

## Rother District Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	13 December 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Performance Report: Second Quarter 2021/22
<b>Report of:</b>	Director – Place and Climate Change
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Dixon
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To consider the recommendations arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 November 2021, regarding the Performance Report: Second Quarter 2021/22. The report and recommendations arising are reproduced below and the Minutes of that meeting (Appendix F) should be read in conjunction with this report.
<b>Decision Type:</b>	Non-Key
<b>Officer Recommendation(s):</b>	It be <b>RESOLVED:</b> That suitable Council-owned sites to accommodate pre-fabricated buildings to be used as temporary accommodation, be further explored.

---





































### Introduction



1. For the financial year 2021/22, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and Cabinet selected a set of 13 key performance indicators (KPIs). These indicators stand as a barometer of the delivery of the Councils' Corporate Plan and those service areas that Members wish to scrutinise over the year, as agreed by Cabinet on 24 May 2021.
2. For the 2021/22 financial year, the focus has been set on five themes:
  - Housing and Communities: to monitor delivery of the Housing and Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
  - Economic Development and Poverty: to monitor the impact of the pandemic on household incomes, council tax and business rates collection.
  - Waste Collection: to monitor the proportion of household waste collected that is sent for reuse, composting and recycling.
  - Additional Income: to monitor significant non-tax income as a part of the Council's revenue streams.
  - Planning processing: to monitor the processing times of applications.
3. This report is a summary of the Council's performance against the five themes at the end of the second financial quarter (1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021). The report gives Members an opportunity to scrutinise the progress

towards the Council's stated aims, outcomes and actions in the Corporate Plan and makes any necessary recommendations to Cabinet for future service delivery.

## Overview

4. A summary of the KPI performance is set out in the table below. Performance is compared to the previous quarter result and to the same quarter the previous year.

<b>Housing &amp; Communities</b>	Status	Compared to same quarter previous year	Compared to previous measurement
Number of all households in temporary accommodation			
Average weeks in temporary accommodation			
Number of households on the housing register			
Net additional homes provided (supply target)			
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (supply target)			
<b>Economic Development and Poverty</b>	Status	Compared to same quarter previous year	Compared to previous measurement
Number of Council Tax reduction claimants			
Council Tax collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit)			<i>Not comparable</i>
Business Rates collection rates (income received as a % of collectable debit)			<i>Not comparable</i>
<b>Waste Collection</b>	Status	Compared to same quarter previous year	Compared to previous measurement
ESCC Waste re-used, composted and recycled (reported one quarter in arrears)			
<b>Additional Income</b>	Status	Compared to same quarter previous year	Compared to previous measurement
Net income from all investment assets			
Additional income generation		<i>New indicator 2021/22</i>	
<b>Planning Processing</b>	Status	Compared to same quarter previous year	Compared to previous measurement
Major applications: days to process			
Minor applications: days to process			

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				

5. The tables of performance and explanation accompanying each of the five themes can be found at Appendices A, B, C, D and E.

### Indicators by Exception

6. Members requested to have reported, by exception, any other performance that is doing significantly better or significantly worse than its target set. For this quarter there is nothing further to report.

### Conclusion

7. This report sets our performance against the agreed key performance indicators for the five themes for the second quarter of 2021/22.
8. Members are requested to consider performance against targets or forecasts and pass any additional recommendations for action to Cabinet for consideration.

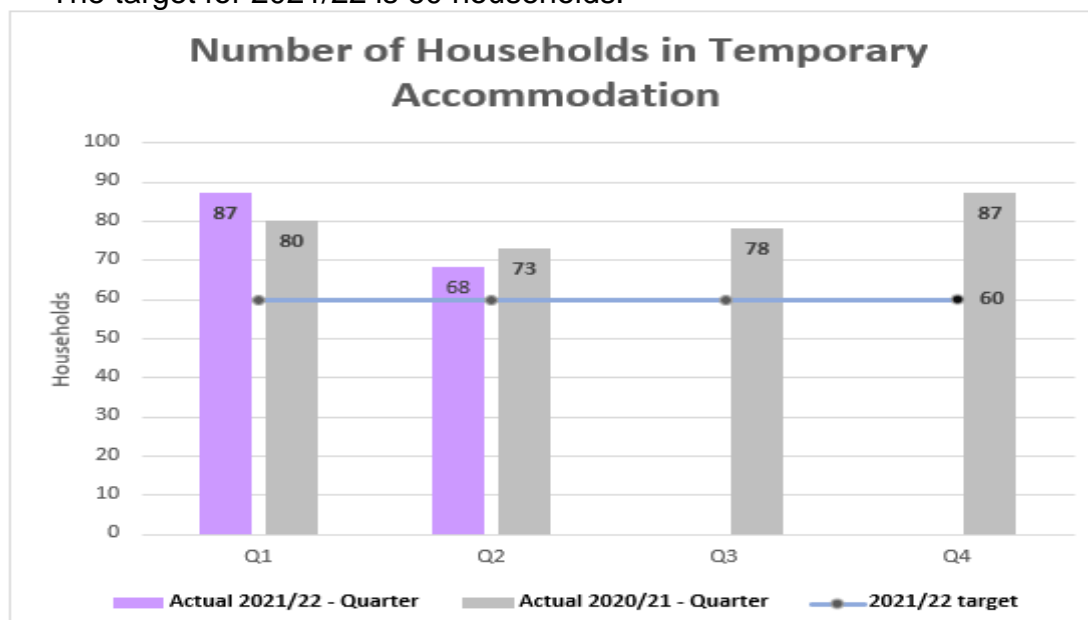
Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	Yes	Exempt from publication	No

