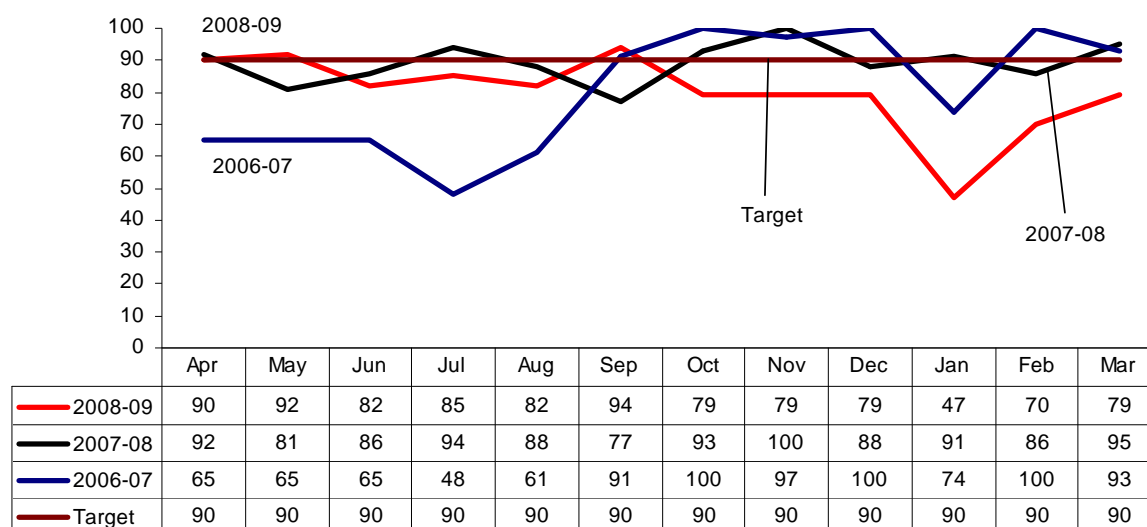
- Whilst performance dipped in Quarter 4, for 2008/09 overall the proportion of children seen by a supervising officer within 15 days of a supervision requirement being made was 71%. This compares favourably with 2007/08 when 60% was achieved.
- Performance compares unfavourably with the target of 100%.
- The Council performs unfavourably when compared with the Scottish average of 80% for 2007/08.
- East Renfrewshire, Moray, Perth & Kinross, Shetland, & Aberdeenshire Council are the best in class at 100% for 2007/08. The Council's performance is now just below the 2007/08 Scottish average.

Management Actions: A review of information collection for this measure is being undertaken to determine an improvement plan. This will include a standard letter that will be sent to arrange a meeting between a young person and their supervising social worker to take place within 15 days of an order being made.

¹ East Renfrewshire, Moray, Perth & Kinross, Shetland, & Aberdeenshire Council: 100%

12. Percentage of building warrants responded to within 15 days (Local Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND QUARTERLY TREND TARGET SCOTTISH AVERAGE BEST IN CLASS
 NOT AVAILABLE NOT AVAILABLE



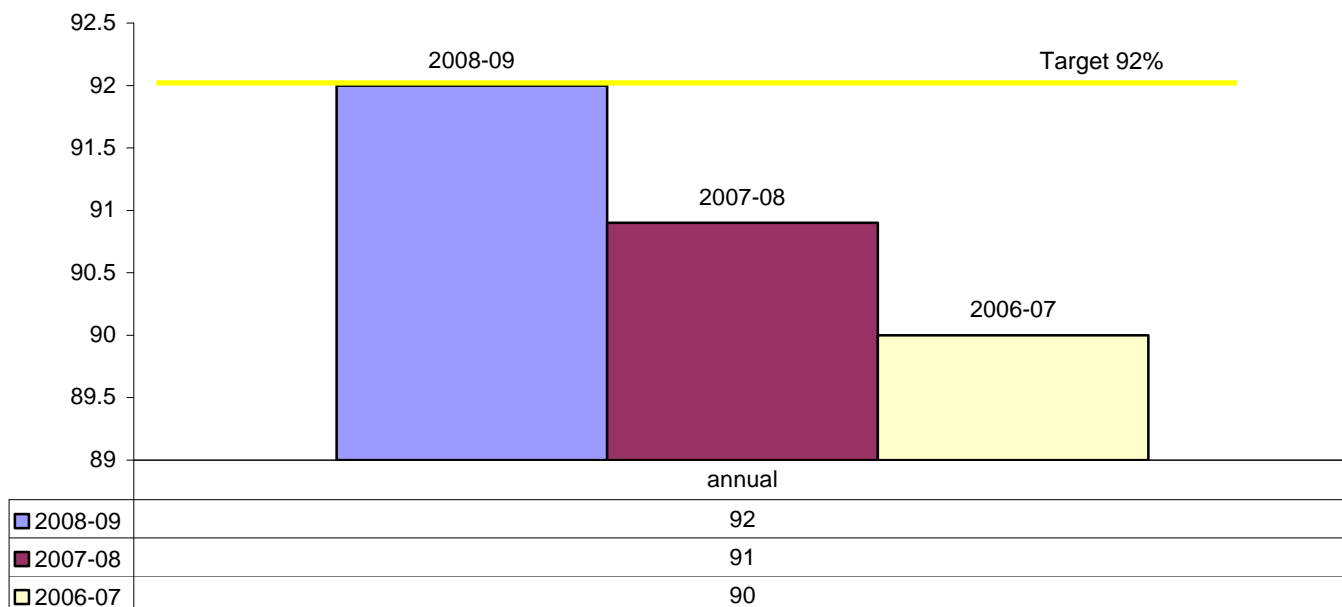
Key points:

- 80% of building warrants were responded to within 15 days during 2008/09. This is unfavourable when compared with the same period last year which was 89%, and the target of 90%.
- Performance has been affected by a combination of:
 - a long term vacancy in establishment;
 - long term sickness of one member of the team;
 - priority given to complex major projects, such as the three new schools and the hospital has impacted on other work and performance.

