



SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

# PERFORMANCE REPORT

Q2 2025/26 (Jul 25 – Sept 25)

## MILESTONES & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Clean, green future



Fulfilling our potential



Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure



Empowered, vibrant communities



Good health and wellbeing



Working together improving lives



# Introduction

This is the Quarter 2 (July 25 – September 25) Performance Report for the 2025/26 Council Plan. It presents the Council's progress against the Key Milestones set out for Quarter 4 and provides an update on the Council's Performance Indicators. The report is structured into the 6 themes of the Council Plan.

For each theme the progress against key milestones is shown alongside the desired outcome or outcomes that it is contributing towards. Detail is then provided on the theme's performance indicators that are noted as being particularly positive, or areas of focus for improvement. All performance indicators are then summarised in a table, with the progress of each indicator identified as either positive, neutral, focus for improvement or for information only. Further detail on each indicator can be found in the Public Performance Dashboard on our website: [Our performance as a Council: 2018-19 onwards | Scottish Borders Council \(scotborders.gov.uk\)](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/our-performance-as-a-council-2018-19 onwards)

Indicators which indicate an **excellent** position are shown in charts coloured in **bright green** and show a star 

The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days **remains consistent** and has remained **above 90%** for the last 4 financial years 



Indicators showing a notable **reduction** in performance, or where there is a **focus for improvement** are shown in charts coloured in **orange**

The percentage of **FOI Requests Completed on Time** has increased over **Q2** but further action needs still to take place in order to meet the **target of 90%**



## Performance Indicators Key

 <b>Excellent</b>	There has been a notable improvement, or the data indicates an excellent position
 <b>Positive/ Satisfactory</b>	There has been no significant change since the previous review, and progress is positive or satisfactory
 <b>Focus for Improvement</b>	There has been a notable reduction in performance, or the data suggests a position that we will be focusing on for improvement
 <b>Information only</b>	The indicator shows data for information purposes only



# Change Updates and Summary of Performance Indicators

## Updated performance indicators:

### Good Health and Wellbeing

- Additional homes provided affordable to people in the Borders, based on our wages – the Q1 figure has been updated from 0 to 3

The status has not changed for this indicator. There has been a change in the data that was provided for the report.

### Clean Green Future

- Missed Collections (as reported by the public) per 100,000 scheduled collections is now being reported on a quarterly basis rather than a monthly basis as it had been.

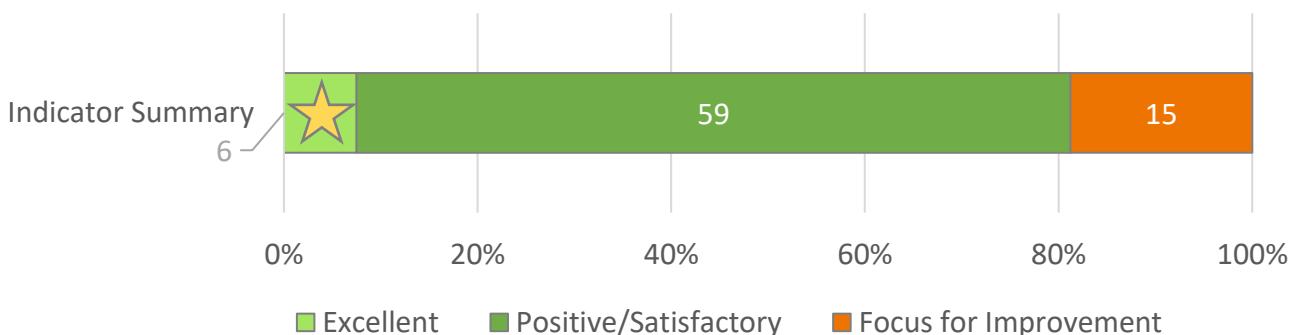
By doing this, the Q1 status has changed from Focus for Improvement to Positive/Satisfactory as an average over the quarter will be used to calculate the status.

## Transformation Project Updates shown:

As part of the Best Value Report, it was recommended to strengthen transformation reporting. There is now a focused Transformation Project Updates section included in the Corporate Performance Report.

## Performance Indicators

Of the 100 indicators presented this quarter, 65 are in a good position of which 6 are excellent. 15 are highlighted as areas of focus for improvement and there are 20 information only figures which provide context to some of the performance indicators also shown in the report.





# Summary of Key Milestones

## Key Milestones

### Fulfilling our Potential

More 16 to 19 year olds are participating in positive destinations than ever before. Scottish Borders is the 6th highest-performing local authority in Scotland in 2025/26 and SBC has improved on its 2024/25 performance.



### Empowered Vibrant Communities

Following an HMIE inspection in June 2025 reporting positive progress in several areas, the 2024-27 Community Learning and Development 3-year plan was approved by Council in September 2025.



### Working Together, Improving Lives

A draft Commissioning Strategy has been compiled which is working to deliver sustainable services that our communities need.

Work is being undertaken on the rollout of AI. The initial roadmap has been approved and SBC is now looking at opportunities in using the technology.

The Community Engagement Strategy is allowing SBC to actively engage with communities and SBC has delivered their largest-ever consultation, which concerns the future of sport and leisure services in the region.

A draft Customer strategy is being developed to help SBC transfer and improve services in a smart, flexible and efficient way.



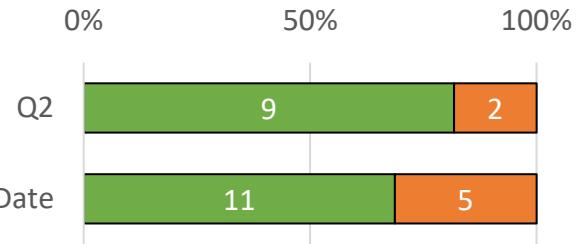


# Summary of Performance Year to Date

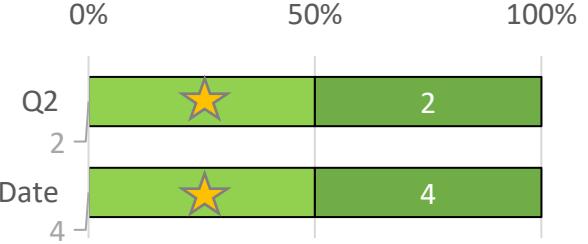
In the Summary of Performance Indicators, bright green with a star shows areas where performance has been excellent, green reflects areas that are positive/satisfactory and orange indicates performance levels that are a focus for improvement.



