



CIVICA

Transforming the way you work

**Gloucester City Council
Revenues & Benefits
Annual Performance Report
2016/17**



**Gloucester
City Council**
Transforming Your City

Executive Summary

Performance for 2016/2017 has been excellent despite the challenges the teams encountered with the large volume of Council and Government initiatives to implement. That said, all but one of the key performance indicators have been met which has been accomplished by the hard work of the team and managers.

Not all of the projects undertaken in 2016/17 are completely bedded in to business as usual at present, however we are working with council officers to remedy these. The on-going projects are listed on pages 14/17 of this report.

The Council is facing major challenges both financial and operationally in 2017/18 and on-going, we hope to be able to continue to support the council in these ventures.

KPI No	KPI Description	Target (Full Year)	Annual perf.	Status
1	Council Tax Collection (in year)	97%	97%	▲
2	Council Tax Collection (arrears)	30.00%	32%	▲
2	Business Rates Collection (in-year)	97.60%	98%	▲
2	Business Rates Collection (arrears)	35.00%	36%	▲
3	Speed of New Claims Processing	21 days	22 days	▼
4	Speed of changes in Circumstances Processing	9 days	8 days	▲
5	Outstanding Workload (Revenues)	N/A	1758	N/A
6	Outstanding Workload (Benefits)	N/A	1879	N/A
7	Local Authority Error Overpayments	<0.48	0.39%	▲
8	Customer Complaints	N/A	53	N/A

CIVICA

Performance Highlights

- ▶ The achievement of all but one KPI
- ▶ The achievement of the projects listed on page 14.
- ▶ 56,500 Council Tax bills were dispatched along with the new calculation of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support for 2017/18 totaling 12,000 notifications.
- ▶ The revaluation of all Business Rates property and applying these changes at billing in March along with implementing the new transitional relief scheme.

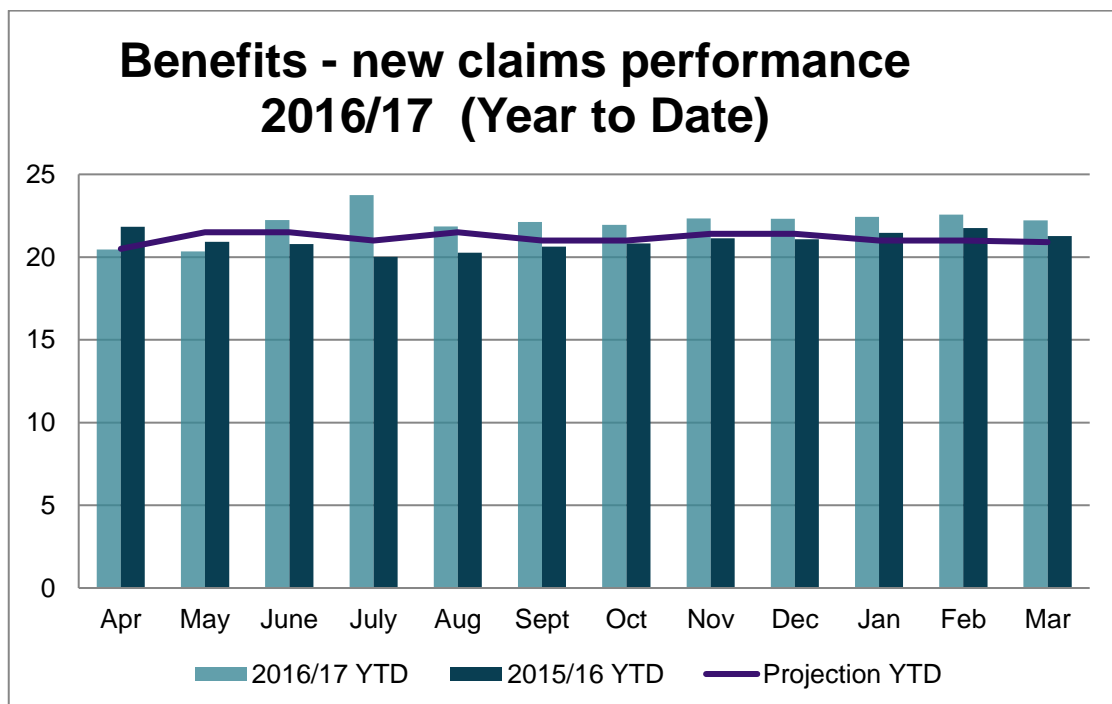
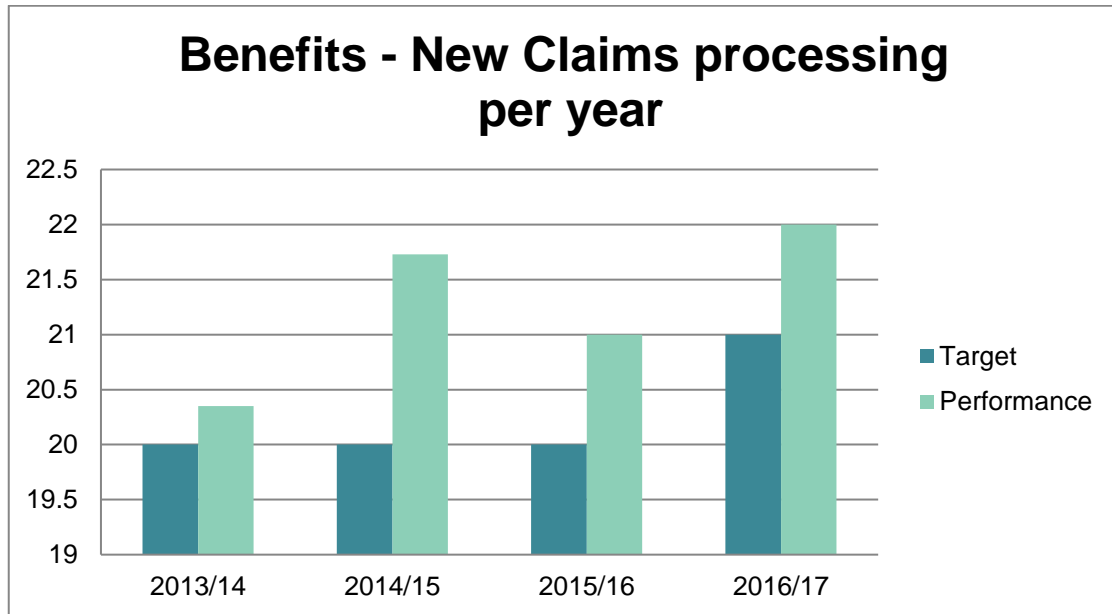
Performance Lowlights

- ▶ The impact of FERIS (Fraud & Error Reduction Incentive Scheme) and RTI (Real Time Information) on the total amount of overpayments outstanding.

