Improvement and Innovation Board
PAS Update

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www.pas.gov.uk

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What is Planning Advisory Service for?

"The Planning Advisory Service (PAS) is part of the Local Government Association. The purpose of PAS is to **support local planning authorities to provide effective and efficient planning services**, to **drive improvement** in those services and to **respond to** and deliver **changes** in the planning system"

(Grant offer letter for 2014-15)

Key Facts

- Started in 2004
- Part of the LGA
- Fully funded by DCLG (to March 2016)
- Sector led – governance board
- 11 staff, supplier framework, peer community
- Always subsidised, mostly without charge
- £2m budget this year (and next)
- Councils (not neighbourhoods, parishes, LEPs, private sector)

As a funded programme we …

- Understand how much things cost
- Evaluate each piece of work
  – including cost and 'excellence'
- Ask for a "state of the nation" each year

PAS 2013/14 impact assessment results

1,890 responded to our surveys and the headline results are that PAS:

- **are worth using**: 97% rated our service a good use of their time
- **remain relevant**: 88% think we are and are getting even more so
- **help people improve**: 92% said we improved their ability to do their work
- **have depth in the sector**: 75% shared information they received from us
- **provide value for money**: 88% felt our service was value for money

What do we do ?

- Work programme agreed each year by our board
- 29 separate activities on it
- Gathered into four themes
  - plans = 50%
  - leadership = 12%
  - collaboration = 12%
  - performance = 25%