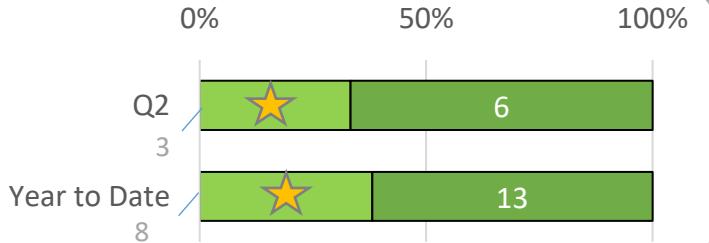
Clean, green future



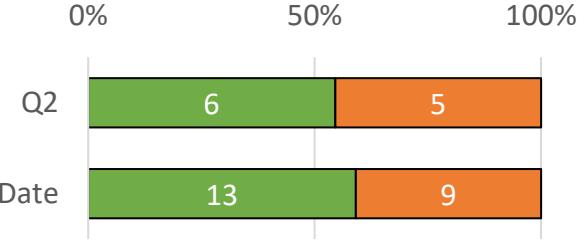
Empowered, vibrant communities



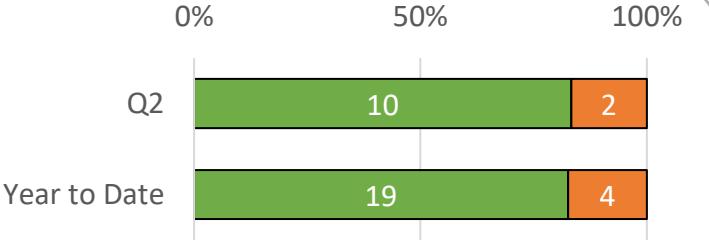
Fulfilling our potential



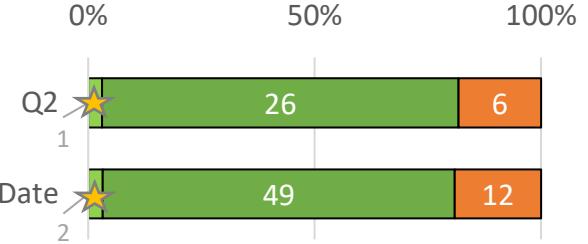
Good health and wellbeing



Strong inclusive economy, transport and infrastructure



Working together improving lives



# Transformation Projects Update



## Out of Area Placements

A project looking at all Out of Area placements within Children & Families Social Work with regards to bringing young people currently in these placements back to the Borders and preventing future placements

Since the commencement of the project in **April 2024**:

- **14** young people returned to the Borders in 2024/25
- **18** young people have returned so far in 2025/26



Since the project commencement, only **8 new** Out of Area **Placements** have been made compared to **34** made in the previous 18 months



This resulted in a significant **reduction** in **costs**



**Phase 3 is awaiting approval** but is planned to focus on **developing high-quality local provision** and infrastructure, further reducing reliance on external placements

## Children and Families Pathfinder

Streamlining a number of processes within Children & Families Social Work, Improving data capture and allowing mobile working



Process reengineering nearly complete



Streamlined new processes set to go live in the next 6 months

**Review of AI solutions** for Social Work is underway to **identify opportunities** for further improvement

Solutions being reviewed include:

- Magic Notes
- Access Note Centre
- CoPilot



These have delivered **efficiencies** in other authorities

# Transformation Projects Update



## Protective Services Pathfinder

Reengineering the processes within Protective Services

 Mobile devices & applications **successfully rolled out** across the Protective Services Team

This is enabling efficient mobile working



**Collaboration with software supplier underway** to scope and develop a dedicated app for the **Trading Standards Team**, supporting transition to mobile workflows

## Customer Advice & Support Service and Business Support Review

To lead and deliver a transformation programme that modernises the Customer Advice and Support Service and Business Support teams



Review started in **September 2025**

Review to look at technical developments and operational transformation



Review is in a **communication phase** with key stakeholders



Plan to implement digital tools such as **AI agents** and **automated messaging** which will:

- enhance customer experience
- deliver automation and system integration
- reduce manual workload



**Steering group** headed by the Director of Resilient Communities is **considering roadmaps to deliver** these **digital developments**

## Digital Commercialisation

Looking at opportunities to maximise income and standardise the booking process and procedures

**Income generation** opportunities being **explored** with:

- Education
- Inspire Learning



This **includes options** to improve the booking system for the use of **SBC's estate for private lets**



# CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

**PRIORITY:** Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



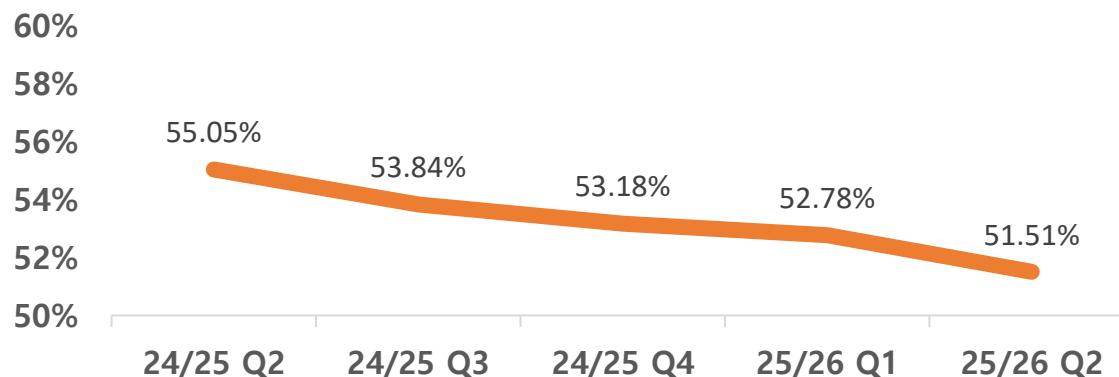
Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Waste	Annual Household Recycling Rate	51.51%	●	Quarterly
	Annual Household Waste Landfilled Rate	11.7%	●	Quarterly
	Annual Household Waste to Other Treatment	36.79%	●	Quarterly
	Annual Average Community Recycling Centre Recycling Rate	72.09%	●	Quarterly
	Missed Collections (as reported by the public) per 100,000 scheduled collections	74.88	●	Quarterly
Property	Electricity Consumption kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	15,849,744 kWh	●	6 Monthly
	Gas Consumption kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	24,061,837 kWh	●	6 Monthly
	Water Consumption m <sup>3</sup> <i>(annual rolling)</i>	189,181 m <sup>3</sup>	●	6 Monthly
	Oil Consumption <i>(annual rolling)</i>	3,635,194 kWh	●	6 Monthly
	LPG kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	458,023 kWh	●	6 Monthly
	Biomass kWh <i>(annual rolling)</i>	688,198 kWh	●	6 Months

