Briefing Note - item 7b)

To:	**Licensing Committee**
From:	**Kerry Simpkin, Licensing Team Manager, Public Protection & Licensing**
RE:	**Premises Licensing Team Post Restructure Performance Review**
Office Location:	**4th Floor, Westminster City Hall**
Date:	**21st September 2016**

1. Introduction

1.1 The Premises Licensing Team is responsible for considering, determining and issuing licences for over 60 licensing regimes. Public Protection and Licensing underwent a restructure in 2015. This report is a summary of the Licensing Team's performance from the commencement of the new structure for Public Protection and Licensing in April 2015 through to 15th August 2016. It compares the current performance measures that the team has introduced to the licensing Team's performance prior to the restructure.

2. Background

2.1 Prior to the restructure in 2015 the Council had two teams that predominantly dealt with premises based licensing. The LA03 Premises Licensing Team dealt with Licensing Act 2003 (LA03) applications that sought the authorisation of premises for alcohol, entertainment or late night refreshment. The General Licensing Team were responsible for all other premises related licensing regimes. The 2015 restructure proposed maintaining these two teams whilst reducing some of the staffing levels within both teams. However, following that restructure both teams were merged into one Premises Licensing Team with one Team Manager (originally the structure had two Team Managers).

2.2 The Licensing Team, following the restructure was made up of 1 Team Manager, 1 Senior Licensing Practitioner, 11 Senior Licensing Officers (originally 10 in the restructure model but the vacant second Licensing Team Managers post was deleted and a further Senior Licensing Officer post was created).

2.3 The Licensing Teams post opening, scanning of applications and correspondence was originally included in the functions that were to be carried out by the newly created Business and Performance Team. However, after the first four months it was found that it would be more efficient as an end to end process if these functions were included within the licensing Team. As a result of this a post was

moved from that team into the Licensing Team to carry out those functions for the Street Trading Team, Road Management and the Premises Licensing Team.

2.4   The financial year following the restructure was a period of change for the Licensing Team. The first two quarters of that year was a difficult period with vacancies and then training new staff. There was also a significant amount of process re-engineering as a result of the restructure and deletion of dedicated processing staff and the merger of the two teams. The final two quarters were specifically focused on issuing the backlog of licences and settling into a standard operating model in preparation for 2016/17 financial year.

3.   Performance Measures

3.1   To measure performance the Licensing Team Manager implemented key indicators of performance for the team. The indicators were based on major elements of the process of considering and determining applications. These key points were the receipt, validation, processing and acknowledgement of applications, issuing licences and closing open Temporary Event Notice application records.

3.2   The new performance indicators were implemented for 2016/17 financial year. To compare performance the performance indicators have been set against the performance in 2014/15, when there are two Premises Licensing Teams prior to the restructure and 2015/16 following the restructure. The figures for 2016/17 are based on the current amounts for this financial year to date (Monday 15th August 2016).

Performance indicator 1 - Acknowledging applications

1.   Applications processed and acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt

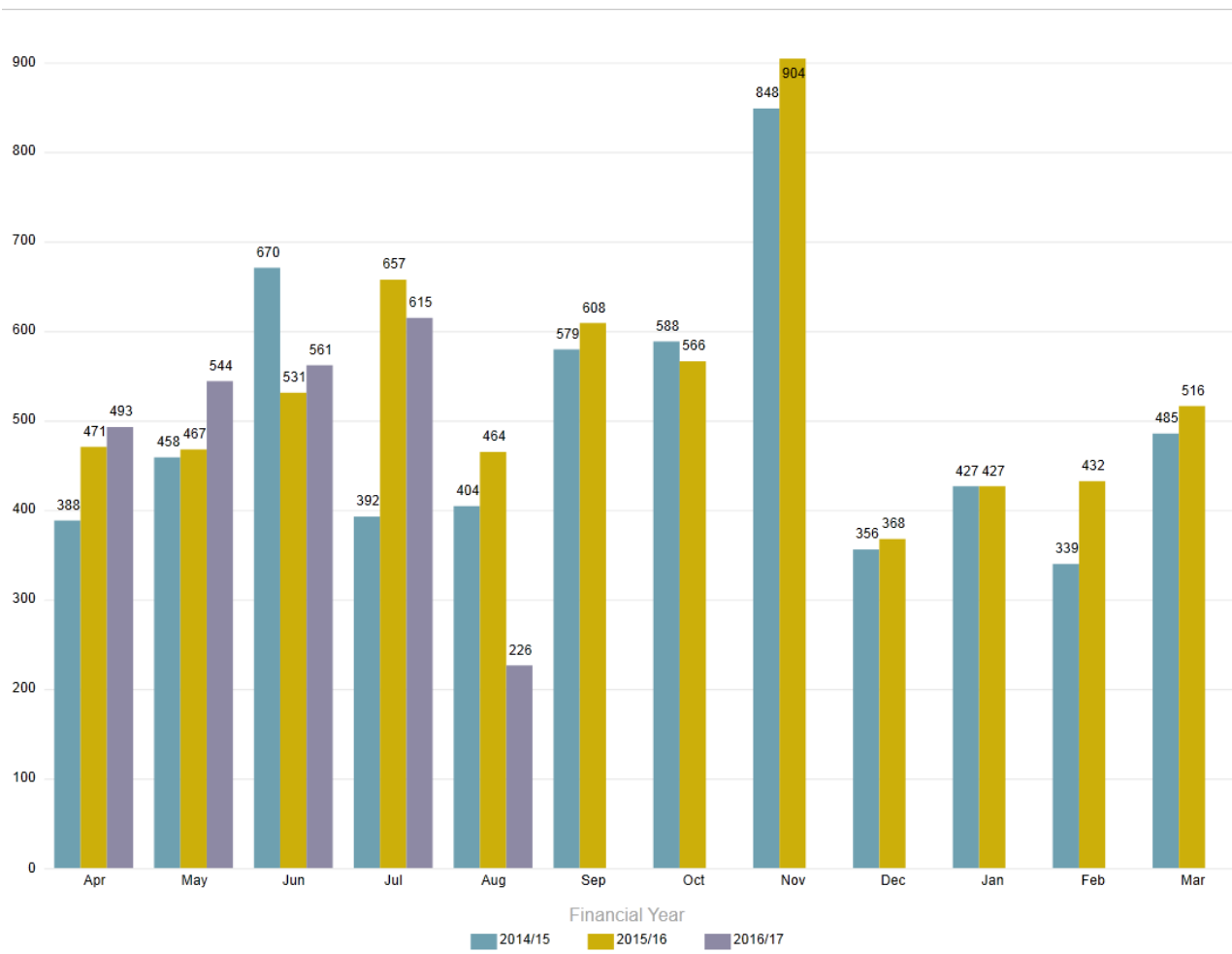| Financial Year	Total number of applications received	Percentage of applications that were processed within target	Number of applications that were processed within target
2014/15	5934	55.97%	3321
2015/16	6411	76.45%	4901
2016/17	2439	83.19%	2029

