

Report to Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board

Corporate Performance Report 2024/25 for Quarter 4: 1st January to 31st March 2025

Portfolio Holder (CPR): Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth

Officer Contact (CPR): Steve Hughes, Assistant Director of Strategy & Transformation

Report date: 18th June 2025

CPR collated by: Performance Improvement Team

Contact: StrategyandPerformance@oldham.gov.uk

Corporate Resources

Key Performance Indicators

RED

KPI underperforming by more than 5%

AMBER

KPI underperforming by less than 5%

GREEN

KPI meeting or outperforming target

Communications

9

Human Resources & Organisational Development

Finance

2

1

1

4

Customer Services

5

0

1

2

Complaints

0

5

0

0

IT

1

0

9

Corporate Resources:

Service areas include:

- Communications and Research
- Customer and Digital Experience – customer services, complaints
- HR and OD
- IT

Communications & Research

Performance Measures & Business Plan Report

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth

Officer Contact: Smyth Harper (*Interim Head of Communications and Research*)

Service Summary:

The Communications and Research team strategically plans, manages and delivers all communications and research activity for Oldham Council, focused on achieving agreed corporate priorities. Communications and engagement activity is delivered across a range of digital and traditional channels, including through the press, social media, web content, face to face engagement, out of home collateral and more; all tailored to our diverse external and internal audiences and adapted for the channels they use.

Communications & Research Strategic priorities

We have four agreed strategic priorities for 2023/24.

These will be fully evaluated as new metrics are available in 2024/25.

Interim activity against each of the measurables is detailed on the following slides, followed by a quarterly snapshot of metrics on our key digital channels.

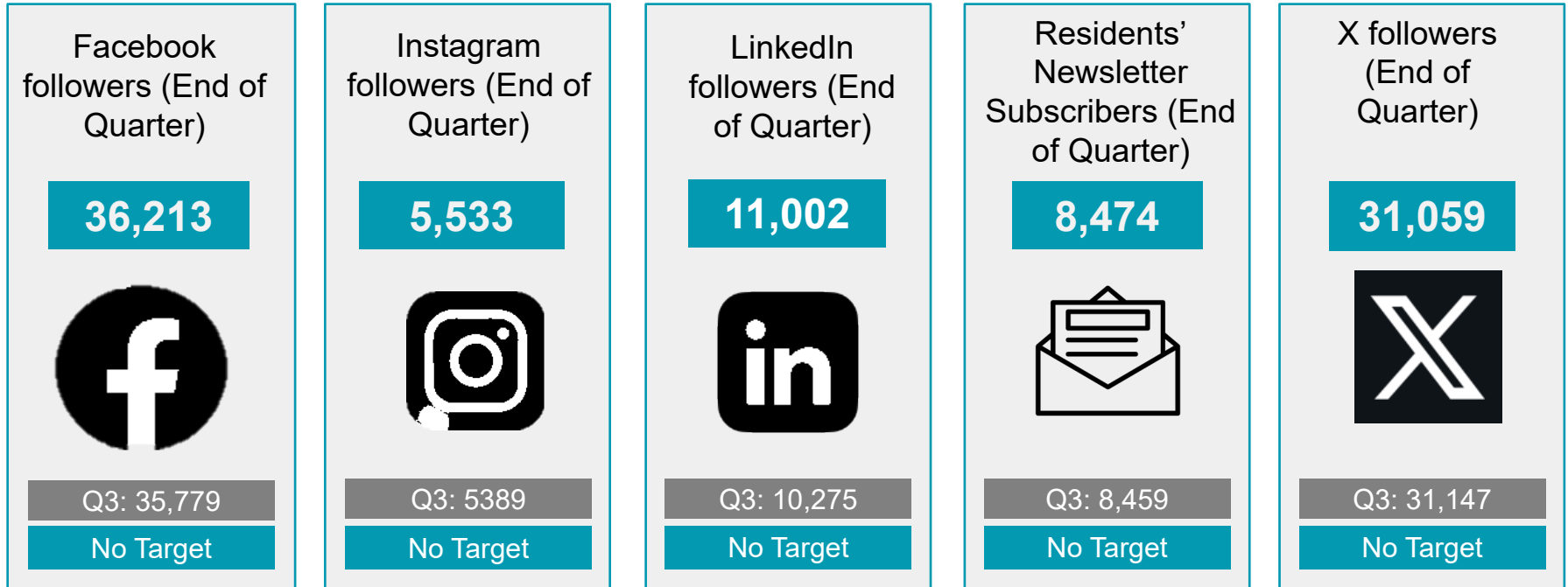
Increase pride in the borough from the Resident Survey of 2022/23. In that survey, 74% of respondents said they were satisfied with their local area but only 35% said they would recommend it as a tourist destination. We'll increase these to at least 79% (LGA average) and 40% by the next Resident Survey.

Increase resident satisfaction with Council communications - We'll measure this by aiming to reduce the number of people who say they don't receive any information from the Council (21% in the 2022/23 Resident Survey) to less than 20%.

