



NEWPORT
CITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR DINAS
CASNEWYDD

MID-YEAR REVIEW

FINANCE

2022-24



Contents

	Page No.
Introduction	2
Head of Service Executive Summary	4
2023/24 Mid-year Overview	6
Programmes and Projects	8
Workforce Development	9
Objectives and Actions	10
Performance Measures	16
Glossary	19

Strategic Leads

Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth & Investment	Councillor Jane Mudd
Cabinet Member for Organisational Transformation	Councillor Dimitri Batrouni
Cabinet Member for Community Well-being	Councillor Debbie Harvey
Director for Transformation and Corporate	Rhys Cornwall
Head of Finance	Meirion Rushworth

Introduction

Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 has four Well-being Objectives to support its mission to deliver an Ambitious, Fairer and Greener Newport for everyone and contribute towards Wales' Well-being Goals set in the Well-being of Future Generations Act. To support the delivery of these objectives, strategic priorities, and deliver continuous improvement each service area has developed their service plan. This report provides the Mid-Year progress against the Finance Service Plan 2022-24 (23/24).

Since the Senior Management Structure implemented in Autumn 2021, the Finance service comprises of six teams: Accountancy; Internal Audit; Procurement/e-payments; Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services. Together, the teams provide a diverse mix of services and activities that support the Council's service areas; setting overall policy frameworks for the whole Council; and Revenues, as one of the biggest external customer departments dealing with all households and businesses and Customer Services dealing with the Council's external service requests, both face to face and phone/digital transactions. Examples of the areas / functions include:

- Setting policy, good practice, training, support and co-ordination to enable effective financial management and strategic planning of a net revenue budget of c£340m, supporting over 200 budget manager's/service managers, Head teachers and Members.
- Supporting the organisation develop its services and deliver key projects with financial advice and support as needed.
- Providing assurance to the Council and Schools on the effectiveness and efficiency of its governance, risk management and internal control of its financial and non-financial resources including where necessary the investigation of impropriety / theft.
- Collect c£120m of income from Council Tax, Business Rates and various sundry debts.
- Manage and support the Council's interaction with its suppliers to ensure value for money through e-ordering, payments and support services in tendering / awarding / managing contracts.
- Supporting the Head of Finance in carrying out his statutory Section 151 responsibilities.

Through the Corporate Plan and beyond, the Finance Services will continue to build on delivering more 'self-service' functions, both internally such as the Council's Budget Management System and externally through the development of the Council's Customer Relationship System and My Account enabling residents and businesses to engage with the Council electronically in more areas and design and build solutions with services to deal with these efficiently and effectively. Specifically within Revenues and Benefits, we will roll out 'self-service' in Council Tax and Benefits administration, as part of the My Account offer. Ensuring the Council's resources are focussed on its key priorities is increasingly important and our Finance Business Partners will support and develop strong, integrated financial planning, management and governance. The Internal Audit team continues to provide high level assurance service to the Council on the financial and non-financial governance, risk management and internal control.

Supporting the Council and City through the Covid Pandemic throughout the previous two years or so has dominated our agenda and our work on supporting businesses and households and individuals is still on-going, either Covid or increasingly, cost of living related - business rates reductions scheme, winter fuel payments, WG & NCC cost of living support scheme for example.

As we write this, the financial outlook for public services is increasingly challenging and uncertain and also, the Council has a new Corporate Plan. We will aim to support and where applicable, deliver on key deliverables and objectives in the Plan as well as support the organisation in navigating through the financial challenges. Specifically, as we do this, we will need to work in the Council's 'new normal' arrangements and ensure staff are working in the most effective, efficient and safe manner.

Service Area Objectives

Objective 1 - Support the medium to long term financial management & planning (Revenue and Capital) across the Council to focus resources on key objectives and help financial sustainability of Council services.

Objective 2 - Develop a range of customer focused services via re-opening of face-to-face services and development of the 'Newport App' and 'My Council Services' systems.

Objective 3 - Embed social value, carbon reduction and Welsh TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) into the Council's procurement processes, taking account of the impending Procurement Reform in Wales, including the Social Partnership & Public Procurement Act (SPPP), and to report to Senior Management on progress and implementation into NCC Procurement Procedures.