# CLEAN GREEN FUTURE

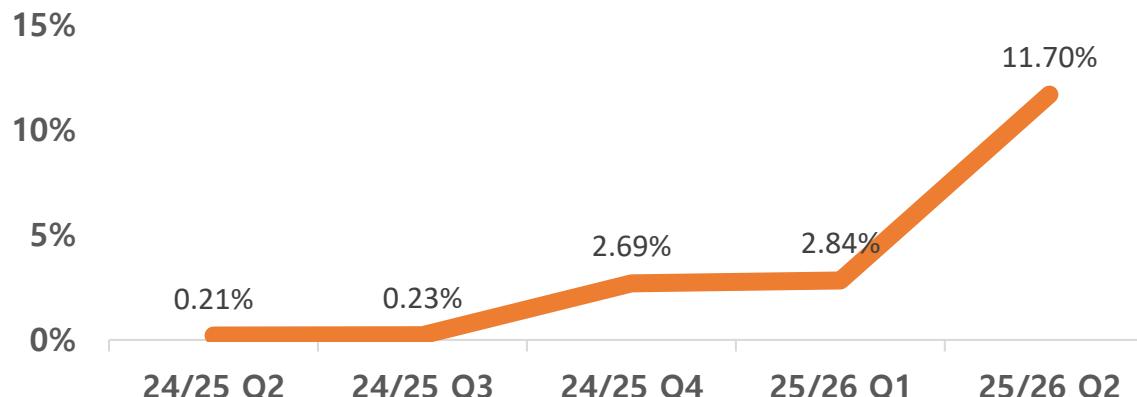
**PRIORITY:** Accelerate action to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and extreme weather.



The Annual Household Recycling Rate has continued to **reduce** in Q2 & remains a **Focus for Improvement**



The Annual Household Waste Landfilled Rate has **increased** significantly in Q2 and continues as a **Focus For Improvement**



The decrease in the Annual Household Recycling Rate and the increase in the Annual Household Waste Landfilled Rate is the result of new legislation which limits the ability to recycle upholstered domestic seating and an increase in the quantity of residual waste being sent directly to landfill without pretreatment.

**Action:** The Council's ability to recycle upholstered domestic seating is restricted due to the new legislation, as is the case for all Local Authorities across the UK. To reduce the quantity of residual waste being sent directly to landfill the Council awarded a new short-term contract in July 2025. This will ensure waste is sent directly to Energy from Waste; however, the new provider does not offer pre-treatment, so we expect the Council's recycling performance to continue to reduce before it stabilises. The Council's future recycling performance will be dependent on the long-term residual waste solution and the services offered at the kerbside

# FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

**PRIORITY:** Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



## Increase the proportion of 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training - based on the Annual Participation Measure (APM) produced by Skills Development Scotland

SBC are the **6th highest performing** local authority in Scotland in 2024/25 with **95.3%** of 16-19 year olds participating in **education, employment or training**

This is:



- **1.1% improvement** of from 2024/25
- **Increase on the 10th highest performing** local authority in 2024/25
- **Above** the national Annual Participation Measure of **93.3%**
- **SBC's best result** since the Annual Participation Measure began in 2016



The success reflects **hard work** and **commitment** of **many partners** across the region

Partners include:

- Developing the Young Workforce Borders
- Local Employability Partnership
- Skills Development Scotland
- Scottish Borders Council



Work undertaken to increase the proportion of 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training includes:



- Continued **strategic planning & partnership working** through the Local Employability Partnership
- Refinement of the **14+ Planning Framework** with Schools & Partners
- **Close working relationships** between Skills Development Scotland, SBC, Schools & Developing the Young Workforce Borders
- Continued **tracking & monitoring at school & local authority** level of post-school destinations with SDS
- Targeted **tracking & monitoring with SDS and Borders College** of young people with care experience
- Enhancements to transition planning for young people with additional support needs
- Continued commitment to **widening access programmes**, including LEAPS
- **Improved curricular offering** at the senior phase in schools to ensure appropriate pathways and qualification for young people

### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Improve employability skills to enable sustained positive school leaver destinations

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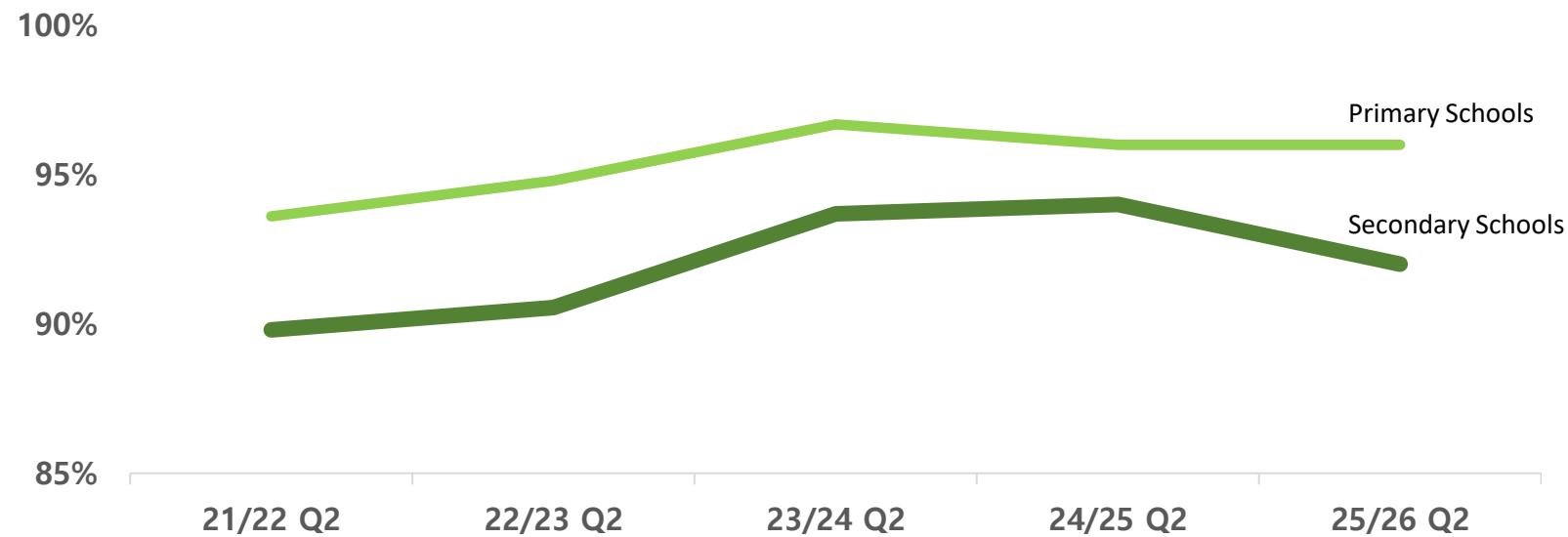
Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Education	Average primary school attendance rate	96%	★	Quarterly
	Average secondary school attendance rate	92%	★	Quarterly
	Average primary and secondary school attendance rate	94%	★	Quarterly
	Number of Exclusion Incidents – Primary Schools	10	●	Quarterly
	How many primary school pupils were excluded?	9	●	Quarterly
	Number of Exclusion Incidents - Secondary Schools	13	●	Quarterly
	How many secondary school pupils were excluded?	13	●	Quarterly
	Number of Exclusion Incidents – Primary and Secondary Schools	23	●	Quarterly
	How many primary and secondary school pupils were excluded?	22	●	Quarterly
	Number of Schools/Nurseries inspected per Quarter	1	ि	Quarterly

# FULFILLING OUR POTENTIAL

**PRIORITY:** Empower schools and their communities to deliver a high-quality education focused on excellence, equity, wellbeing and improved outcomes for children, young people, and families.



