

A G E N D A

ANGLIA REVENUES & BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE & TIME Tuesday, 22nd June, 2021 at 11.00 am

VENUE: Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford

For the attention of:

Cllr Philip Cowen, Breckland Council
Mr D Ambrose Smith, East Cambridgeshire District Council
Mrs S. Broughton, West Suffolk District Council
Mr M. Cook, East Suffolk Council
Mrs J. French, Fenland District Council

Should members of the public wish to attend this meeting, and to ensure that Covid restrictions are adhered to, please email democraticservices@breckland.gov.uk

Page(s)
herewith

1. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

To appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the ensuing year:

The terms of reference of the Joint Committee stipulate that:

1. The persons eligible to be elected as Chair shall not be the appointees of a Council whose appointee held that position in any of the four previous years.
2. The persons eligible to be elected as Vice-Chair shall not be the appointees of a Council whose appointee held that position in the previous year.
3. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall not be appointees of the same Council.

For your information, the Chairmanship has to rotate round so that each Council takes its turn in a 5-year period (previous 6-year Chairmanship shown):

*East Cambs DC - June 2015
Fenland DC - June 2016
Suffolk Coastal - June 2017
Waveney District Council – June 2018
West Suffolk – June 2019
Breckland DC – September 2020 (current)*

	<u>Page(s) herewith</u>
2. <u>TREASURER</u> To appoint a Treasurer for the ensuing year.	
3. <u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2021.	1 - 8
4. <u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	
5. <u>URGENT BUSINESS</u> To note whether the Chairman proposes to accept any items of urgent business pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
6. <u>DECLARATIONS</u>	
7. <u>ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN AND RISK REGISTER</u> Report by Paul Corney, Head of ARP.	9 - 18
8. <u>PERFORMANCE REPORTS (STANDING ITEM)</u> Report by Adrian Mills, Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP.	19 - 84
9. <u>WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)</u> Report by Adrian Mills, Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP.	85 - 87
10. <u>Q4 ARP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2020-21</u> Report by Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director of Finance & S151 Officer (BDC).	88 - 92
11. <u>FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)</u> To note any items.	
12. <u>NEXT MEETING</u> To note the arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 21 September at 11am. Venue to be confirmed.	

BRECKLAND COUNCIL
EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
EAST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday, 9 March 2021 at 11.00 am
Virtual meeting via Zoom

THIS MEETING IS IN LINE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020

PRESENT

Cllr Philip Cowen (Chairman)	Mr M. Cook
Mr D Ambrose Smith (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs J. French
Mrs S. Broughton	

In Attendance

Paul Corney	- Head of ARP
Jo Andrews	- Strategic Manager (Revenues) ARP
Sam Anthony	- Head of HR & OD (Fenland)
Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
Rachael Mann	- Assistant Director (Resources & Performance) (West Suffolk)
Brian Mew	- Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer (East Suffolk)
Adrian Mills	- Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP
Stuart Philpot	- Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP
Ian Smith	- Finance Manager & S151 Officer (East Cambs)
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

1/21 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

2/21 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

None.

3/21 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

4/21 DECLARATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None declared.

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5/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Stuart Philpot, the Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP presented the report.

Business Rates:

Targets had been amended to reflect the grants received in respect of the rate reliefs received by Government. Jo Andrews, Strategic Revenues Manager advised that East Suffolk was no longer behind target.

Council Tax:

Council Tax was currently under target due to the many changes and the affect that the pandemic was having on residents in respect of hardship, and as well as not being able to recover outstanding amounts through the Magistrates Courts until recently, had affected the ability to collect. These targets were expected to improve going forward.

Fraud:

The Partnership had continued to identify significant amounts of attempted fraud particularly in respect of the single person discount which had increased since the previous meeting.

Enforcement:

Visits had re-started in August 2020 but again the pandemic restrictions had affected the Teams ability to engage with customers and as a subsequence there had been a significant drop in the amount of collections carried out by the Enforcement Team.

The Strategic Revenues Manager advised that the Team had tried to make extended arrangements with customers and were back out visiting but obviously there were still restrictions in place in terms of going into people's homes.

Non-Domestic Rates:

The Team had an increased workload over the first two months of this year due to the additional rate reliefs to be awarded and the payment of grants to businesses.

Council Tax:

351,000 Council Tax bills had been produced by an external mail company and were now 'hitting the mats' in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland. West Suffolk DC in respect of e-billing should be with their customers in the next 48 hours.

The Strategic Manager (Support Services) had been pleased with the progress thus far with the bills and with the e-billing option of just under 24,000 residents.

Councillor Broughton asked how e-billing was being promoted. Members were informed that this was being promoted by the Customer Services Team

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which formed part of the Customer Services Strategy Group; however, it was a slow process and the reasons for this was explained.

Paul Corney, the Head of ARP explained that the other factor linked to the lack of take up of e-billing was the very nature of Council Tax bills as customers only took notice of them once a year. The Customer Services Strategy Group was already looking at other ways to attract more e-billing customers by linking systems as East Suffolk already had.

The Chairman asked if there were any barriers to prevent this happening. Members were informed that not all Councils had 'CRM' software, and therefore was dependent on how each of them took such matters forward but this was being looked at.

The Chairman was pleased that all the partner authorities were aware of the opportunity and that the various IT Teams were being briefed on this approach but asked for an update to be brought to the next meeting or to the pre-meeting to establish how all partners were either migrating services to a new platform or utilising existing platforms in respect of single point of contact.

Members agreed as this could potentially create substantial cost savings.

It was further agreed that a target would be included.

The Vice-Chairman felt that June was too soon for the Head of ARP to pull such information together and suggested that it be brought to the September pre-meeting instead.

It was agreed that an update would be provided at the September pre-meeting.

Referring to the Performance report itself, the Chairman asked for an update on the court case in respect of Fenland's business rates collection that was now being appealed by the NHS, and whether this would have an impact across other authorities. The Strategic Revenues Manager advised that the appeal was still on-going and would primarily affect West Suffolk, Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Councils.

The Chairman asked why Fenland's target was shown 'red' but not the others. Members were informed that Fenland was marked 'red' due it being last year's collection rates, the current year was on target.

The Performance report was otherwise noted.

Stuart Philpot, the Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP was leaving at the end of March and the Head of ARP thanked him for all the years he had worked for the Partnership and the fantastic service that he had provided.

The Chairman totally endorsed the above comments and also conveyed his thanks to Jo Andrews, Strategic Revenues Manager who would be taking early retirement very soon.

6/21 ARP FORECAST FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2020-21 (AGENDA ITEM 6)

In the Chief Accountant's absence, the Head of ARP presented the report.

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This report had been based on information as of 31 January 2021 and showed an estimated overspend against budget of £492k for the whole of the partnership. This had mainly been due to the loss of enforcement income as discussed earlier in the meeting due to the pandemic restrictions. However, this would be offset by the income compensation scheme that the Government had introduced.

Authorities were expected to absorb the initial 5% of lost income against budget and after that the grant would provide 75p in every £ of lost income. The lost Enforcement income would be claimed under this scheme for each partner as shown in the table at section 1.4 of the report.

Members' attention was then drawn to Appendix A of the report, the details of which were explained.

The report and appendix were otherwise noted.

7/21 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK 2021 (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Strategic Revenues Manager presented the report.

In 2019, a consultancy exercise had been carried out to look at performance governance. There was a great deal of data, but a consistent approach was needed to report against agreed targets. Each Team had looked at their own objectives against strategic priorities and the critical success factors had been identified.

The Customer Services Team had reviewed and considered the targets and measures and it had been found that other measures would need to be included such as avoidable customer contact.

The data would be displayed on dashboards and would provide a visual way of recording performance and were being constructed so that as much as possible each Authority would be able to see their own data and that of the other partners. The dashboards would be a "living" document and new indicators and information could be added (or removed) when required. If set up in this way there would be less resource required to produce performance data.

Appendix B of the report highlighted the suggested targets and measures, and dashboards would be developed along each strategic priority. The process was explained.