Objective 4 - Revenues and Benefits team and Income Collection team support households and businesses through the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Head of Service Executive Summary

What we have achieved

The first half of the year has seen good progress on a number of issues.

The accountancy team completed the Council's Statements of Accounts within deadlines and whilst the audit was completed in Quarter 3, we know that a reduced number of issues and corrections were identified. Still within accountancy, the replacement of the Council's financial system has progressed but slower than planned.

The revenues and benefits team were re-structured in the first half of the year and are now a single, holistic team. The new structure is more flexible and where appropriate, we have identified some common roles and merged into one. The structure is also improved in terms of role progression and should help with workforce planning and succession. Performance in the team is good and whilst collection of Council Tax remains challenging; it has held up well in the circumstances but requires on-going careful review and management. The Benefits administration performance has benefited from less additional workload from cost-of-living grant schemes to administer and core function performance has improved and is good.

The first half of the year saw some significant challenges in the Internal Audit service with a lot of vacancies emerging in quick succession. The risk to the delivery of the audit plan was very high and the risk of this was escalated to a corporate risk. External service provider was identified and bought in to help manage the risk and I'm pleased to say that this has helped to stabilise the risk and we are hopeful at this stage of completing a good level of the plan, albeit not in line with the target.

Challenges, risks and issues

The Council is facing a number of challenges and risks which are within the 'finance' areas remit and the service itself has some on-going challenges.

The Council's MTFP and the 2024/25 budget is on-going but is clearly challenging as we struggle with increased costs and on-going increasing demand in a number of areas and which impacts on the MTFP. Uncertainty on funding in 2025/26 and beyond remains a significant risk too and more information and intelligence on this should be available from late Autumn. The Accountancy teams remain focussed on supporting the MTFP process.

Delivery of a significant capital programme remains a challenge too. A recently introduced 'capital assurance group' will hopefully provide more challenge and support to improve matters and provide the clarity and intelligence to the Executive Board and then Cabinet on the issues and solutions affecting delivery. It is chaired by the Chief Executive and the accountancy team supports the group.

In the service itself, the implementation of the Council's new finance system has been delayed and implementation is now planned for 1st April 2024. This has certain advantages but is a delayed start. A number of technical issues have been problematic to resolve but the project team is now focussed on achieving the new date.

Implementing digital solutions in our Revenues and Benefits services and on-going developments of our customer services technology into service areas are slower than planned. Capacity issues and project management resources and knowledge are issues and the HoF is working with service managers to provide more focus here.

Lastly, the increased risks in the Council's Internal Audit Team following increased vacancies is continuing to be closely managed. Recruitment (in Quarter 3) has been successful and that is on-going. The plan is being progressed with help from external resources and good progress is being made.

Plans for the next 6 months

The accountancy function will be focussed on delivering the Council's new finance system over the next 6 months. As well as testing and implementing the technical aspects of the project; there will also be a significant amount of training required to be delivered. The budget will also be finalised over the same period and therefore together they represent a real challenge for the accountancy team.

As I write this, the Cabinet have approved a consultation to start on long-term empty and second home Council Tax Premiums. No decision on this has yet to be taken and that will be in early 2024 but if approved, it will represent a significant challenge to the revenues team as we have little intelligence on these homes at this time and experience elsewhere tells us that it creates a lot of additional workloads. The Welsh Government are also consulting on a new Council Tax banding proposal, and we need to keep up with developments in this area of course, the billing of the 2024/25 Council Tax will also need to be completed.

We continue to try and recruit into our Internal Audit team and transitioning into the regional service will be a key priority over the next 6 months.

We have recently engaged some external consultancy assistance to review the Council's approach to Customer Services and this project will be undertaken over these next 6 months. It is likely to be quite intensive and require a lot of support from all parts of the Council and in particular from the customer services managers and their team.