**School attendance across both Primary and Secondary schools is Excellent** this quarter. The attendance in both **Primary Schools** and **Secondary Schools** has had an overall increase over the last 4 years. 



**What was implemented to enable the improvement:** SBC introduced a new Attendance Policy in 2024/25 which brought clarity and consistency to the recording of absences and approaches to improvement. SBC is also working collaboratively with Education Scotland this year on improvement methodology

# STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**PRIORITY:** Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.

Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Major Capital Projects	RAG status is "Green"	9	●	Quarterly
	RAG status is "Amber"	4	●	Quarterly
	RAG status is "Red"	1	●	Quarterly
Working Age Population	Working age population (16 - 64) employment rate*	75.8%	ℹ	Quarterly
	Working age population (16 - 64) Claimant Count (including Universal Credit and JSA)	2.8%	ℹ	Quarterly
	Working age population (18 - 24) Claimant Count (including Universal Credit and JSA)	4.7%	ℹ	Quarterly
Customer Advice & Support - Financial Inclusion	Number of People referred in the quarter	429	●	Quarterly
	Monetary Gain for cases closed in the quarter	£1,344,912	●	Quarterly
	Cumulative Monetary Gain for cases closed in the year to date	£2,679,780	●	Quarterly
Customer Advice & Support - Housing Benefit	New Claims (Avg No. of Days to process)	25.83	●	Quarterly
	Change Events (Avg No. of Days to process)	8.62	●	Quarterly
Business Gateway	Total number of new Business Start-Ups (Business Gateway)	14	●	Quarterly
	Number of clients attending start-up workshops/seminars (Business Gateway)	106	●	Quarterly
Estates/Economic Development	Occupancy Rates of Industrial and Commercial Units	93%	●	Quarterly
Community Benefit Clauses	Total Number of Contracts Awarded with Community Benefit Clauses (CBC) included	9	●	Annual
	Number of new Employment and Skills opportunities delivered as a result of Community Benefit Clauses (CBC)	51	ℹ	Annual

\* Please Note that there is a lag of one Quarter for data provided for employment rates

Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement ℹ Information only

# STRONG INCLUSIVE ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**PRIORITY:** Deliver the key economic development programmes for our region - the **South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy, Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal** and the **Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and Regional Prosperity Framework** – making our economy stronger, greener and more sustainable.

**Changes in Q2:** Hawick Flood Prevention has moved from **Red** to **Amber**  
Tweedbank Care Village has moved from **Amber** to **Green**



The following **9** Capital Projects continue on track:

- Borders Innovation Park Phase 2
- Chambers Institution Peebles
- Eyemouth Primary School
- Eyemouth Nursery & Family Centre
- Galashiels Academy
- Hawick High School
- Peebles High School
- Selkirk High School
- Tweedbank Care Village

The Project Teams have implemented a RAG status framework to proactively monitor and mitigate risks associated with Capital Projects.

**Amber Status:** *Jedburgh High Street Building; Borderlands Coldstream Industrial Business Units; Plant & Vehicle; and Hawick Flood Protection Scheme*

Design proposals for Jedburgh High Street Building have been reviewed in consideration of ongoing works at 3-5 Exchange Street, which are onsite and progressing at pace. Discussions are underway to facilitate minor design revisions and advance the tender process. The Borderlands unit at Coldstream has been substantially complete for some time, pending only the water connection. Additional works to historic water connections are progressing in dialogue with Scottish Water. The Council has invested heavily in modernising its plant and fleet in recent years with further significant investment required. Fleet services and finance continue to work together on a 10-year replacement programme to ensure the Council's fleet remains fit for purpose. The Hawick Flood Protection scheme has achieved contractual practical completion, with the project moving toward closure, and a planned programme of resolution of outstanding defects progressing with SBcContracts.

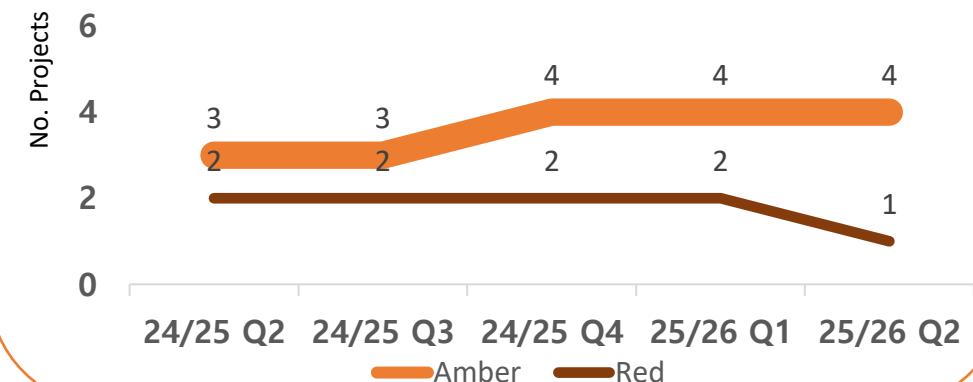
**Red Status:** *Union Chain Bridge*

Northumberland County Council are leading on the Union Chain Bridge project and officers are working with them to manage and conclude outstanding matters and reduce the risk position.

The following **3** projects have been identified as being in the **feasibility** stage:

- Hawick Care Village
- Lowood Masterplan
- Tweeddale Additional Support Needs Provision

The number of **Capital Projects** with an **Amber** status have remained **static** in Q2 but the number of **Capital Projects** with a **Red** status have **reduced** to one with the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme changing to an Amber Status, which is **positive**. Both continue to be a **focus for improvement**



# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

**PRIORITY:** Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



**Develop a 3-year Community Learning and Development plan supported by engagement with local communities, enabling us to better respond to local need**

**Consultation** with **learners & practitioners** was **carried out** to inform the priorities of the 2024-2027 plan



The **one-year CLD Partnership Plan for 2024-2025** has been extended into the **full three year plan for 2024-2027**



An **annual report** was produced summarising **achievements & impact** the 2024-2025 plan had in the CLD service delivery



HMie inspected CLD services in June 2025 and reported **positive progress** in **strengthening** the **leadership & governance** of CLD and **use of data**



The **2024-2027 Plan** was approved by the Community Planning Partnership Strategic Board and Council in **September 2025**



**4 celebratory learner events** which were held for:

- ESOL learners
- Youth learners
- Adult learners
- Volunteers



## Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Enhanced participation and engagement which empowers communities to shape the decisions which affect them