Benefits Performance

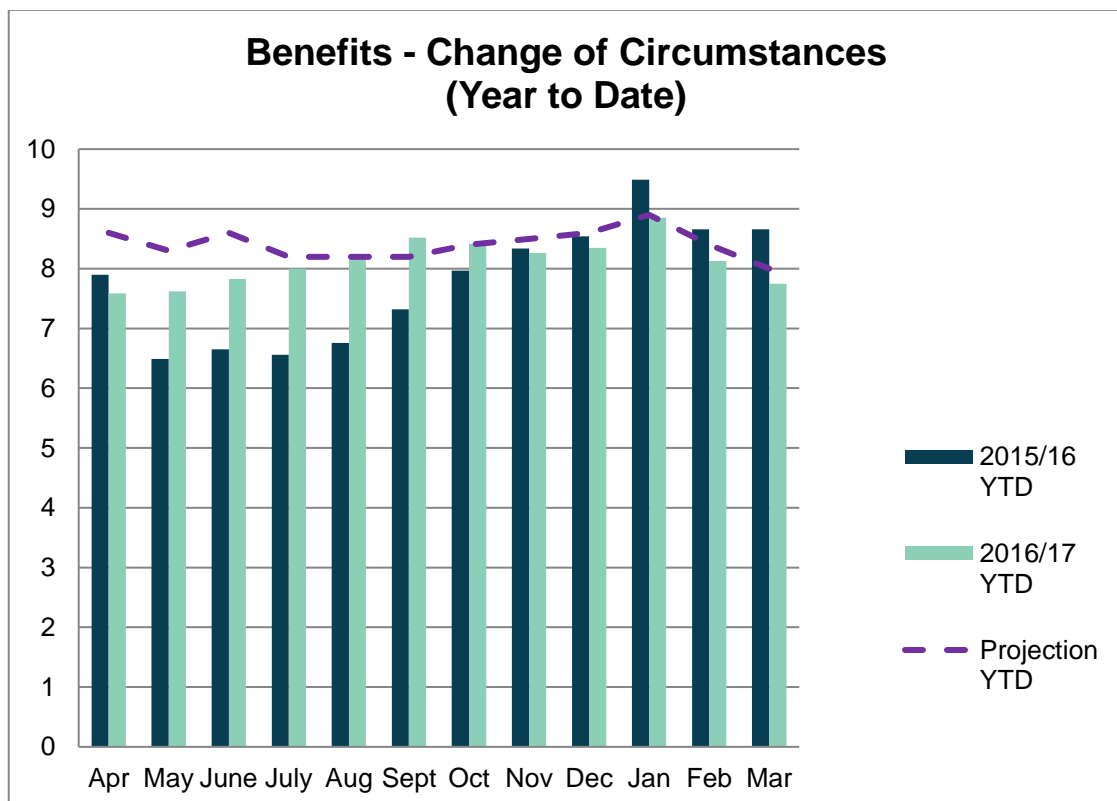
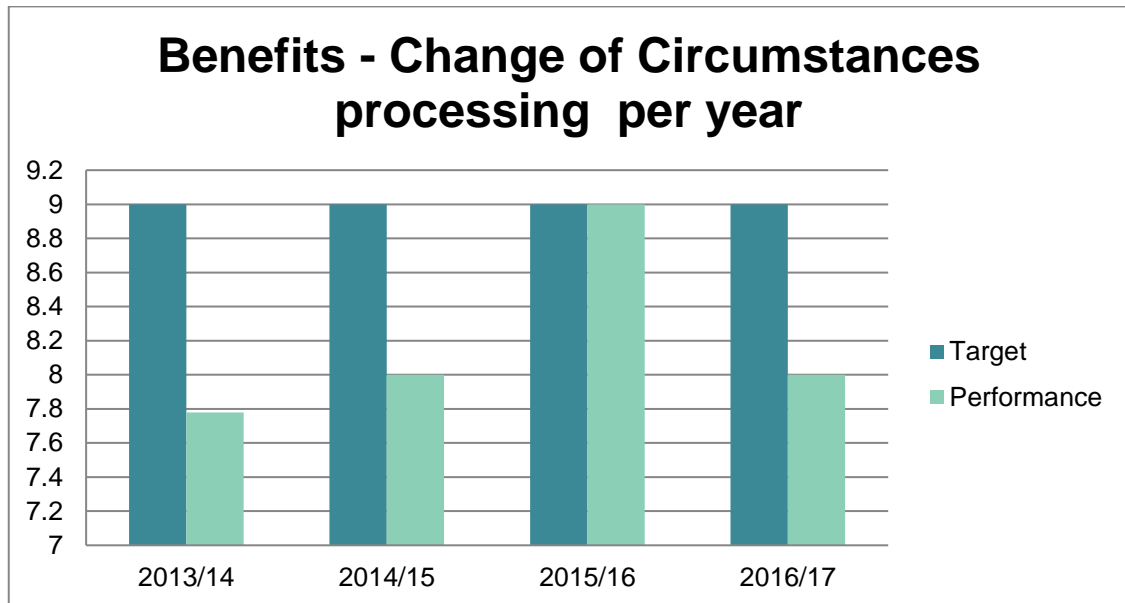
Benefit – New Claims Processing Performance

The average time to process new claims in 2016/17 was 22.2 days, rounded to 22.