Finance 2023/24 Overview

Service Plan Objectives

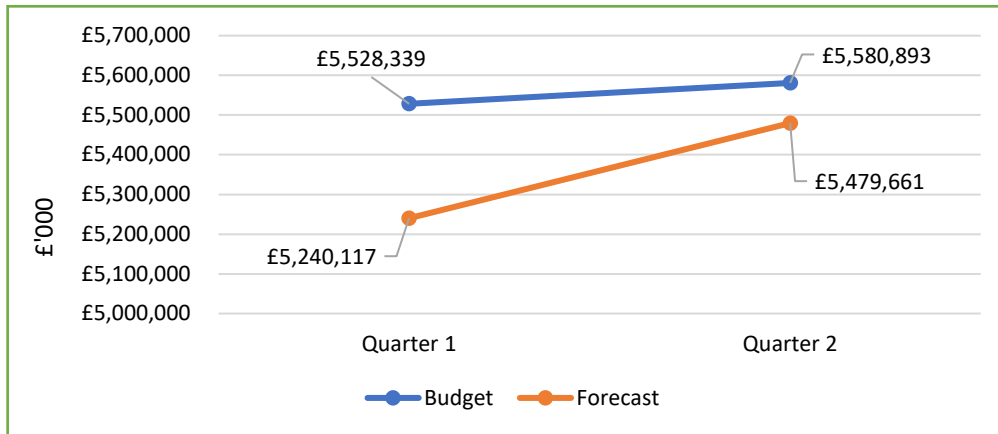
Objective	Mid-Year Status (Red / Amber / Green)
Objective 1 - Support the medium to long term financial management & planning (Revenue and Capital) across the Council to focus resources on key objectives and help financial sustainability of Council services.	
Objective 2 - Develop a range of customer focused services via re-opening of face-to-face services and development of the 'Newport App' and 'My Council Services' systems.	
Objective 3 - Embed social value, carbon reduction and Welsh TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) into the Council's procurement processes, taking account of the impending Procurement Reform in Wales, including the Social Partnership & Public Procurement Act (SPPP), and to report to Senior Management on progress and implementation into NCC Procurement Procedures.	
Objective 4 - Revenues and Benefits team and Income Collection team support households and businesses through the Cost-of-Living crisis.	

Service Area Risks

Risk	Corporate / Service Risk	Inherent Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Quarterly Risk Scores (Q3 2022/23 to Q2 23/24)			
				Quarter 3 22/23	Quarter 4 22/23	Quarter 1 23/24	Quarter 2 23/24
Balancing the Council's Medium Term Revenue Plan	Corporate	16	10	20	20	20	20
Failure to Achieve Internal Plan	Corporate	20	6	16	16	16	16
In Year Capital Management	Service	12	6	12	12	12	12
ICT Key Systems (Oracle and C/Tax)	Service	16	5	9	9	9	12
In year financial revenue position	Service	9	6	9	9	6	6
Council Income reduction	Service	20	9	8	8	8	4

Service Area Finance Forecast (End of Quarter 2)

Revenue Forecast



Programmes and Projects

Programme / Project Title	Project Overview	Well-being Objective(s) supported	Expected Completion Date (Quarter / Year)	Quarter 2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
<p>Upgrade to a new financial system</p>	<p>The replacement of the existing financial system, which is on an unsupported platform and not integrated, with a fully integrated, Cloud-based, system which improves the user experience, quality of reporting and access on a more remote basis.</p>	<p>Well-being Objective 4</p>	<p>Quarter 1 24/25</p>	<p>80%</p>	<p>Overall progress and achievement of milestones has been limited during Quarter 2. This is mainly due to a number of unforeseen issues being encountered, particularly with some of the more technical aspects of the implementation, such as data migration and creation of interfaces. These issues have taken a considerable amount of time to resolve, a large part of which has relied upon support from third parties, which has delayed the start of the final cycle of user acceptance testing. As a result, the overall go-live date has been deferred, to ensure that an adequate amount of testing is undertaken before the system is launched.</p>

Workforce Development

To support workforce development across Finance service the following actions have been identified as priority between 2022-24.

Action	Outcome(s) of Action Delivery	Action Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
Review the current approach to recruitment within Finance, with a particular focus on entry level posts.	Improve the likelihood of recruiting to vacant posts and create new routes for people to enter Finance. This may include the introduction of graduate schemes, traineeships or school leaver schemes.	1 st October 2022	31 st March 2024	35%	Accountancy: During Quarter 2, the potential of recruiting an Accountancy apprentice has been explored. This will be progressed during Quarter 3. A graduate trainee role is also being considered and will be explored further during the remainder of the year. Procurement: Currently recruiting a trainee procurement apprentice in Quarter 2.

