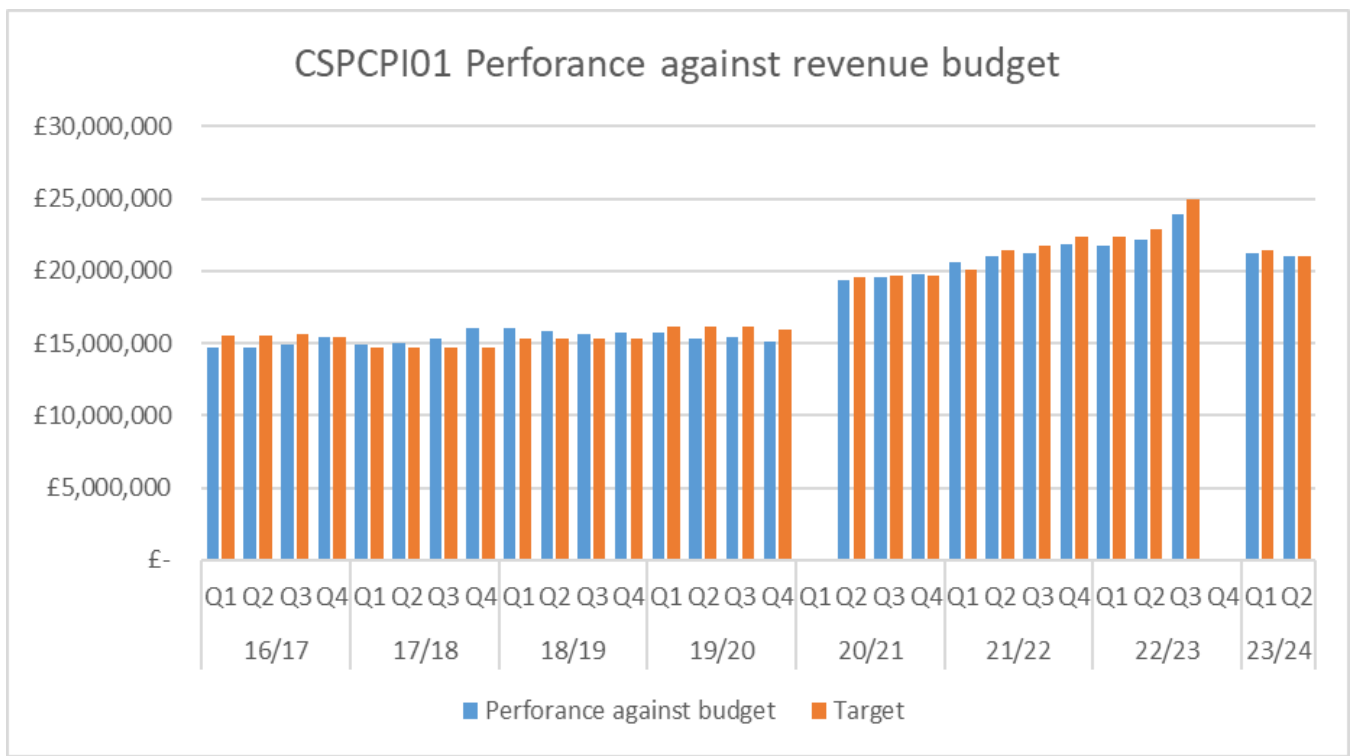


Children's Services, Partnership and Communities Performance Report 2023/24 Quarter 2