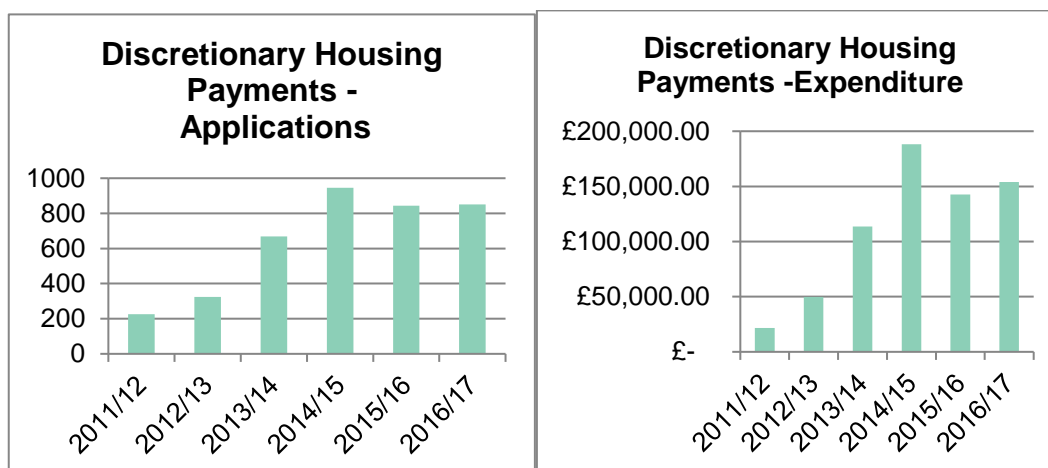
Benefit – Change of Circumstances processing

The average time to process a change in 2016/17 was 7.75 days, rounded to 8 days, which exceeds the target set.



Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs)

Numbers of DHP applications received in 2016/17 totaled 851. The expenditure totaled £153,964 which was 66.3% of the DWP funding.



LA error overpayments – ‘year to date’ performance

The LA error percentage for 2016/17 amounted to 0.39% which is below the target of 0.48% at which the authority would lose subsidy.

Real Time Information (RTI)

The DWP now report on the data-matching of salary details against the HMRC records for Benefit purposes. The table below shows the annual gross amount of overpayments as a result of this matching.

Date Received	Number	HB Overpayment (Gross)	Council Tax Support Overpayment (Gross)
2014/2015 (6 months)	549	£543,997.74	£116,474.45
2015/2016	647	£658,092.43	£138,616.45
2016/2017	588	£392,753.75	£74,302.38
Total	1784	£1,594,843.75	£329,393.28

FERIS

The Fraud and Error Rate Incentive Scheme results for the last year are as follows:

Campaign	Date sent	No of reviews completed	Weekly savings £
Wages declared now below the National Living Wage	08/11/2016	211	£3,573.76

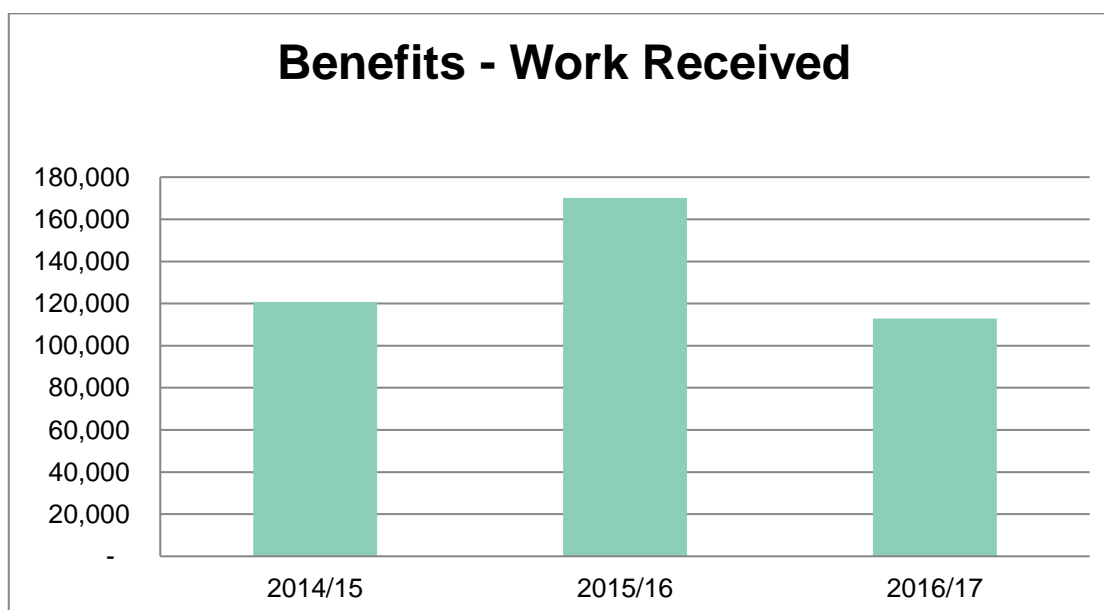
Occupational pensions which have not been updated since April 2016	06/12/2016	128	£2,542.04
1.No change to income <April 15 Non deps on JSA/IS over 25 where customer/partner not in receipt of DLAC or AA 2.Nil income claims 3.Non dependants earnings banding of earned income	02/02/2017	102	£2,142.18
1.Earnings not declared since April 2016 2. Child Care costs review	15/02/2017	178	£3,805.19
Earnings not declared previous to April 2016	22/02/2017	188	£1,686.31
Total		807	£ 13,749.48

Universal Credit

Universal Credit for single jobseekers went Live in Gloucester in June 2015. During 2016/17 we have received 1,449 communications from the DWP. There have been 38 Personal Budgeting appointments made (the Council holds information as to the number of interviews carried completed).

Work Volumes - Benefits

The total amount of work received in 2016/17 amounts to 112,896 which is a decrease of 57,000 on 2015/16. The decrease is mainly due to RTI being electronic and the removal of paper correspondence from the DWP.