In respect of e-billing sign up, the current target had been set at 10% which would be in the region of 36,000 customers.

The Chairman referred to page 48 of the agenda pack under heading Performance Management roles that contained the annual plans and strategies and asked if there should be a mid-year review given everything that had been happening in the last 12 months.

The Vice-Chairman agreed with the above suggestion and felt that it this should be looked at more than once a year.

The Head of ARP thought it was a good idea but asked for more information as to what Members actually wanted to see in the review. The Chairman felt

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that the approval of ARP plans and strategies should be reviewed every six months as everything had been fundamentally different over the last year and were going to be different again going forward. It was not just the pandemic that was creating this change, but it was also about the forthcoming agenda item that had yet to be discussed that was also going to drive change.

The Head of ARP agreed and felt that it would make entire sense to provide a Service Delivery Plan and Performance update every quarter if preferred.

Not to create work for the sake of it, and if appropriate, it was agreed that a Service Delivery Plan would be brought to the meeting in June alongside the Risk Register and the Performance updates would continue to be provided quarterly. The format of how these matters would be brought forward would be discussed and agreed off-line.

Subject to the above, it was,

RESOLVED that:

- the indicators identified, targets, tolerance levels and level of reporting be agreed; and
- the use of the Dashboard be approved.

At this stage, the Chairman thanked Jo Andrews and Stuart Philpot for everything they had done for the partnership. Their time and effort and their quality of their work had been thoroughly appreciated. Both were invited to remain in the meeting until the end of the agenda.

8/21 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Adrian Mills, ARP Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) presented the report.

The four matters of interest were highlighted as follows:

Universal Credit

Referring to paragraph 2.18, Members had always shown an interest in DWP's approach to helping people to claim Universal Credit. This was the second year that this service had been contracted to the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) but frustratingly, DWP had not confirmed its plans for the forthcoming imminent financial year arrangements. ARP had been led to believe that the service would be continued with the CAB for 2021/22 and that there would be further a review. DWP had noted all concerns raised.

Members' attention was then drawn to section 2.2.3 of the report (3rd bullet point). The £20 uplift in Universal Credit had been extended for the first six months of the forthcoming financial year. Customers who received Council Tax support would continue to receive the full benefit of that uplift until the end of September 2021.

Welfare Benefit Up-rating April 2021

From April 2021 all benefits would increase by the September 2020 CPI inflation measure which was 0.5% with the exception of the State Pension which was due to increase by 2.5% due to the 'triple lock' (lower of CPI inflation, average earnings or 2.5%).

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The report was otherwise noted.

9/21 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 9)

No issues arising.

10/21 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Chairman advised that there was some debate as to whether or not meetings were going to continue to be held virtually or in public/face to face after 21 June 2021. Further clarification was still being sought by the LGA.

The Vice-Chairman said that he would prefer to carry on with virtual meetings as it saved time and travel. He suggested face to face meetings once a year going forward.

Councillor Broughton concurred with the above comments as she felt that these virtual meetings had worked well and most people were now used to Zoom.

In the interim, the next meeting on Tuesday, 22 June 2021 at 11am was noted. Members would be informed of whether this meeting would be held virtually or face to face once the arrangements had been confirmed by Government.

A Member Briefing would be held at 10am prior to the meeting.

11/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 11)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 & 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.

12/21 RISK BASED VERIFICATION (RBV) POLICY REVIEW AND VERIFICATION POLICY 2021-2022 (AGENDA ITEM 12)

The Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) presented the annual report.

Members were being asked to note the Risk Based Verification Policy for 2020/21 as unchanged and to approve its replacement with a Verification Policy from April 2021.

The two major drivers for this initiative were highlighted and the table at Appendix A was explained.

RESOLVED that:

- the Risk Based Verification (RBV) policy remains unchanged in 2020/21; and
- the Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee approves the replacement of RBV with a Verification Policy for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims from April 2021 for Breckland Council,

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East Cambridgeshire District Council, East Suffolk Council, Fenland District Council and West Suffolk Council.

13/21 SUCCESSION PLANNING (AGENDA ITEM 13)

Before the report was discussed and on behalf of all the partner Councils, the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Head of ARP said a few words in respect of Stuart Philpot, the Strategic Manager (Support Services) and Jo Andrews, the Strategic Manager (Revenues), who would be leaving the Partnership shortly and thanked them both for their help and support over the years and wished them well for the future.

Stuart Philpot thanked everyone for their kind words he had thoroughly enjoyed working for the Partnership over the last 7 years and paid particular thanks to Paul Corney who had been a fantastic boss and felt that he would not have achieved his position without him.

Jo Andrews thanked everyone for their kind words.

At this point, the Strategic Manager (Revenues), the Strategic Manager (Support Services) and the Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) left the meeting.

The Head of ARP informed Members that he would be taking early retirement too in the near future, and this was one of the reasons for the succession planning report.

The Service Delivery Plan (Appendix A) had included "Leadership and Succession Planning" as an action since December 2019. For the continuation of services and to secure efficiencies, the Operational Improvement Board and the ARP Senior Management Team had been reviewing and discussing plans to consider key roles in the ARP establishment that could produce skills gaps were people to leave the organisation.

The suggested interim and future arrangements were then explained in great detail.

The Vice-Chairman was very pleased with the proposed arrangements but asked if it would be the OIB or the Joint Committee who would be appointing/interviewing the new Head of ARP as he felt that Members should have some input.

The Head of ARP reminded Members of the process when he was appointed but would find out if the same procedure remained.

Brian Mew, the Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer for East Suffolk DC stated that appointments such as these had to be in accordance with the employing authorities.

Rachel Mann, the Assistant Director (Resources & Performance) (West Suffolk) provided Members with a number of suggestions and felt that there would be a role for Members in the appointment process.

Members felt that this was a very comprehensive report and totally endorsed all the points that had been made.

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RESOLVED that the recommendations as listed in the report be approved.

It was agreed that the appointment process for the Head of ARP would be investigated and confirmed in due course.

The Chairman thanked the Head of ARP for all the hard work that he had done and for all the hard work ahead.

The meeting closed at 12.20 pm

CHAIRMAN

ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

Report of Paul Corney - Head of ARP

To: ARP Joint Committee, 22 June 2021

Subject: The Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register.

Purpose: To Provide an update concerning the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register at Appendix A

Recommendation(s):

- That the progress in respect of the December 2020 Service Delivery Plan and the risk register is noted.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In accordance with the ARP agreement a revised Service Delivery Plan with risk register should be agreed by the Joint Committee by the end of December each year and then reviewed every 6 months.
- 1.1.2 A Service Delivery Plan was agreed in December 2020 and this report provides an update below which details progress against this plan and an update to the risk register.