Management Action: Reduction in overall numbers of applications has meant the worst effects of the above problems have been mitigated hence performance has been maintained at reasonable levels i.e. close to the former SPI target of 80%. Once major projects are concluded it is expected that performance should improve, all other things being equal. The long term sickness issue is being addressed.

13. Percentage of street lights repairs completed in 7 days (Statutory Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND **QUARTERLY TREND** **TARGET** **SCOTTISH AVERAGE** **BEST IN CLASS**
 NOT AVAILABLE  NOT AVAILABLE NOT AVAILABLE NOT AVAILABLE



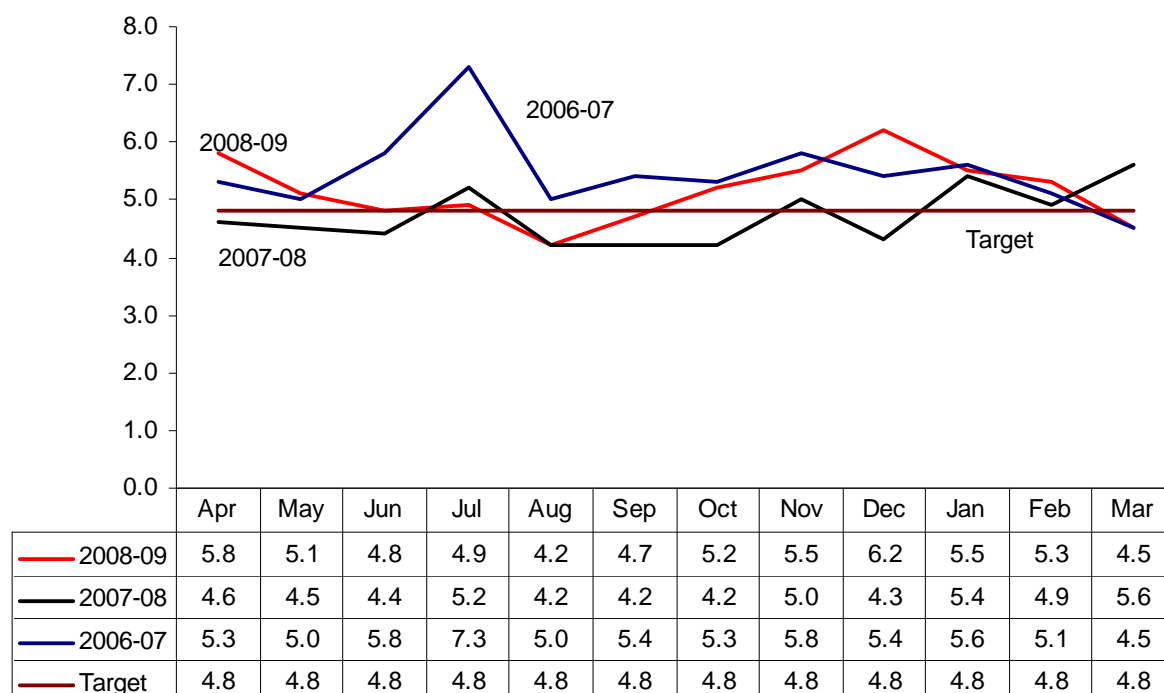
Key points:

- The percentage of street light repairs completed in 7 days during 2008/09 was 92%.
- This is consistent with the planned target of 92% and when compared with 2007/08, which was 91%

Management Action: Through an emphasis of the requirements of this SPI, all parties involved in the repair of street lighting have focused their commitment to improving this statistic. The bedding-in of new reporting software, the following-up of unresolved items and the restoration of the number of maintenance staff will all contribute to this improvement.

14. Percentage of Staff Absence - all staff (Local Performance Indicator)

ANNUAL TREND	QUARTERLY TREND	TARGET	SCOTTISH AVERAGE	BEST IN CLASS
▼	▼	▼	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE



Key points:

- The percentage of staff absent due to sickness during 2008/09 was 5.2%.
- This compares unfavourably with performance for 2007/08, which was 4.7%, and with the target for 2008/09, which was 4.8%.
- There was a very high incidence of viral infections across many services during the winter months. Reducing figures in March suggest that this was a seasonal blip.

Management Action: There are a range of management actions in place to maintain a focus on absence management including regular monitoring, more rigorous occupational health referrals, management of long term absences, positive health promotions, and promotion/reminders of basic hygiene to prevent spread of viral infections. The Attendance Management Group continues to monitor levels/ reasons by services, and to share and encourage promotion of good practice.