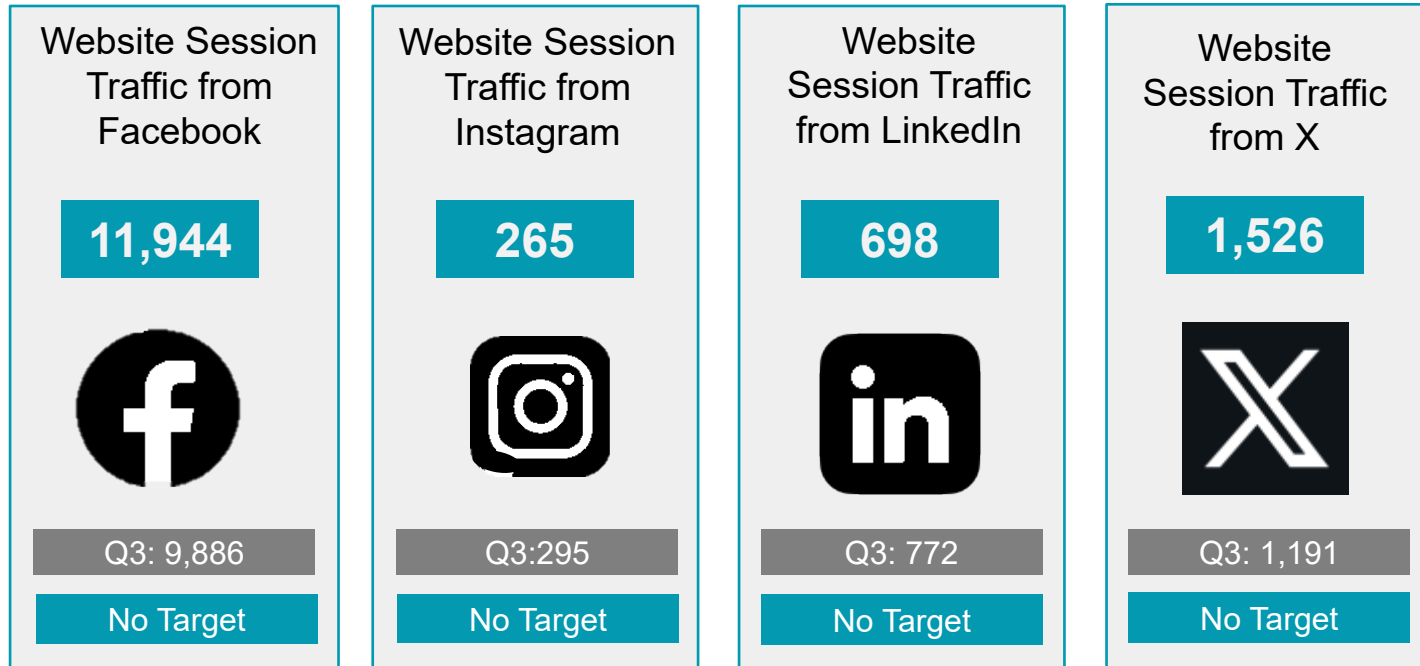
Improve two-way engagement with our workforce. In our most recent Staff Survey only 41% of staff said senior management "communicate effectively with me". We aim to improve that to at least 50% by the next Staff Survey via the implementation of a strategic Internal Communications Strategy. The strategy will also act as our 'golden thread' of engagement touchpoints we have with staff in 2023/24.

Manage key reputational issues in an honest, transparent and people-focused way. We will ensure our residents have access to factual and timely information and enable media to produce fair and balanced reports.

Communications & Research- Key Metrics (no targets) - Social Media



Communications & Research - Key Metrics (no targets) - Web Figures



* Figures are an average over 3-month period

Communications & Research - Progress Against Key Annual Priorities

Increase pride in the borough	There were a number of "big ticket" announcements in this quarter which landed well both in the media and on social media. This includes the launch of SportsTown and the wider allocation of £20m of levelling up funds for the borough. We also generated excellent publicity for some of our big events which bring Oldham people together, such as Illuminate.
Increase resident satisfaction with Council Communications	We have continued with the promotion of real Oldhamers accessing our services and how their lives have been made better as a result. This helps us tell our organisation's story and demonstrate the work we are doing to deliver excellent and engaging services, encouraging Oldham residents to use them. We've also had features on our less people-focused services over this quarter, for example national BBC Breakfast featuring our gritting services during the cold weather at the beginning of the year. We have also been working with colleagues to develop a residents' survey to provide statistically significant data on resident satisfaction.

Communications & Research - Progress Against Key Annual Priorities

Improve two-way engagement with our workforce	Significant work has been done this quarter to bring together a staff working group to redesign and repurpose staff conferences. Now called "The Conversation", they will be delivered in Q1 and will represent a major departure from previous staff conferences.
Managing key reputational issues	This quarter saw significant reputational challenges created by Elon Musk using Oldham as a means to challenge the UK government on child sexual exploitation. The team managed this by taking a measured, calm and clear response focused on Oldham residents and our cohort of survivors. We proactively communicated the

Communications & Research - Comments

Q3: Smyth Harper, Interim Head of Communications and Research

This was a busy and successful period for the communications service, promoting our services, celebrating our successes and encouraging staff and residents alike to show pride in our borough.