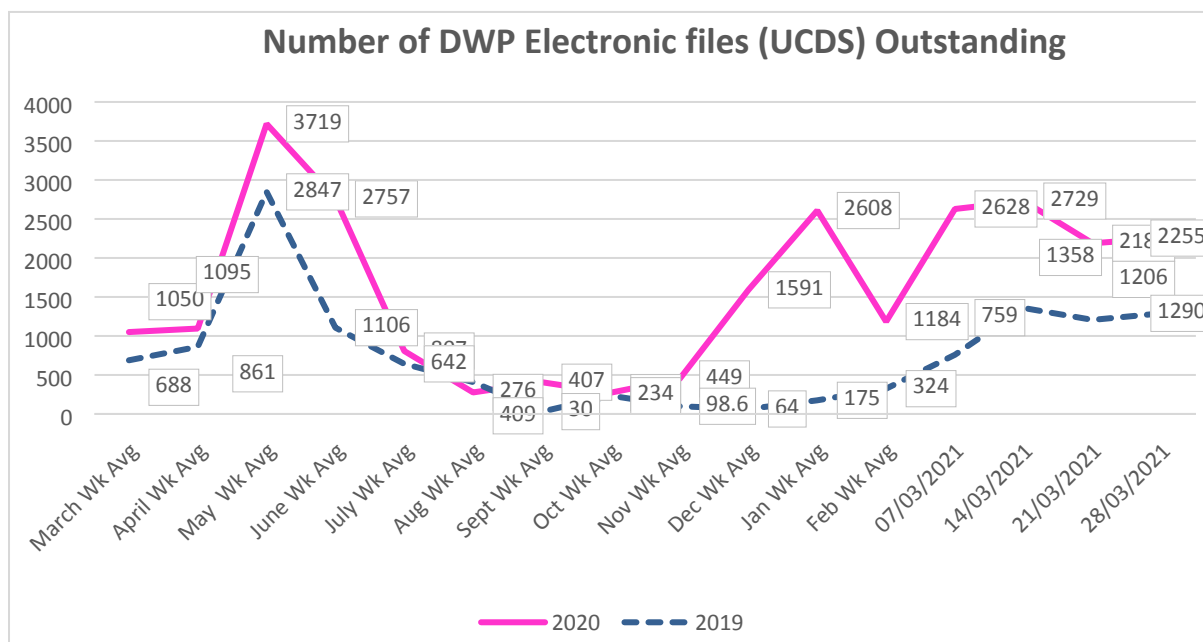
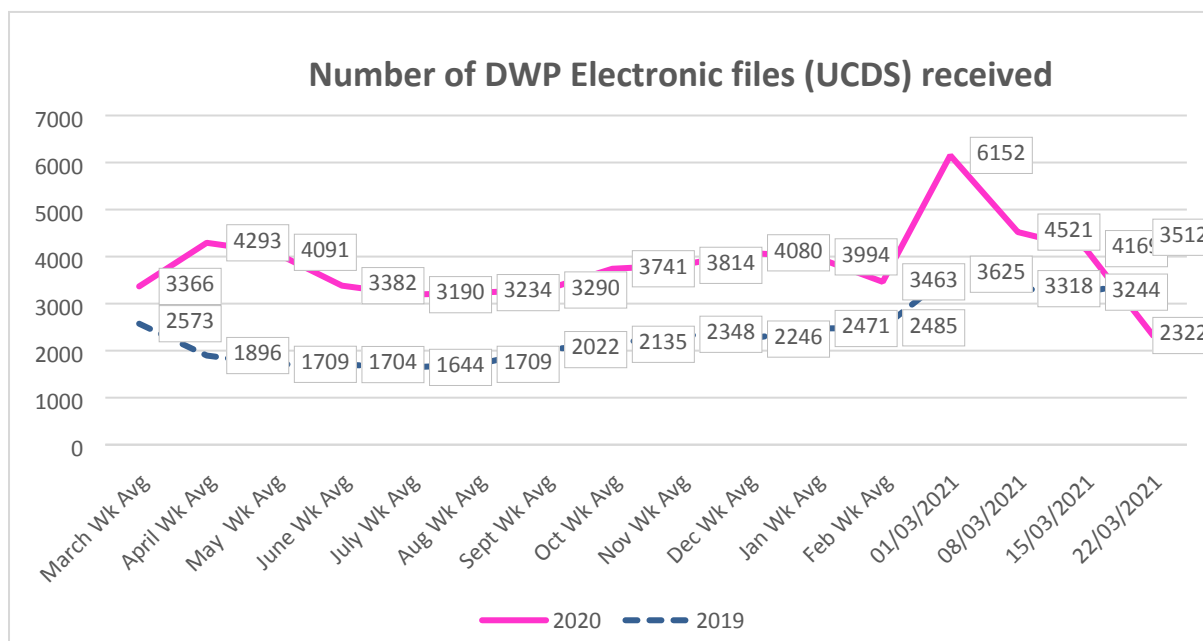
2. December 2020/21 plan update

- 2.1 The ARP are seeing significant success in 2020/21 and we have achieved the following;
- Housing Benefit new claims and changes are meeting targets in 21/22 even though Covid has affected levels of work and enquiries
 - The suite of forms and other functionality is available to all customer teams using Capita customer contact software to sign customers up to e-services and the number of those using e-services continues to rise.
 - The further recovery work jointly funded by County Councils secured recovery of £680k even though covid led to suspension of courts which has reduced the recovery in 2020/21, the achievement is commendable considering the circumstances. Recovery in 2021/22 is expected to reach the levels seen in previous years
 - The Fraud teams work, also jointly funded by the County Councils, identified over £2.3 Million in fraud and error last year even with the restrictions caused by Covid. The team are on target to achieve similar values in 21/22.

Some other achievements relating to the Transformation Programme are detailed below:

- 2.2 The Digital work stream has progressed with the automation of new claims and changes in circumstances growing steadily, to such a degree that when we saw the significant increase in Universal Credit Data Service reports of changes in circumstances we were able to automate approximately 50% resulting in less build up in work outstanding and therefore a quicker response for customers.

UCDS received and outstanding



- 2.3 Automation of Universal Credit records also includes the introduction of the “Tolerance Rule” into our Council Tax Support Schemes last year, this has meant that approximately one 3rd of the changes in income received did not result in a revised bill and payment profile for our customers leading to a clearer picture of what they have to pay. We did not have any cases where we need to reassess due to the tolerance rule causing hardship in cases where income reduced.
- 2.4 With the increase in unemployment and the continuing migration of cases from legacy benefits we are expecting the increase in UCDS cases to continue and so increasing levels of automation continues to be a priority
- 2.5 Our next steps in UCDS automation are, to increase automation in respect of changes in circumstances and, to automate new claims. We received the upgrade in software to facilitate this work in April 2021.
- 2.6 East Suffolk and West Suffolk are passing parking cases to our ARP enforcement services (previously known as Bailiff). This increases the teams resilience and ability to

collect debt in a fair manner taking account of people's ability to pay and vulnerability. It will also mean that the fees generated from enforcement action will come to the partners.

- 2.7 With Self-isolation Payments introduced and business grants being offered in the second lockdown in place in November we still seeing additional pressure on the teams. However, the partnership working between teams across all councils and the ARP Teams has worked fantastically and it should be a priority, when the current crisis ends, to ensure that we continue to work as closely in future.
- 2.8 Appendix A attached to the report shows the status of the priorities agreed in December 2020 and as can be seen the actions are progressing as we have anticipated, it is commendable that the pressures of covid are not affecting progress in 2020/21.
- 2.9 Two key members of the Senior Management Team have retired and as previously agreed the Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement is being appointed to. Work continues to ensure that members of the ARP team are offered opportunities to develop the skills they need to progress. This of course benefits the partners in establishing resilience and future strength in potential succession.
- 2.10 Work with the Customer Strategy Group continues to drive performance and will seek to develop customer satisfaction data in the future. The Customer Journey Programme will seek to improve the online access for customers by seeking to make links between websites as seamless as possible.
- 2.11 We are also looking to review the Council Tax Support Schemes for the Councils. We are endeavouring to continue to remove the need for customers to provide us with data already provided to DWP in support of Universal Credit claims. This approach will also improve the potential levels of automation meaning that customers claims are resolved more quickly.
- 2.12 The draft budget for 2021/22 is lower than it was in 20/21 even after the 2.75% increase in salaries; due to the savings in salaries and in the increased income from bailiff work now that the enforcement team will collect parking debts for East and West Suffolk.

3. Updated Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register

- 3.1 The service Delivery Plan (Appendix A) details the high-level actions that the service must implement to ensure that the varied demands on the service are met. The plan has 2 areas:
 - Service plan – business as usual and innovative activities
 - Risk register
- 3.2 The Joint Committee has reconsidered the strategic direction of the ARP going forward and the Service Delivery Plan seeks to detail actions to achieve the visioning detailed in the report to members.
- 3.3 The priorities of the Revenues and Benefits service are:

“Colleagues”: Our operations rely on the people who make up our team, both directly within the partnership and in partner service areas. We will develop our people professionally and pursue a comprehensive organisational development plan.

“Customers”: We focus all of our work on supporting the families, communities, individuals and businesses located in our partnership area. We will continue to make our services as convenient and as accessible as possible.

“Digital”: We will aim to increase our ‘digital by default’ service including full self-service. We will use automation to speed processing and release our teams to focus on vulnerable and complex cases.