Chief Executive:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Joanne Wright
e-mail address:	<a href="mailto:joanne.wright@rother.gov.uk">joanne.wright@rother.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	A – Housing & Homelessness B – Economic Development and Poverty C – Waste Collection D – Additional Income E – Planning Processing F – OSC Minutes 22.11.21
Relevant previous Minutes:	CB21/7

## HOUSING & COMMUNITIES

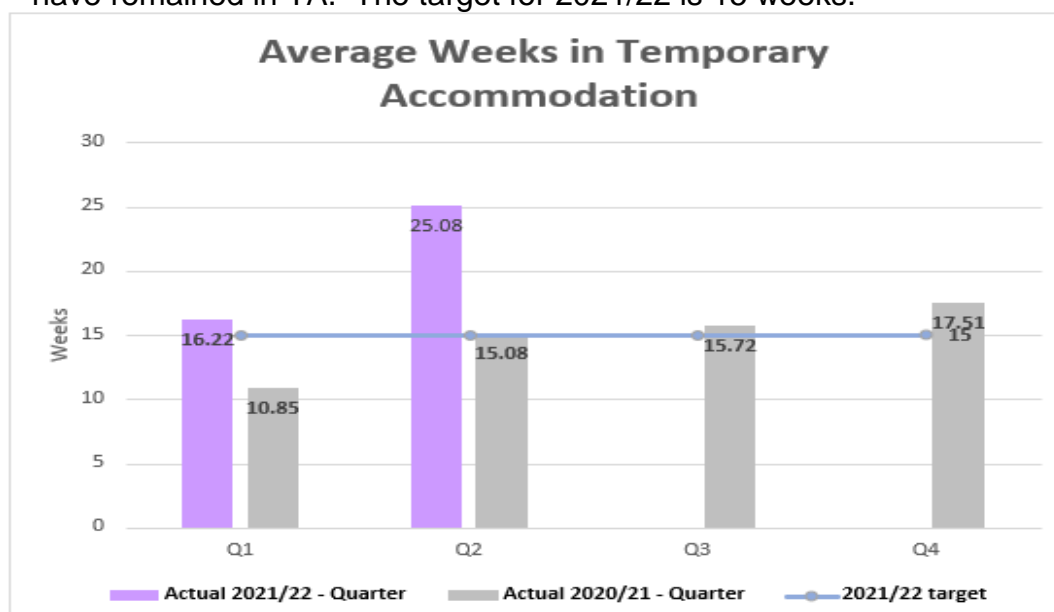
### Number of all Households in Temporary Accommodation

1. This measurement is the number of households that the Council has placed in temporary accommodation (TA) on the last day of the month. Mainly these are households either accepted as homeless and waiting for a home or are waiting for a decision on their application for homelessness.
2. The target for 2021/22 is 60 households.



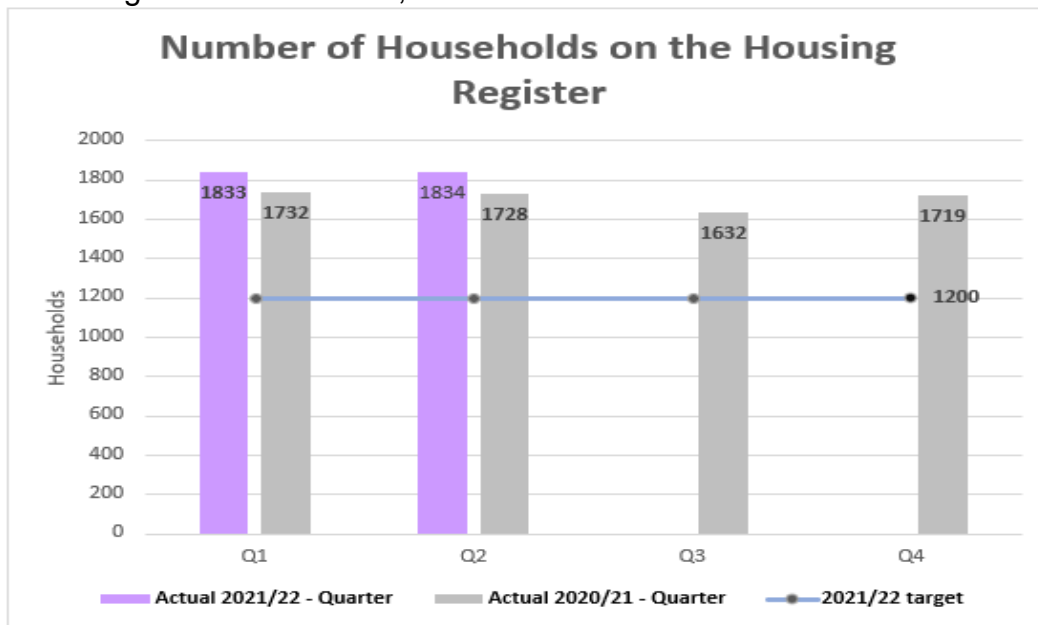
### Average Weeks in Temporary Accommodation

3. This measurement is the average number of weeks that households in TA have remained in TA. The target for 2021/22 is 15 weeks.