Figure 1 – Total number of applications received by month

Performance indicators 2 to 5 - Issuing licences

3.3   Following the restructure the Licensing Team had a number of Senior Licensing Officer vacancies and had a large backlog of licences that were waiting to be produced and issued. Due to these vacancies and backlog the team concentrated on considering and determining applications. That meant that the production and issuing of licences was substantially reduced. Once the team were up to full staffing there was a substantial push to issue licences and clear the 800 plus back log of licences. This can be seen between September and December 2015 in 2015/16 compared to 2014/15 issued licences bar graph in figure 2 below.
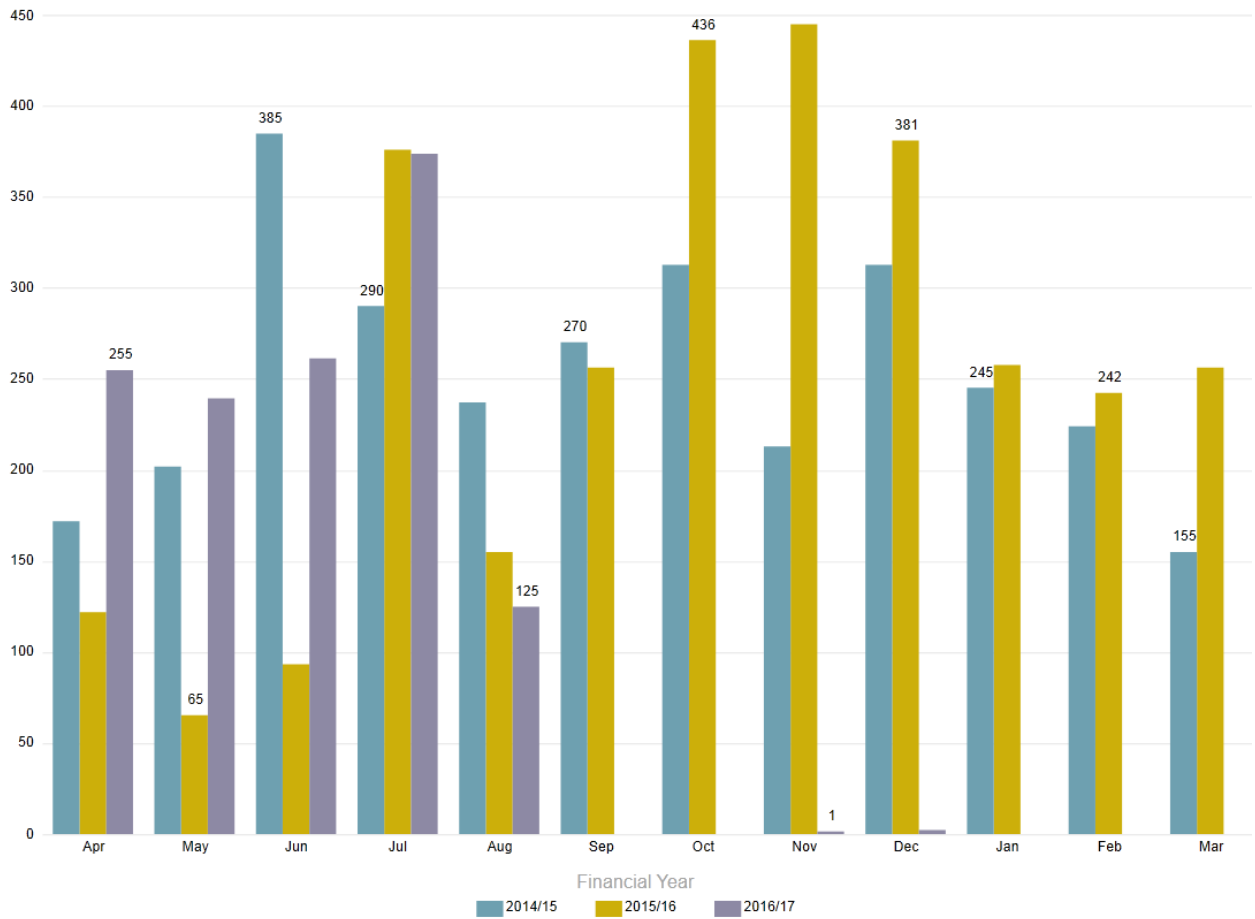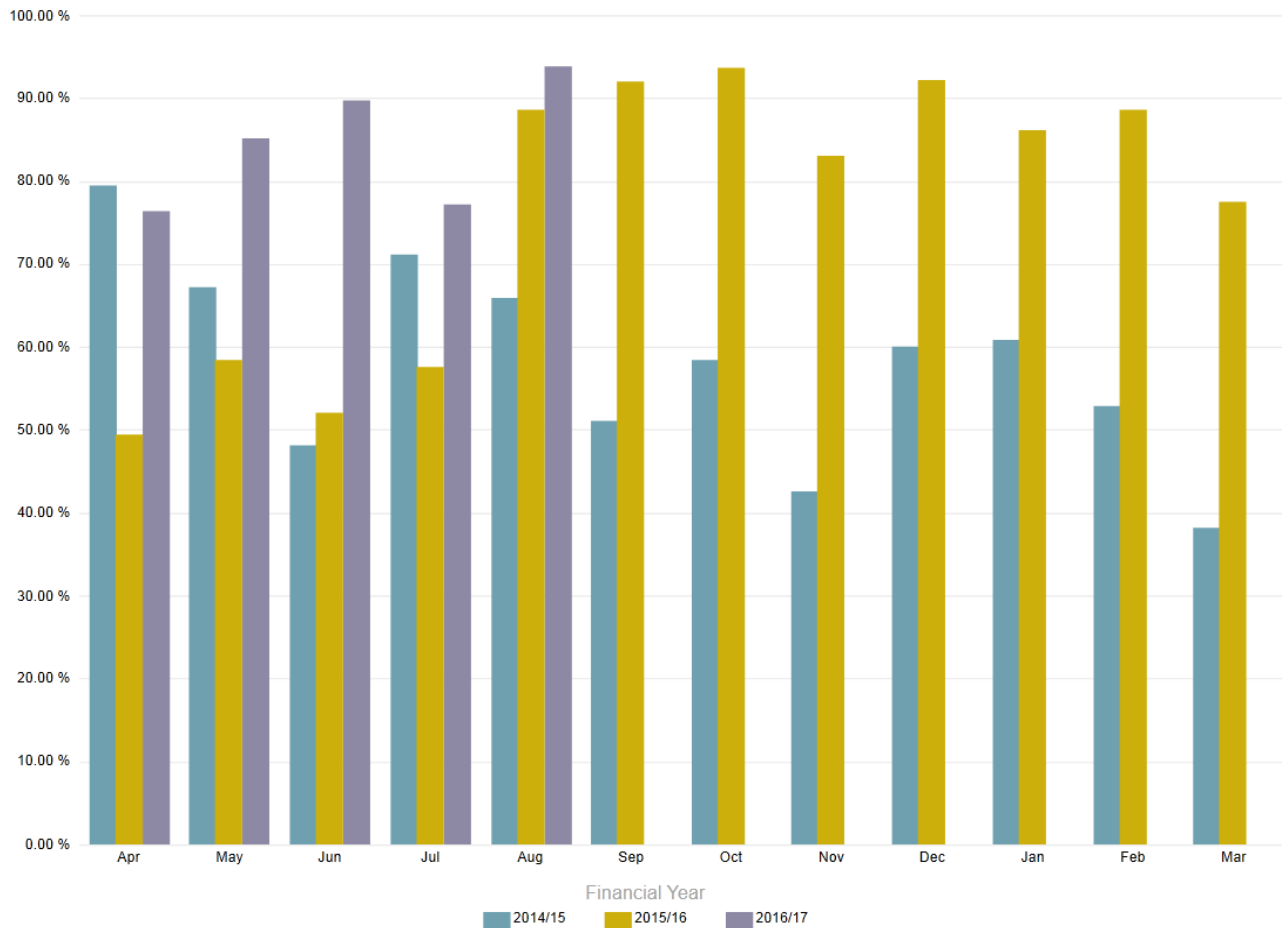
Figure 2 – Total number of issued licences per month