“Relationships”: We are a partnership of five district councils, pooling resources to share the provision of revenues and benefits services, offering greater returns on investment in change and innovation projects.

“Sustainability”: We are organisationally designed to improve the financial sustainability and self-sufficiency of our partners, through the collection of council tax and business rates and the ethical recovery and enforcement of related debts.

- 3.4 All partner Councils strategies include the development of digital online solutions. Self-service offers customers accessible services inside and outside of opening hours, it also means that the customer service teams are available to provide more help to those who cannot self-serve or need to speak to a specialist.
- 3.5 The offer of online facilities to customers able to self-serve also frees existing resource to help those unable to self-serve. The development of the online portal, forms and automation will continue to be a priority.
- 3.6 The Customer Strategic Team (the lead officer from each Councils customer services team and ARP officers) will continue to improve the access customers have to services and will continue to improve the interface between front and back office functions.
- 3.7 In 2021/22 we will continue to invest time and resource into developing automated processes which have already delivered savings of over £120k. In addition, a further £220k efficiency target is included in the budget from 2022/23 onwards.
- 3.8 The ARP strategic team will continue to influence national initiatives such as Universal Credit and to influence system design to improve performance and generate efficiencies where possible.
- 3.9 The risk register also continues to highlight the need to monitor the impact of Universal Credit on customers and grant income. We continue to influence changes in delivery through representation on DWP steering groups.
- 3.10 All elements in the risk register have reached their target scores; The appeal from Hospitals for business Rate relief has been withdrawn, and the impact of Covid is being managed and all staff are able to work remotely.

4 Options

- 1. To suggest changes and additions to the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register.
- 2. To note Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register at Appendix A.

5 Reasons for recommendations

A Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register are requirements of the ARP agreement and are needed to agree the short to medium term priorities of the ARP in delivering services as effectively, efficiently and economically as possible and to identify the risks associated with the services.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Risk

If a Service Delivery Plan is not agreed then the direction and priorities of service delivery can lose focus. The Plan allows members to monitor and direct service provision. The identification and mitigation of risk is necessary to ensure that Councils minimise the impact of risk on customers and the partner councils.

6.2 Financial

The Service Delivery plan requires the ARP officers to monitor and report on financial matters of relevance to the Section 151 officers of the ARP.

6.3 Legal

The ARP agreement requires a Service Delivery Plan to be agreed before the end of December each year.

6.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Background papers:- None

Lead Contact Officer

Name/Post: Paul Corney (Head of the ARP)

Email: paul.corney@angliarevenues.gov.uk

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A – Service Delivery Plan December 2020 – updated June 2021

Topic	Link to Strategic aims	Core Purpose	Summary Action Required	Links with other actions and projects	timeframe	Suppliers/Relationships	Interdependencies	Progress & completion date	Flag
Universal Credit implementation and other Welfare Reform	Customer Relationships Sustainability	Ensuring that customers receive, as far as possible, a seamless change to Universal Credit and other future welfare reforms by managing skills and knowledge of officers	Continue review of Revenues & Benefits service provision in the light of the introduction of Universal Credit and other future welfare reforms once migration timetable communicated by DWP	Workforce Strategy and Learning and Development Strategy. Also links to Review of CTS Scheme	ongoing - current managed migration target for UC 2023	DWP	DWP are managing this process, we must understand the implications to us as the information concerning migration timetables become available	Strategic Manager Benefits attends national DWP group and keeps ARP informed as well as directing DWP to address LA issues. All ARP Councils have been in full service (for new claims) since the end of December - still awaiting info on Managed migration of existing cases.	
Review of Council Tax Support Scheme	Colleagues Customer Digital Relationships Sustainability	To review the scheme to maximise the customers journey whilst ensuring the Councils receive the income needed	To link the scheme to Universal Credit entitlement where legacy benefits are not in payment. We will be able to automate a significant number of cases which will speed up responses for customers	Links to Customer Journey automation	Cabinet and Council approval by end January 2022 for 2022/23 Scheme to be in place from April 2022	Capita/ DWP	A reliance on Capita providing data and software enabling automation of new claims received through UCDS	A project group has been set up to develop a project plan - once modelling has taken place we will be able to inform OIB and members of the implications of changes to the Schemes to gain approval. Consultation will then be required	
Customer journey - online services	Customer Digital Sustainability	To offer as simple a journey as possible for the customer to access online services and information. Where possible to offer 24.7 & 365 services to customers to be able to transact with the Councils which will increase self-service transactions using online forms that lead to automation	To work with Customer Service teams to make links between websites as seamless as possible. To develop the Capita Change of Address (COA) form and to further develop current online forms and integration into the back office. To further improve the take up of online services	This project is part of the Customer Journey programme and, in particular, links to the automation action on this service plan	Testing has commenced on the Capita COA form and the Customer Teams are determining the strategy for seamless websites	Capita provide ARP with the protal and online form functionality	A reliance on Capita providing data and software enabling automation	The detailed plan for COA is being developed - based upon testing of Capitas improved form received recently. The Customer Strategy Team (leads from all LAs and ARP) are developing strategy concerning development of the website. Covid meant that the Customer Strategy Team did not meet for a time but, they have been able to recommence meetings and progress is again being made	
Customer Journey - Automation of Services	Customer Digital Sustainability	To maximise the number of automated transactions, that are received electronically, to speed up processing times for customers and to provide efficiencies	Self service forms to be auto-indexed (a significant percentage of form are now auto-indexed) - and auto assessment increased. UCDS automation on change of circs to be increased (currently at around 50%. Develop automation of new claims with Capita.	This project is part of the Customer Journey programme and, in particular, links to the online services action on this service plan	Work already commenced - next milestones by end June 2020 - improved UCDS and review of COA automation	Dependent upon supplier engagement and delivery	A reliance on Capita and the Government Agencies agreeing data sharing protocols and providing data and software enabling automation	UCDS automation of changes at 50% and work continues with Capita to improve. We will also seek to automate new claims in the new year. Council Tax change of address automation has been developed by Capita (software rec'd April 2021) and testing is taking place to put Capita form live and to automate updates in the system.	
NDR, Recovery and Enforcement - EDMS	colleagues Digital sustainability	To ensure data is held on Edms and is held in a manner that improves performance information	To ensure data is submitted to EDMS in format that breaks transactions down. To create efficient processes to pass work to relevant officers through drip-feed	Performance Framework	by end November 2021	EDMS team, System Adminand Capita	EDMS team, System Adminand Capita	Some reports and processes already developed - Covid has meant some other priorities have suspended action but, still on target to achieve by November.	
Covid 19 - agile workforce	Colleagues Customers Digital Relationships Sustainability	Ensuring that customers receive, as far as possible, a seamless service by managing skills, resources and knowledge of officers. To ensure that future working models are developed in light of the cultural changes seen from Covid	The New Normal programme looks at the future of service provision in providing online solutions (covered in other actions in the plan) and in ensuring that staff have the resources and support they need working at home or in the office	Wellbeing, Customer Journey, Learning, Development Strategy and Resourcing Strategy	Ongoing	HR, Support Team, Ops Managers and SMT	Pandemic	A huge amount of work from WS IT has facilitated all officers to be able to work from home. Work takes place to understand what period of time will be spent working from home and what time will be spent in the office going forward.	
Billing and Benefits letter production	Customer Sustainability	Annual exercise to get bills for new Council tax year and benefit letters to customers with in prescribed time to collect instalments	The production and dispatch of year end bills and benefit letters		Commence January for issue of bills and letters mid-march 2022	External mailing Contract	Preceptors setting their Council Tax early enough for bills to be produced	This is an annual project which went very smoothly in March 2021 but remains on the plan for 2022. Project plan to be developed by end January 2022 - Capita release scheduled for late Dec/early Jan 2022	
Learning & Development Strategy	Colleagues Customers Sustainability	To oversee and ensure corporate L&D meets the strategic OD, Corporate Induction and service level workforce plans whilst maximising the Levy contributions from the partnership councils, in order to upskill the workforce and promote from within	Bi-annual review of operational TNA & skills gap priorities and provide direction to achieve key OD objectives inline with L&D calendar. Utilise Levy at each LA. Communicate career pathways/career clusters for each job profile. Improve internal and external secondment offering, job shadowing. Review operational skills needed to upskill or cross-train	Succession Planning L&D strategy projects Operational	Jul-20	SMT and Ops mgmt. ARP Trainers & Resilience Officers L&D teams	Reliance of Ops teams providing TNA data and any changes to Apprentice Levy schemes, with use of funding and providers available.	TNA completed for each service area. Identified 4 levels of development (Talent Development to SMT). All LA's sharing training calendar and HUB updated with events. HUB also has links to LA's L&D pages. Level 3-Level 6 Apprentices offered to all in talent pipeline and above (approx 20 may be undertaking mgt qualification during 2021-2022 via Levy). Career pathways on HUB. Coordinating with LA's online info for all staff development.	

