

Average number of working days lost per Full Time Equivalent

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Top 25% of District Authorities
11.12	2.45	8.55	6.8

Action to improve performance:

On loss of circa 11 days per FTE, sickness absence currently costs EBC approximately £300 000 per annum. (alternatively approximately 25 full time staff)

Actions taken in the first half of 2002:

1. Setting up of external mediation service support

Jan 02

2. Training of Personnel Officer (Employee Relations) in mediation/conciliation skills

March 02

3. Drafting of new and revised Attendance Management policy and procedures

June 02

4. Consultation with UNISON*, EBC Managers and CE/CMT on Attendance Management issues

June/July 02

**UNISON is experiencing problems with resources and our ability to roll out the new procedures will depend on when a meaningful response from them is received. The projected timescales below assume that this will be forthcoming before September 02.*

Programme for period from September 2002

1. Roll out of training and familiarisation with Attendance Management policy and procedures to Directors and Heads of Service, then other line Managers

Sept - Nov 02

2. Consequent robust use of formal Interviews and referrals to Occupational Health to deliver the procedures

Sept - Mar 03

3. Monitoring statistics issued to Managers at monthly intervals to assist with process; quarterly figures sent to Directors for their reference.

Commencing in Sept 02

4. Personnel to monitor and review impact of roll out quarterly, starting with

October to December 02 figures.

5. Future corporate work to promote Work Life Balance initiatives corporately.

Pilot study likely Autumn 02.

The % of invoices paid within 30 days or other mutually agreed terms

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Performance Standard set by Government
86%	85%	>99%	100% by 2002-3

During the first three months of this year, we processed nearly 11,200 creditor invoices.

Of these, 9,500 were paid within 30 days of invoice date and 1,700 were not.

Half of those 1,700 were paid between 30 and 40 days of invoice date.

Processing invoices is a resource hungry and time consuming task. Quite properly, our financial regulations require us to carry out a series of important checks before payment is authorised. Notwithstanding that, it is clear that we have to review our processes to improve speed without sacrificing on accuracy.

Actions in place to improve performance include identifying and recording disputed invoices (which do not then count against the target), introducing additional payment runs (we now have two BACS and one cheque payment each week), and reducing the number of default payment days down from 28 to 21.

A review will be undertaken during this year that will involve individual analyses of the systems used in different departments and divisions. Identifying in areas where performance is lowest where the delays in processing are occurring, and disseminating throughout the Council best practice from high performing departments and other authorities.

The percent of services that are capable of being delivered electronically that are delivered electronically

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance as at June	Target	Performance Standard set by Government

30%	41%	35%	100% capability in electronic service delivery by 2005
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This figure has been calculated using a list of services and a spreadsheet agreed as a standard by all East Sussex Local Authorities, to enable us to make meaningful comparisons with our neighbouring authorities (the spreadsheet can be downloaded from the Intranet at <http://eastbourne/IT/downloads/17-7-02estimate.xls>). The spreadsheet consists of a series of columns which describe different types of interactions that might apply to each listed service, for example Provide Information, Making an Application, Booking a Service and so on.

The strength of our current figure is largely down to the wide range of detailed information available on the Council's websites about our services, enabling us to score highly for most services under the Provide Information column. We also offer generic email addresses for almost all services, which enable us to score at least 50% on Inviting Feedback.

To achieve further improvements to our percentage we will be implementing online payments this year, which should boost our percentages under the Receiving Payments column and have a significant impact on the bottom line figure.

Obstacles to further improvements include a lack of progress by the Government in developing a framework to allow citizens / local authorities to digitally sign documents. Without such a framework it will be difficult to achieve 100% in the Making Applications and Regulation columns of the spreadsheet. Further information about the Government's progress in this area is available from www.e-envoy.gov.uk/egov/digital_britain/digsigs/intro.htm.