Figure 3 – Performance indicator 1 bar graph

2.   Issuing unopposed major applications (applications with between 21 and 28 day public consultation period) within 28 days from determination.

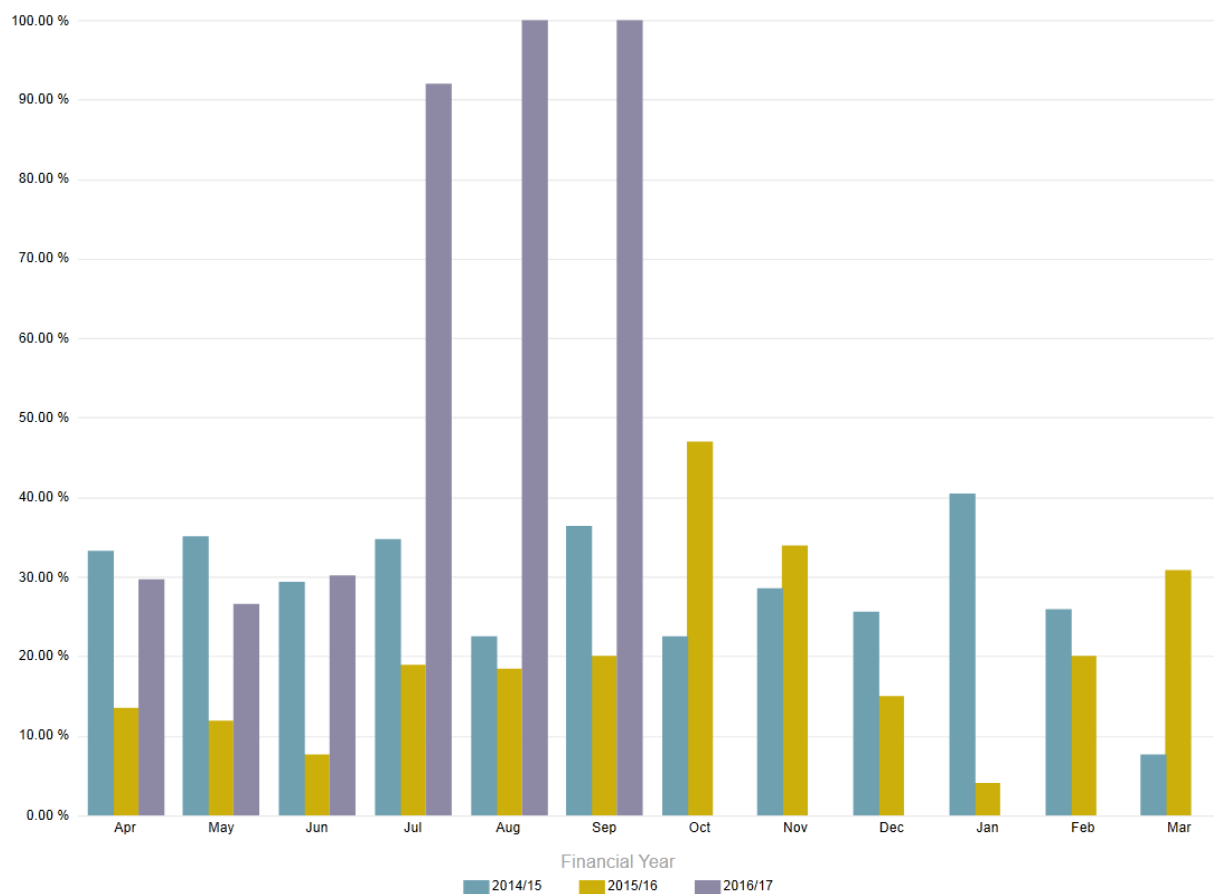| Financial Year	Total number of licences issued	Percentage of licences issued that met target	Number of licences issued that met target
2014/15	568	27.99%	159
2015/16	607	20.92%	127
2016/17	274	61.68%	169

Figure 4 – Performance Indicator 2 bar graph

3. Issuing unopposed minor applications (applications with a maximum of 14 day consultation period) within 14 days of determination.

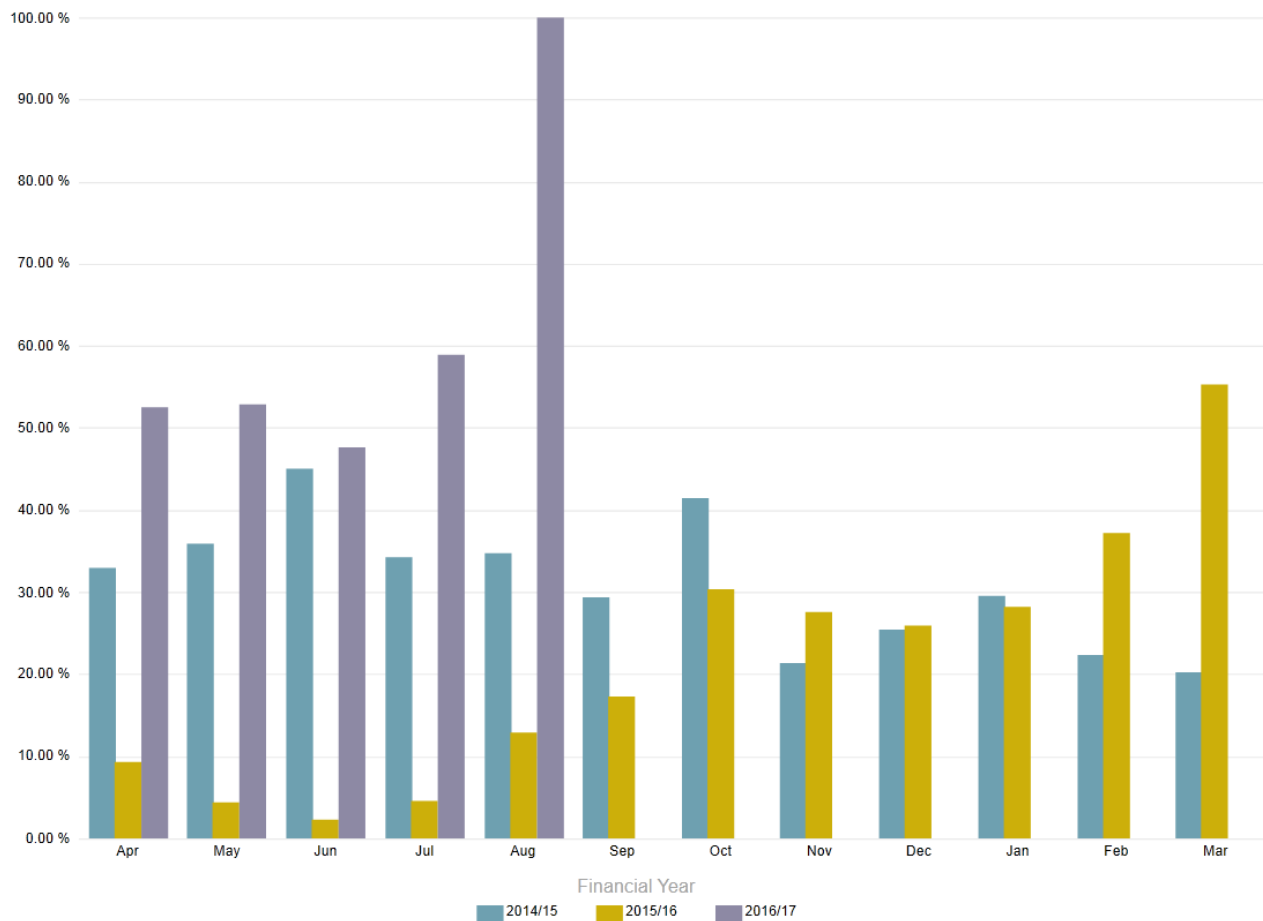| Financial Year	Total number of licences issued	Percentage of licences issued that met target	Number of licences issued that met target
2014/15	1605	30.59%	491
2015/16	1414	21.85%	309
2016/17	688	61.19%	421