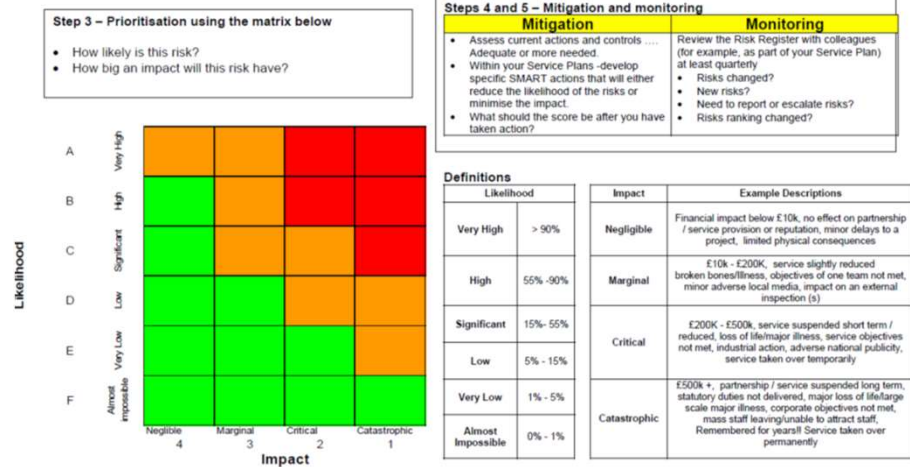
Leadership & Succession Planning	Colleagues Customers Sustainability	Develop a strategic approach to succession planning at Management level so that we identify and develop our leaders of the future inhouse where possible in areas of virtual leadership traits.	Create Leadership and Management development programmes to support succession planning. Commit to matrix working, job shadowing, sharing knowledge and skills to build workforce resilience. Incorporate mandatory mental health awareness into leadership and management development programmes. Consider future structure in light of critical Managers leaving	Resource Management	April 2021 - 01/05/2022	OIB, SMT and Ops mgmt. Assessment Centre providers L&D teams	Reliance on TNA of leadership and identifying future leaders as part of new ARP structure. Funding to deliver qualifications that can not be attained through Apprenticeship Levy	SMT and Ops mgt critical skills and knowledge reviewed and approved as part of SMT recruitment/succession planning. PDP tool developed for succession planning with inclusion of job shadowing, mentoring and having a leadership Coach. Now have 17 MHFA's, 9 of which are in mgt roles.	
Work force Strategy	Colleagues Customers Sustainability	To provide operational HR metrics to manage and monitor people performance, budgeted headcount and be pro-active in identifying operational needs in line with agile working	Review ARP and operational workforce organisational structures & service reviews to support achievement of ARP key projects, agile/flexible working and customer service level agreements	Operational resource strategies Operational project timelines Customer Service level agreements Staffing Budget	Dec-20	OIB, SMT & Operational Mgmt. team Financial team across ARP HRBP's	Current organisational structure and establishment to remain constant. LA's policies across partnership with regard to workforce planning strategies	All HR teams have approved the new Council Tax Billing (generic) role. SMT restructure plans approved by OIB. HR metrics provided as part of Performance Framework project. Annual reports for 01.04.20-31.03.21 issued to SMT. SLA successfully completed. All HR projects have a scope and project plan. HR teams working together re agile/hybrid working approach.	
Well-Being Strategy	Colleagues Customers Sustainability	To continue to pulse survey and support staff through well-being initiatives, prepare them for new ways of working, good physical, mental and financial health info on ARP HUB, EAP's, OH and benefits available.	Continue to develop an ARP Well-Being Charter to target areas as a result of ARP survey. Promote virtual events and good practice to support H&WB at work. Promote EAP and Benefits packages i.e. financial & non-financial benefits. Staff Forum Annual survey and / or mini pulse surveys to include ARP culture and acting on areas which prohibit a healthy and positive workplace culture	Health & Well-Being Strategy and Implement ARP WB Charter	01/04/21 - on going	External Well-being providers HRBP's OIB, SMT and Ops mgmt. ALL Staff ACAS/legislation/casework/Union Well-Being Champions & MHFA's	Funding to support well-being initiatives and suitable facilities to delivery them	A significant amount of material and workshops have been made available to officers before and during lockdown. APR WB Charter progressing well and assessment planned for July 21. WB virtual events planned every month, WB page promoted each month with different theme. WB Champions and MHFA meetings held. ARP surveys completed in Nov 2020, Jan 21 and May 21	
Resourcing Strategy	Colleagues Customers Sustainability	Review and modernise our approaches to recruitment and retention, to make sure that we attract and retain valued employee's	Develop a brand strategy to include social media presence and approach to engaging prospective employees. Review and update virtual recruitment tools and assessments of candidates	Workforce Planning and Implement e-recruitment	April 2021 - April 2023	ICT (ARP) ARP Corporate Comms	Links with partnership website remain unchanged and HR SLA arrangement	A process for interviewing and training remotely has been successfully implemented now we need to further develop testing of candidates remotely. ARP brochure and WS ARP specific online portal now set up.	
Communication and Digital Strategy	Colleagues Customers Sustainability	Promote a digital culture throughout the organisation through a digital champions network.	Utilise variety of digital platforms to develop framework for measuring impact of ARP services for the partnership and ARP branding. Work closely with programme, project and Comms Officer/ ARP HUB administrator team to increase accessibility and use of ARP HUB.	Implement digital learning - corporate. ARP Communications Strategy	April 2021-2023	WS IT Team		ARP Hub is live and continues to be developed within service areas	
Sharing of Good Practice	Colleagues Customers Relationships Sustainability	Challenge and support to encourage new ways of working, sharing of good practice and innovation through "function" support teams	To review terms of reference of existing Function Support Teams and for OIB to agree other groups that add value to sharing of intelligence and good practice across the partnership	Links to most other actions - Communications and delivery will be partner responsibility	Scoping by March 2021	Members of groups	All terms of reference documents are subject to review, and new editions should make specific reference to the ways they support ARP's strategic themes. Format will be consistent, following the layout of the most recent set (at the time of writing) for the new Communications Support Team	Over time a number of specialist teams have been set up to discuss future approach to various issues - the next step should be for OIB to formalise the groups needed and each groups terms of reference should be agreed	
Performance management	Colleagues Customers Digital Relationships Sustainability	To ensure that customers receive prompt accurate service by ensuring that the correct individual, team and organisational performance measures (and reporting) are in place to manage service delivery across the ARP	Design a performance management framework to enable a clear line of sight between planning, measuring, monitoring and reporting on performance and support SMT in performing their role through ensuring effective performance reporting arrangements are in place	Integral to all activities	new Approach for approval March 21 JC for 2021/22 year	OIB, SMT, Function Support Teams	All officers on each group must engage with group and complete tasks agreed by the groups	All Business Units are on target to develop performance measures for their teams that will form part of the Performance Management Framework	