## Number of Households on the Housing Register

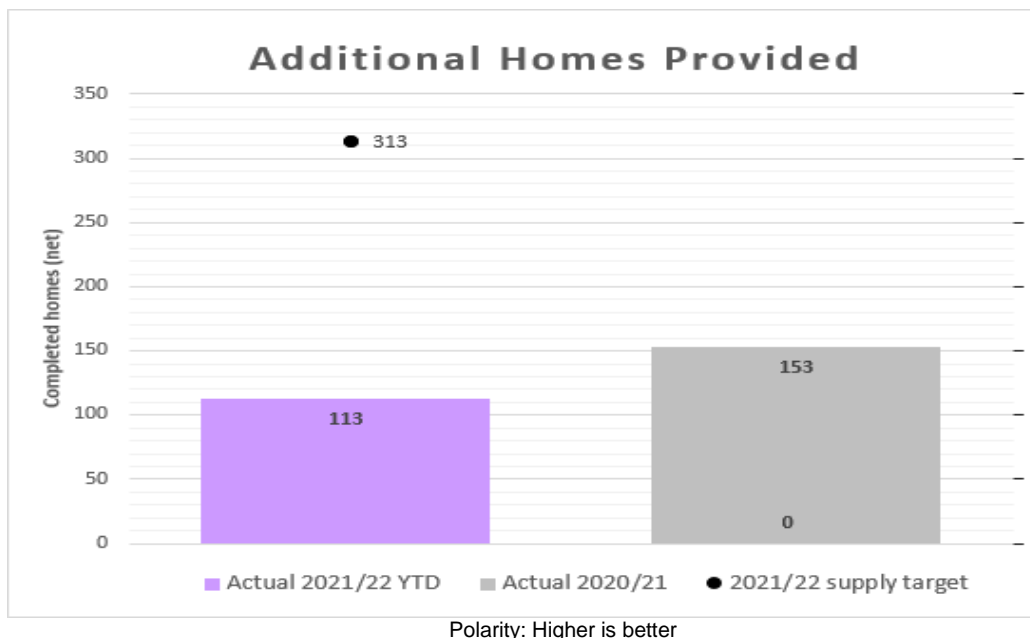
4. This measurement is the number of households on the housing register on the last day of the month when measured. This list covers all households who meet the criteria to be able to join the register.
5. The target for 2021/22 is 1,200 households.



Polarity: Lower is better

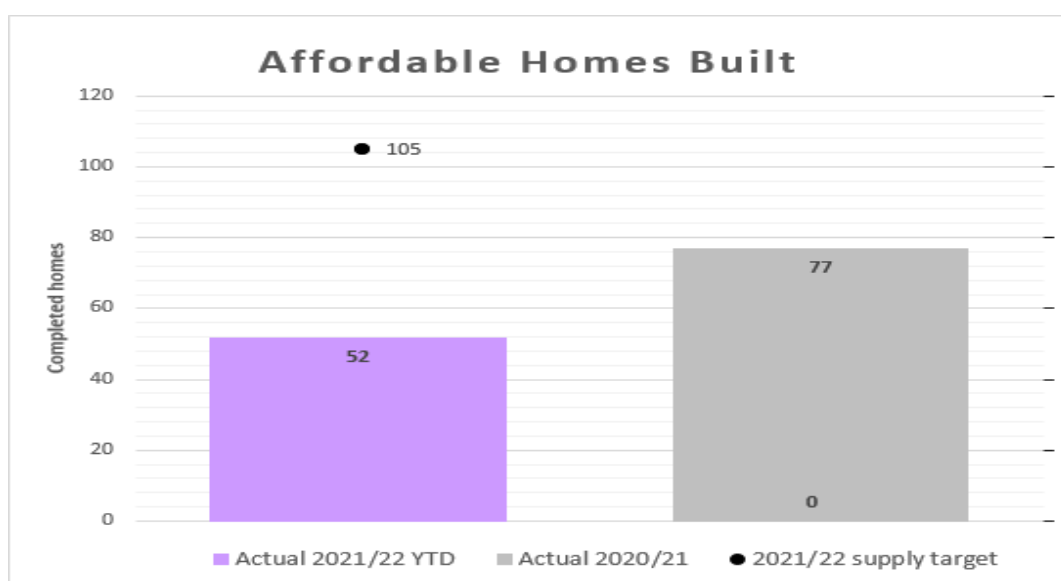
## Additional Homes Provided

6. This measurement counts the number of all new homes in Rother, allowing for demolitions and change of use to give a net gain. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes to manage spatial development and the provision of affordable and decent housing stock.
7. This indicator has two targets: the supply target and the Local Plan target. The supply target is based on the projected delivery for the year, as set out in the April 2020 Housing Land Supply and Trajectory report. The supply target is 313 new homes for 21/22.
8. As the Core Strategy is now more than 5 years old, the Local Plan target is now based on the standard method for assessing Local Housing Need. As of April 2020, the annual Local Plan target is 736. It should be noted that this figure does not include the 20% buffer which is required to be included within the Council's five-year housing land supply position calculations.



### Affordable Homes Built

9. This measurement is the gross number of new affordable homes that have been completed in the district. By completed we mean that the home has been built and handed over from the developer to the provider for occupation by a tenant or purchaser. The home may not yet be occupied. This measurement monitors the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcome for affordable and decent housing stock, specifically the action to support the development of affordable accommodation.
10. The indicator has two targets: the supply target and the Local Plan target. The supply target is based on anticipated delivery from planned sites that we knew about at the time of setting the target. The supply target is 105 affordable new homes for 2021/22. The Local Plan target is based on local housing need set out in the Local Plan and is set at 121 new affordable homes by the end of 2021/22.