The formal consultation for the communication service redesign was conducted successfully and Q4 will see the implementation move forward with the new structure operational from 1 April 2025. Given that there is a significant reduction in the service establishment, and the levels of uncertainty and unsettlement restructures always create, it is a credit to the team that they have conducted such a successful quarter in a challenging environment.

Q4: Smyth Harper, Interim Head of Communications and Research

The communications service restructure was finalised and moved towards implementation in this quarter. This means that we have now moved to having a significantly reduced team which means that there is a need to repurpose communications activity to focus on communications and organisational priorities.

This was another challenging quarter, with a number of reputational matters which the team handled professionally and successfully.

Signed Off: 12/05/2025

Communications & Research - Portfolio Holder Comment

Q3: Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader & Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham

There has been a reduction in capacity in the Comms team created by both voluntary redundancies and the restructure, but I do not think this has had a material impact on the output as yet. Lots of hard work has gone into continuing to promote Oldham and encourage more pride in our Borough.

Q4: Cllr Arooj Shah, Leader & Cabinet Member for Building a Better Oldham

The comms team continue to play a really vital role of informing the residents of what this council does to help and support them. We have had lots of positive feedback from residents regarding some really big events and announcements recently, as well as incredibly challenging moments for Oldham as a Borough, not just the council as an organisation.

Signed Off: 05/06/2025

Customer & Digital Experience

Performance Measures & Business Plan Report

Portfolio Holder: Leader & Cabinet Member for Growth

Officer Contact: Fran Lautman, Assistant Director of Customer Experience

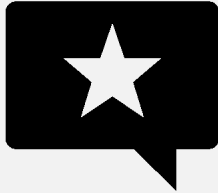
Service Summary: Customer & Digital Experience provides the following services:

- Blue Badges
- Complaints
- Customer Support Centre (Contact Centre)
- Customer Service Centre at Spindles
- Household Support Fund
- Local Welfare Provision
- Registrars Service

Customer Support Centre - Key Metrics (against target where set)

Post Call Customer
Satisfaction
Surveys

92.25%



Q3: 91.28%

Target: 90%

[Green]

Call Quality
Evaluation

95.66%



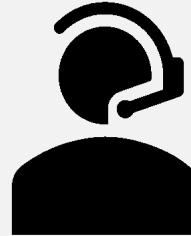
Q3: 95.68%

No target

[Amber]

% Calls
Answered

87.82%



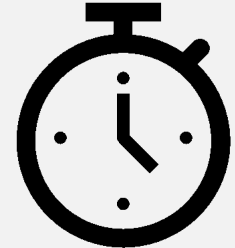
Q3: 88.48%

Target: 89%

[Green]

Customer Support
Centre- Average
Call Wait time (All
Queues)

00:05:50



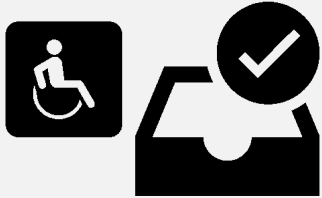
Q3: 00:05:44

Target: <00:12:00

Customer Services - Key Metrics (no targets)

Blue Badge: Average number of days taken from Application to decision

31 days



Q3: 33 days

No target

Blue Badge: Average working days taken from referral for IMA to appointment

16 days



Q3: 16 days

No target

Customer Service Centre - Average wait time (combined services)