Quality/GDPR/Audit	Customer Relationships Sustainability	Ensuring that the correct checks and balances are in place to provide security of data and efficient processes	Ensuring that Internal Audit Plan recommendations are followed up and completed within agreed timeframe and applying risk based quality assurance work to ensure processes are followed and error is minimised	Integral to all activities	Annual audit plan agreed with audit partnership/SLA	SMT and Ops mgmt. ARP Trainers & Resilience Officers L&D teams	Link to Partnership audit requirements and advice	Quarterly updates are provided	
Maximising taxbase Council Tax	Relationships Sustainability	Ensure all relevant properties are included on a Valuation List and to bring properties back in to use and / or understand why they remain empty - campaign to encourage owners to get properties occupied - to maximise income	To identify properties not in the lists or, with reduced charge that should be charged more Council Tax. To maximise use of Total Mobile to improve efficiencies in visits	Budget monitoring and Quality, Audit	Initial letters by early June for empty property review. Monthly timetable for review of discount and exemptions	Planning, Housing Teams and ARP	Data to be shared so that taxbase is maximised and reasons for properties being empty are recorded and reviewed periodically	During the year cases are reviewed and in addition an annual exercise has been started in May, working with partner housing teams, to review all long term empty properties before the Council Tax Base is calculated for MHDCLG	
Maximising taxbase NNDR	Relationships Sustainability	Identify method and undertake full review of SBRR across partnership putting in place facility for on going checks, carry out periodic review of Reliefs and exemptions and exercises to identify hereditaments that are missing or altered	To identify hereditaments not in the lists or, with reduced charge that should be charged more Business Rates. To maximise use of Total Mobile to improve efficiencies in visits	Budget monitoring and Quality, Audit	Initial letters by early September 2021 for SBRR review. Timetable for review of reliefs and exemptions	Planning, Housing Teams and ARP	Data to be shared so that taxbase is maximised and reasons for properties being empty are recorded and reviewed periodically	During the year cases are reviewed and in addition an annual exercise is started at the end of may, working with partner housing teams, to review all long term empty properties before the Council Tax Base is calculated for MHDCLG	
Budget monitoring	Relationships Sustainability	To keep officers and members informed of performance against projections to ensure that financial planning can be accurate and to ensure Subsidy is not qualified and is maximised	Monitor income, expenditure and Subsidy in the light of NNDR retention scheme, LCTRS, UC and conversion issues	Maximising Taxbases	Annually - April-March initial review against budget on monthly basis and report to 151 officers any variance	OIB, SMT & Operational Mgmt. team Financial team across ARP HRBP's	Finance officer function group will continue to agree information to be provided and frequency	Reported quarterly to JC - Finance teams advised if issue identified monthly. The Finance	
Team Cohesion	Colleagues Customers Relationships Sustainability	To develop an improved understanding of each service area within ARP, build team work through projects, cross cutting events events and well-being initiatives	Service area awareness events, improve induction programmes and cross-skilling opportunities through job shadowing	ARP Communications Strategy Operational Service Plans	HR Ongoing	All Ops mgmt.		Initial stage will be to scope suggested activities and assess cost of events. Staff Forum has been relaunched and one sub group will look at developing events to get groups from all Councils together	

Ref.	Risk Title	Risk Description	Consequences	Opportunities	Risk Owner	Risk Manager	Current Controls	Mitigating Actions	Date added	Date Updated	Curr. Score	Tgt Score	Trend
	Business continuity	Loss of key staff due to welfare reform and potential reduction in required resource	Inability to meet statutory requirements and to deliver services according to performance targets	With the expanded partnership we can ensure that skills are more widely held	Head of ARP and Strategic managers	Head of ARP	Staff are encouraged to take IRRV exams and NVQs and internal structures allow for career progression - reasons for staff leaving are being monitored to identify whether this becomes a reason for staff leaving	Transformation programme has identified opportunities for training and staff development - monitoring of reasons for staff leaving shows that it is not currently due to concerns over welfare reform	01/04/2014	18/05/2021	C4	C4	Reached target score
	Business continuity	Loss of premises, loss of power/telecoms and/or loss of systems - a new emphasis must be placed on loss of systems in relation to cyber attack	Difficulty in finding some members of staff access to systems or, loss of systems	Shared services mean that we operate from 4 centres and work can be carried out from 6 sites	SMT	SMT	Systems mirrored at 2 sites enabling work to continue. All staff are home enabled now. West Suffolk IT update systems with new patches and protection regularly and systems are PSN compliant	Access to Mirrored servers in FHCC regularly tested. Business Continuity plan agreed with partners - fail testing carried out and lessons learned applied. West Suffolk IT have worked on specific mitigation of cyber attack which reduces risk	01/04/2014	18/05/2021	E2	E2	Reached target score
	COVID-19	Increased demand due to economic impact of Covid-19 and extra Government requirements e.g. continuation of Hardship Fund and Self Isolation schemes. Withholding enforcement reducing income for Councils	Processing delays, deterioration in customer service, risk to LA error, risk to collection and recovery, increased complaints	To continue to engage with DWP/HMCLG/DHSC at a national level as an early warning system and to shape implications.	SMT	SMT	Lack of Government forecasting on economic impact upon a demand led service means we are reacting.	The vaccination programme has led to opening up of businesses and the future looks good in terms of lessening of additional demand and courts should remain open	29/10/2020	18/05/2021	E3	E3	Reached target score
	Income from retained Business rates and Council Tax	Income from NDR and Council Tax do not meet budgeted amount, in particular, due to impact of pandemic on businesses and individuals and potential appeals against rateable value - also the potential impact of Brexit	The income available to the Councils is insufficient to meet needs	Income may exceed projected budget	Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement	Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement	Monitoring will continue for 2020/21. Revaluation 2017, appeals adds risk for life of 2017 list	The NNDR1 and Taxbase calculations include provision for bad debt and appeals - on target to meet spending requirements this risk increased with Re-val in 2017	01/04/2014	18/05/2021	D1	D2	Reached target score
	Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Unemployment levels rise to a level that make the scheme unaffordable - this risk has risen due to potential impact of Covid	Customers are asked to pay more than they can afford and arrears accrue	Increased income from Council Tax could be achieved	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	Current scheme has set payment levels at or below Attachment of Benefit levels for all but one Council which gives realistic opportunity to recover - Councils and the Govt are doing what they can to support businesses to keep unemployment levels from rising	If revised scheme reduces awards of LCTRS then funding from County Councils should be sought to fund additional recovery officers	01/04/2014	18/05/2021	D3	D3	Reached target score
	A partner or partners leave the partnership	A reduction in partners could occur for a number of reasons in the future such as Local Govt reorganisation	Possible loss of key staff and TUPE implications - loss of resilience - also leading to increased cost of service and reduction in VFM	Develop trading opportunities to carry out some functions for other Councils	Head of ARP	Head of ARP	Partnering agreement includes notice period for cessation of partnership. ARPT being developed as trading vehicle	Opportunities for trading to be considered and business cases developed	01/04/2014	18/05/2021	E3	E3	Reached target score
	Billing and Benefit letter production	External printer does not issue daily or annual bills and letters within legal timescale	Bills may have first instalment date later than 01/04/2016 which could result in loss or delay in collection of Council Tax and Business Rates	The contract will continue to offer significant savings to the Councils	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	2015/16 to 2021/22 annual billing process successful and daily bills and letters designed and active with current printers	The process was carried out successfully last year and testing will ensure that all documents are sent with correct information and on time	01/04/2014	18/05/2021	E2	E2	Reached target score