Caseload

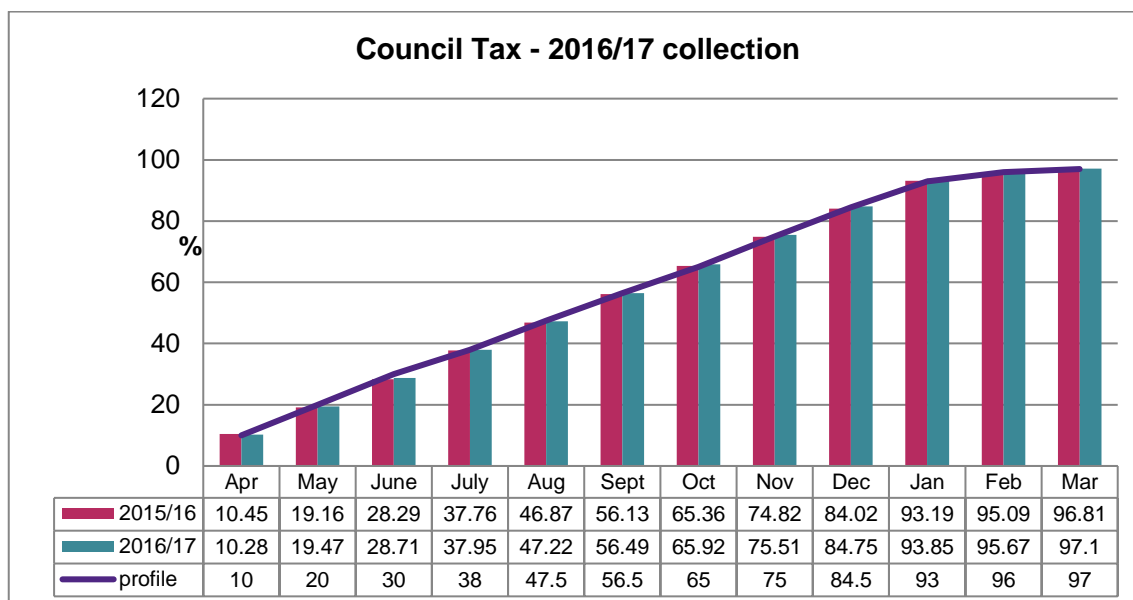
The following table gives a breakdown of the caseload and the variation since the contract started in October 2011.

Claim Type	Mar-17	Previous month	Monthly variation	Variation since Oct 11
No of cases	11040	10995	0.4	-11.5
HB cases	8838	8808	0.3	
CTB cases	9259	9220	0.4	
Private Tenant cases (a)	3552	3558	-0.2	
Registered Provider cases (b)	5210	5179	0.6	
Private cases (a+b)	8762	8737	0.3	
Rent rebate cases	76	71	7.0	
Pension age cases	3640	3649	-0.2	
Working age cases	7400	7346	0.7	
No of HB/CTB claims - total	18097	18028	0.4	

Revenues Performance

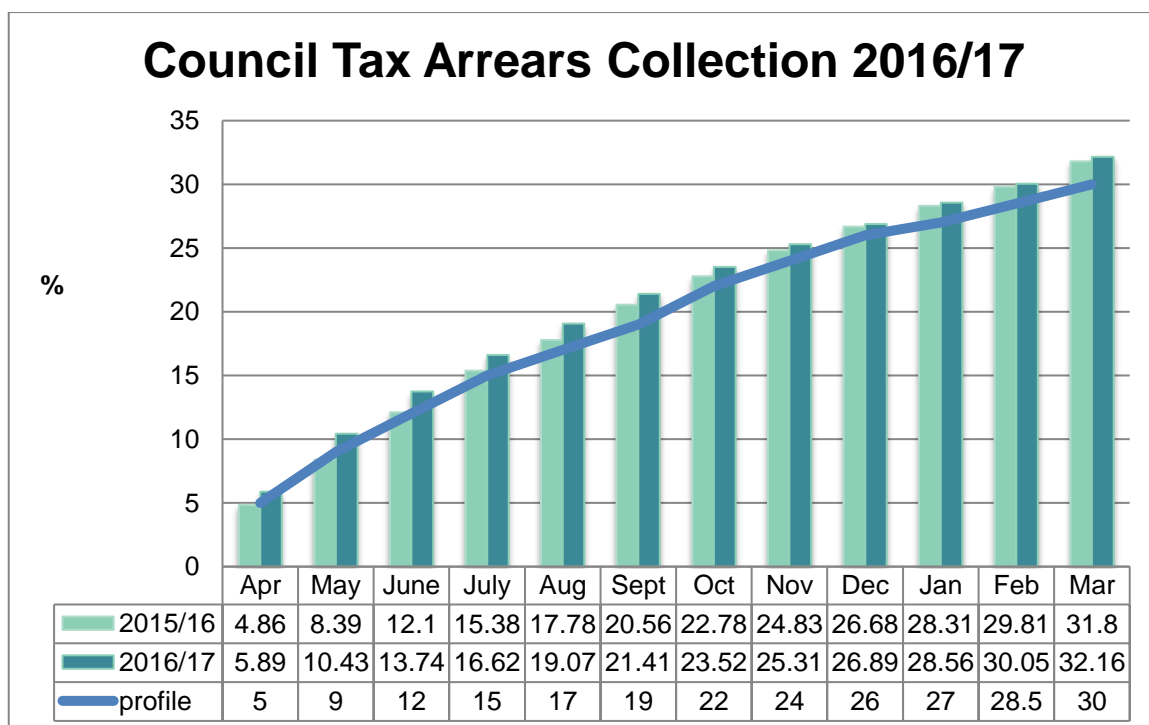
Council Tax – collection for 2016-17

The table below shows collection against the debit of £57m for the 2016/17 year only in a cumulative format. The out-turn collection rate rounded to the nearest percent is 97%. This figure achieves the agreed target.