Plans in place

Essentials
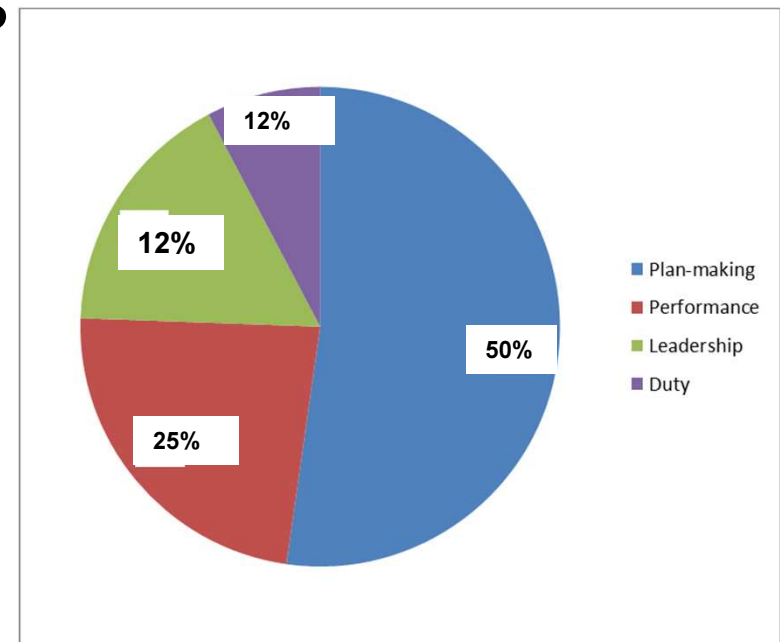
Duty to Cooperate

Strategic planning

Pre-app, PPAs, charging

Leadership

CIL

Delivery

Fracking, housing, flooding

Benefits of growth

Evidence

Viability

Viability Training

Sustainability Appraisal

Local plans

Project mgmt

Successful plan-making

Good decisions

Peer challenges

Objectively assessed needs

Community engagement

Improvement

Designation

Improvement cohorts

Councillor involvement

Neighbourhood plans

Benchmark

Improvement Peer Challenge

Toolkits and materials

Planning Quality Framework

We worked with (at least) 2,539 people in 2013-14
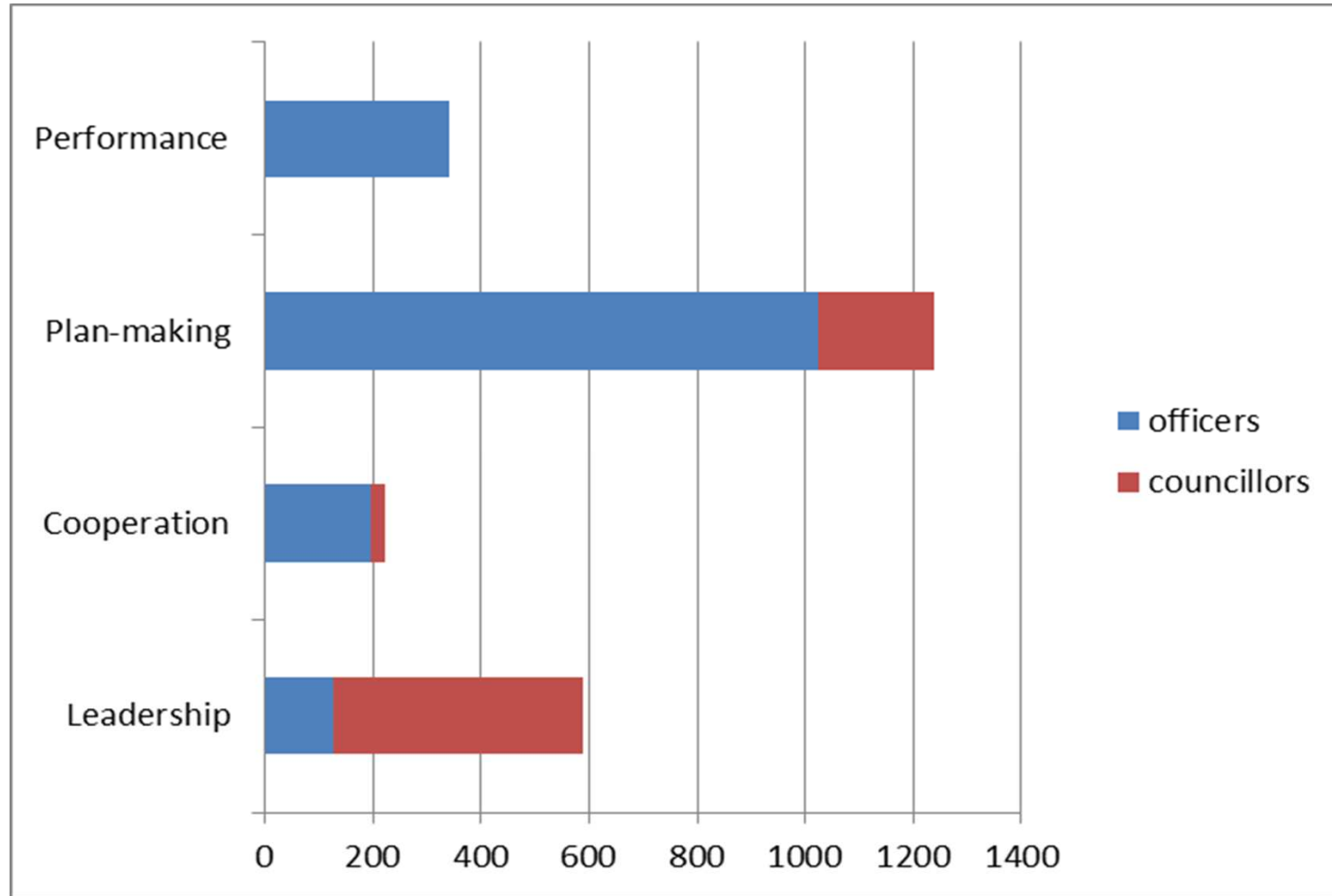
What do we do ?

- Make things
  - toolkits, 'how to' guides, briefings eg objectively assessed housing needs, 'positive planning', Local Development Orders
  - often through pilots / working parties
- Deliver things
  - consultancy, cohorts, events
- Offer to everyone
  - online
  - forum
  - share best practice

For example: Planning Quality Framework

- What is it ? A new product / service that
  - compares planning application databases (and benchmark performance)
  - surveys customers (staff, ward members and amenity groups)
  - includes new templates for capturing "quality"
- Allows councils to understand performance in a holistic way so they can
  - unpick, understand, improve
 - be accountable, demonstrate quality