00:09:04



Q3: 00:10:26

No target

Customer Service Centre - Customer satisfaction

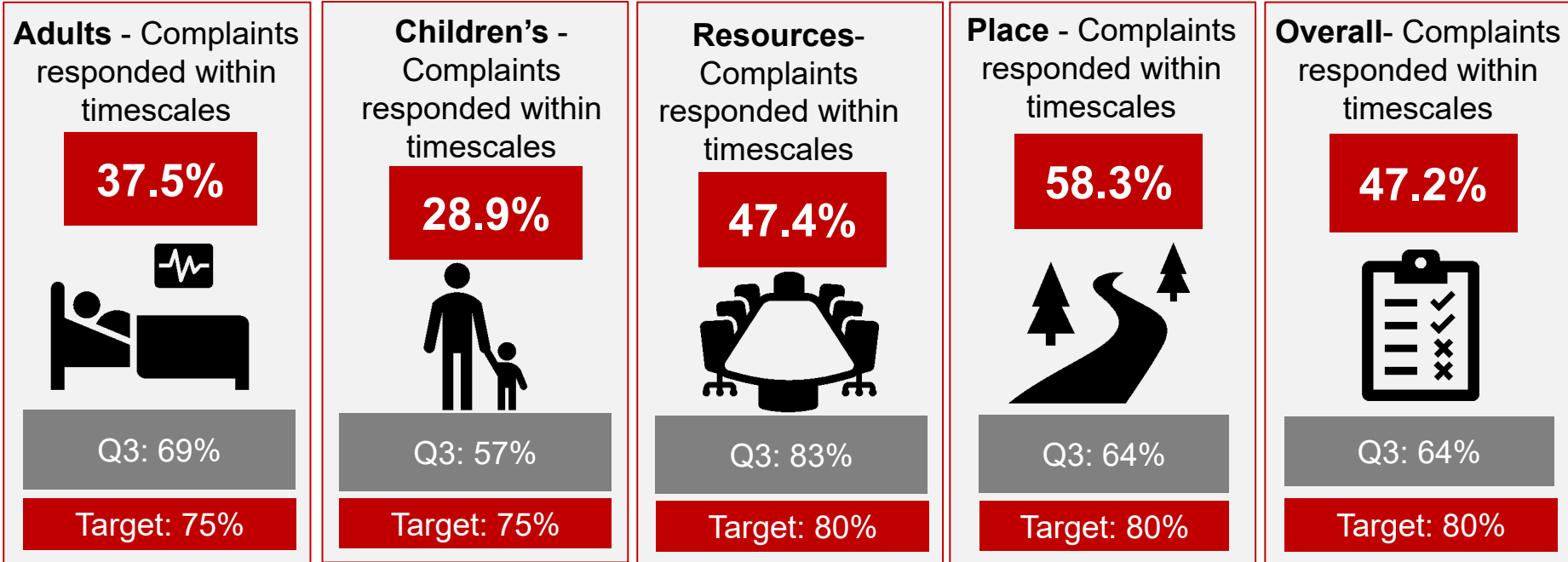
96.77%



New Measure*

No target

Complaints - Key Metrics (against target where set)



We've updated how we report complaint timeliness. Previously, performance included complaints that had been closed. The new approach includes all complaints received and counts any that were already out of timescale at the point of reporting, giving a more accurate and transparent picture of how we're performing.

Customer Services - Successes

Calls Answered	Calls answered for 2024-25 is 5.66% higher than 2023-4.
Average wait time	Average wait time has reduced by 3 minutes
Customer satisfaction	Satisfaction levels have been maintained

Customer Services - Areas for Development (across all metrics)

Complaints Performance

A revision to the methodology has been implemented to report on all open complaints within each quarter.

A recovery plan for Complaints is in development working with Adults, Children's, Place and Resources to drive improvement in our timeliness and quality of complaints responses.

Customer & Digital Experience - Comments

Q3 Comments: Fran Lautman, Assistant Director of Customer & Digital Experience

I am pleased to report marked improvements in complaints performance since Q2: Adults' responses rose from 29% to 69%, Children's from 50% to 57%, Resources from 64% to 83% and overall, from 50% to 64% (target 75%). These gains reflect considerable focus and efforts in this period including implementing improved processes and procedures, delivering training, cleansing historic cases, reorganising corporate complaints into Resources and Place and introducing regular complaint forums in both Children's and Adults' services. We are also finalising self-serve Power BI dashboards for Adults, Children's, Resources and Place which will provide real-time performance data to further drive transparency and improvement as we work towards achieving the 75% target.

Q4 Comments: Fran Lautman, Assistant Director of Customer & Digital Experience

I'm pleased to share that we have delivered significant improvements in Contact Centre performance in 2024-25. The call answer rate has improved by 5.86% against 2023-24 and the average wait time has dropped from 9 minutes to 6 minutes. This has been achieved through a clear focus on understanding service data and working with services around reasons for contact in addition to utilising technology to improve our efficiency such as implementing the auto-switchboard. Performance in Local Welfare Provision applications being processed has been maintained at 92% within 3 working days. Blue Badge applications are now taking 32 days on average compared to 27 in 2023-24 within the context of a 9% increase in applications over the past 12 months. Moving forwards into 2025/26, the Customer Experience Team is being restructured to deliver a 20% budget saving with the priority to protect front line roles to maintain performance as part of our commitment to work with a resident focus. Complaints performance remains a priority area of focus – our performance must improve across the board. A recovery plan is being developed with clear accountability needed in each directorate.

Signed Off: 29/04/2025

Customer and Digital Experience - Portfolio Holder Comments

Q3 Comments: Cllr Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities & Culture

Welcome progress has been made in the performance of responding to complaints since Q2, I'm grateful to Cabinet colleagues and Chief Officers for this but there is still more to do to work towards being a resident focused council.

Q4 Comments: Cllr Peter Dean, Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities & Culture

Obviously the KPIs for complaints are not in the place we want them to be, but in changing the way we measure complaints performance we are being honest with ourselves and we have a better understanding of the services we actually provide to residents. As I said last quarter Cabinet and Chief Officers are committed to improving this situation and I hope this change inspires them to work faster.