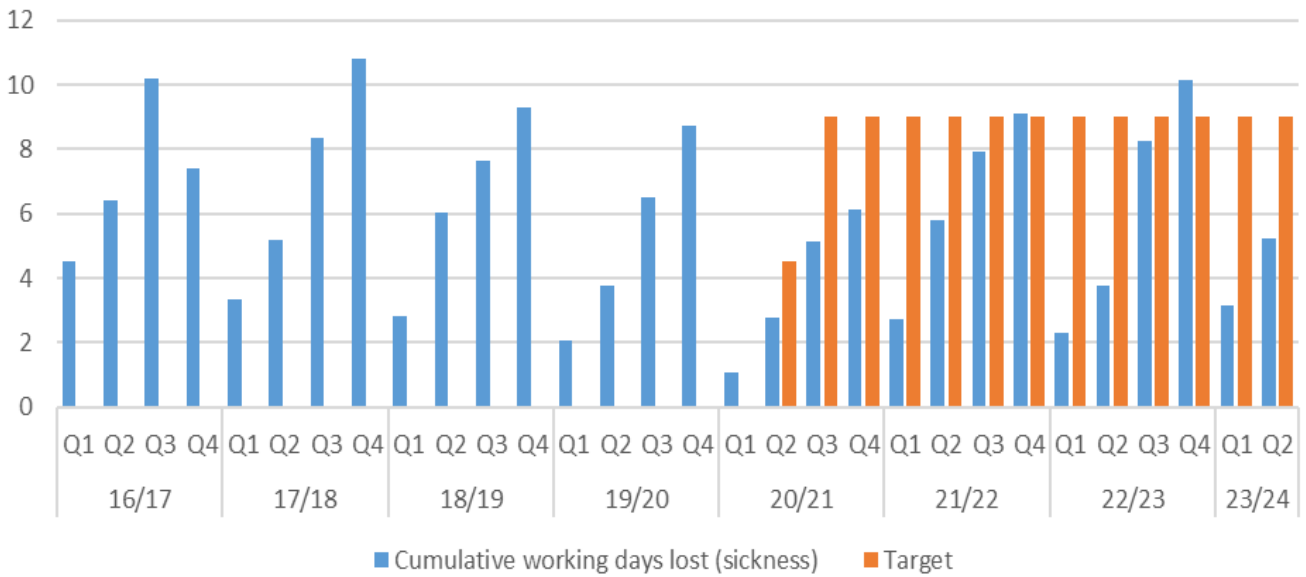


01. Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes

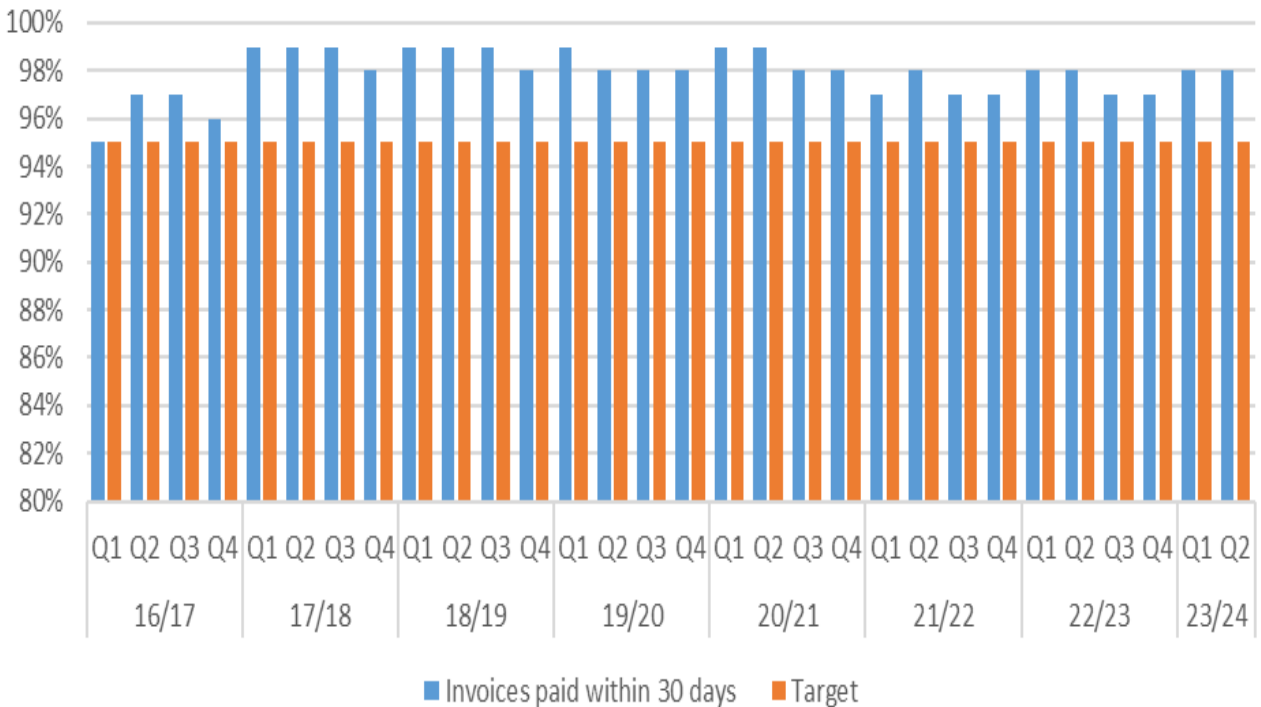
Q2 23/24: Progress in delivery of strategic outcomes