Objectives and Action Plan Update

Objective 1- Support the medium to long term financial management & planning (Revenue and Capital) across the Council to focus resources on key objectives and help financial sustainability of Council services.							Objective 1 Mid-Year Assessment
Ref	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Well-being Objective Supported	Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
1	Review of activity associated with the closure of accounts.	The introduction of a programme of review of activity across Accountancy, with the aim of identifying ways to complete tasks more efficiently, automate them, undertake them in advance of the year-end or not undertake them at all if there is no value added.	Not Applicable	1 st October 2022	31 st March 2024	25%	The focus over the last quarter has been on the 2023/24 monitoring process, budget setting process and the external audit of the Statement of Accounts. Therefore, it was not expected that much progress would be made during Quarter 2, with progress anticipated during the second half of the year.
2	Review of the approach taken to technical aspects of the accounts.	A robust review of historic approaches to processes such as asset valuations (in line with new audit advice), the utilisation of the new system to automate and facilitate more of the technical aspects and updated approaches to the production of the core statements.	Not Applicable	1 st October 2022	31 st March 2024	10%	As reported in the previous quarter, this area of work will be a focus during the second half of the year, with the focus of the team in question currently on the external audit process.

Ref	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Well-being Objective Supported	Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
3	Ensure the new financial system maximises the quality of financial information provided to budget holders.	An easy to use, readily accessible financial system, which provides real-time management information and interactive, useful reporting tools.	Not Applicable	1 st October 2022	31 st December 2023	35%	During this quarter, the work to create reports and dashboards within the new system has commenced. The majority of this work will be concluded during Quarter 3, however progress has been made to date. This includes the initial design of a budget manager "landing page", which will provide users with a summary view of the key financial information impacting their services. In addition, other dashboards and reports are being designed, with a focus on ensuring readability and usefulness.
4	Expand the financial training offer to include general financial training for budget managers – augmenting and co-ordinated with current offers.	Budget managers with a wider appreciation of the financial context that the Council works within, including Council funding sources, basic accounting concepts, capital and treasury management.	Not Applicable	1 st October 2022	30 th September 2023	10%	As reported in the previous quarter, the initial focus of this year has been to introduce revised budget monitoring arrangements. These are still bedding in, part of which includes an assessment of each service's training needs. Resource challenges have restricted the ability to broaden the general financial management training received by budget holders. However, where possible, bespoke support has been provided to services, where needed and possible.
5	Review, amend and embed robustly a revised operating model that underpins the revenue budget management process.	Clarity of expectations upon budget managers and Accountancy staff, a robust approach for identification of risk-based areas and a revised annual budget monitoring timetable.	Not Applicable	1 st October 2022	31 st March 2024	90%	Revised monitoring arrangements are now in place, with two monitoring positions reported during this quarter. Further work is now required to embed the process and establish a methodology for reviewing its effectiveness.

Objective 2 - Develop a range of customer focused services via re-opening of face-to-face services and development of the 'Newport App' and 'My Council Services' systems.

Objective 2 Mid-Year Assessment

Ref	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Well-being Objective Supported	Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
1	Support the provision of Benefits Service to Newport citizens that makes best use of the resources available.	Capita Connect integration. Transfer of HB enquiry lines to the Contact Centre. Maximise the use of automated and digitised services.	WBO 2 / Strategic Priority 6 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 4 Digital Strategy	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2024	10%	A meeting is booked for 16/10/23 to discuss support now that the restructure has been complete for this area.
2	Review of administrative processes and services within customer services.	By moving to the use of technology such as artificial intelligence systems we can make repetitive processes more efficient freeing up staff to deal with more complex queries.	WBO 2 / Strategic Priority 6 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 4 Digital Strategy	1 st October 2022	31 st March 2024	60%	Review is complete, there are some possibilities especially looking at email responses, a discussion to be had with the relevant officers to progress.
3	Explore all options available for the use of robotics within the Revenues and Benefits Section.	To remove the requirement for staff to carry out repetitive standard transactions, to free up resources for debt recovery and welfare related matters.	WBO 2 / Strategic Priority 6 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 4 Digital Strategy	1 st October 2022	31 October 2024	5%	This project is just commencing and will be supported by the digital team. Initially the project will focus on routine emails and will speed up the time taken to respond. The project will link in with the planned upgrades to the Council website.
4	Continuing Development of the Newport App and My Council Services system. Look at opportunities that occur by being part of project and project boards such as Digital strategy and web redevelopment.	Staff and Residents are able to report, pay and request services from anywhere. Staff to have the ability to mobile work with Real - Time Reporting.	WBO 2 / Strategic Priority 6 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 4 Digital Strategy	1 st January 2023	31 st March 2025	5%	Testing is being undertaken by all LAs using MCS for any bugs prior to implementation of the new GDS Portal. New Job Description for the team passed by panel and staff consultation started.