Average relet time for Council dwellings

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Top 25% of District Authorities – 2000-1
26.1 days	35 days	25 days	26 days

A variety of issues have impacted on performance including:

- the number of refusals of offered properties;
- some workforce shortages at Serco and a shortage of some materials; and
- new officers being trained on undertaking void inspections.

Matters that are being undertaken to resolve the issues above:

- introduction of HomeChoice should lead to a reduction in refusals – this is being monitored;
- Serco are stockpiling materials i.e. plaster to prevent delays in repair works;
- Additional staff training is in hand; and
- The Tenant Services Manager is 'auditing' void process over last 2 months to ensure any other issues affecting performance are identified and rectified.

Departmental monitoring in place:

- Void performance and related issues are discussed with contractors at monthly meetings
- Specific management meetings are held quarterly to review overall performance.

Specified repairs done within government time limits

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Performance of top 25% of all authorities in 2000-1
91.9%	96.5%	94%	96%

This performance covers 886 jobs, of which 31 went 'out of time'.

Statistics cover all contractors who are involved in the repair and maintenance of properties, including Domestic Gas contractors.

We have monthly meetings with all contractors to monitor activity and 'out of time' job lists are reviewed daily. In house, property services team meet monthly to discuss performance.

Improvements on the Year to Date position are due, in part, to the termination of the Domestic Gas Contract and the use of new interim contractors.

The Repairs contracts let in 2000 have included performance measures and targets. The monitoring of performance has shown continual improvement in the time taken to carry out essential repairs in line with Best Value principles.

Average time spent in Bed and Breakfast by households who are unintentionally homeless and that include children or pregnant women.

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Performance of the top 25% of all authorities (2000-1)
7.9 weeks	2.6weeks	4 weeks	2 weeks

Homelessness is a demand-led service and demand for housing from people in housing needs well outstrips available supply. Nevertheless, the service has been pro-active in seeking to extend the range and amount of temporary accommodation available. This includes use of Eastbourne Borough Homes housing stock, private sector housing and empty homes. A review of temporary accommodation and an action plan to explore alternative forms of temporary accommodation is proposed for completion by December 2002. This will feed into a Homeless Strategy that is being developed by the local Housing Authorities at a County level. An improved monitoring process has been implemented and will be refined to manage the costs of B&B.

The % of Household waste recycled

Performance for 2001-2 April –June	Current Performance April – June	Target for 2002-3	Performance Standard set by Government

Waste Collected: 7500 tonnes	Waste Collected: 7750 tonnes	8.5%	12% by 2003-4
Waste Recycled: 565 tonnes	Waste Recycled: 548 tonnes		
% Recycled 7.53%	% Recycled 7.07%		

Eastbourne Borough Council is at present retendering its refuse and recycling contract. The current recycling rates are unlikely to increase until after the new contract comes into place on 1st April 2003.

We intend to increase our household waste recycled in two ways.

Firstly through waste minimisation campaigns. The current initiatives include such activities such as Real Nappy Week, which runs every April, and Home Composting, which we shall be promoting during the summer of 2003, with the aid of subsidised compost bins. This is being organised through the East Sussex Recycling Consortium. The East Sussex Housing Roadshow is currently underway, in which we have a Recycling and Waste minimisation stall, providing leaflets, advice and promotional items to members of the public. Other recent promotional days include activities such as the Hampden Park and Ratton Neighbourhood Watch fete, Wood chips days and presentations to members of the public. We have recently put together a "schools package" with the help of East Sussex County Council which provides practical advice on recycling and opportunities for discussions with pupils, teachers and parents. We are also supporting national campaigns including "drop your pants", and Waste Awareness Month which is every October. The aim of this is to encourage people to consider what they throw away and to increase the awareness of the need for waste minimisation.

Secondly, we wish to expand our existing recycling facilities. We will increase the number of bring sites (3 new sites per year) to achieve better coverage. We will improve the appearance and suitability of the sites to encourage the public to use them.

We have plans to expand our kerbside scheme from April 2003 to cover 34,000 households. This is an increase from the 8,600 households presently receiving this service. The intention is that this collection scheme will be paper based with the option to collect other materials.