Signed Off: 05/06/25

Glossary:

- CSC: Customer Support Centre
- LWP: Local Welfare Provision
- IMA: Independent Mobility Assessment
- PERP: Pre-Election Restriction Period

Human Resources & Organisational Development

Performance Measures & Business Plan Report

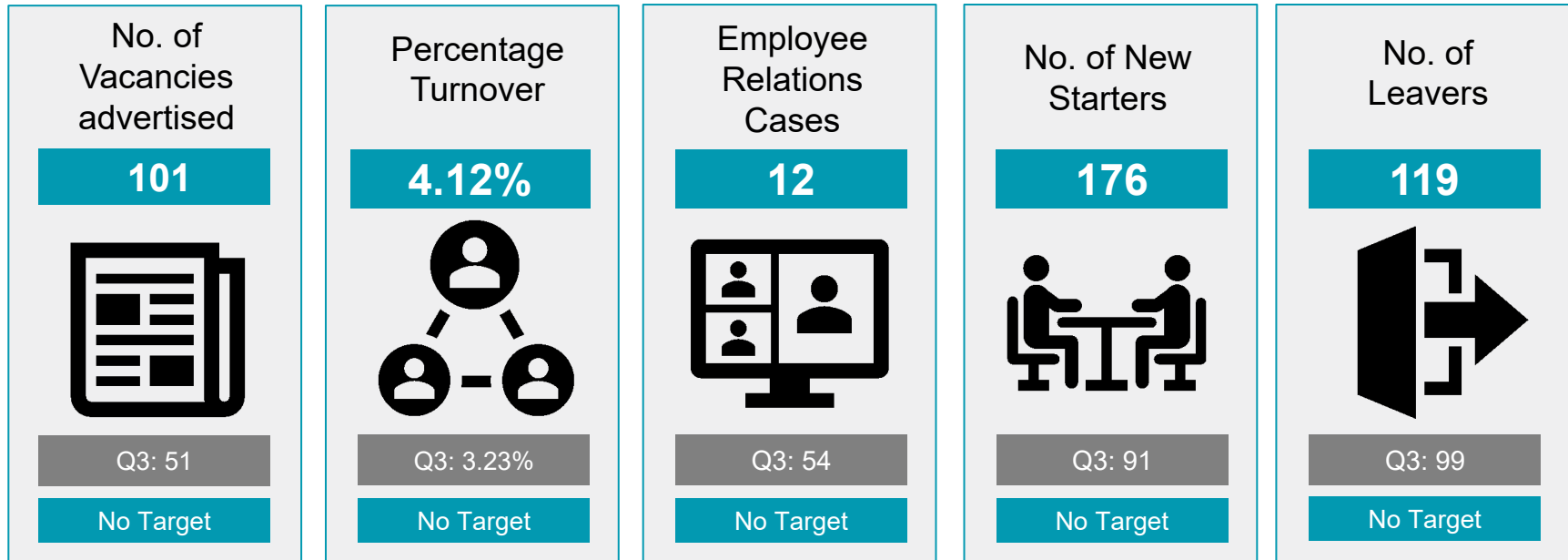
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability

Officer Contact: Wendy Jackson, Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources

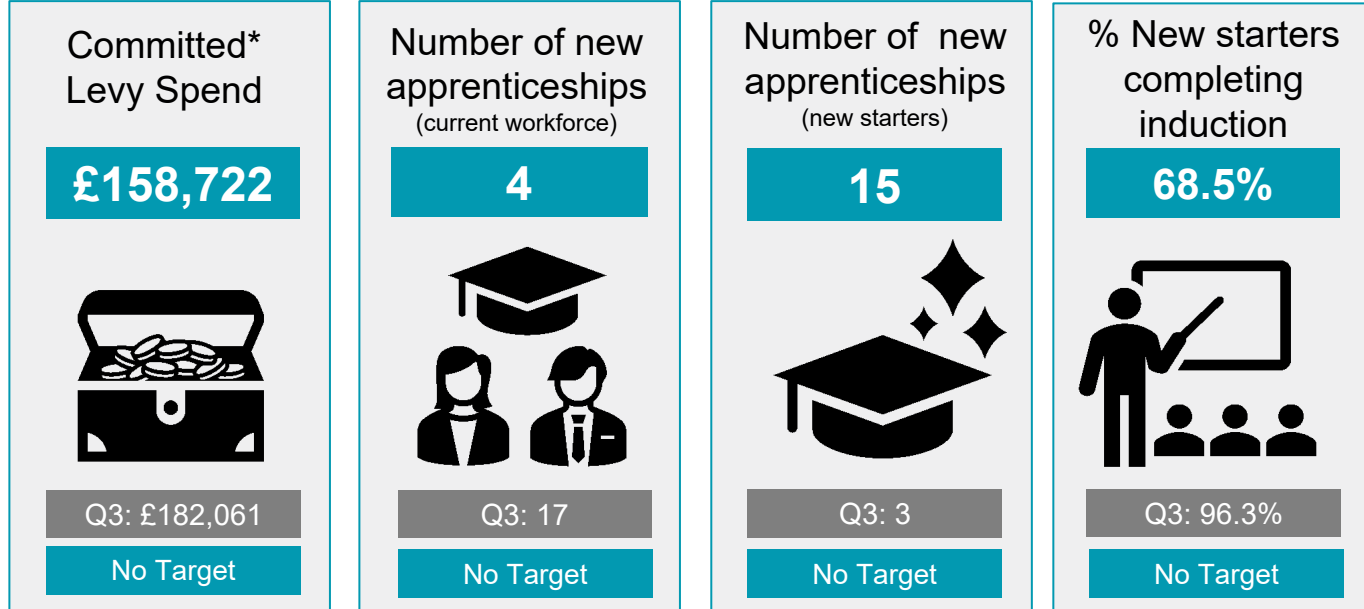
Service Summary: The service provides a range of workforce related functions that support good employment practice and workforce engagement for the Council and external paying customers