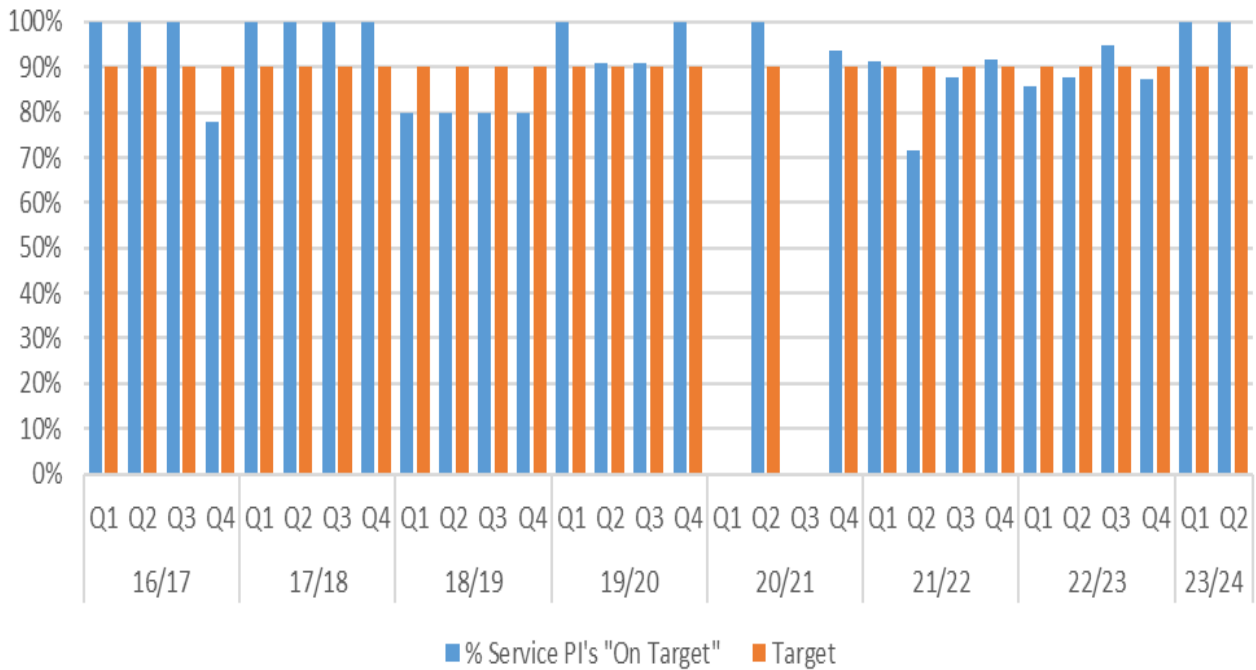
CSPC.MPI.02 Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence (cumulative)