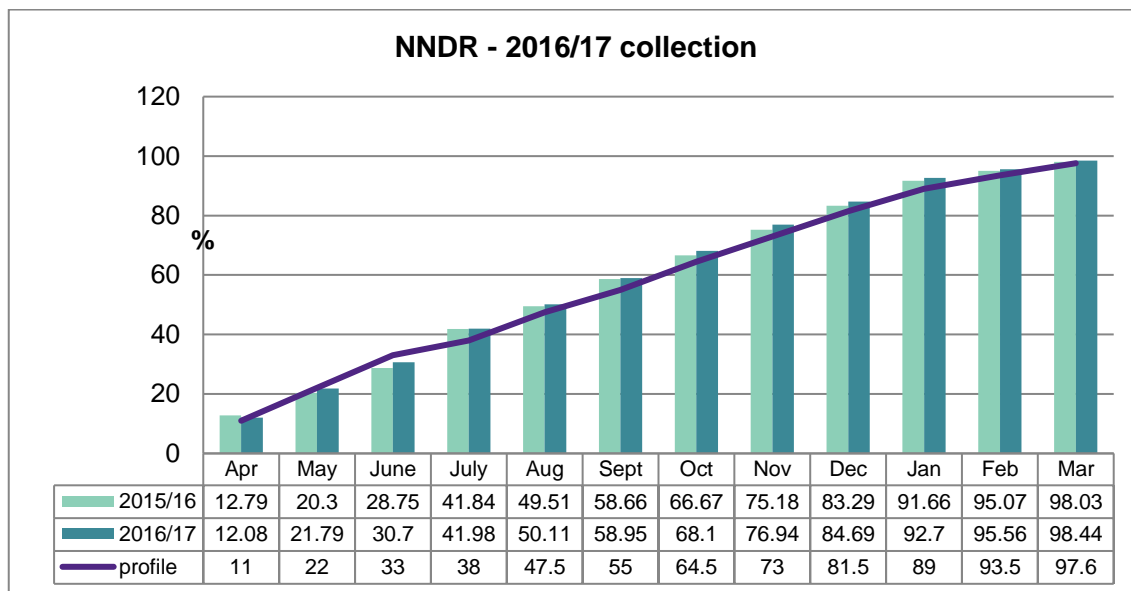
Council Tax – arrears

The total outstanding arrears at the start of 2016/17 were £5.09m. For the 2016/2017 financial years collection amounts to 32.16% which amounts to approx £1.64m.



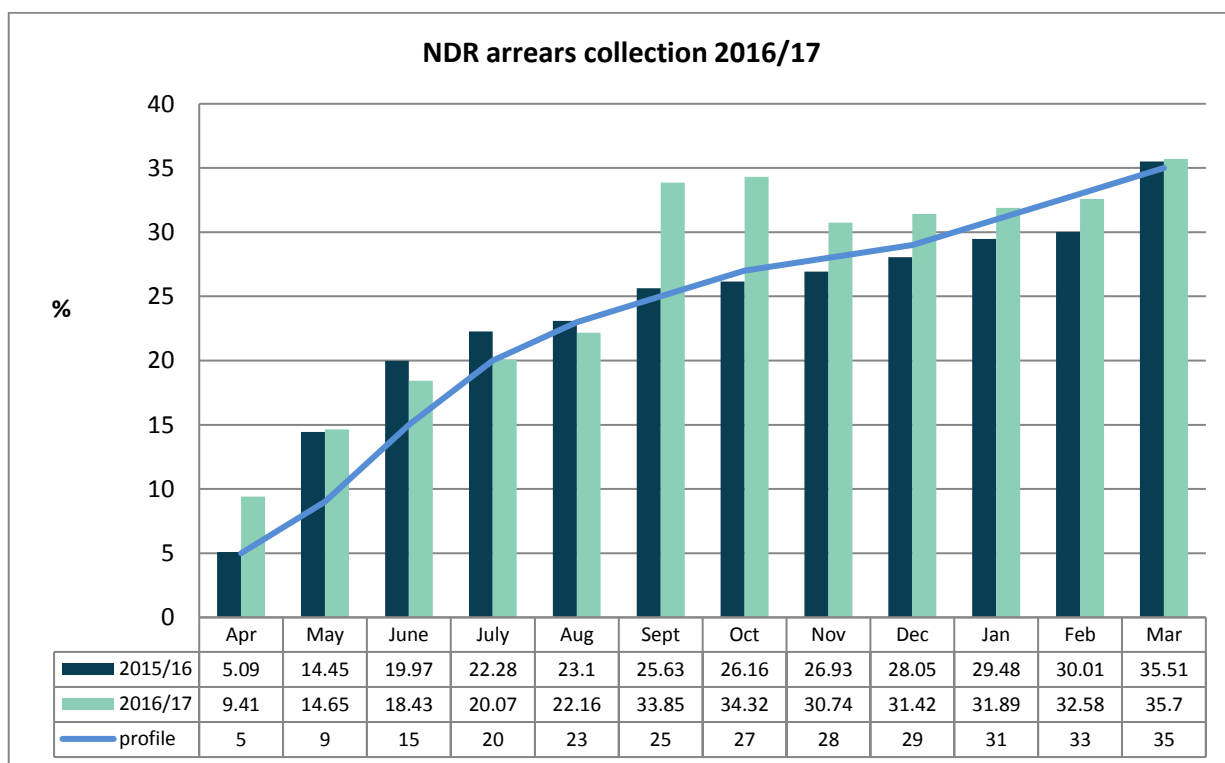
Business Rates – collection for 2016-17

The chart below shows performance this year against 2015/16 performance. The profile shows the target for each month to achieve the annual target. Performance for the year stands at 98.44% rounded to the nearest percent. This is above the agreed target.