Figure 5 – Performance indicator 3 bar graph

4. Issuing administrative changes to licences within 7 days from determination.

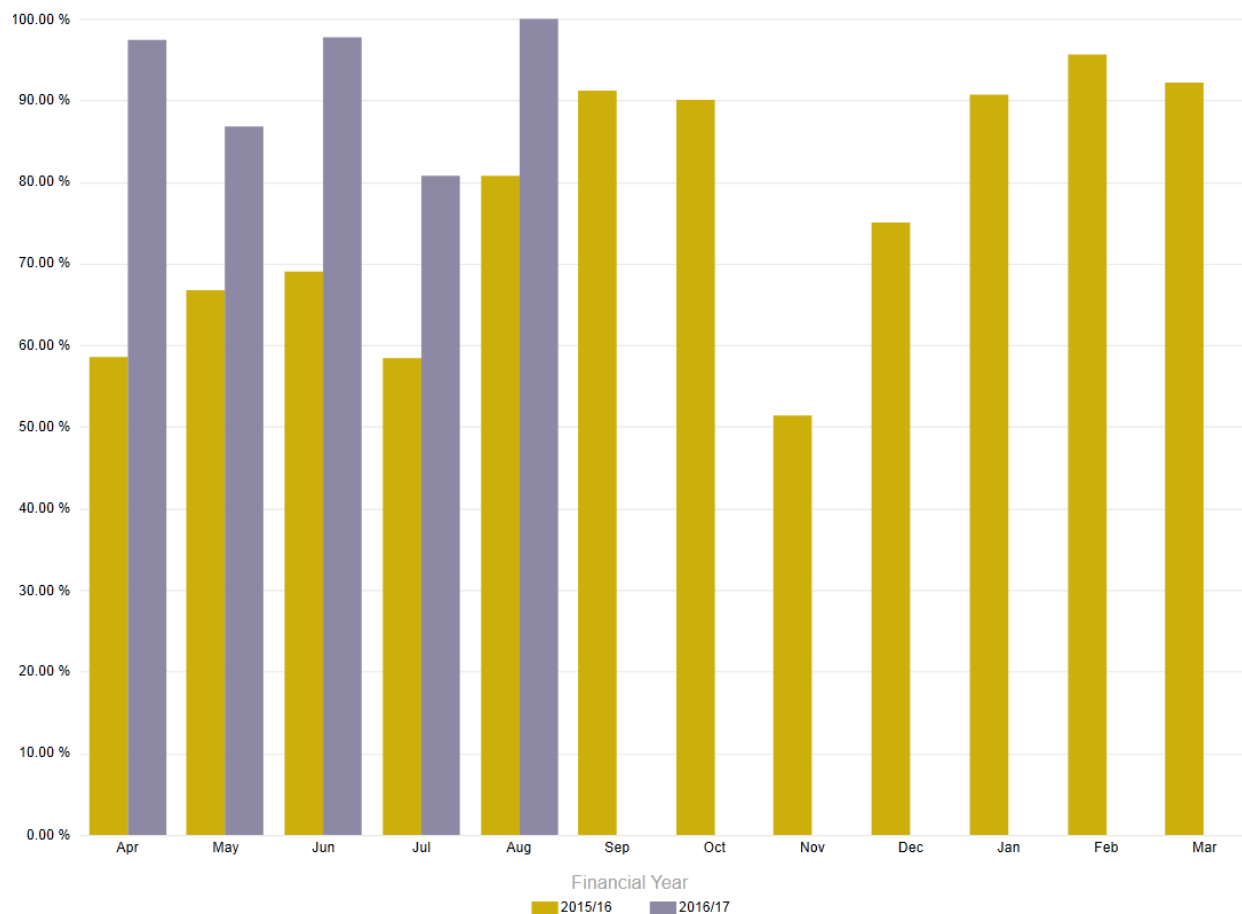| Financial Year	Total number of licences issued	Percentage of licences issued that met target	Number of licences issued that met target
2014/15	Previously not recorded		
2015/16	709	68.83%	488
2016/17	381	86.61%	330

Figure 6 – Performance indicator 4 bar graph

5.   Issuing licences within 28 days following the publication of the Licensing Sub-Committee decision.

Financial Year	Total number of licences issued	Percentage of licences issued that met target	Number of licences issued that met target
2014/15	Not previously recorded		
2015/16*	62	45.16%	28
2016/17	58	86.21%	50