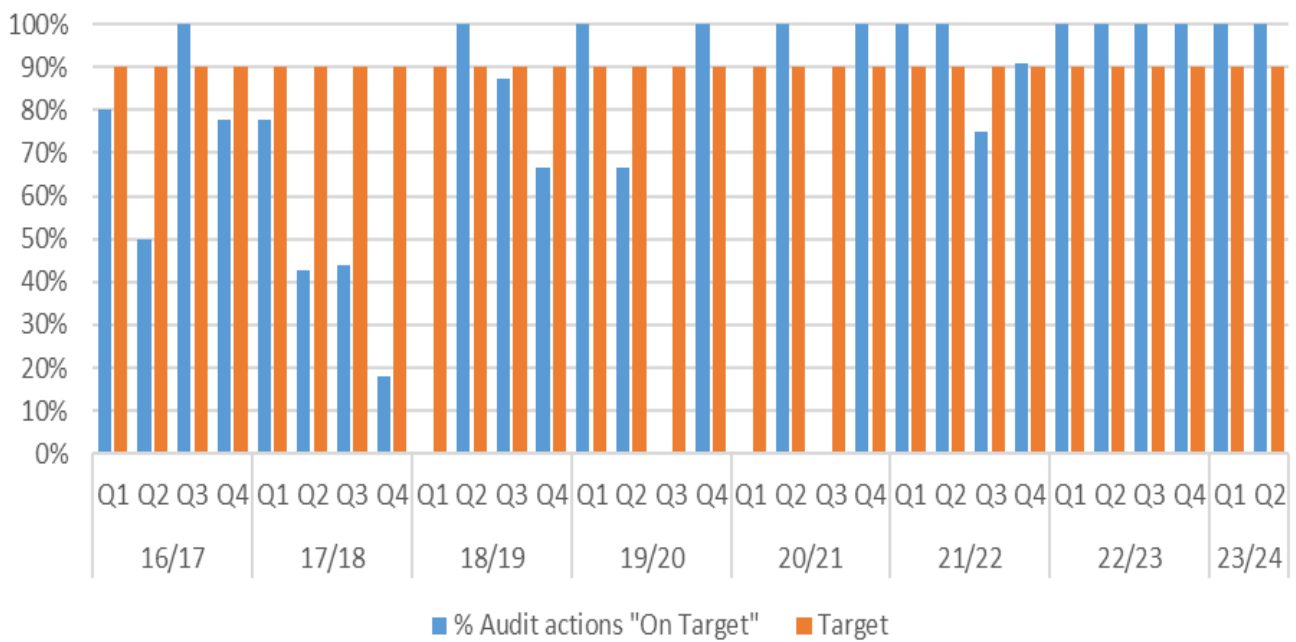
CSPC.MPI.04 % of invoices paid within 30 days of invoice receipt (cumulative)



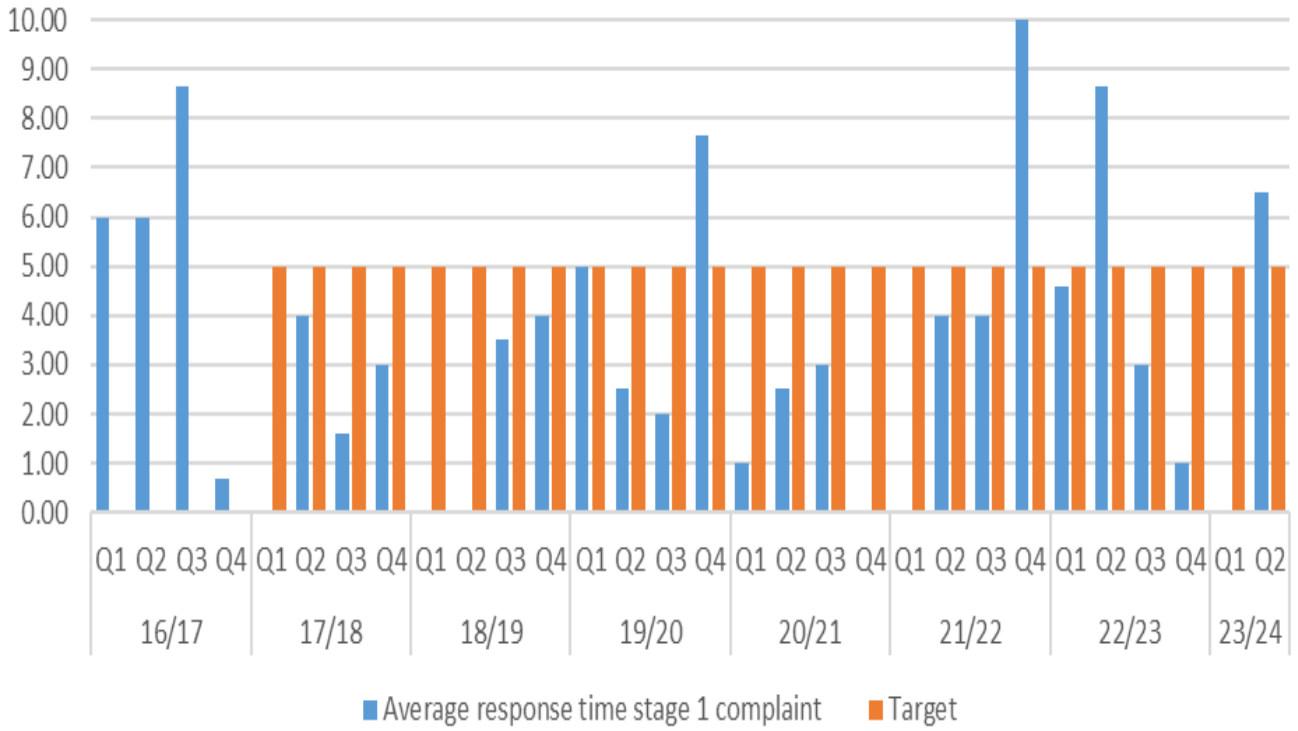
CSPC.MPI.05 % of Service PIs that are on target/have reached their target. (does not include Corporate PIs)