The separate collection and composting of green waste is also being considered with a view to the further expansion of our existing facilities but this is unlikely to happen before 2005.

Average time taken to complete planning applications broken down by i) Minor, ii) Major and iii) Householder

Performance for April – June	Current Performance April – June	Target	Performance Standard set by Government
2001-2 Numbers of applications in brackets			

i) 7.9 weeks (63)	i) 10.7 weeks (66)	i) 70% in 8 weeks	iii) 80% within 8 weeks
ii) 24.6 weeks (6)	ii) 19.9 weeks (4)	ii) 40% in 13 weeks	
iii) 7.7 weeks (66)	iii) 8.2 weeks (83)	iii) 83% within 8 weeks	

Development Control has had significant professional staffing problems during the last 6 months, with two officers leaving. The vacancies were filled in July 2002.

Development Control Administrative Support has been reorganised after an 18 month pilot programme. From June 2002 a full complement of staff has been in place to implement the new administrative regime.

These staffing improvements will now begin to impact on performance and should lead to a more efficient and effective service.

Significant delays in securing "Section 106" agreements in part caused by staffing shortages in the Legal Section has also impacted on the time taken to process major applications

Delegation

A review of the delegation procedures is currently being undertaken, with a view to increasing the percentage of decisions delegated by Members to officers. Any increased delegation is likely to improve planning application processing times although this will have to be carefully balanced with the need to maintain transparency in decision making and democratic accountability.

Speed of processing Benefit Claims

a) New Claims

b) Change of circumstances

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Performance Standard set by Government
a) 53.57 days	a) 71.1 days	a) 40 days	a) 33 days
b) 20.47 days	b) 28.9 days	b) 20 days	b) 8 days

Average Time to process a New Claim for Housing Benefit

This is the average amount of time it takes to award benefit from the date the benefit application is received in the Benefit Section. As such it includes both the time taken for the customer to supply any additional documentation that is needed before the claim can be processed, and then any subsequent time for the processing to take place. In practice the section aims to process all new benefit claims within 14 days of receiving all the necessary information to deal with the claim

During the early part of this year, good progress has been made to clear backlogs of work that arose in the Benefit Section following the mainframe migration. However, during April and May it was necessary to

prioritise the processing of renewal claims that had arisen as a result of problems with the Sx3 software. This meant that staff were unable to give new claims the priority they would normally have received. The figure for the first quarter is therefore significantly higher than the 32 day target we have set for the year.

The graph below indicates the significant progress that has been made in dealing with the outstanding work.

Average Time to Process Benefit Changes of Circumstance

This is the average time taken to process any notifications of changes of circumstance. Our target for the year is 20 days. Processing changes of circumstances quickly is important because the authority incurs a lower rate of Housing Benefit subsidy on the overpayment if the work to action the change is delayed. However, where there are backlogs of work, authorities will generally concentrate on processing new claims. This is because it is important for claimants who may be relying on Housing Benefit to pay their rent, etc, to receive a first payment as quickly as possible.

On average, over a 1000 items of post (including hand-delivered items at the benefit reception counter) are received in the benefit section each week, about a quarter of these are changes. The above graph shows how quickly change of circumstance work built up when staff had to prioritise the renewal work mentioned earlier. Agency staff covering for vacant posts has helped to clear the backlog. At the time of writing, officers were able to process changes on the day they were received, but this cannot always be maintained when there are staff shortages due to illness or holidays, etc.

Future issues that may affect claim processing

a. New Tax Credits

There are major changes to the benefit system again from April when the Government's New Tax Credit (NTC) scheme takes effect.

- The Child Tax Credit will provide a single system of help for families with children
- The Working Tax Credit will provide in-work support for low-income working households, extending help to people without children or a disability

Although the Inland Revenue will administer the new tax credits, Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities will have a key role in their delivery. From 7 April 2003 NTC awards will have to be taken into account as income for Housing Benefit claims – this will mean that we will need to reassess for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit uprating from 1 April and then *again* for NTCs from 7 April. There are no automated mechanisms for achieving the latter. Also, any in-year changes to the amount of NTC awarded will need to be taken into account in HB/CTB.