- HR advisory, policy & employee relations
- Job Evaluation
- Recruitment
- Workforce systems, workforce data & statutory workforce reporting
- Payroll, pensions & HR transactional
- Learning & Development
- Apprenticeships
- Workforce Wellbeing
- Organisational development & design
- Employee engagement
- Workforce planning

HR & OD - Key Metrics (no targets)



HR & OD - Key Metrics (no targets)



**Spend over the duration of the apprenticeships learning programme*

HR & OD - Successes/Areas for Development

HR & OD - Comments

Q3: Wendy Jackson, Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources

Over the last months there has been a significant amount of work has been undertaken to focus of the performance figures and follow up actions. This focus was that accurate sickness recording within the iTrent system, which has seen a jump in the sickness figures from 5% to 20.9%. Based on the high percentage now showing, a focus on absence management will continue in the coming months.

Q4: Wendy Jackson, Interim Assistant Director of Human Resources

Improvement in Apprenticeships in the last quarter represents the continued drive to bring apprenticeships on board.

Signed Off: 05/06/25

IT & Digital

Performance Measures & Business Plan Report

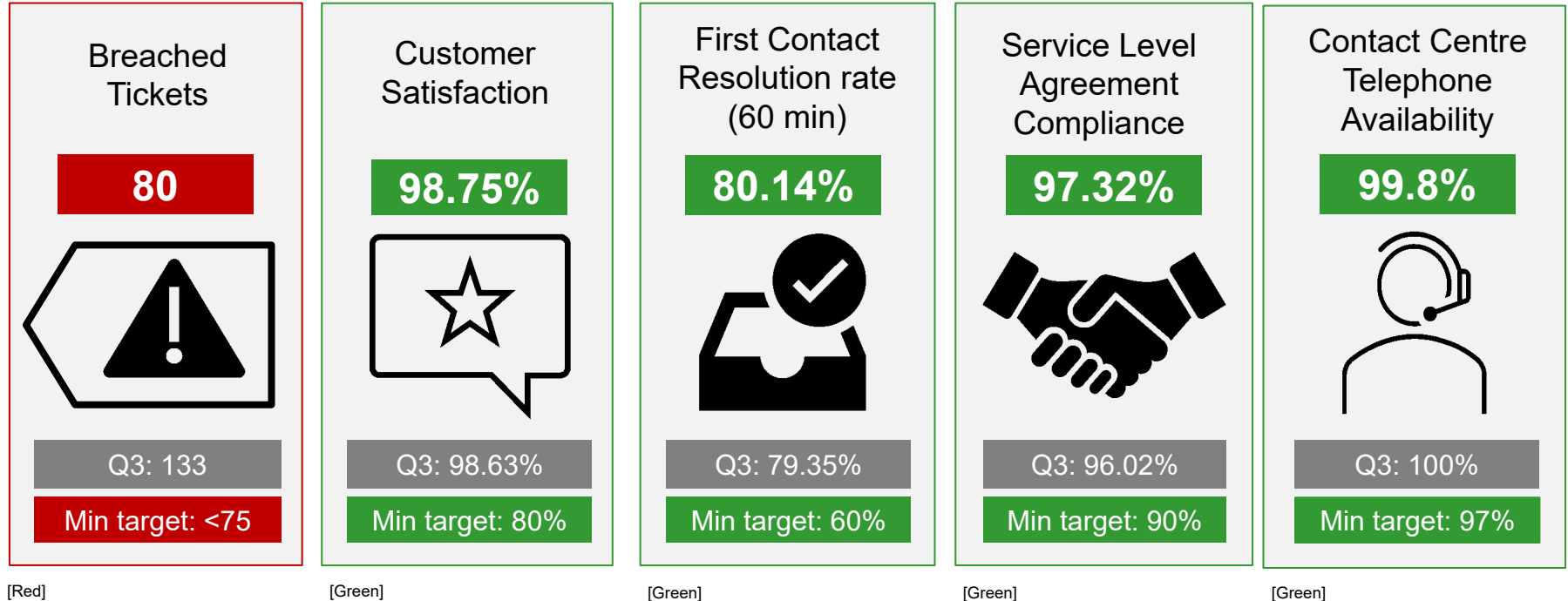
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability

Officer Contact: Chris Rawding, Interim Director of IT & Digital

Service Summary:

The role of the IT team is to deliver seamless and reliable IT services and projects that drive the success of Oldham Council. IT are committed to enhancing operational efficiency, supporting all departments, and embracing innovation to meet the evolving needs of our organisation.