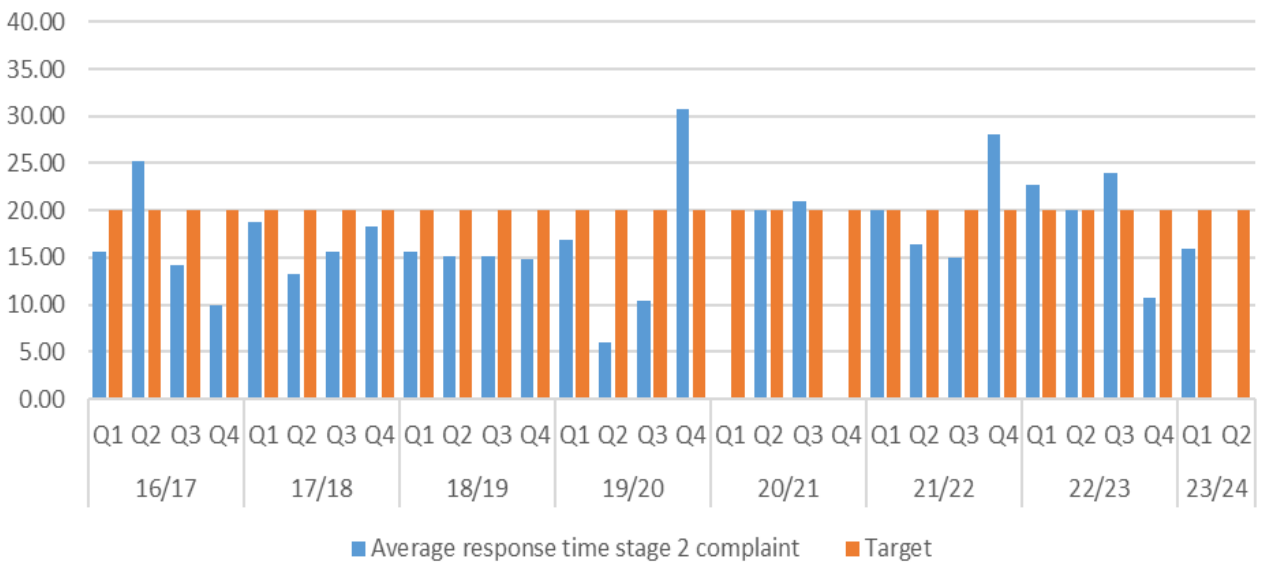
CSPC.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete this quarter.



CS.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1



CS.SPSO.04.2 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 2



The Promise

The Promise work continues to drive forward our children's service improvements.
Plan 21-24: Priority Areas

19 A Good Childhood
23 Whole Family Support
26 Supporting the Workforce
29 Planning
32 Building Capacity

Our Family wellbeing service which offers holistic family support is established and whilst there is still work to do we are on track to offering services to families that will ensure they do not escalate into social work services. An area for noting is around the workforce. There is a local and national workforce issue within social work and social care. Difficulties around recruitment and retention are very live issues across all services. Whilst we are doing everything possible to ensure the workforce is supported through this difficult time there needs to be recognition that there is no quick solution to this problem and having sufficient staff who are experienced to undertake their statutory duties is becoming more difficult. We are linked in with national groups to ensure we are learning from others and making those that need to be aware are mindful of this predicament.

Referrals:

Work is being progressed and is almost complete around gaining a clearer understanding on how all referrals come into the service.