We are very concerned about the way data will be exchanged between LAs and the Inland Revenue (IR) as this will be done using a number of manual, paper-based mechanisms. Inevitably, all this additional manual work will result in delays to claim processing at what is an already very busy time of the year.

b. Sx3 I-World Migration

Our current software supplier, Sx3, plans to migrate all of its existing customers to a brand new version of its Revenues and Benefits software called "I-World". At the time of writing the company has not yet given

Eastbourne any details of when this may be achieved, but they have indicated that they will not provide any legislative upgrades to their existing software from next April. There are likely to be additional conversion costs for this process.

While the conversion issues are unlikely to be as complicated as the migration from ICL to Sx3 last year, there will, inevitably, be a further disruption to service as staff have, once again, to be trained to use the new systems, etc. The project will need to be managed very carefully.

c. Supporting People

While the Council's responsibility for providing the Transitional Housing Benefit Scheme finishes at the end of the current financial year, it is clear that local proposals to ensure the new scheme functions properly from April may potentially still require a significant input from the benefit section.

Numbers attending a leisure facility

Performance for 2001-2 April – June	Current Performance April – June	Target for full year 2002-3
Sovereign Centre – (110,371)	Sovereign Centre – (99,349)	Sovereign Centre – (398,412)
Motcombe Pool – (16,672)	Motcombe Pool – (15,564)	Motcombe Pool – (72,733)
Cavendish Centre – (5,496)	Cavendish Centre – (7,379)	Cavendish Centre – (33,077)
Shinewater Centre – (17,771)	Shinewater Centre – (16,043)	Shinewater Centre – (70,232)
Hampden Park Centre – (11,267)	Hampden Park Centre – (8,340)	Hampden Park Centre – (36,876)
Dev Park Fitness Centre – (7,511)	Dev Park Fitness Centre – (8,868)	Dev Park Fitness Centre – (30,946)
Body Matters – (11,267)	Body Matters – (14,434)	Body Matters – (43,918)
Total – (180,355)	Total – (169,977)	Total – (686,194)

Outside circumstances beyond our control

- **School Holidays** – 5 of the 9 days at Easter fell in March & there was an extra bank holiday in the summer half term, which affects usage at all facilities.

Action taken to improve performance

- Introduction of a pricing structure which promotes equality of opportunity for participation. This includes

peak & off peak sessions

- Cavendish Sports Centre roof replaced
 - Seek capital investment to improve the Sovereign Centre, Motcombe Pool, Devonshire Park Fitness Centre and Princes Park Café and Boating Lake.
1. Place advertisement inviting the Private Sector to register interest
 2. Carry out pre-tender interviews with interested Private Sector companies
 3. Investigate a Trust with neighbouring authorities
 4. Have full surveys carried out at each facility

Future action to improve performance

- Physically improve neighbourhood facilities, to improve equality of access, and opportunities.
1. Refurbish toilets, showers and changing facilities within Hampden Park, Cavendish and Shinewater sports centres
 2. Convert the existing Bar at Hampden Park sports centre into a multi-use room.
- Develop programmes which are accessible and attractive to minority and target groups
 - Continue to seek capital investment to improve the Sovereign Centre, Motcombe Pool, Devonshire Park Fitness Centre and Princes Park Café and Boating Lake.
1. Prepare specification and tender documentation
 2. Consult with staff and stakeholders
 3. Prepare shortlist and invite tenders
 4. Evaluate tenders and interview potential partners
 5. Appoint successful partner

Departmental Monitoring of Performance

Regular meetings are held between Managers and Head of Service to discuss income, usage and overall performance.