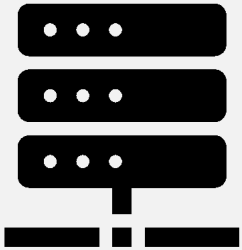
IT (Operations) - Key Metrics (against target where set)



IT (Operations) - Key Metrics (against target where set)

Business Critical
Applications
Available

99.07%



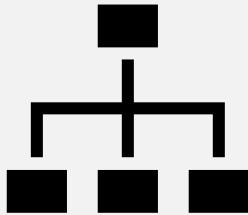
Q3: 100%

Min target: 97%

[Green]

Business Critical
Infrastructure

99.23%



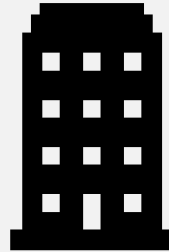
Q3: 100%

Min target: 97%

[Green]

LAN Availability –
Civic Centre

99.81%



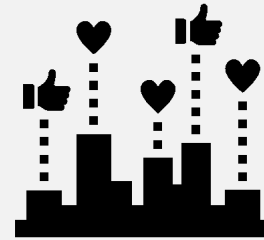
Q3: 100%

Min target: 97%

[Green]

WAN Availability
– Council Sites

99.81%



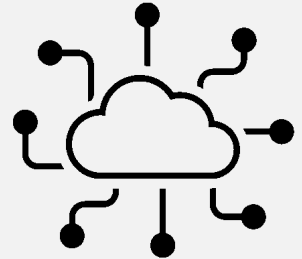
Q3: 96.56%

Min target: 95%

[Green]

Remote
Connection
Availability

99.81%



Q3: 100%

Min target: 97%

[Green]

IT (Operations) - Successes

Departmental Operational Roadmaps 25/26 - signed off and published

Draft Digital, Data and Technology Strategy 25/30 – created and under peer review

Phase One of Moving to Modern Deployment Methods (Intune) - completed

Microsoft M365 Licence Reduction / Consolidation - completed

IT (Projects) - Successes

Resident Cloud Printing in Oldham Library - Completed

BARTEC Trade Waste – Fully Implemented

Wi-Fi Refresh – 48 sites Completed

Royton Children's Home – IT Installation Completed

IT (Operations) - Areas for Development

Breeched tickets

We continue to focus on breached tickets, executing the improvement plan to drive breached tickets below the 75-ticket threshold. On average we receive 10k new tickets every quarter, with an average closure rate of 90.5%.

IT (Operations) - Comments

Q3: Lindsey Al-Basri, *IT Head of Projects*

The 3 months from October witnessed more Council teams and partners coming into Spindles further proving the new infrastructure. The build of the new Primary Comms Room is progressing, ready for completion in early Q4, when we commence a major milestone of migration from the old data centre in the Civic, to Spindles. The laptop refresh project has now started with IT being the first department to be implemented and with early adopters across the Council being progressed, but the expected and welcome impact of having a fresh estate has not yet reached a point to reduce device failures but Q4 and into 25/26 will see the benefit of reduced service calls from this. However, our initiative to improve Wifi across council sites is progressing well, and due to finish in Q4 as is the implementation and migration of sites onto the new GMA Network which continues and is gathering pace.

Q4: Chris Rawding, *Interim Director IT & Digital*

Over the last quarter, IT Operations has made significant strides in laying the groundwork for future success. We successfully gained sign-off and published the Departmental Operational Roadmaps for 2025/26, providing a clear direction for our activities. Furthermore, we have crafted the Draft Digital, Data and Technology Strategy for 2025-2030, which is currently undergoing valuable peer review. Operationally, we celebrated the completion of Phase One of our transition to Modern Deployment Methods using Intune, streamlining our device management. In our ongoing efforts to foster a connected and thriving Oldham, we have also been actively working to improve Wi-Fi infrastructure across council sites. Regarding the Laptop Refresh project, as early adopters, we identified that the Microsoft Surface devices did not meet our enterprise-grade requirements due to limited battery performance and processing power. Moving forward, we have rigorously tested new devices from several alternative vendors and will be showcasing these options to key stakeholders to ensure a collective agreement on the most suitable devices. Finally, we successfully completed a crucial Microsoft M365 Licence Reduction and Consolidation initiative, optimising our resource and cost utilisation.

Signed Off: 12/05/2025

Finance

Performance Measures & Business Plan Report

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate Services & Sustainability

Officer Contact: Fiona Greenway, interim Director Finance

Service Summary:

The Finance Service provides a wide range of functions primarily focussed on the delivery of financial management information, advice and support to Council officers and Members, but also members of the public, Central Government and other partner organisations.