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

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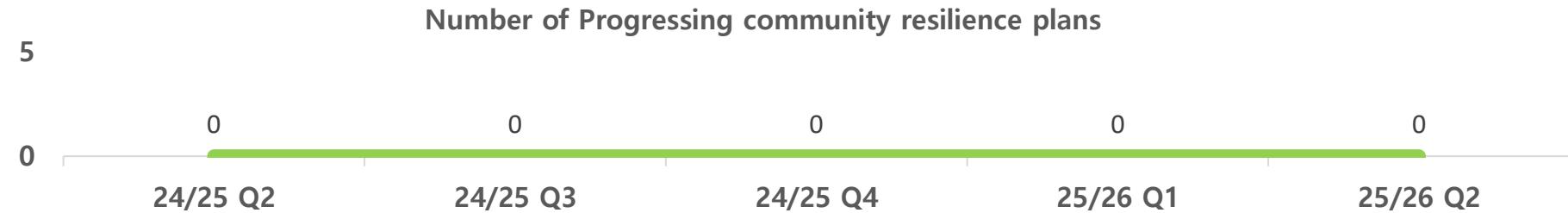
Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Communities & Partnerships - Asset Transfers	Number of Requests <b>Received</b>	1	ि	Quarterly
	Number of Requests <b>Agreed</b>	0	ि	Quarterly
	Number of Requests <b>Refused</b>	0	ि	Quarterly
Communities & Partnerships - Participation Request	Number of Requests <b>Received</b>	0	ि	Quarterly
	Number of Requests <b>Agreed</b>	0	ि	Quarterly
	Number of Requests <b>Refused</b>	0	ि	Quarterly
Communities & Partnerships	The number of people carrying out volunteer work with SBC	302	●	Quarterly
Neighbourhood Support Fund – Value of Funding Awarded	Total Scottish Borders	Fund is now administered by Borders Community Action and will be reported Annually in Q3.  For latest available data, please see our <a href="#">Performance Dashboard</a>	Annual	
	Berwickshire			
	Cheviot			
	Eildon			
	Teviot & Liddesdale			
	Tweeddale			
	Neighbourhood Small Schemes Fund – Total Value of funds awarded (cumulative)	£63,345	ि	Quarterly
Community Resilience	SB Alert - No. of people registered	7957	●	Quarterly
	No. of Active community resilience plans	56	★	Quarterly
	No. of Progressing community resilience plans	0	★	Quarterly

# EMPOWERED VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

**PRIORITY:** Support communities and empower people to achieve strong, active, resilient and sustainable communities and to realise opportunities for improving people's lives.



The number of both **Active and Progressing community resilience plans** has **remained steady** over the past 6 quarters with an increase in Q2 2025/26. This is considered to be very positive and **Excellent** with the existing group numbers being one of the highest totals in the country



Zero is considered **Excellent** as all work has been completed and there are no outstanding plans needing addressed

# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**PRIORITY:** Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Social Work Children & Families	Looked After Children (aged 12+) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	64%	●	Quarterly
	Looked After Children (All ages) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	77%	●	Quarterly
	Number of Looked After Children (LAC)	212	●	Quarterly
	Number of Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) held about a child	162	ि	Quarterly
	Number of children on Child Protection Register	59	ि	Quarterly
Adult Support & Protection	Number of Concerns	123	ि	Quarterly
	Number of Inquiries with Investigative Powers	89	ि	Quarterly
Economic Development & Procurement	Additional homes provided affordable to people in the Borders, based on our wages	14	ि	Quarterly
NHS**	Bed days associated with delayed discharges in residents aged 75+; rate per 1,000 population*	293.2	●	Quarterly
Domestic Abuse	Number of High Risk domestic abuse cases discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	63	●	Quarterly
	Number of Referrals to Domestic Abuse	114	●	Quarterly

\* Please note that the data provided is derived from Board of Residence monthly figures

\*\* There is a lag of one Quarter for data provided for NHS data

Key: ★ Excellent ● Positive/Satisfactory ● Focus for Improvement ि Information only

# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

**PRIORITY:** Ensure the people of the Scottish Borders have the opportunities and are supported to take control of their health and wellbeing, enjoying a high quality of life.



Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Safer Communities	Number of persons being monitored for Antisocial Behaviour	293	●	Quarterly
	Number of new temporary homelessness accommodation tenancies that commenced in the time period	105	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of households assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness (where contact was maintained) who secured settled accommodation in either Social Housing, Private Rented Housing or Owner/Occupied housing	93%	●	Quarterly
	Average number of days from assessment to closure for applications assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness	179	●	Quarterly
	Average number of days households spent in temporary accommodation during the course of their homeless assessment	92	●	Quarterly

## Road Incidents

Currently vetted information from Police Scotland is only available up to the 28th September 2025. There may be additional data for the remainder of September that isn't yet available.

Unfortunately, there was 1 fatality as a result of a road accident in the Scottish Borders over the 3 months of Q2 2025/26. This is a decrease of 3 for the same period last year.

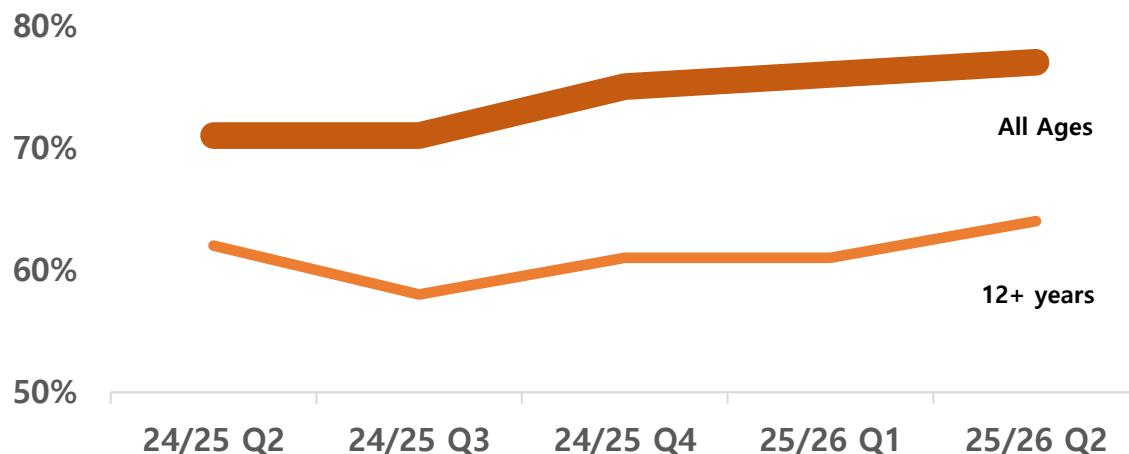
There were 8 people seriously injured as a result of road accidents in the Scottish Borders over the 3 months of Q2 2025/26. This is a decrease of 15 for the same period last year.

# GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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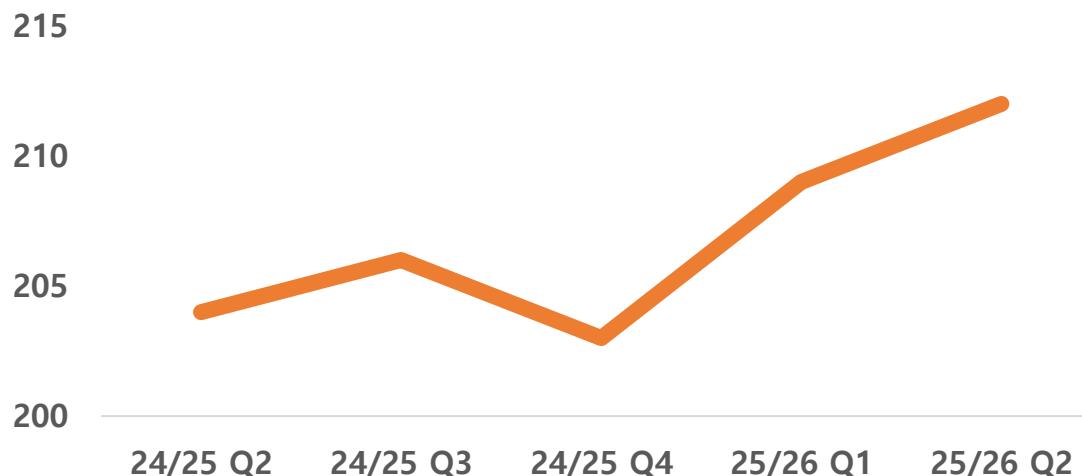


The trends for both the percentage of **Looked After Children aged 12+ in family-based placements** and the percentage of **Looked After Children of all ages in family-based placements** have been **Positive** over the past year. This continues to be an area for **focus for improvement**.



**Action:** The aim is to achieve an annual increase of 10% in foster carers numbers and to also reduce unplanned endings in Kinship Care each year.

The number of **Looked After Children** has **increased** over the last two quarters following a decrease in Q4 24/25. This PI remains a **focus for improvement**.



**Action:** Service delivery models across multi-agency landscapes will be considered. This will include consideration of specialist education service delivery, family support service models, tailored support programmes and localisation of teams & services to be responsive and adaptive to meet needs.

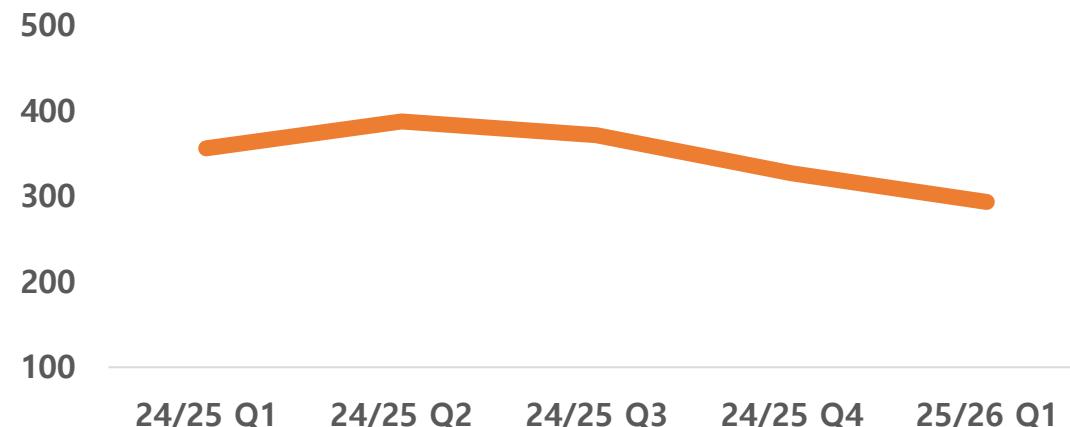
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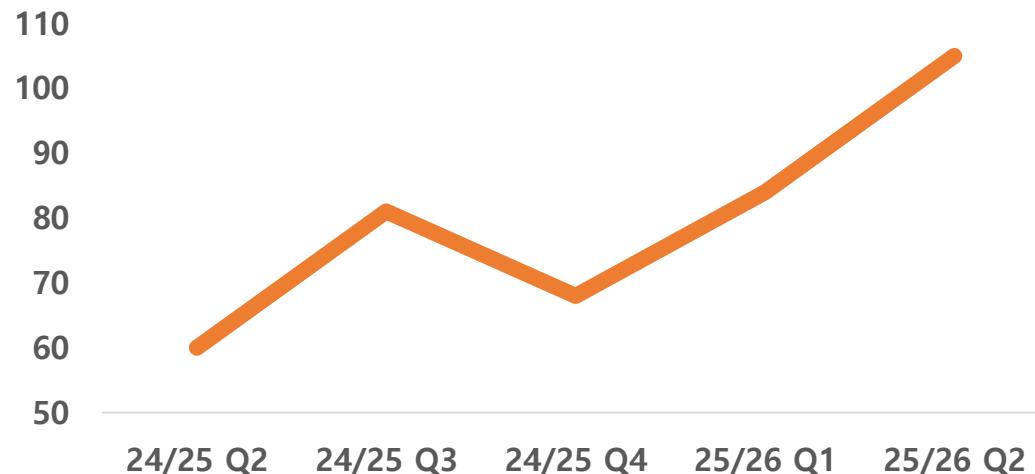
The number of bed days associated to **Delayed Discharges** have **decreased** in every quarter since Q2 2024/25 which **positive**. This indicator continues to be **focus for improvement** for Q1.

The improvement has been attributed to the implementation of several strategies and models including: Early Discharge Planning, Home First & Hospital at Home Models, Performance Monitoring & Continuous Improvement and Ready for Discharge Meetings



**Action:** An Integrated Discharge Team is being set up to manage the discharging process so patients are assessed for ongoing care requirements after discharge. This will reduce delays for discharge from hospital. (NHS data)

There has been an **increase** in the Number of new temporary homelessness accommodation tenancies that commenced in the Q2 and this is a **focus for improvement**



**Action:** SBC are in discussion with Registered Social Landlord partners to increase stock levels of temporary accommodation.