Planning Quality Framework

- 40 councils helped us to pilot it
    - launching in January 2015
    - our goal is to get the majority of councils using it
- Once set-up, the process is very easy to run and keep up to date
    - not a snapshot, tracks things over time
- No targets, but use of peer groups can easily show where improvement is possible
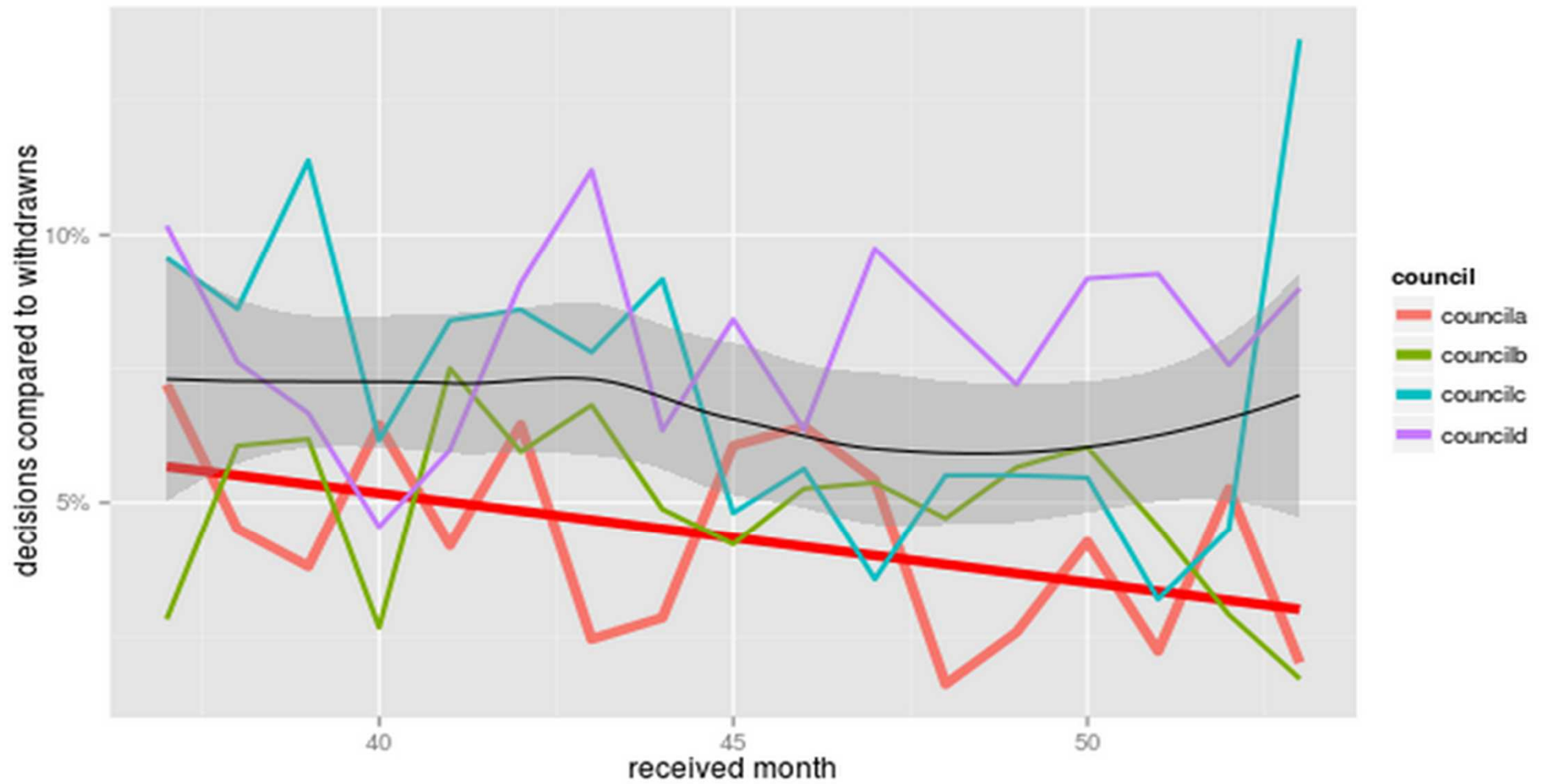
Planning Quality Framework