## Housing & Communities Summary

11. We have begun to see a reduction in TA placements. The reduction is an indicator of the success of improvements to internal processes as well as a renewed focus on staff training under a new management structure. The increased average length of stay in TA can be attributed to a lack of move on accommodation for our most difficult to house households. The situation is exacerbated by challenges associated with COVID-19, and a lack of move on accommodation both the private and social housing sectors.
12. We have seen an increase in property owners no longer willing to let their properties and wishing to sell to maximise their income in these uncertain times. We are continuing to engage local agents and small portfolio holders to adapt and adjust our landlord incentives within the Rother Tenant Finder. We have begun to see more successes as a result of this engagement, something that is reflected in the reduced number of TA placements. We also hope to begin leasing properties in the new year and provide more affordable accommodation that is safe and well managed.
13. We are continuing to have offers accepted on properties for our own TA following the additional investment approved by Cabinet in recent months; our TA ownership and Housing First properties currently stands at 10 properties.
14. Re-assessments for those on the Housing Register has commenced, with estimates of re-assessing all those who complete the paperwork within 20 weeks. It is expected that the new Allocations Policy will go live in the new year.
15. The net increase in homes in Rother is 113. This is an addition of 49 new homes on the second quarter alone. There were 64 new homes in the first quarter. This means that in the first two quarters we have 74% of the total new homes built over all of the previous financial year. Figures remain an estimate at this stage.
16. There were 29 affordable homes handed over during Q2 of 2021/22 compared to 23 in Q1. These were delivered across 3 sites in Bexhill and Battle and were made up of both affordable rent and shared ownership properties. A good range of property sizes were delivered in the previous quarter from 1 bedroom flats up to 4 bedroom houses. Of the 29 affordable homes handed over, 15 were for Affordable Rent and 14 were for Shared Ownership.
17. Breakdown of sites delivering during Q2 2021/22:  
  
Mount View St, Bexhill: 10 units. All affordable rent. 5 x 1 bedroom, 5 x 2 bedrooms (Orbit).  
  
Barnhorn Rd, Rosewood Park, Bexhill: 7 units. 5 affordable rent: 2 x 1 bedroom; 2 x 2 bedrooms; 1 x 4 bedrooms. 2 shared ownership: 2 x 2 bedrooms (Optivo).  
  
Tollgates, Battle: 12 units. All shared ownership: 3 x 2 bedrooms; 5 x 3 bedrooms; 4 x 4 bedrooms (Optivo).

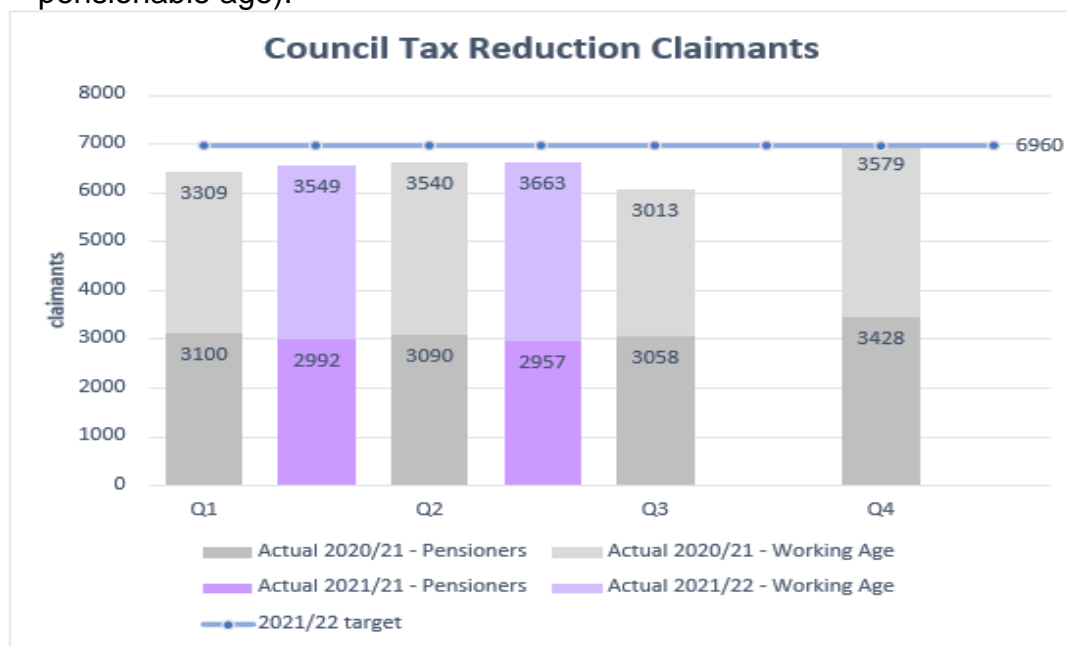
18. We are also expecting further affordable housing completions at Preston Hall Farm, Bexhill during 2021/22.
19. Development is also underway on-site at Westfield Down (Optivo); Darvel Down, Netherfield (Optivo); Main Road, Icklesham (Hastoe) and Lilybank, Battle (Places for People).