*The date in which the decision was received from Committee Services was not recorded prior to November 2016.
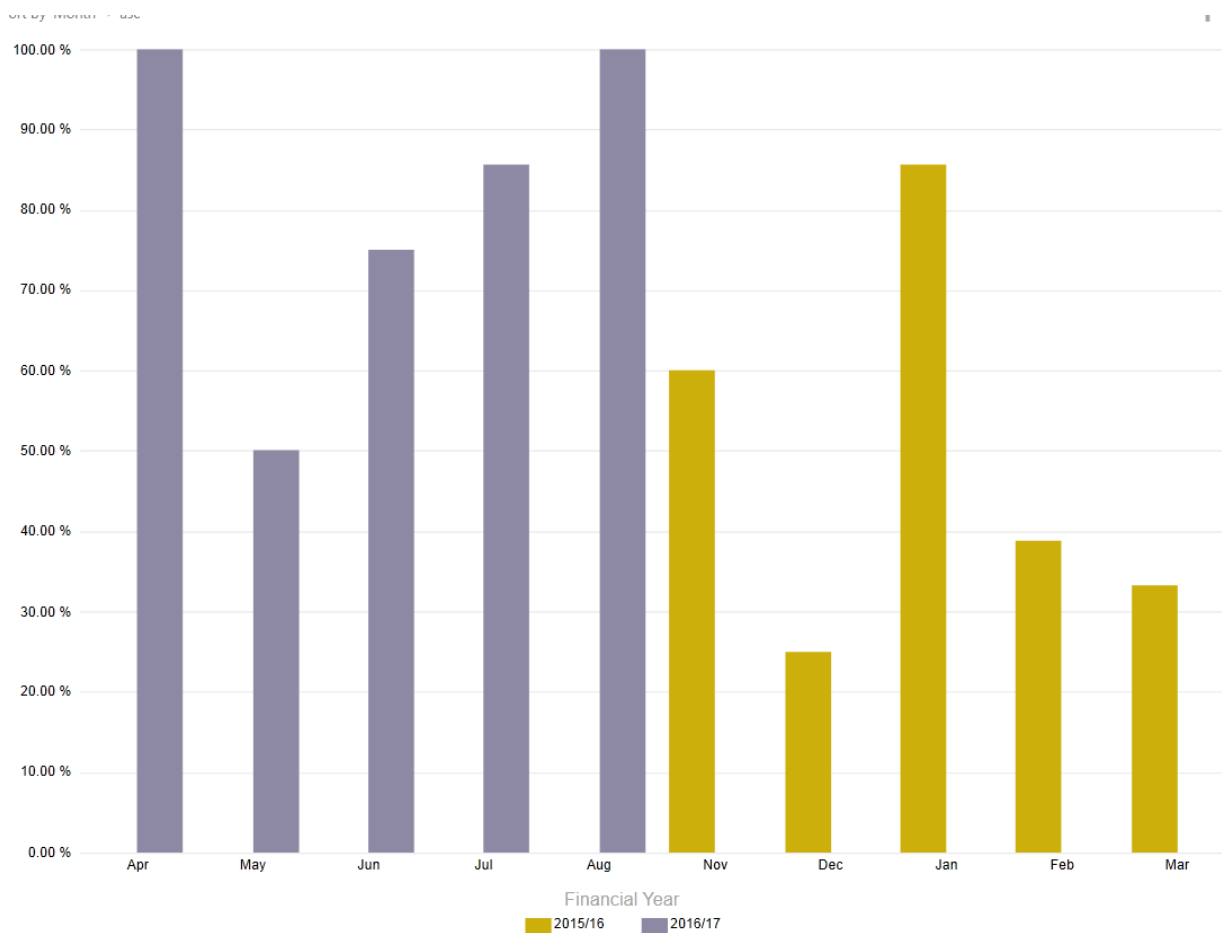
Figure 7 – Performance indicator 6 bar graph

3.4   The Council receives on average 2974 Temporary Event Notices per calendar year. The notices require the Council to acknowledge the notice and then consider whether they will impact one or more of the Licensing Objectives[1] under the Licensing Act 2003. Figure 8 below shows the number of Temporary Event Notices received per calendar month for 2014, 2015 and up to the 15th August 2016. There has been an increasing trend in Temporary Event Notices year on year and it is expected that the Council will receive in excess of 3200 notices in 2016.

	2014	**2015**	**2016***
Temporary Event Notice Received	2821	3127	1552

Up until the 15th August 2016

3.5   There is a Temporary Event Notices peak between September and November every year due to the holiday period. This 3 month period represents nearly 2 thirds of the total number of Temporary Event Notices received by the Council per year. This can clearly be seen in Figure 8 below. Between January 2014 and March 2014 the Council recorded Temporary Event Notices differently so the bar graph in Figure 8 doesn't show the data for those months.