Business Rates – arrears

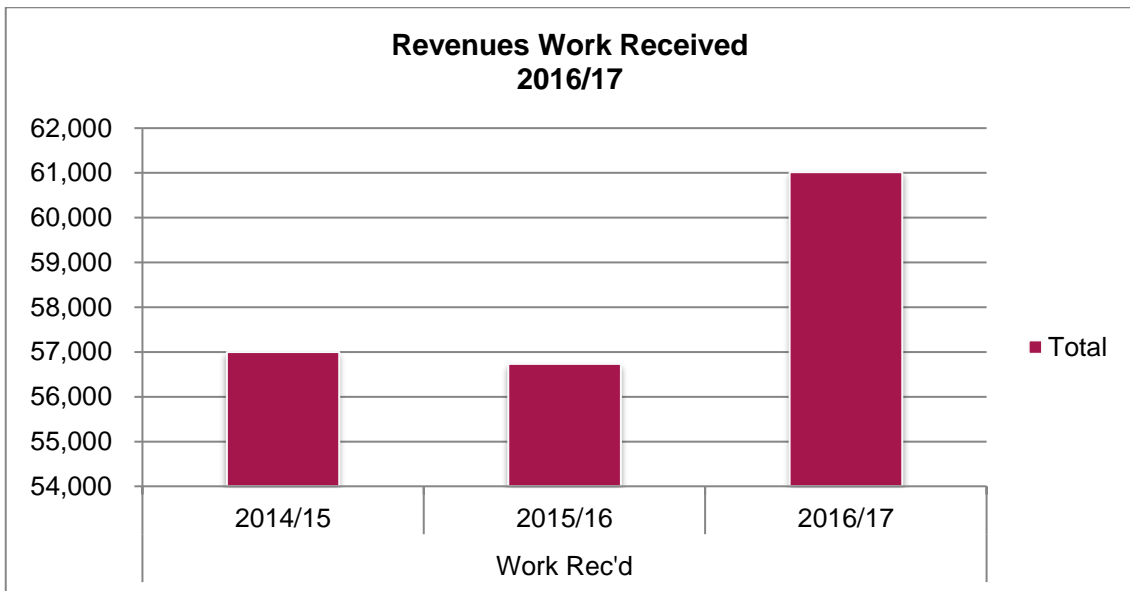
The total outstanding arrears at the start of 2016/17 were £2.33m. 35.7% (rounded to 36%) was collected, which equates to £832k of those arrears.



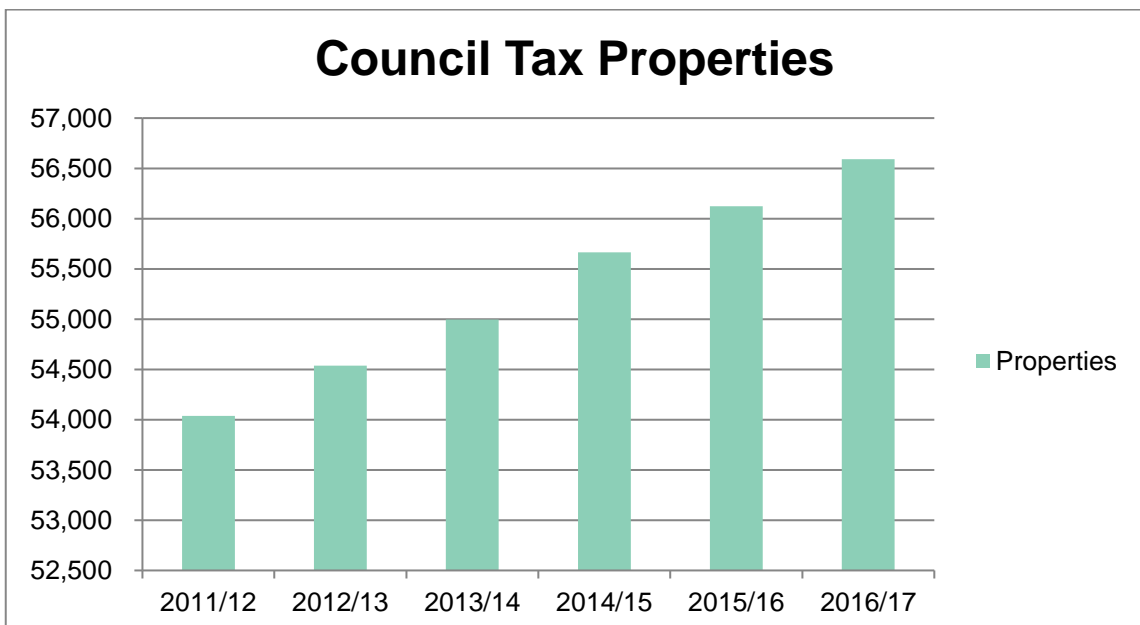
Work Volumes – Council Tax and Business Rates

The total amount of work received in 2016/17 amounts to 61,019. This year we have a significant number of customers contacting us by email.

The figures below do not include recovery notices dispatched or the number of telephone calls received (statistics for calls unavailable).



It should also be noted that the total number of properties has now risen to 56,591. This is an increase of 4.72% since the start of the Civica contract.