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and POVERTY

### Number of Council Tax Reduction Claimants

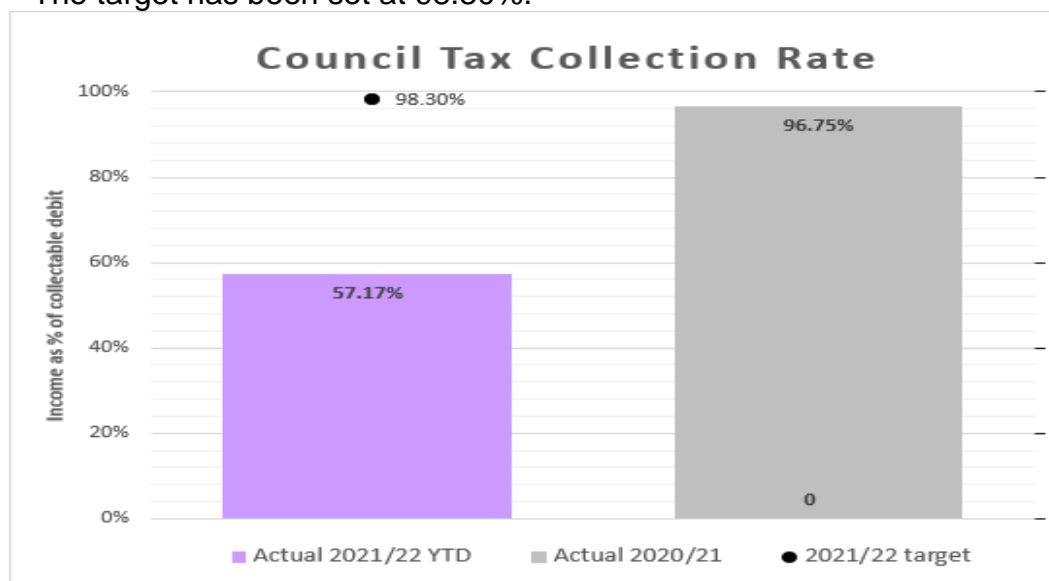
1. This measurement monitors the total number of council tax reduction claimants (working age and pensioner) in a receipt of a reduced council tax bill.
2. The measurement indicator has been set at 6,960 (3,919 working age, 3,041 pensionable age).



Polarity: Lower is better

### Council Tax Collection Rates

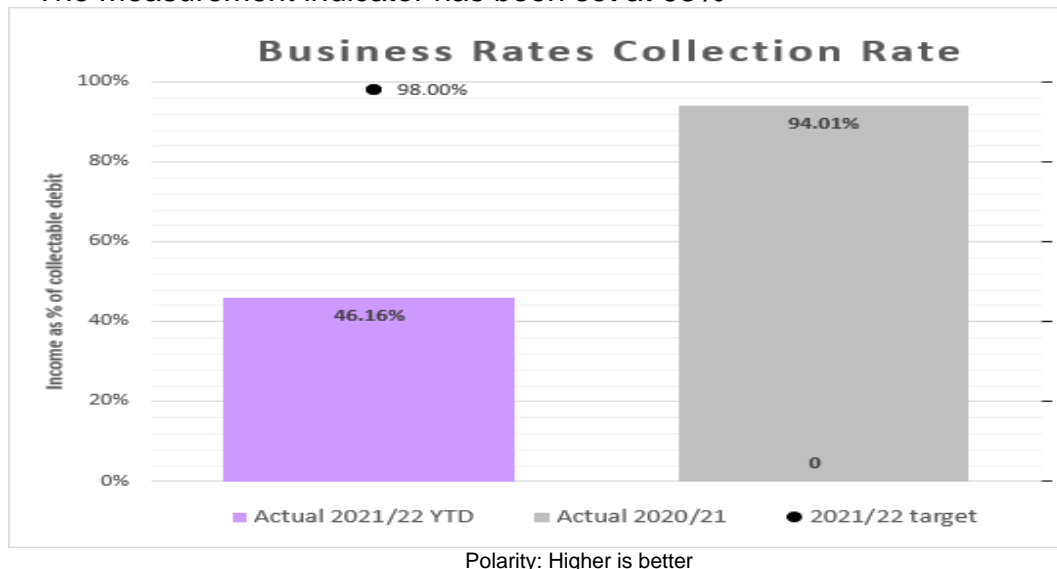
3. This measurement monitors the percentage of council tax estimated collectable debt in the year.
4. The target has been set at 98.30%.



Polarity: Higher is better

## Business Rates Collection rates

5. This measurement monitors the percentage of business rates collected of the estimated collectable debt in the year.
6. The measurement indicator has been set at 98%



## Economic Development and Poverty Summary

7. The number of CTR claimants remains broadly similar to the previous year and below the total estimated claimants for the year. There was an expectation that the ending of the furlough scheme might result in a spike in the number of claimants, but so far that does not seem to have occurred. This will continue to be monitored closely and Members updated in future reports.
8. Council Tax collection rates for the current year as at the end of September are approximately 1.4% ahead of 2020/21 which were hit during the start of the pandemic. Arrears of Council Tax from prior years now stand at £3.5m of which £1.5m relates to 2020/21. A significant proportion of the outstanding debt is covered through a bad debt provision. However, this may need to be increased as year-end approaches and additional provision made. This will impact the 2022/23 financial year with the major preceptors meeting about 90% of any increase. To give Members an insight into the recovery action taking place, the following table shows the activity from first reminder through to post court arrangements. In addition, over 4,600 households have special payment arrangements in place.

### Council Tax 2021/2022 Recovery

	Sept	Year to date
First Reminders issued	753	9,174
Final Notices	505	6,453
Summons issued	315	2,381
Liability Orders issued	226	1,565
Cases to Bailiff	707	722
Attachment of Earnings	3	9
Charging Orders	1	1
Attachment of Benefits	57	141

9. Business Rates collection rates are lower than previous years. This has been distorted by the additional rate relief the Government awarded for the first quarter of the year and the near 100% relief awarded in 2020/21. As at September the collection rate had increased to 46.68%. Arrears for previous years stand at £985,000 and again a substantial part is covered by bad debt provision. The wide scope of the rate relief has resulted in a low outstanding amount of £300,000 relating to 2020/21. As with Council Tax, recovery activities remain high as shown below:

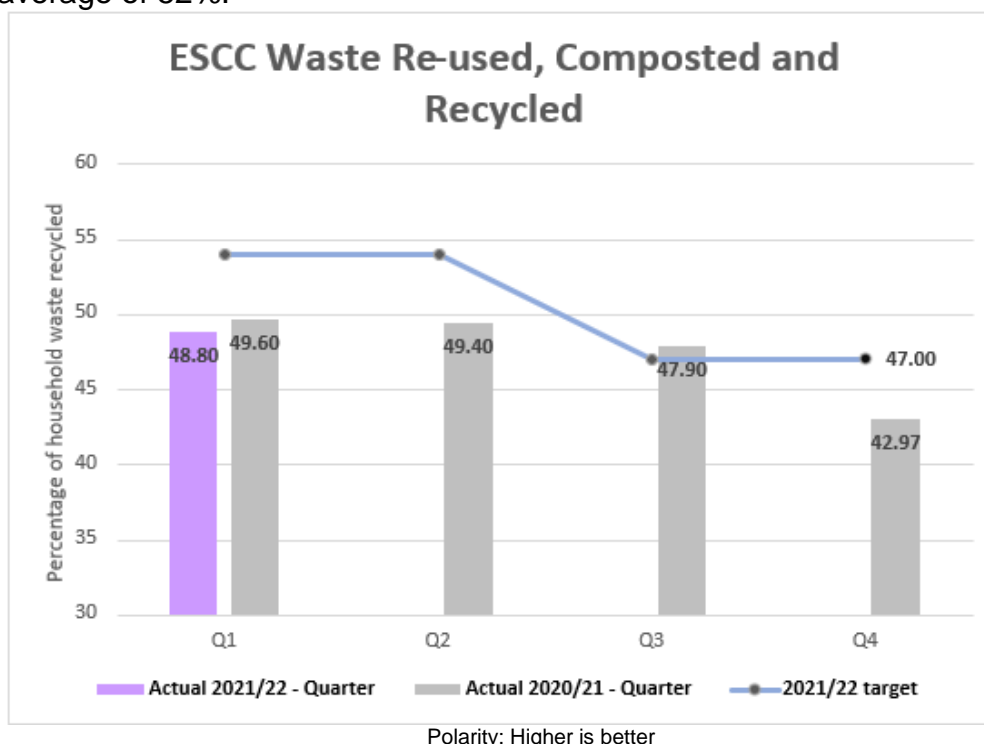
**Business Rates 2021/2022 Recovery**

	<b>Sept</b>	<b>Year to date</b>
First Reminders issued	168	852
Final Notices	111	608
Summons issued	13	129
Liability Orders issued	4	74
Cases to Bailiff	28	28

## WASTE COLLECTION

### Household waste Re-used, Composted and Recycled

1. This measurement is the percentage of collected household waste sent to be re-used, recycled and composted.
2. This is based on data reported by East Sussex County Council (ESCC) which includes all waste collection streams and is reported one quarter in arrears. The target for 2021/22 varies depending on the time of year leading to an average of 52%.



### Waste Collection Summary

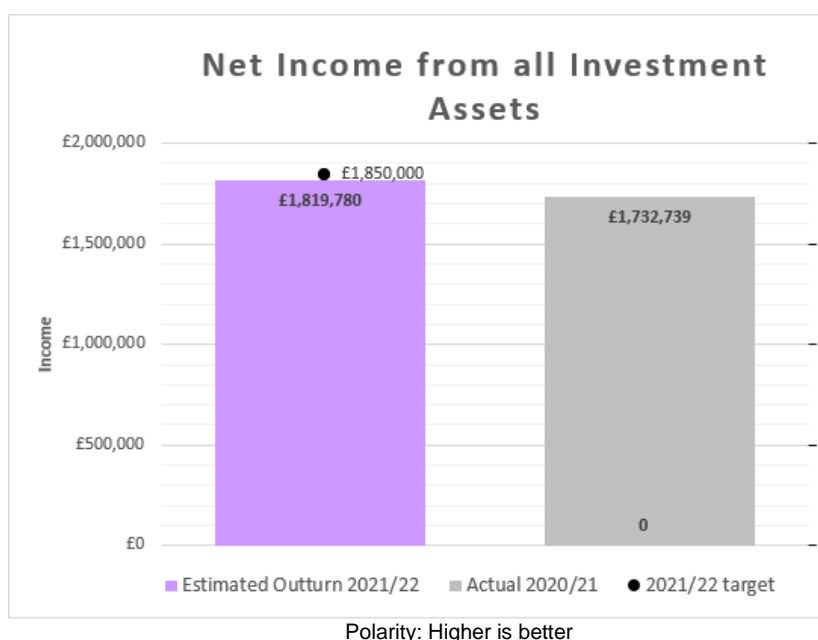
3. Please note, ESCC advise that the recycling rates for the districts and boroughs are currently under review due to discrepancies between ESCC figures and DEFRA's for some authorities and are subject to change. ESCC will provide an update on this in due course.
4. The overall recycling rate for quarter one is 48.8% according to Waste Data Flow. This is lower than targeted and lower than the previous first quarter, which was 49.6%.
5. The collection of recycling materials from 'Bring Sites' continues to be of poor quality, and it has been, and continues to be, necessary to collect much of these sites as refuse rather than recycling. This will have had a minor impact on the recycling percentage during 2020/2021 and in quarter 1 of 2021/2022.
6. Domestic waste tonnages remain high whilst people continue to work from home and the number of fly tips, according to Biffa data, remain high but are beginning to reduce slowly from a high of 134 in March 2021 to 74 in June 2021. It remains to be seen if this reduction continues.