- Some example visuals to illustrate the information that the PQF provides to local authorities to use for improvement
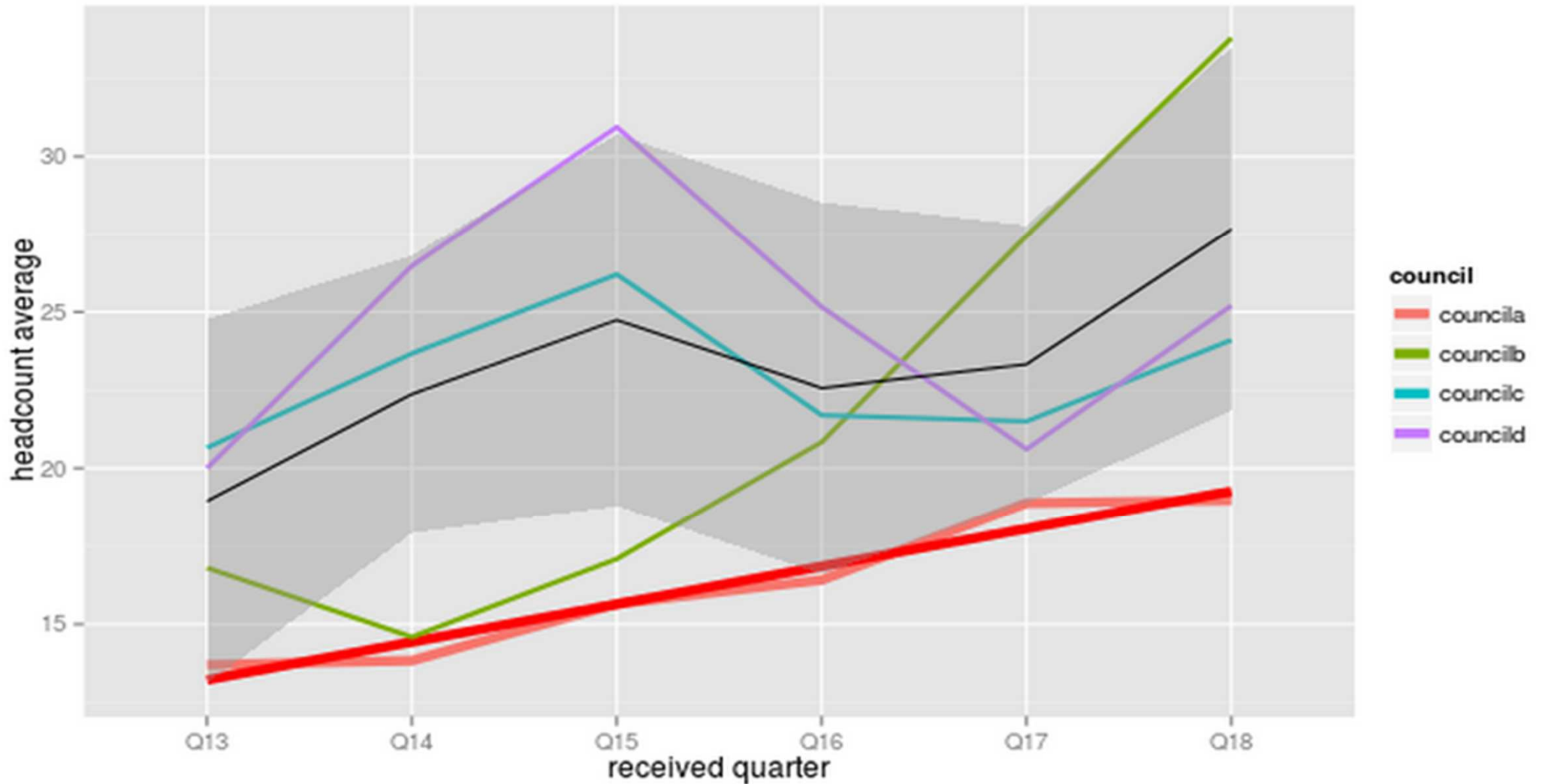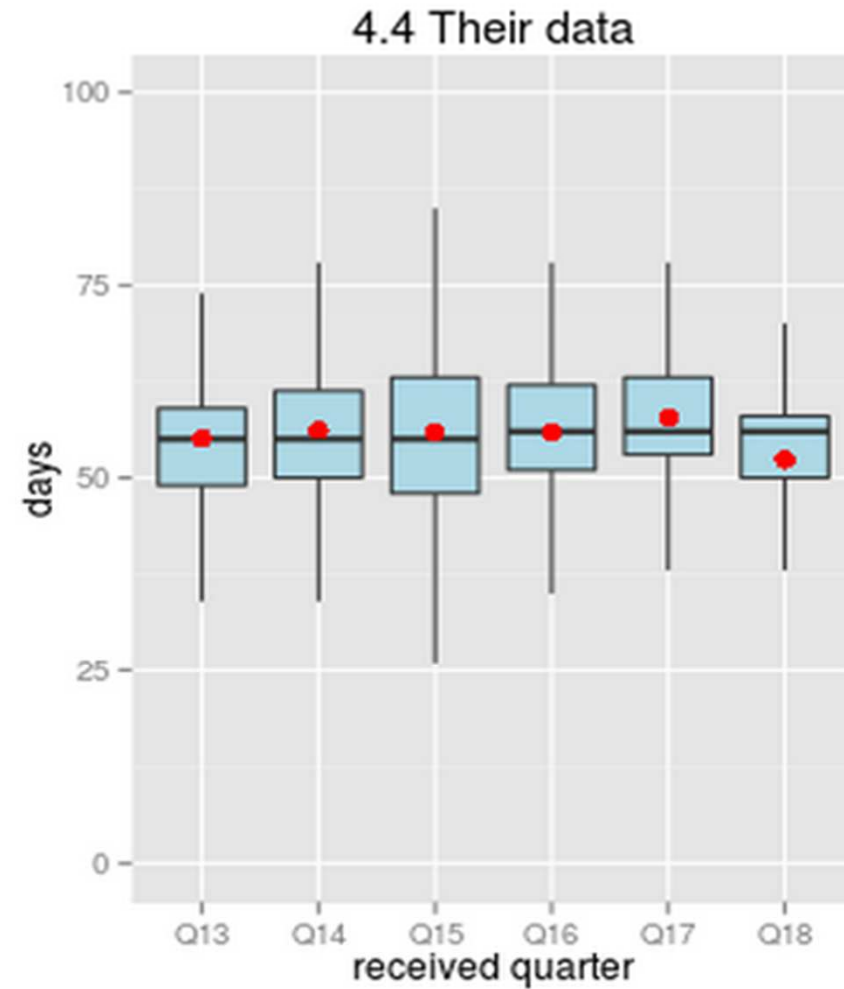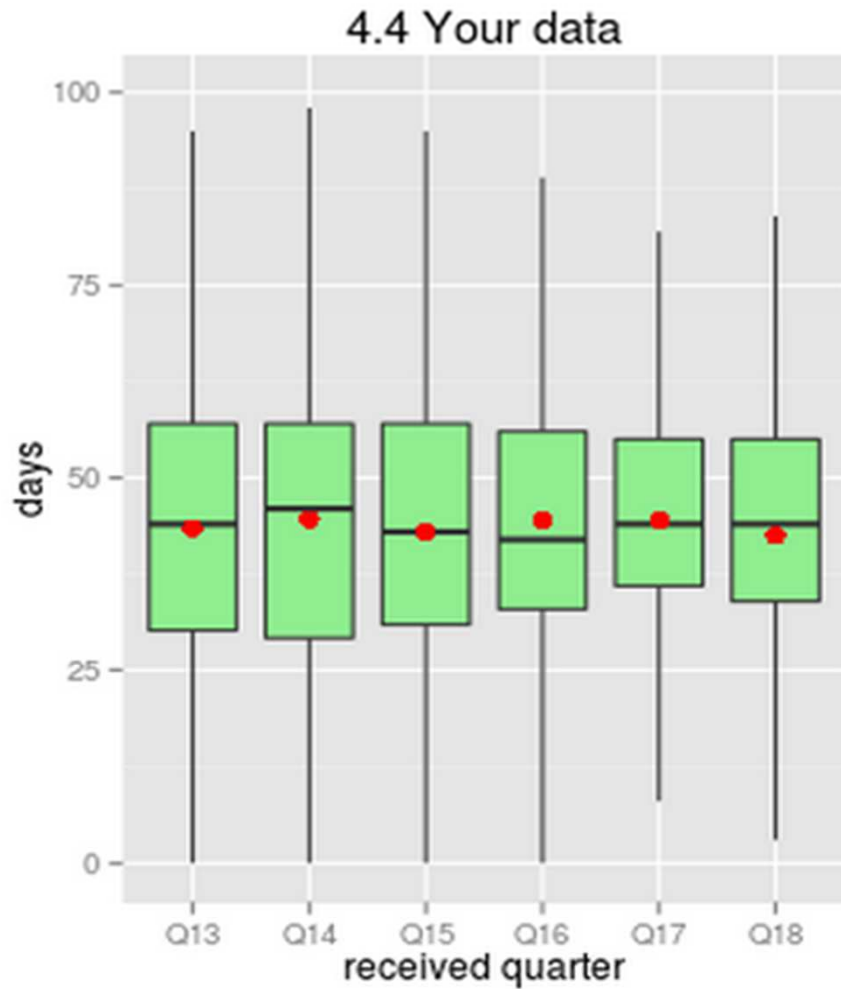- We will explain………..