Ref	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Well-being Objective Supported	Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
5	Explore and implement System Rationalisation across the authority looking a way to replace or integrate back-office systems through use of 'My Council Services' system.	To identify and explore potential back-office systems / areas which can be integrated into MCS.	WBO 2 / Strategic Priority 6 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 4 Digital Strategy	1 st April 2023	31 st March 2025	0%	We have two development officers in the MCS team that will be working on exploring opportunities across the Council. We will be formalising this process with a work plan, actions and risks/issues. The current projects such as website redesign and customer services review across the organisation will also underpin this development work. There has been a delay in commencing this work due to restructuring and other competing priorities for the team however work is underway in compiling the list of tasks to be undertaken
6	Complete a desktop review of the two main Revenues IT systems to assess strengths and weaknesses across a number of review areas. Complete a review of other users experience of each system to augment and inform the above analysis.	A more robust and supported platform solution to deliver council tax, benefits and NNDR services.	Not Applicable	1 st November 2021	31 st March 2024	5%	There is a need to look at the ICT system provision of the major system suppliers to evaluate and determine whether in the medium to long term there may be advantages in moving to a new cloud based system. Due to the time this will take and the ongoing implementation of the new finance system it is unlikely this will be undertaken as planned in 2023-24 and will instead need to be moved into 2024-25.

Objective 3 - Embed social value, carbon reduction and Welsh TOMs (Themes, Outcomes and Measures) into the Council's procurement processes, taking account of the impending Procurement Reform in Wales, including the Social Partnership & Public Procurement Act (SPPP), and to report to Senior Management on progress and implementation into NCC Procurement Procedures.

Objective 3 Mid-Year Assessment

Ref	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Well-being Objective Supported	Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
1	Attend National Procurement Network for Wales to receive updates from Welsh Gov procurement reform representatives.	Information gained used to inform internal updates and preparation for new legislation implementation	WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 3 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 7	1 st April 2023	31 st December 2024	30%	All National Procurement Network (NPN) meetings attended, along with attendance in person at specific procurement reform consultation meetings at the WLGA in Cardiff during July and August 2023. Representatives from WG Procurement Reform Team attend NPN meetings and provide updates on progress of new legislation.
2	Receive updates from Welsh Gov via subscription to their Procurement Reform emails.	Information gained used to inform internal updates and preparation for new legislation implementation	WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 3 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 7	1 st April 2023	31 st December 2024	30%	Procurement Manager is on all necessary mailing lists, and in attendance at all necessary WG and WLGA meetings on procurement reform.
3	Attend appropriate webinars, workshops etc in order to be best informed of new requirements.	Information gained used to inform internal updates and preparation for new legislation implementation	WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 3 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 7	1 st April 2023	31 st December 2024	30%	Workshops at the WLGA to draft formal consultation responses have been attended in person during July and August 2023. Workshops, seminars etc will be attended as and when available, and once the training programme is live with both UK Gov and Welsh Gov, Exec Board will be updated and decisions made on which Council officers and members should attend which level of training.
4	Explore implications of extending decarbonisation processes into Gateway Process 2 (tenders above £25k in value).	Decide if the Council are in a position, both maturity and resource to include de-carb measures into low value procurements, taking into account the likely benefits.	WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 3 WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 7 Climate Change Plan	1 st April 2023	31 st March 2024	25%	No further action at this stage. Discussions to resume with CRT once fully resourced, and decisions proposed on minimum contract values that should include specific carbon reduction measures.