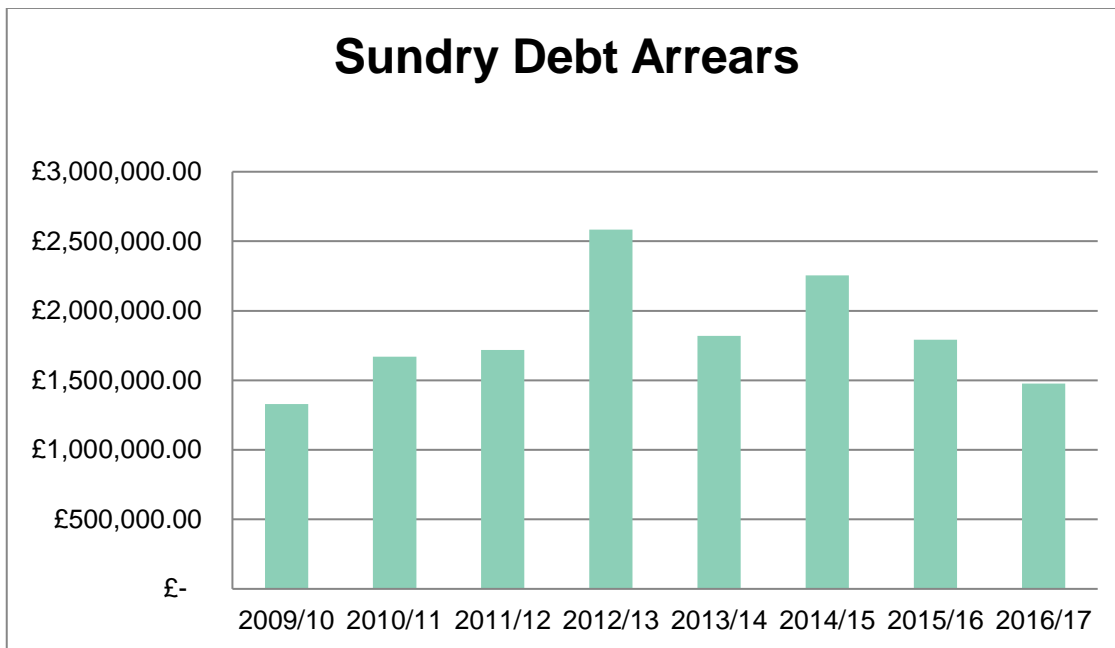


Other Work Streams

Sundry Debts

Sundry debt includes services such as garden waste, commercial rent, allotment fees etc, which are services provided by the Council which are chargeable.

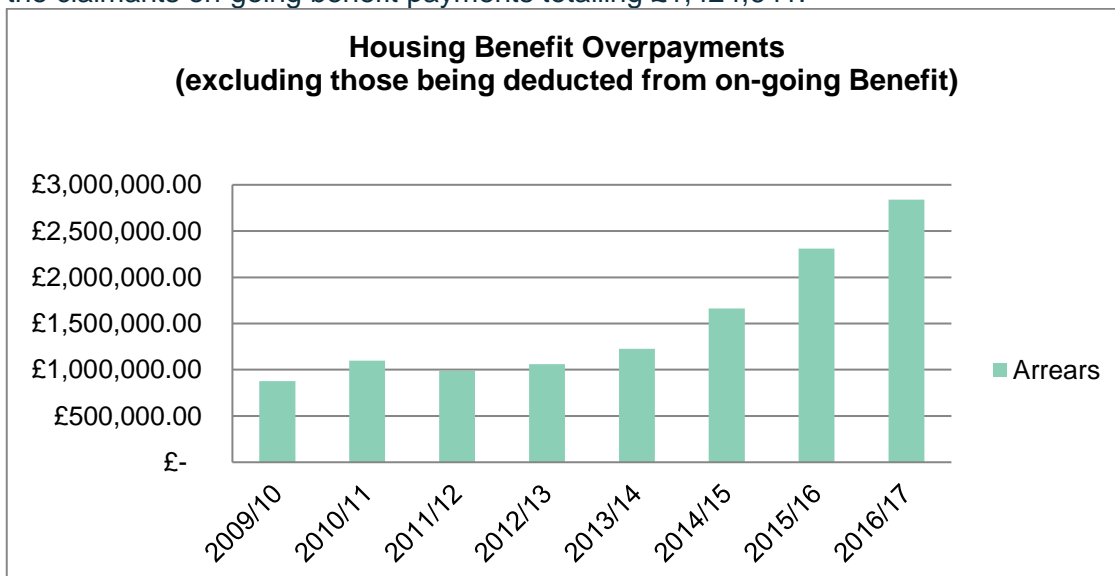
The total number of invoices raised in the year was 28,122 with a debt totaling £9.6m. The chart below shows the level of arrears at the end of historic financial years.



Housing Benefit Overpayments

Overpayments occur where a person receives more benefit than they are entitled to. This can be as a result of not being notified of a change in circumstance, DWP error, LA error etc.

The number of invoices outstanding at the end of March was 1,926 with a value of £2,839,087. Additionally there were 1,155 claims where money is being recovered from the claimants on-going benefit payments totalling £1,424,641.



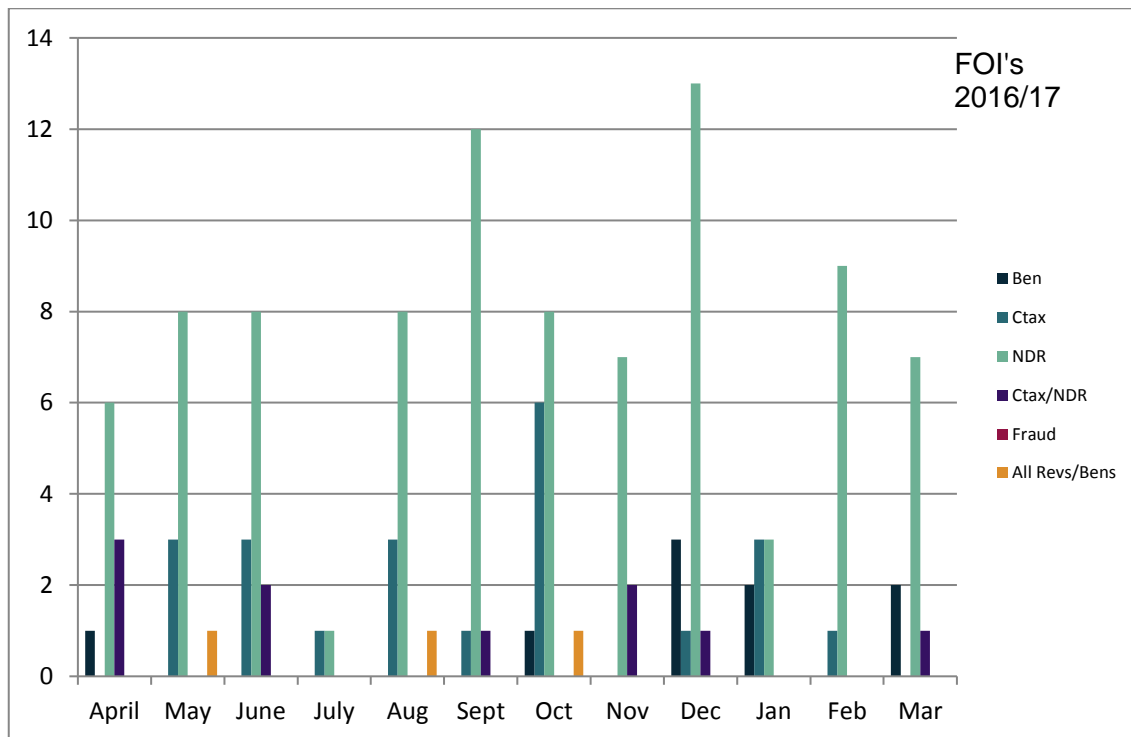
CUSTOMER SERVICES PERFORMANCE

Compliments, Complaints

There were a total of 37 complaints received this year and 7 compliments.