	Housing benefit subsidy shortfall	Overpayments that are a local authority's fault can be claimed back as income if the value is less than 0.48% of the overall HB expenditure. Extrapolation by External Audit teams can also take Councils over this threshold	If LA error is not kept below this level it can have a significant financial impact on councils	To ensure that processes and procedures are correct and are followed and to ensure that backlogs do not effect LA error and that error is kept to a minimum so that Audit do not have cause to extrapolate subsidy overpayments	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	Rigorous procedures and high level of professional training. We have a Quality Assurance team that test accuracy levels and looks for and at areas of weakness. All councils were kept below LA error levels for audited claims from 2013/14 to 2019/20 due to robust challenge of Audit findings and extensive work to identify drill down to avoid extrapolation having an adverse effect	To continue to use overtime and agency where vacancies mean that there is a risk to subsidy. To continue to apply QA to areas identified in audits and random testing to identify other areas of risk / error	11/12/2014	18/05/2021	D3	D3	Reached target score
	Universal Credit Implementation	Uncertainty over future funding from DWP and CLG. Affect upon customers currently receiving HB and resultant impact on customer teams	UC has been rolled out to new claimants but later a managed migration of HB caseload will occur - the impact on customers and social landlords will be enormous if the migration falters	To continue to work with the DWP and Stakeholders to jointly offer customers assistance in making the transition	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	Head of Council Tax Billing, Benefits and System Admin	We have entered in to an agreement with DWP to jointly help customers to make the transition and agreed a Universal Support Partnership with them.	Assess the impact of claims moving to the DWP - modelling can take place to understand how ARP will be impacted as the timetable for all councils is issued.	11/12/2014	18/05/2021	D3	D3	Reached target score
	Fraud and Error	Risk of Fraud entering the system if retained fraud team are not kept. LCTRS fraud and Council Tax fraud will not be investigated by the DWP - retained service has to be self funding	If no service is retained by the partnership then Fraud will not be identified in cases.	Funding to resource interventions in cases currently receiving benefit and to retain joint funding from County and Police	Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement	Head of NNDR, Recovery and Enforcement	Team retained to investigate LCTRS, Tenancy, Ctax discounts/exemptions and NNDR since 01/09/15	Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils have agreed funding for Fraud team till 31/03/22 - quarterly reporting to County Councils to demonstrate the impact of the Fraud team.	11/12/2014	18/05/2021	C2	C2	Reached target score

Risk management process and toolkit





Joint Committee Performance Report March 2021



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All Partner Councils Combined



Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 40,382,156	£ 80,234,076	£ 122,593,614	£ 151,680,832	●
Target	£ 38,080,964	£ 78,313,282	£ 118,246,156	£ 148,138,900	●
2019/20	£ 68,526,436	£ 137,479,211	£ 179,586,617	£ 243,658,978	●
Year End Target				£148,138,900	●

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£127,454,324	£251,468,250	£379,825,898	£454,493,276	●
Target	£131,101,223	£258,456,805	£386,585,468	£454,258,929	●
2019/20	£125,766,695	£247,998,105	£330,460,654	£439,901,785	●
Year End Target				£454,258,929	●

Number of Electronic Forms Received					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	12,089	23,189	37,184	55,159	●
2019/20	9,375	19,525	28,498	36,405	●
Year End Target				36405	●

Fraud and Compliance	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Yr Target
Single Person Discount Fraud	£529,263	£942,485	£1,290,452	£1,455,793	£500,000
Local Council Tax Support	£6,050	£20,001	£63,272	£87,093	£150,000
Tenancy Fraud	£6,480	£105,960	£295,200	£295,200	£400,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£113,556	£301,455	£373,578	£495,817	£250,000
Fraud Identified	£655,349	£1,369,901	£2,022,502	£2,333,903	£1,300,000

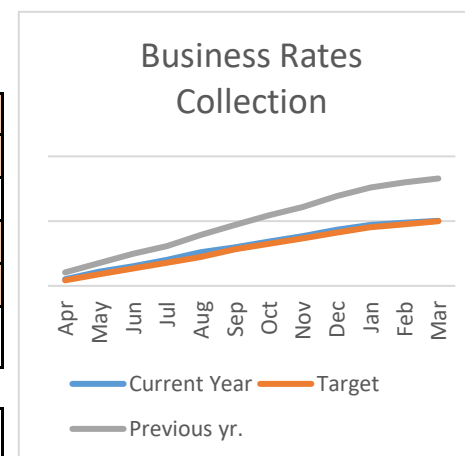
Performance Information March 2021

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 6,046,513	£ 11,935,167	£ 17,330,233	£ 20,092,010	●
Target	£ 5,351,728	£ 11,332,757	£ 16,430,763	£ 19,979,420	
Refunds	£ 403,258	£ 1,240,252	£ 1,567,290	£ 2,309,912	
2019/20	£ 9,936,479	£ 18,830,045	£ 27,763,428	£ 33,171,404	●

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Year End Target	£ 19,979,420	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

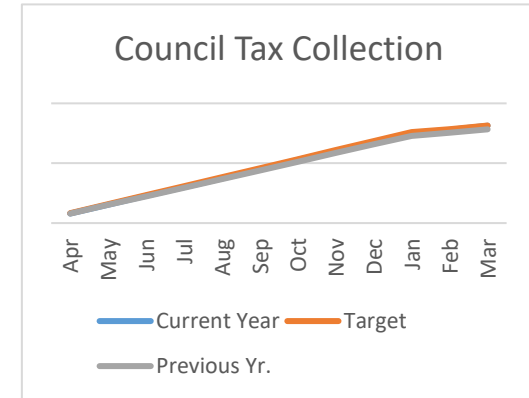
Narrative

Collection met target for the current financial year. Targets were amended to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £2,400. Enforcement action in 2021/21 has resulted in collection of £25,721.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 22,830,485	£ 44,806,050	£ 67,828,605	£ 81,338,654	●
Target	£ 23,306,834	£ 45,717,564	£ 68,527,467	£ 81,463,941	
Refunds	£ 204,527	£ 489,303	£ 726,141	£ 1,080,745	
2019/20	£ 22,364,957	£ 43,876,573	£ 65,767,484	£ 78,299,417	●



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Year End Target	£81,463,941	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is behind target by £125,287. The Government is funding a hardship scheme which has provided up to £150 to each LCTRS recipient of working age. Targets have been adjusted to reflect these payments. Whilst Covid has affected some customers ability to pay, we were unable to take our normal action to recover outstanding amounts through the Magistrates Court until the last quarter of the year. Also, the amount of Council Tax support awarded has increased during this financial year, reducing the amount to be collected.

Further recovery action in 20/21 has resulted in collection of £73,379. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £491,561.

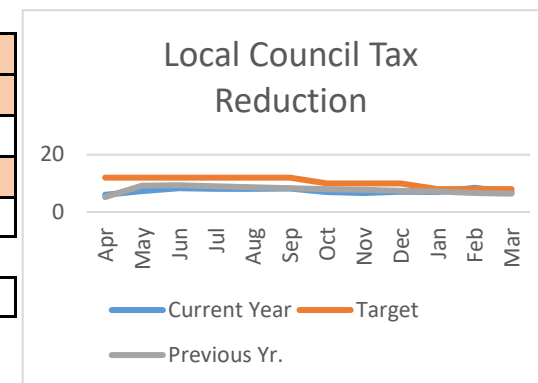
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £388,654 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	8.26	8.20	7.04	6.98	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	9.34	8.26	7.46	6.43	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

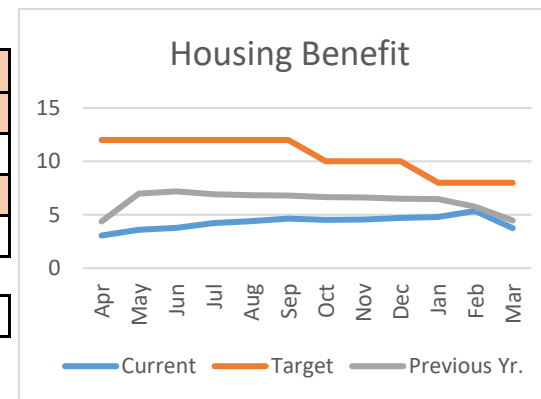
This indicator measures the average year to date number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year, despite significant increased demand due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 causing rises in Universal Credit claims and change of circumstances.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	3.77	4.64	4.72	3.74	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	7.19	6.81	6.50	4.47	●
Year End Target		8		●	



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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The team continue to proactively seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are also forging closer working relationships with a number of service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

Recent involvement includes a closer working relationship with both Planning Enforcement and Economic Development.

In a broader sense the team are also working with County in setting up the Fraud Hub in Norfolk. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. Funding from Norfolk county continues to support the Premium Single Person Discount Reviews.