Objective 4 - Revenues and Benefits team and Income Collection team support households and businesses through the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Objective 4 Mid-Year Assessment

Ref	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Well-being Objective Supported	Start Date	Expected Completion Date	Q2 RAG Assessment / % Completion	Commentary
1	Revenues and Benefits team to support households and businesses through the cost of living crisis.	Providing necessary advice, guidance and financial / payment plan support. Signposting residents to other council, public and third sector financial management support.	Not Applicable	1 st April 2023	31 st March 2024	25%	The Revenue Team continues to support and provide flexible solutions for customers that are struggling to make their payments.
2	Expand the options available for customers to transact digitally with the Revenues & Benefits service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction claims. • Online Council Tax payment plan management. Automated Council Tax Reduction awards.	Enable customers to be able to self-serve and improve their digital access to the Revenues and Benefits service. Support, advice and guidance provided to customers to enable access to services including disadvantaged and vulnerable residents.	WBO 4 / Strategic Priority 4 Digital Strategy	1 st April 2023	31 st March 2024	10%	Once implemented this software will deliver benefits for both the Customer Contact Centre and the council tax back-office function with both areas benefitting from reduced customer contacts due to the ability for customers to self-serve. Progress has been delayed by the need for new servers for the Capita One Digital Portal, work is ongoing to complete this before the end of November 2023. This has had a knock-on effect on the installation of the software and as a result of these technical challenges and to avoid clashes with the year-end schedule it is possible that full implementation may need to move to Q1 of 2024-24.

Performance Measures

Annual performance measures are not included in the Mid-Year review and will be reported as part of 23/24 End of Year Review.

Performance Measure / Description	End of Year Performance (21/22 to 22/23)			Mid-Year Performance 23/24		
	Actual 2021/22	Actual 2022/23	Actual Q2 2022/23	Actual Q2 2023/24	Target 2023/24	Commentary
Percentage Council Tax Collection	96.1%	96.1%	52.73%	51.72%	96.3% (Q2 Target - 55%)	Collection of council tax remains challenging due to the cost of living and household budgets being squeezed, but the team continue to offer flexible solutions and encourage customers to engage at every stage.
Percentage Non-Domestic Rates Collected.	96.3%	97.78%	56.6%	59%	96.8% (Q2 Target - 60%)	Collection is on track and the target should be achieved.
Percentage total Council Tax Collected as a percentage of annual budgeted amount.	100.53%	100.3%	54.5%	54.53%	100% (Q2 Target - 55%)	Collection is marginally ahead of 2022-23 and target should be achieved.
Percentage of Council Tax arrears collected	32.71%	30%	16%	16.91%	35% (Q2 Target - 18%)	Collection of previous years arrears is also affected by the cost of living crisis. Priority is given to helping council taxpayers meet their current years payments to avoid falling further behind which can result in arrears taking longer to clear.
Percentage of NNDR Arrears collected.	42.5%	50%	31.09%	33.04%	40% (Q2 Target - 20%)	Collection is on course to meet the target.
Percentage of Internal Audit Plan completed	71%	77%	31%	23%	50% (Q2 Target - 20%)	The performance is above the expected mid-year target of 20%.
Number of days to issue a draft IA report	5 days	5 days	3 days	8 days	10 days	Draft reports are being issued within the expected target of 10 days.
Number of days to issue a final IA report	3 days	2 days	2 days	3 days	5 days	Final reports are being issued within the expected target of 5 days.
Percentage Payment of Invoices within timescales	92.61%	90%	90%	91.3%	90%	Currently slightly above target after the mid-year point.
Percentage of customer transaction requests carried out Face to Face	0.86% (1,459)	0.6%	0.62%	1.69%	30% or less	There has been an increase in the number of face to face transactions following the move to the new central library.
Customer Contact Centre average wait time- Council Tax enquiries	22 minutes 59 seconds	20 mins 23 secs	32 minutes 8 secs	11 minutes 33 secs	25 minutes	The average wait time of council tax enquiries has significantly improved since the previous reporting period.