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[1] Licensing Objectives are Prevention of Public Nuisance, Protection of Children from Harm, Prevention of Crime and Disorder and public Safety.
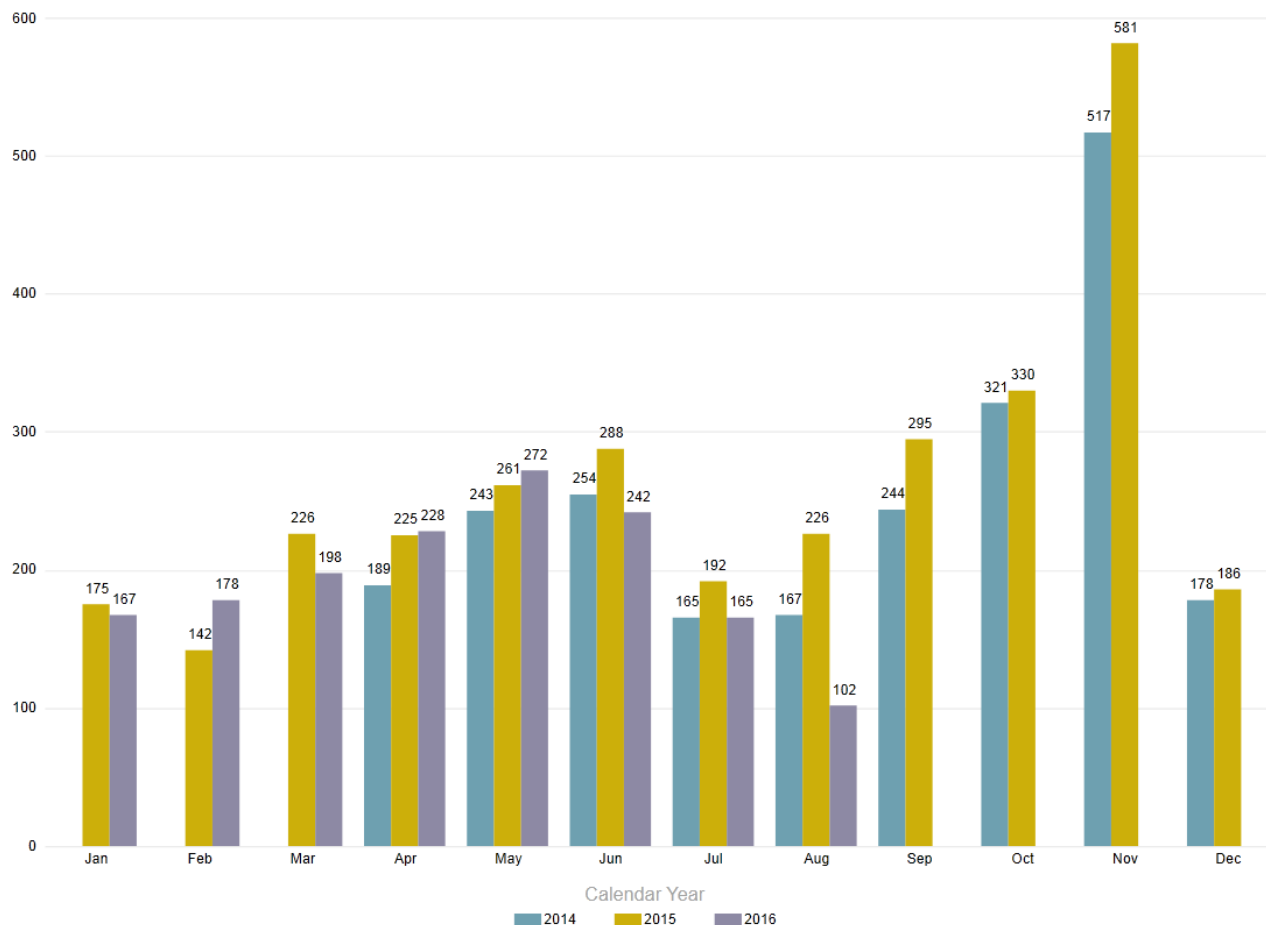
Figure 8 – Temporary Event Notices received per month

Performance indicator 6 - Closing Temporary Event Notices Records