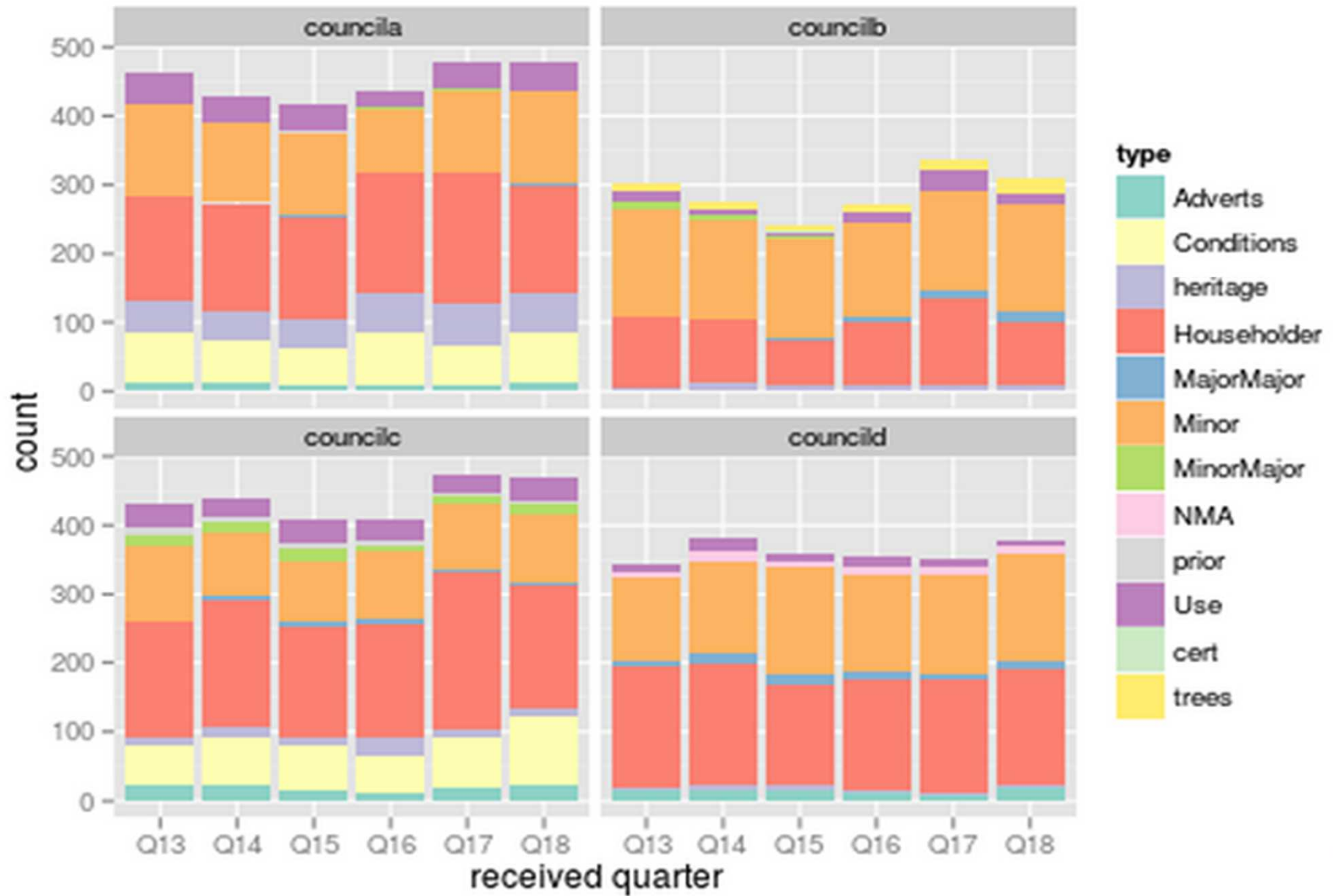# Approvals over time
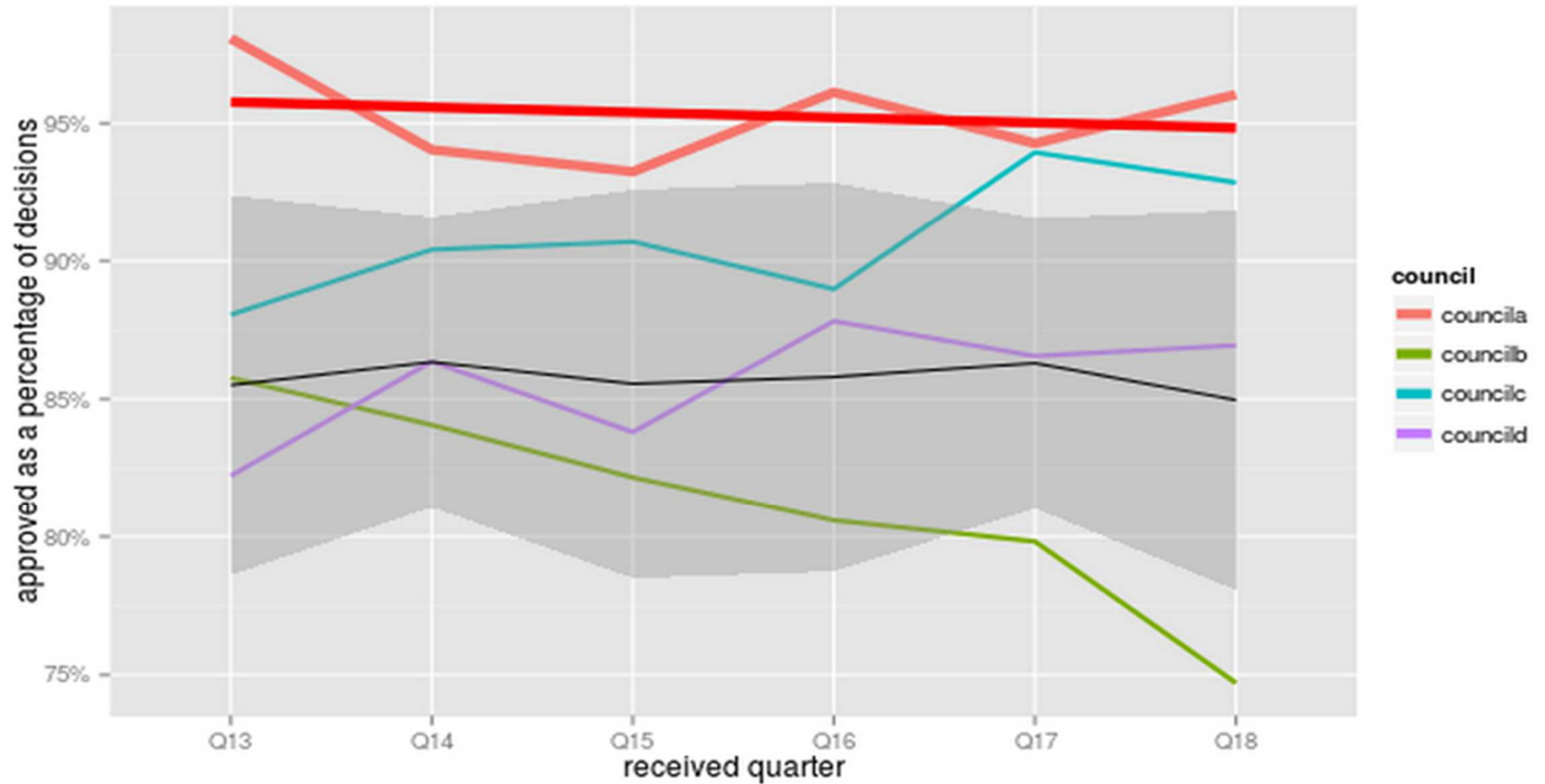
Waste over time

Workload over time

New ways of looking at performance

Still work to do getting quality data

Planning Quality Framework

- An excellent example of improvement and innovation
  - but not all in one go – years, reputation, confidence
- Councils able to use evidence to improve at almost no cost = better leadership = better outcomes
- It will continue to improve with feedback
- At the moment it is based on the needs of single councils but also great value in using the data in aggregate - what *really* happens in planning departments

Looking forward

- Issues
  - resources
  - (Compulsory) Plan making (and strategic planning)
  - de-regulation (Autumn Statement)
  - demonstrating value of planning