Freedom of Information Requests (FOI's)

The service received 134 FOI requests in 2016/17, of which 67% related to Business Rates. The chart below shows the FOI requests received per month.



SERVICE IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Projects/initiatives completed in 2016/17:

- ▶ The testing an implementation of 4 releases and 7 patches of software for the Open Revenues system
- ▶ The implementation of software to administer the Benefit Cap
- ▶ DCLG and DWP returns submitted:
 - Subsidy estimate for 2016/17
 - Actual subsidy calculation for 2015/16
 - 2015/16 NNDR3 ahead of Government deadline to meet Gloucestershire pool expectations
 - The QRC4 return to the DCLG itemizing the collections in 2015/16 for Council Tax and Business Rates, along with the staged return at the end of each quarter
 - Calculation of Taxbase return for 2017/18 approved by the client and provided to major preceptors, and the subsequent recalculation for purposes of setting the charges for the following year
 - The NNDR1 return calculating the estimated gross debit for the forthcoming year
- ▶ The implementation of LADS to replace the current system of downloading files from the DWP.
- ▶ DWP Payment Deduction Program – This automated the exchange of files between the local authority and DWP.
- ▶ Implementation of a module of Open Revenues to enable the payment of DHP's where the customer is a UC claimant and is not in receipt of Council Tax Support.
- ▶ Implementation of new BACs software following the replacement of the Finance system.
- ▶ The transfer of the Bill Payment service from Co-operative Bank to Capita (Post Offices/Pay Point outlet payments).
- ▶ Garden Waste – The annual renewal of Garden Waste invoices. This is the first year that all telephone calls relating to this have been taken by the Civica team rather than the Council's Customer Services team.
- ▶ The Subsidy Audit for 2015/16.
- ▶ Undertaken training on subsidy classification, also taken security and data protection refresher courses.

CIVICA

- ▶ NDR Revaluation – The draft list was applied to the main Open Revenues database during the Year End processing and the transitional scheme was applied.
- ▶ During the annual billing process the changes to Small Business Rates relief were implemented plus the changes to introduce the £1,500 discount for office space occupied by local newspapers for 2 years from April 2017
- ▶ Implemented the new charging system for replacement Garden Waste and refuse bins from April 2017.
- ▶ Completed the calculation and dispatch of annual Council Tax and Business Rates bills along with Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support notices.
- ▶ Re-calculation of GCH HB claims following issues identified with the file provided in February for the annual calculation of benefit.
- ▶ Assisting with the replacement of the new Finance System and replacing the Sundry Debtors system with a module of the Finance System

Projects/initiatives underway:

- ▶ Updated on-line Benefit claim form and connector to Risk Based Verification.
- ▶ Upgrade to Civica Automation Benefit Subsidy module
- ▶ Replacement of the Open Revenues servers to Windows 2012.
- ▶ Interfacing between AXIS Income Management and Toptix' SR04 system.
- ▶ Following the replacement of the Debtors system, implementing a replacement system for taking replacement Garden Waste applications.
- ▶ Preparing for the potential Business Improvement District for the City Centre as proposed at Cabinet in July 2015. The Revenues team has responsibility for supplying contact details for those in the area and later the collection of the levy.
- ▶ Implementing an interface for car park transactions through the Income Management system.
- ▶ PCI DSS compliance – Implementing Point to Point Encryption for all Chip & Pin devices, implementing "CallSecure" (removing the necessity for staff to take card details over the telephone). Through Capita moving the Income Management Payment Service to the Cloud.
- ▶ Implementing Civica's Open Revenues SMS texting and email facilities.
- ▶ Assist with the review of credit card recharges
- ▶ Preparation for the WURTI rollout (Wider Use of Real Time Information) ready for implementation due 9 October to 10 November 2017.

Changes - Future & 2017

CIVICA

- ▶ Right Benefit Initiative (RBI) – this replaces FERIS and is optional for the Council. By opting in the Council receives funds to resource the processing of optional RTI records. (April 2017)
- ▶ Local Authorities to be able to use their local discretionary powers to support Public Houses (April 2017)
- ▶ Local Authorities to be able to use their local discretionary powers to devise a scheme to support businesses who as a result of the revaluation has significant increases in their bills (April 2017)
- ▶ Local Authorities to be able to use their local discretionary powers to support businesses who as a result of the revaluation have lost their small business relief (April 2017)
- ▶ Receipt of Council Tax direct deductions from DWP benefits through LADS service (June 2017)
- ▶ The Council restructure- As part of this there are some fundamental changes to the way customers services/housing team will deal with customers. This will mean changes to opening times and system access. There is also likely to be operational impacts on this Civica contract. (June 2017)
- ▶ Universal Credit Rollout (Gloucester February 2018)
- ▶ 100% Business Rates retention (2019/20)
- ▶ Potential changes to New Homes Bonus Grant (2017/18)
- ▶ Potential Late Night Levy on licensed premises
- ▶ Local Authorities to be able to use their local discretionary powers to support publicly owned public toilets (April 2018)
- ▶ Business Rates bills will be indexed to CPI (From 2020)
- ▶ Revaluations of Business Rates property to be more frequent than the current 5 years and to be at least every 3 years
- ▶ To standardise Business Rates bills and to ensure all ratepayers have the option to receive and pay bills electronically
- ▶ To link all Business Rates systems to HMRC digital tax accounts (by 2022).
- ▶ Upgrade to Images@Work which is currently de-supported