7. ESCC Household Waste and Recycling sites have only just begun to operate normal opening times and site access procedures and this may support further reduction in the number of fly tips. A total of 16 'bring sites' have been closed and work is ongoing to monitor contamination levels.
8. Following a successful campaign in the Autumn, garden waste subscribers exceeded the target of 20,000 paid customers by 31 March 2021, and current confirmed paid subscribers was at 20,614 as at 29 October 2021.
9. UK Environment Bill – The latest update (28 October 2021 on the Government's website) is that it is at the consideration of amendments stage. It could be several months before it is known how waste and recycling will be impacted.

## ADDITIONAL INCOME

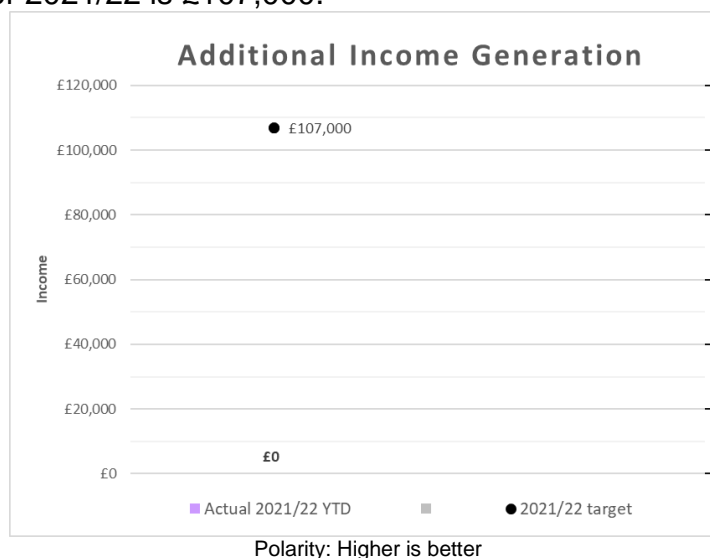
### Net Income from All Investment Assets

1. This measurement is forecast annual net income from investments calculated from gross income less expenditure excluding borrowing and interest payments.
2. The Asset Income total does not include 'community' assets which might also generate an income such as sports facilities, allotments etc.
3. The target for 2020/21 is £1,850,000. This does not include any provision for income from any new property purchases achieved in the year.



### Additional Income Generation

4. Additional income generation through increased or new fees for discretionary services.
5. The target for 2021/22 is £107,000.



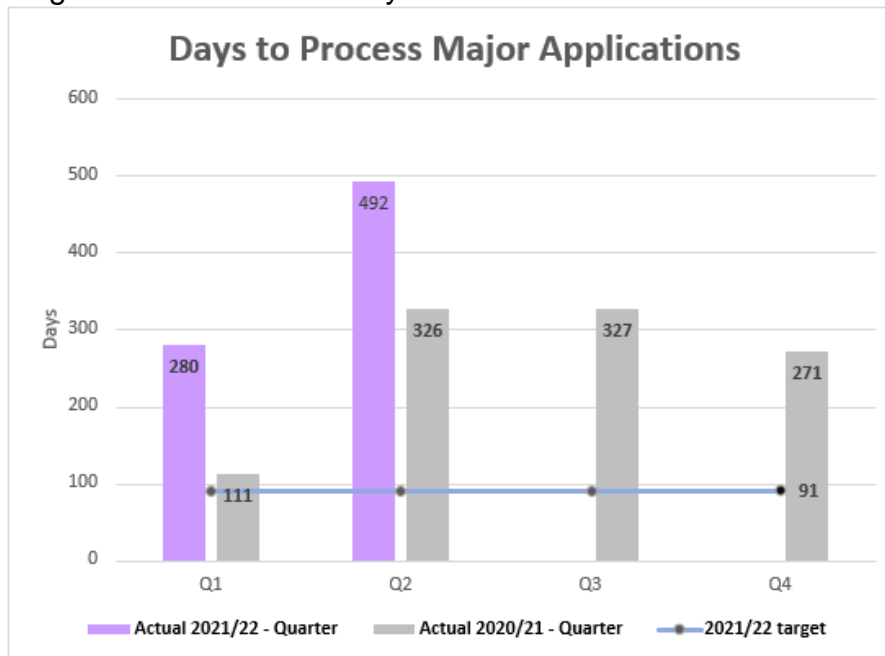
## **Additional Income Summary**

6. There is a projected small shortfall of 1.6% or £30,000 in the projected 2021/22 outturn. The property team are actively looking to improve revenues from existing assets to bridge this gap. We have been successful in letting vacant space at Napier House, Peasmarsh units and elsewhere. We continue to pursue rent reviews where these are outstanding as well as collecting arrears. Longer term, we are focusing on maximising revenue opportunities at key regeneration and development sites we already own such as Beeching Road, Camber, and Barnhorn Green.
7. Delivering additional income is integral to the Financial Stability Programme. Work has commenced with Heads of Service to identify proposals that will be presented to the Financial Stability Programme Board in due course. As a result of the continuing pandemic, this work and the subsequent implementation of proposals is delayed and therefore it is unlikely that the target for 2021/22 will be met.