Finance - Key Metrics (against target where set)

Average time taken to process *New Claims* -
Housing Benefits

19 days



Q3: 23 days

Target: 27 days

[Green]

Average time taken to process *Change in Circumstances* -
Housing Benefit

5 days



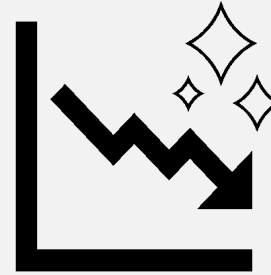
Q3: 4 days

Target: 27 days

[Green]

Average time taken to process *New Claims* -
Council Tax Reduction

28 days



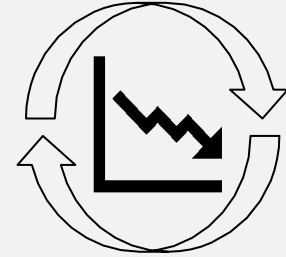
Q3: 22 days

Target: 20 days

[Red]

Average time taken to process *Change in Circumstances* -
Council Tax Reduction

7 days



Q3: 7 Days

Target: 20 Days

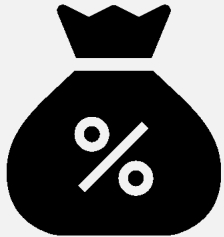
[Green]

Finance - Key Metrics (against target where set)

Percentage of in-year
Council Tax collected

93.82%

Current position
(cumulative)



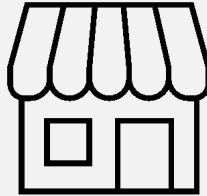
Q4 (2023/24):
94.11%

No Target

Percentage of in year
national non-domestic
rates collected

97.37%

Current position
(cumulative)



Q4 (2023/24):
96.22%

No target

Valid invoices paid
within 30 days

83.04%

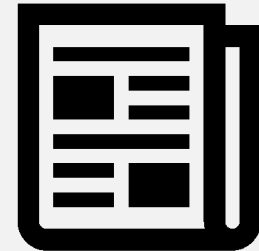


Q3: 83.15%

Target: 94%

FOI & EIR completed
within timescales

92.6%



Q3: 90%

Target: 85%

[Red]

[Green]

Finance - Summary Update

Procurement - Summary Update

Q4: *Jasmin Banks-Lee, Interim Head of Commercial Procurement Unit*

Procurement are now operating under the new Procurement Act 2023 in addition to continuing to apply Public Contracts Regulations 2015 where applicable. New procurement templates continue to be developed (75% complete and with legal for review) and the Council CPRs are being reviewed to ensure they fully adopt PA23. STAR Procurement conducted two training sessions one for Management and the other being more operationally focused, to both educate on public procurement and share the changes PA23 brings, with an emphasis on the requirement for more transparency under the Act which will expose contracting authorities which are non-compliant with PA23.

This month has seen an increase in staff engaging with procurement to ensure contracts are fairly awarded. We have seen 3 (possibly a fourth) shift away from 'usual' suppliers where, by conducting a procurement exercise they have either scored poorly which is reflective of stakeholder feedback on their services, or where other, new suppliers have been given the opportunity to bid and proposed better and more cost effective contract solutions. This will allow procurement to start to record cost avoidance and savings which hasn't been done in previous years.

Planning has commenced for the procurement of solutions for Construction and Highways and Temporary Accommodation which are key projects and had previously been on hold due to a lack of resource. These will need to be suitably resourced due to the scale of the tasks.

Finance - Comments

Q3: Adam Parsey, Interim Head of Revenues

The accounts payable team has been impacted by staff sickness resulting in an increase in the average time to process invoices. Universal Credit migration and an increase in change of circumstances notifications from the DWP has increased workload for the benefit team. The focus has been to ensure Housing Benefit processing remains within DWP targets, however the team are working to bring Council Tax reduction new and change of circumstances back in line.

Q4: Adam Parsey, Interim Head of Revenues

The service performed strongly during Q4, notably in the processing of Housing Benefit new claims, and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction change of circumstances. Performance on new Council Tax reduction claims fell short in part due to an increased amount of DWP notifications because of ongoing UC Migration. To address this the team are testing new automation tools to streamline these processes with an aim to implement ahead of Q2.

Council Tax collection ended slightly below target at 93.82% which remains a solid outcome given current economic pressures and is consistent with performance at comparable local authorities.

The percentage of valid invoices paid within 30 days was 83.04%, below the 94% target. This dip was partly due to staff sickness during Q3 and Q4. With all staff back at work, performance in this area is expected to improve in Q1 of 2025/26.

Signed Off: 09/05/2025

Finance Glossary:

- FOI: Freedom of Information
- EIR: Environmental Information Regulations
- CTR: Council Tax Reduction
- SPD: Single Person Discount
- CPU: Commercial Procurement Unit

Finance / Procurement / HR & OD / IT - Portfolio Holder Comments

Q3: Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Value for Money & Sustainability

I'm incredibly proud to report that once again Oldham is one of the few authorities in the country to have submitted our accounts for 2023/24 to audit by the statutory deadline, this is no easy task but the team have worked tremendously hard under difficult circumstances to complete this work.

While the average time to process new CTR claims isn't yet where we'd like it to be I'm glad progress has been made back towards the target from its high of 30days in Q2.

Q4: Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Value for Money & Sustainability

The increase in new CTR claims back up to 28 days is worrying given the economic climate and what this might mean to our resident's income, I have asked the team to look into new ways of processing, including automation, to get this back where we'd like to be. I'm grateful to colleagues across the council whose valuable feedback has helped ensure we proceed with the correct approach regarding the laptop refresh project. I know the implementation of the new procurement act 2023 has been challenging but I'm delighted to see that it is already delivering better services and value for money for our residents.

Signed Off: 05/06/25