This has been a significant piece of work involving many stakeholders. Within Q2 there is a 7% decrease compared to last year at this time and a 12% decrease in referrals from Q1. The impact of this piece of work is already evidencing positive results. This said the complexity of the referrals coming into the service remains high however it is hoped that we shall offer a much improved service

Family Wellbeing Service

The service has had a significant amount of training on offer to the new workforce to ensure they have a good understanding of their role going forward. They are already working with over 100 children and young people. We have an independent person undertaking a review of what voluntary support we can buy-in to support this service. It is hoped this shall be concluded by the end of October. Arrival of Ukrainian Families and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). We continue to welcome Ukrainian families into Midlothian adopting a holistic approach to the support on offer. We are confident that our steady and thorough approach to this work has ensured that we are robust in the work we are undertaking.

Looked After away from home population

The data evidences that our looked after population is fairly static bearing in mind data changes on a daily basis. These stats are testament to the workforce ensuring that they support families to remain together, where safe to do so. The introduction of

Family Group decision making, supports families to devise a plan which promotes families staying together with support from extended family, it is too early to advise if this is reason for this consistent decline in numbers. Child Protection has reduced from last quarter however domestic abuse remains the main reason children's names are on the CP Register.

Self-Directed Support

We continue to work tirelessly to ensure that families had access to funding if assessed as in need . The summer period is often a challenge for families trying to identify sufficient resources for children with additional support needs. Our aim is to start planning for next year so that families are aware of what is available and have choice where their child(ren) can attend.

Trauma Informed Training

We remain committed to ensure all our staff are trauma informed this includes our foster carers. A rolling programme of training is being rolled out across the directorate and Council.

02. Challenges and Risks

Q2 23/24: Challenges and Risks

National Care Service:

The 'Bill' which is currently in Stage 1 of the process is delayed and being considered with an expectation that the lead committee will provide a report at the start of 2024. CELCIS have been commissioned to undertake research around the inclusion of children's services within the NCS. This work should be concluded by the end of the summer 2023.

Poverty

As families continue to be impacted by the cost-of-living crisis this is expected to lead to an increase in the number of families experiencing poverty. This also applies to workers on low incomes. We are assessing all claims that come into children and families from the Scottish Welfare Fund for early identification of families who may need additional support.

Workforce:

Midlothian continues to experience the same staffing issues encountered by other Councils. There is a general lack of experienced and skilled staff across the sector, and we are having to increasingly rely on locum workers. As reported in other quarters, this is a national issues and discussions have started around A National Social Work Agency which would offer the same terms and conditions across Scotland, similar to that of Police Scotland and Education staff. This would benefit Midlothian if this approach were adopted.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

To date we have 15 unaccompanied asylum seeking children/ young people within the local authority. We have been able to meet the mandated request for UASC. However we are now at a point where we have no local resources if asked to accommodate any more UASC under the age of 16. This is a similar picture across Scotland and not unique to Midlothian.

Increased numbers of children impacted by the delay in neurodevelopmental waiting times:

There is a significant delay in families waiting for an appointment with CAMHS regarding neurodevelopment concerns. Not all cases will require clinical input from CAMHS however we are looking at how we can work together to consider how we best support families whilst on the waiting list. We continue to work with partners to explore how best to meet the current demands and pressure whilst making sure we future proof our services to deliver sustainable options locally for children and young people with ASN and Complex and Enduring Needs.

Foster Care

Given the local and national foster care crisis we are about to commence a new advertising campaign to hopefully generate prospective carers for teenagers and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people. We are in the midst of recruiting permanent staff to take this piece of work forward. Given that we already offer training to prospective foster carers with other local authorities, we are about to commence discussions around a joined up approach to recruitment.

Financial Pressures

Finance is an ongoing challenge and whilst Q1 reporting looks positive, the request for one placement within secure care or an additional external placement could potentially change our financial position going forward.

Quarter 2 - Children's Services Partnership and Communities-



Quarterly Reporting PIs - Off Target

Code & Title	Gauge	Value	Target	Next Update Due	Last Update	History
CSPC.MPI.07 % of internal/external audit actions progressing on target or complete t...		69.23%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
CS.SPSO.04.1 Average time in working days to respond to complaints at stage 1		6.5	5	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	
CS.SPSO.05.1 Percentage of complaints at stage 1 complete within 5 working days		0%	95%	01 Jan 2024	Q2 2023/24	

← 1 of 1 →