## PLANNING PROCESSING

### Days to Process Major Applications

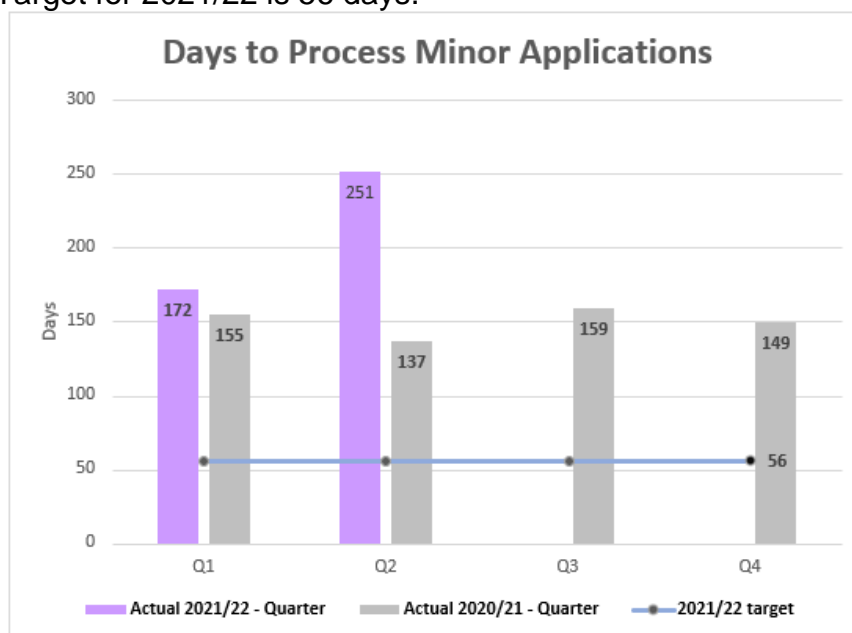
1. This measurement is the average number of calendar days to determine 'major' planning applications.
2. The target for 2021/22 is 91 days.



Polarity: Lower is better

### Days to Process Minor Planning Applications

3. This measurement is the average number of calendar days to determine 'minor' planning applications.
4. The Target for 2021/22 is 56 days.



Polarity: Lower is better



## Planning Processing Summary

5. The time taken to determine planning applications remains high and this is acknowledged by the Council.
6. Essentially, the causes centre around limited capacity in the service due to vacant posts, long-term sickness, significant upturn in workload and all the challenges faced with COVID-19 (home working, officer fatigue and limited technology etc.). Unfortunately, this has impacted on officers' ability to deal with all applications in a timely fashion with average determination times around 150 days from point of validation.
7. The Council has now invested in additional resources for a 6-month period to increase capacity in Development Management planning and validation. Looking forward to Q3 it is hoped that there will be a marked improvement on speed to decision on applications.
8. Provisional figures are encouraging with the validation backlog being reduced allowing a greater number of live applications to go through the system since August 2021 and the increased capacity has allowed a significant increase in decisions issued during August and September. Resulting in a gradual reduction in the overall live planning applications on hand.
9. At the same time, it is proposed to manage the older planning applications towards decision and reduce the 'backlog' of planning applications which is currently being experience. Whilst the average age of some of these cases results in the average time taken to increase, the reduction in the backlog will assist in the timely determination of newer planning applications.
10. Accordingly, it is anticipated that this will result in the average time taken to process a planning application to reduce over time. It is however too early in this stage to properly assess the degree of reduction but that this should be apparent by the time the next reporting of planning processing statistics is due to be put before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 22 November 2021****OSC21/35. PERFORMANCE PROGRESS REPORT: SECOND QUARTER 2021/22**

Consideration was given to the report of the Director – Place and Climate Change on the Performance Report of the Second Quarter 2021/22. Members were given the opportunity to scrutinise the progress towards the Council's stated aims, outcomes and actions in the Corporate Plan and make any necessary recommendations to Cabinet for future service delivery.

A summary of the Council's performance against the selected Key Performance Indicators (KPI) areas (Housing and Communities, Economic Development and Poverty, Waste Collection, Additional Income and Planning Processing) at the end of the second financial quarter (1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021) was set out in the report. Performance was compared to the previous quarter result and to the same quarter the previous year.

**Housing and Communities:** During quarter two, one measure had been flagged as a warning (Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (gross) Supply target) and four did not meet their target (Number of all Households in Temporary Accommodation (TA), Average Weeks in TA, Number of Households on the Housing Register and Net Additional Homes Provided Supply target).

**Economic Development and Poverty:** During quarter two, all three measures met their target (Number of Council Tax Reduction Claimants, Council Tax Collection Rates and Business Rates Collection Rates).

**Waste Collection:** During quarter two, this measure (East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Waste re-used, composted and recycled) did not meet its target, largely due to contamination at bring-sites. ESCC had advised that the recycling rates for the districts and boroughs were under review due to discrepancies between ESCC figures and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' for some authorities and were subject to change.

**Additional Income:** During quarter two, both measures did not meet their targets (Net Income from all Investment Assets and Additional Income Generation). The property team was actively looking to improve revenues from existing assets, primarily through scheduled rent reviews as well as ensuring any outstanding arrears were collected.

**Planning Processing:** During quarter two, both measures did not meet their targets (Major Applications days to process and Minor Applications days to process). This centred around limited capacity in the service due to vacant posts, long-term sickness, significant upturn

in workload and challenges faced with COVID which had impacted on officers' ability to deal with all applications in a timely fashion.

Members had the opportunity to ask questions and the following points were noted during the discussion:

- time taken to validate planning applications had decreased from an average of 12 weeks to two weeks, which would eventually filter through to the processing time of applications;
- Members requested that officers ensure that acknowledgement of receipt of a planning application also be sent to the applicant when using an agent;
- the recent backlog of approximately 800 planning applications had been reduced by 135 in the previous eight weeks. By the Quarter 4 progress update, the impact of the Capita contract to assist with processing would be evident;
- the use of pre-fabricated buildings for TA was within the Strategy; and
- the improved quality and reduced cost of TA was not reflected in the KPI set.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) Cabinet be requested to recommend that suitable Council-owned sites to accommodate pre-fabricated buildings to be used as temporary accommodation, be further explored.

(Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda Item 7).