6.   Closing an open Temporary Event Notice record within 7 days following the last date for objection notices.

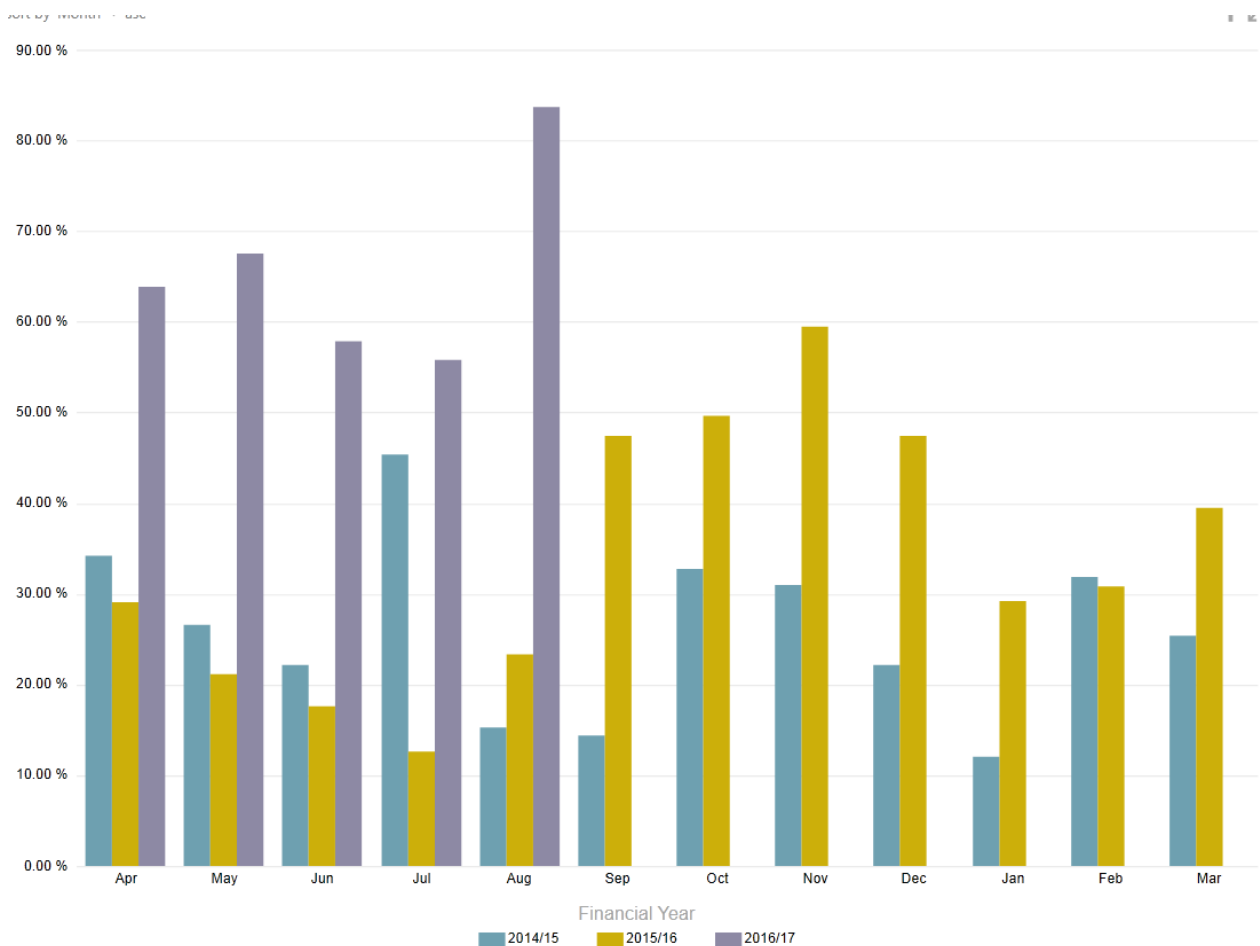| Financial Year	Total Temporary Event Notices	Percentage of Temporary Event Notice records closed within target	Number of Temporary Event Notices closed within target
2014/15	2775	26.31%	730
2015/16*	2975	37.51%	1116
2016/17	990	64.55%	639