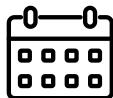
# WORKING TOGETHER, IMPROVING LIVES

**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



**Develop an approach to commissioning across all service areas in the Council which strengthens governance, decision-making and strategic oversight, while reviewing key areas of commissioning activity to ensure that Borders communities have access to the services they need**

The draft **Commissioning Strategy** with 12 key commissioning principles was being taken to Full Council on **29th October**



A **Market Position Statement** is being developed to accompany the Commissioning Strategy



With regard Health & Social Care commissioning the below activities have also been carried out. Other commissioning activities will subsequently be expanded across SBC

**Redesign of Care at Home delivery** in the region **progressing well** with financial modelling almost complete



A **Strategic Commissioning Board** has been established & is **fully operational**



The redesign illustrates a more **sustainable model** going forward with:

- increased provision by external partners
- new models of commissioning



**Review of third sector provision** is in early stages



Aim to commission services in the community delivered by third sector partners which will be a more sustainable footing & deliver exactly what communities need

## Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed to meet people's needs

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**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



**Develop and implement an AI Strategy for SBC that ensures the safe, efficient, and ambitious use of relevant AI tools. This strategy will seek to ensure SBC remains dynamic and responsive to the needs of our community by embracing cutting-edge AI technologies while maintaining the highest standards of data security**

**Strategy not fully implemented** but foundations in place for a successful implementation across SBC



**Initial roadmap for AI rollout approved** by Corporate Management Team



A **working group** has been established to **develop governance** & an **ethical framework**



The working group will report to a newly established **Technology (AI) Governance Group**

List of **use cases** is being generated to look at **opportunities for quick wins** to support **automation and process re-engineering** & more wholesale change to ways of working



**Benchmarking** against other public sector organisations is underway, alongside **research into the AI developments** anticipated within our systems catalogue



Work is progressing to **maximise use of Microsoft 365 within SBC**



**This** includes use of **Copilot** - the AI-powered digital assistant

## Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Digital technology is maximised to make service delivery better

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**PRIORITY:** Ensure that Scottish Borders Council is effective, sustainable, responsive and aligned to the needs and priorities of our communities.



## Fully implement and raise awareness of the Council's Community Engagement Strategy, with a view to improving how the Council interacts with citizens and communities, emphasising transparency and partnership

The Community Engagement Strategy has been formally adopted and embedded as a live document

A **Community Engagement Toolkit** resource was created to support staff in delivering engagement activities. The toolkit includes:

- guidance on accessibility
- guidance on inclusivity
- evaluation frameworks

**Community Engagement model** allows SBC to actively engage communities using varied methods tailored to local needs

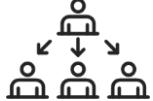


Work underway to implement **Helix data analysis software** to capture & analyse engagement data



The **Strategy & Toolkit** can be found on the [SBC website](#)

Strategic **collaborations** with **Live Borders & internal policy teams** have enabled SBC to deliver the largest consultation to date concerning the future of sport and leisure services in the region



### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed to meet people's needs

## Develop, consult upon and implement a Customer Strategy to improve the ways in which customers engage with the Council and access services, in response to customer needs

Draft **Customer Strategy** is **being developed** aiming to help SBC transform & improve services in a smart, flexible & efficient way



**Key outcomes** being targeted include:

**High-quality online services** as the preferred choice



**Responsive & timely service** shaped by customer feedback



**Fair & open experiences** for all customers



Aim to present Customer Strategy as final draft to council in **December 2025** followed by a public consultation

### Desired Outcomes linked to this Milestone

- Services are designed to meet people's needs

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Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Planning Permission	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Maj Dev (cumulative)	99	●	Quarterly
	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (non-householder) (cumulative)	6	●	Quarterly
	Av.time (wks) taken to process all planning apps - Local Dev (householder) (cumulative)	6.5	●	Quarterly
	Number of Planning Applications Received	286	ℹ	Quarterly
Property	Capital Receipts Generated	£246,533	●	Quarterly
	Properties surplus to requirements	45	●	Quarterly
	Properties actively being marketed	28	●	Quarterly
	Properties progressed to "under offer"	15	●	Quarterly
	Total number of sold properties	5	●	Quarterly
Complaints Handling	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage one	4.8	●	Quarterly
	Performance against timescales: the number of complaints closed at stage one within 5 working days as percentage of total number of stage one complaints	79.7%	●	Quarterly
	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage two	32.1	●	Quarterly
	Performance against timescales: the number of complaints closed at stage two within 20 working days as percentage of total number of stage two complaints	33.3%	●	Quarterly
	Average times: the average time in working days to respond to complaints after escalation	22.1	●	Quarterly
	Performance against timescales: the number of escalated complaints closed within 20 working days as a percentage of total number of escalated stage two complaints	52.9%	●	Quarterly
	Number of Complaints Closed	202	ℹ	Quarterly
	Number of Facebook Engagements	6881	●	Quarterly
Social Media				

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Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Freedom of Information	FOI Requests Received (excluding Assessor FOIs)	483	ⓘ	Quarterly
	Percentage of FOI Requests Completed on Time (excluding Assessor FOIs)	88%	●	Quarterly
Assessor	Council Tax Valuation List - Percentage of New Properties added to the list within 0-3 months	69%	●	Quarterly
	Valuation Roll (Non Domestic) – Percentage of new, altered or demolished properties amended on the valuation roll within 0-3 months	33%	●	Quarterly
Council Tax	Council Tax – In Year Collection Level	55.53%	●	Quarterly
HR	SBC Absence Rate – Staff	5.46%	●	Quarterly
	SBC Absence Rate – Teaching Staff	2.72%	●	Quarterly
	Staff Absence Rate (overall)	4.79%	●	Quarterly
	SBC Staff Turnover	3.13%	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of our workforce aged 16 to 29	12.37%	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of our workforce who have told us that they have a disability	2.60%	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of our workforce who have stated they are LGBT	1.68%	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of our workforce who are from an ethnic minority	1.58%	●	Quarterly
	Percentage of our workforce who have completed equality monitoring data	75.02%	●	Quarterly
Payment Services	Percentage of Invoices paid within 30 days	96%	★	Quarterly
Customer Contact	Consolidated Call Numbers - HQ Switchboard, 0300, SW Duty Hub and Homelessness	38,136	●	Quarterly

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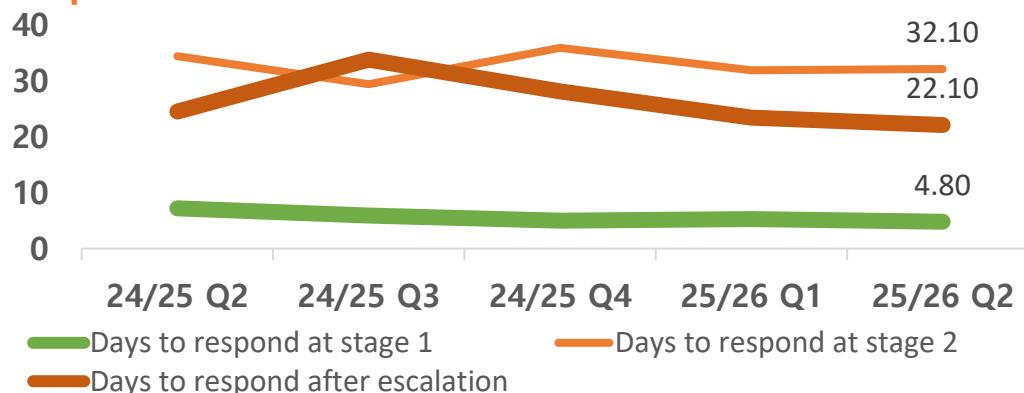
Service	Indicator	Q2 25/26	Status	Reporting Frequency
Modern Apprentices	New Modern Apprentices employed by SBC	8	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Quarterly
	Current Modern Apprentices employed within SBC	25	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Quarterly
	Modern Apprentices securing SBC employment after apprenticeship Cumulative Year to Date	2	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Quarterly