Visits in person to a Museum / Art Gallery

Performance for April – June 2001-2	Current Performance April – June	Target	Performance of the top 25% of all authorities (2000-1)

136.1 per 1000 population (12,605 visitors)	93.8 per 1000 population (9353 visitors)	526.6 per 1000 population (48,744 visitors)	608 per 1000 population approx. (56,000 visitors)
35.5 Redoubt	25.9 Redoubt	113 Redoubt	
100.6 Towner	67.9 Towner	359.8	

The Towner is open all year round and the Redoubt is open only 30 weeks in the year. Key decline in performance at the Towner is related to general decline in tourism figures and the lack of consistent marketing material and educational schools activity caused by the redirection of limited staff resources to the relocation of the Towner to the Hub project. This will be addressed through the work of the new Exhibitions and Marketing Co-ordinator who will back fill these responsibilities of the absent Curator. An Arts' Council funded Education Consultancy in the autumn will explore new ways for the Towner to attract and sustain school audiences.

Visits to the Redoubt are seasonal in nature and are affected by the weather and the flow of visitors. The season so far has been very adversely affected by the bad weather with visitors not using facilities along the sea front as much as in previous years.

However this season new promotional material has been produced for both the Redoubt and the Local History Museum (and 1812 concerts - figures not included in the total) and it is hoped that the attractive presentation of the heritage resource of the Council will impact as the season continues.

In the autumn, a series of lecture on military and local history topics will be promoted and this will maintain the profile of the service over the winter months.

The Redoubt web site receives a high number of hits per month. This activity is not included in the figure above.

The Towner Art Gallery's changing programme of exhibitions draws a regular audience to the gallery. With the post of exhibitions and marketing co-ordinator now filled the increase in marketing activity will both enhance the profile of the gallery and impact positively on the growth in visitor numbers.

The % of the targeted income from ticket sales for shows achieved, by venue.

Performance for 2001-2	Current Performance	Target
April – June	April – June	
Congress – 103%	Congress - 95%	100%
Devonshire Park - 286%	Devonshire Park – 143%	100%
Winter Garden – 152%	Winter Garden – 77%	100%
Combined – 137%	Combined – 102%	100%

Targeted income for 2002-3 (1st quarter) is 98% of the income received in 2001-2 1st (quarter).

Following the enormous success of the in house productions at the Devonshire Park Theatre in 2001/2002 three further productions have been undertaken for this year.

The first play of Summer 2002, *'Relatively Speaking'* was picked up by The Theatre Royal Windsor who took it on for three weeks in September with a contribution to Eastbourne Theatres in the region of £28000.

The second play *'You're only Young Twice'* was a new play, which then embarked on a national tour under the banner of Eastbourne Theatres. The tour alone contributed £22000.

In summer 2002, plays have been chosen to consolidate and develop our audiences. Although Windsor Theatre Royal did express considerable interest in taking the first play *'Taking Steps'* they were unable to due to last minute restrictions on their own programming. *'Stepping Out'* was chosen as the 'ideal' Eastbourne Summer title with real scope for long-term audience development. It is a large production and one that has been supported by a significant grant from South East Arts. However, the rights holders for *Stepping Out* would not grant a licence to tour the production, which does not open this particular income stream for this year.

All productions have performed well in the first quarter with targets being surpassed. The volatile nature of the business means that the situation can change very quickly, especially with so much activity in the summer months. However advanced sales, and the nature of contracts for the autumn season, indicate that theatres' targets should be surpassed although perhaps not in the same dramatic fashion as last year.

Conference Attendance: Number of 'Bed Nights' booked

Performance for	Current	Target	Performance
2001 – 02	Performance April – June		Standard set by Government.
26,171	2,361	32,123	N/A

The performance is around the targeted level but the majority of conferences are held off peak. Therefore, the current performance does not show cause for concern as conferences are scheduled between October and March.

The Conference Policy is being reviewed – target date for implementation April 2003 – with the objective of increasing the value to the local economy. The value to the economy was estimated for 2001-2 as £2.878m. The target for the current year is £3.533m an ambitious increase of 23% on the previous year.