Performance Measure / Description	End of Year Performance (21/22 to 22/23)			Mid-Year Performance 23/24		
	Actual 2021/22	Actual 2022/23	Actual Q2 2022/23	Actual Q2 2023/24	Target 2023/24	Commentary
Customer transaction requests made online using MCS	76.5% (320,133)	78.4%	79.8%	81.3%	70% or more	The percentage of transactions completed via MCS has increased since the previous reporting period.
Customer Contact Centre average wait time- main enquiry line.	8 minutes 1 second	4 mins 29 secs	7 minutes 43 secs	13mins, 4 second	5 minutes or less	We've seen increased attrition in customer services resulting in need to recruit and train new staff members. We have also had to back-fill 4 posts due to maternity leave. Nearly back to full compliment of staff so should start to see this decrease.
Customer Contact Centre average wait time- Welsh enquiry line	3 minutes 44 seconds	2 mins 17 secs	No Data	2 mins, 26 seconds	5 minutes or less	The average wait time for Welsh enquiry line continues to meet the expected target.
Average time of processing new housing benefit claims	33.19 days	25.7 days	No Data	25.3 days	32 days	The Benefits Team is no longer administering ad hoc government schemes, so have been able to fully focus on claim processing which has resulted in improved performance.
Average time of processing change events.	7.9 days	6.3 days	No Data	4.53	14 days	Processing of changes in circumstance continues to be processed quickly and efficiently by the team.
The amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered during the quarter as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayments identified during the quarter	105.4%	111.7%	108%	125.71%	Min 103%	Overpayment collection continues to be managed effectively.
The amount of housing benefit overpayments written off during the quarter as a percentage of the total amount of housing benefit overpayments outstanding	3.84%	0.6%	0%	1.66%	2%	Write offs are carried out when all other options are exhausted and are done in timely manner.
Budget monitoring - Budget Manager submissions Percentage of monthly forecasts submitted by budget managers.	No Data	67.3%	65.7%	76%	80%	The new approach to budget monitoring places an emphasis upon supporting managers to provide forecasts on a monthly basis, via additional training and support, as required. The increase in performance compared to last year suggests that the intended benefit is being realised.

Performance Measure / Description	End of Year Performance (21/22 to 22/23)			Mid-Year Performance 23/24		
	Actual 2021/22	Actual 2022/23	Actual Q2 2022/23	Actual Q2 2023/24	Target 2023/24	Commentary
Financial Training Satisfaction or better ratings from individuals participating in training provided by Finance service	No Data	100%	No Data	83%	80%	Financial training continues meet satisfaction ratings from participants and we continue to improve on feedback provided.
Grant claims Percentage of grant claims submitted in line with awarding body deadlines.	No Data	77%	No Data	82%	95%	The cumulative position for the first two quarters of the year reflects a total of 107 grant claims submitted, with 88 of those submitted on time (82%).

Glossary

Service Area Project / Action Assessment

RAG Status	Description
X%	Project / Action is not on track to deliver with major issues preventing the action being completed by the agreed ' <i>Target Date</i> '. Immediate management interventions is required to improve performance and escalation to Directorate Management Team and/or relevant Board.
X%	Project / Action is mainly on track with some minor issues which could prevent the Project / Action being completed by the agreed ' <i>Target Date</i> '. Management intervention(s) required to improve performance and close monitoring by the Head of Service / Service Management Team.
X%	Project / Action is on track to be completed by the Agreed ' <i>Target Date</i> '.
C	Project / Action has been successfully delivered

Performance Measure Monitoring / Tolerance Assessment

Newport City Council has agreed a 15% tolerance against targets set in service plans.

RAG Status	Description
=>15%	Performance is under achieving against Target or previous year's performance. Immediate management intervention and escalation to Directorate Management Board is required.
<15%	Performance is off target or Previous Year's Performance but within a variance of 15%. Management intervention and close monitoring by the Head of Service / Service Management Team is required.
	Performance is achieving / succeeding against its agreed Target or Previous Year's Performance.

Risk Assessment Matrix

Probability	5	5 - Moderate	10 - Major	15 - Severe	20 - Severe	25 - Severe
	4	4 - Moderate	8 - Moderate	12 - Major	16 - Severe	20 - Severe
	3	3 - Low	6 - Moderate	9 - Major	12 - Major	15 - Severe
	2	2 - Low	4 - Moderate	6 - Moderate	8 - Moderate	10 - Major
	1	1 - Very Low	2 - Low	3 - Low	4 - Moderate	5 - Moderate
		1	2	3	4	5
		Impact				

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
MCS	My Council Services
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association