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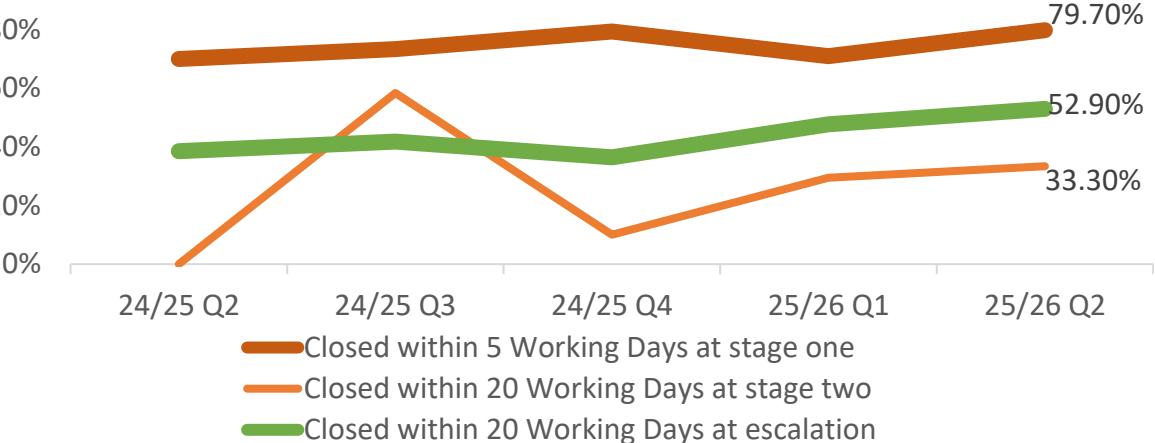


The number of days taken to respond to complaints at **stage 1** remains **positive/satisfactory** for the 3rd quarter in a row. The number of days taken to respond to complaints at **stage 2 and after escalation** continue to be areas to **focus on improvement**.

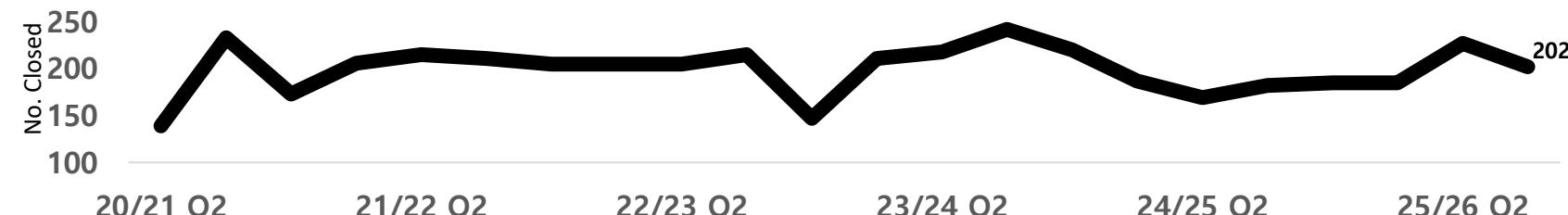


**Action:** Support services to maintain focus on closing overdue complaints and ensuring that complaints are dealt with within prescribed timescales. Also support services with training requirements to ensure this happens.

The percentage of complaints closed at stage 1, stage 2 & after escalation have all **increased** since the previous quarter which is **positive**. Complaints closed at stage 1 and stage 2 remain a **focus for improvement** but those closed after escalation have continued to be **positive/satisfactory**.



The number of complaints closed has stayed at a consistent level over the last 5 years with a decrease in the current quarter

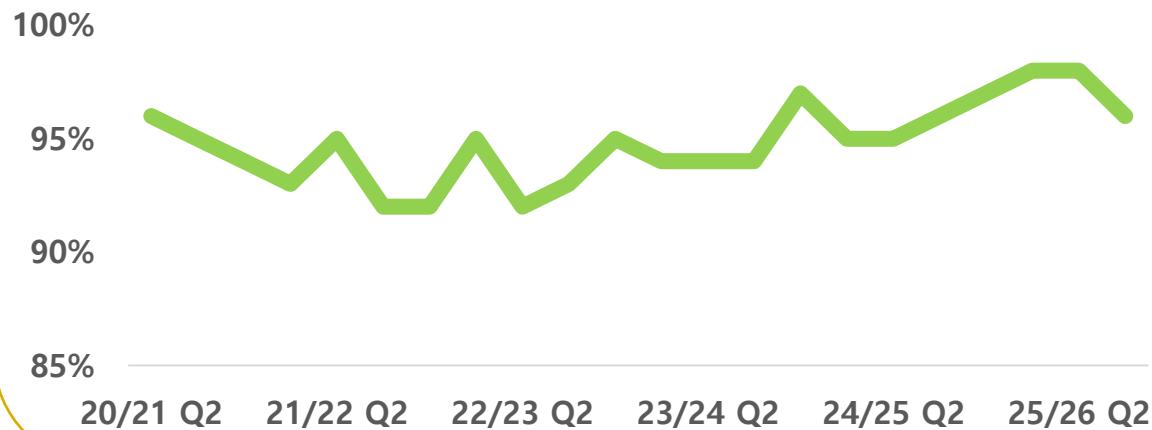


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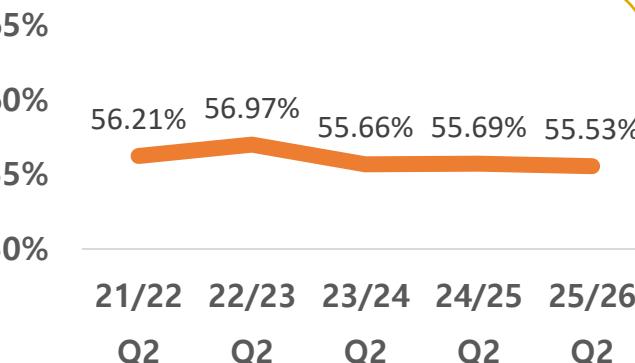


The percentage of invoices paid within 30 days **remains consistent** and has remained **above 90%** for the last full 5 financial years. The performance for **Q2 25/26** is **96%**



The Council Tax - In year collection level is below the level in the same quarter over the past 4 years and is a **Focus for Improvement**.

**Action:** SBC are in the late stages of introducing resource to specifically concentrate on improving Collection



Following a decrease of the **FOI Requests Completed on Time** last quarter, there has been a slight **increase** in quarter 2. There continues to be an increase in the number of FOI Requests Received. The indicator is a **Focus for Improvement**.

**Action:** Services continue to work through FOI Requests and discussions will take place around the challenge of the often complex multi-disciplinary responses required. The Information Management service is also currently exploring whether there are any technical solutions and or any procedural developments which might assist performance.