Figure 9 – Performance indicator 6 bar graph

4.   Licensing Sub-Committee Reports

4.1   The Licensing Team attended 68 Licensing Sub-Committee hearings in 2015/16. Officers of the team produced 176 Licensing Sub-Committee reports for applications that were opposed and required determination by members.

4.2   The Licensing Sub-Committee granted 146 licences, refused 19 applications, determined 11 reviews and acknowledged 3 opposed Temporary Event Notices.

5.   Road Management Processing

5.1   In September 2015 the Licensing Team took on the function of processing Road Managements applications for Temporary Traffic Orders and approvals for the siting of a crane on the Highway. The team has received an addition member of staff to manage the Road Management applications. The addition of these Road Management applications (approximately 2500 applications per financial year) will mean that the Licensing Team now deals with in excess of 8500 applications per financial year.

6.   Key Projects and Work Streams

6.1 As well as the day to day consideration and determination of licence applications that Licensing Team undertook a large amount of other work throughout 2015/16. The Team carried out a complete review of all processes and procedures to improve the service to its customers remove inefficacies and streamline processes in line with the new one team structure.

6.2 The Licensing Team undertook a review of the Sub-Committee reports to implement a more streamlined report process and document. The Team also reviewed the way it listed applications for Sub-Committees which resulted in a more even spread of applications to each of the Sub-Committees.

6.3 A comprehensive fee review was undertaken through June and August 2015 which resulted in a significant change to the fees. This fee review implemented a new process of calculating the fee levels for the licensing regimes that the team are responsible for. These fees were implemented from the 1st January 2016. The 2016/17 fee review is currently in progress which will be determined in November 2016 by the Licensing Committee.

6.4 The Licensing Team also undertook the Council's first review of William Hill's betting shop in Harrow Road. The result of that review was a serious of strong conditions that has benefitted the local community by reducing the problems associated with that premises.

6.5 The Council's Gambling Policy was reviewed by the Licensing Team and consulted upon in late 2016. The final Policy was agreed and formally published in January 2016. The Team continue to work on the new revision to this policy which they intend to release for public consultation in late 2016.

6.6 The team have supported to Council's Digital Transformation project. It has been working closely on the implementation of new online application forms for a large number of licensing regimes. These forms will have the benefit of automatically completing the Council's database and reducing the need for significant data entry. There have been significant delays in the online form project due to technical problems associated with the connection between the web forms and the Council's databases and the payment system. The team will continue to work with the project team on this project to implement these new online forms once they are working properly.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The Licensing Team has been improving the time that it takes to validate and acknowledge applications. The target that the team are working to is to acknowledge applications within 2 working days. The improvement since the 2015 restructure has gone from acknowledging applications within this timeframe just over 50% of the time in 2014/15 to 86% in 2016/17 (to date).

7.2 Although there was a drop in issuing licences immediately prior to the 2015 restructure to September 2015 due to staff shortages all of the performance indicators relating to the issuing of licences show a significant increase in average

performance from September 2015 to August 2016 over the pre-restructure performance.

7.3   Since the Licensing Team cleared the backlog of licences (December 2015) the number of licences issued per month has remained reasonably steady. The average number of licences issued per month between January and July 2016 is 269 licences.

7.4   Although the closing of Temporary Event Notice records within the Council's database doesn't have an impact on the public it is a key requirement to enable the Licensing Authority to keep a track on the number of Temporary Event Notices that have been submitted for each premises or the notice giver. The Licensing Act 2003 has specific limits to the number of notices that can be submitted for premises or by an individual.

7.5   The Licensing team have implemented a performance target to enable them to monitor the closing of these records. Since the 2015 restructure there has been steady progress in improving the time it takes to close a Temporary Event Notice record on the Council's database. The Team are committed to improving on the current performance throughout 2016/17.

7.6   Overall there have been improvements in the way that the team operate since the 2015 restructure. The ability of the team to consider and take applications through to determination as an end to end process has prevented a number of the time consuming hand offs and significantly reduced the potential for errors.

7.7   The financial year (2015/16) following the restructure was a year of undertaking business as usual whilst reviewing and amending processes, filling vacancies and training staff. It is clear from the performance reports above that once that process had been completed in mid 2015/16 the team performance has improved significantly. This improvement in performance was undertaken whilst the team took on Road Management application processing, undertook and published the revised Gambling Policy, contributed to and completed a fundamental fee review and has worked on a number of resource intensive projects.

7.8   The aim for the team for 2016/17 is to continue to improve against its own performance indicators whilst working on key service plan priorities and other Council priorities, such as digital transformation.