The team have also been working with NNDR in post assurance business rates grants and also have investigations underway in respect of false applications.

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	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£117,886	£236,327	£304,536	£326,549
Local Council Tax Support	£1,346	£5,477	£23,403	£35,554
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£93,000	£93,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£53,563	£65,107	£84,089	£105,971
Fraud Identified	£172,794	£306,911	£505,027	£561,074



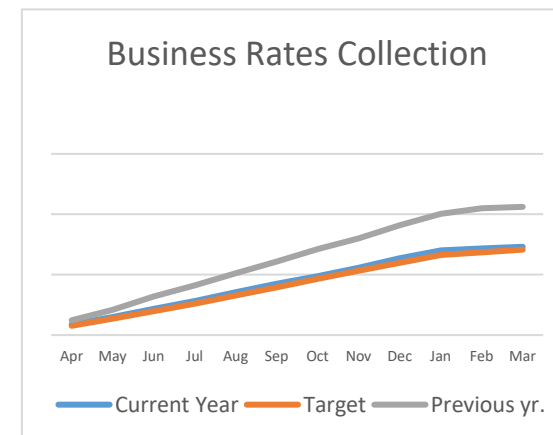
Performance Information March 2021



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 4,321,819	£ 8,513,137	£ 12,702,067	£ 14,622,123	●
Target	£ 3,978,590	£ 7,915,784	£ 11,969,953	£ 14,153,152	
Refunds	£ 219,614	£ 429,251	£ 679,549	£ 797,931	
2019/20	£ 6,372,977	£ 12,173,009	£ 18,185,963	£ 21,231,175	●

Full Year Target	£14,153,152	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection met target for the current financial year. Targets have been amended to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

There have been claims by NHS Trusts for charitable rate relief which have been subject to a High Court appeal. If successful this could result in a backdated refund of £553K. The High Court have rejected the claim that the NHS Trusts are charities, however initially the NHS trusts appealed this decision but this has now been withdrawn.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has not resulted in any collection. Enforcement action in 20/21 has resulted in collection of £16,008.



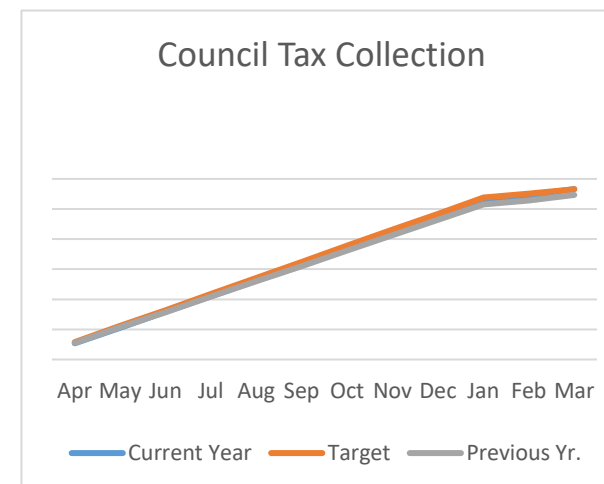
Council Tax



Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 15,859,812	£ 31,561,919	£ 47,847,998	£ 56,630,706	●
Target	£ 16,420,947	£ 32,428,966	£ 48,431,329	£ 56,565,439	
Refunds	£ 149,975	£ 342,403	£ 522,217	£ 806,345	
2019/20	£ 15,730,723	£ 31,067,215	£ 46,402,469	£ 54,682,384	●

20

Year End Target	£ 56,565,439	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection met target for the current financial year. The Government is funding a hardship scheme which has provided up to £150 to each LCTRS recipient of working age. Targets have been adjusted to reflect these payments. Whilst Covid has affected some customers ability to pay, we were unable to take our normal action to recover outstanding amounts through the Magistrates Court until the last quarter of the year. Also, the amount of Council Tax support awarded has increased during the financial year, reducing the amount to be collected.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £33,475. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £237,894.

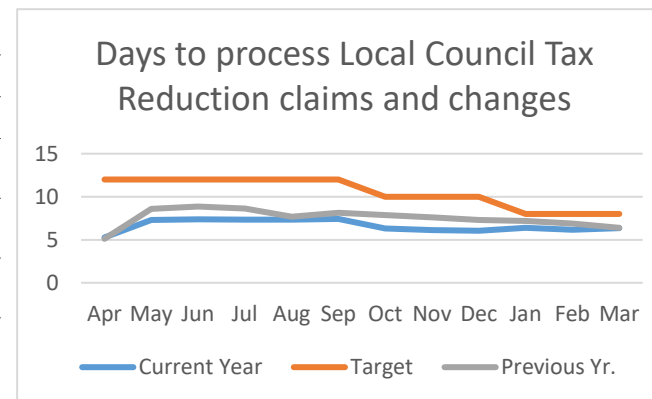
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £321,921 debt.



Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	7.37	7.42	6.03	6.36	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	8.86	8.12	7.31	6.38	●



20

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

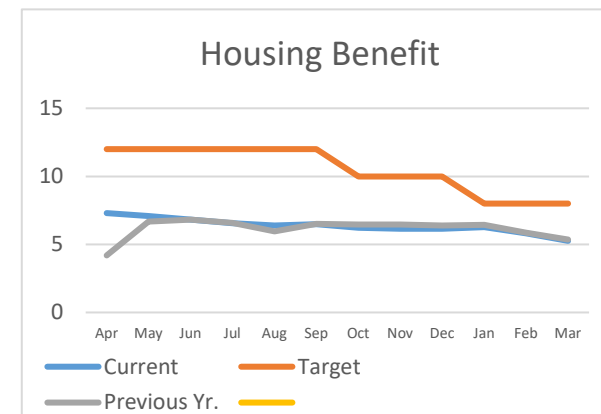
This indicator has been met for the year, despite significant increased demand due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 causing rises in Universal Credit claims and change of circumstances.



Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	6.82	6.48	6.14	5.26	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	6.82	6.50	6.38	5.36	●
Year End Target		8			●



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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes.

The team are working with the largest Social Housing provider in the authority to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

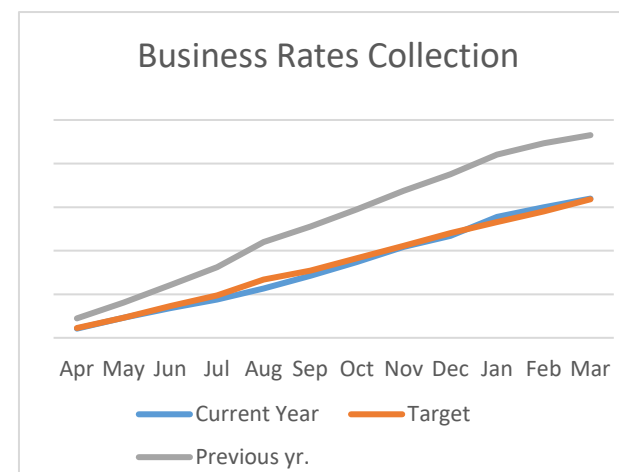
In a broader sense the team are also working with Cambridgeshire County in setting up the Fraud Hub in Cambridgeshire. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. A business case and project team is progressing the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and an update is expected in terms of its progression and procurement of software. Once operating this will align the work of the fraud team across the partnership.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£27,997	£40,118	£61,177	£71,898
Local Council Tax Support	£2,122	£2,610	£6,674	£6,711
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£93,000	£186,000	£186,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£0	£101,939	£114,400	£128,452
Fraud Identified	£30,119	£237,667	£368,250	£393,060

Performance Information March 2021

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 13,586,679	£ 28,476,749	£ 46,751,882	£ 63,912,082	●
Target	£ 14,599,314	£ 30,783,361	£ 48,034,963	£ 63,596,344	
Refunds	£ 613,691	£ 1,733,063	£ 2,486,253	£ 3,270,590	
2019/20	£ 24,147,964	£ 51,103,221	£ 75,034,979	£ 93,033,039	●
Year End Target		63,596,344		●	



32

Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

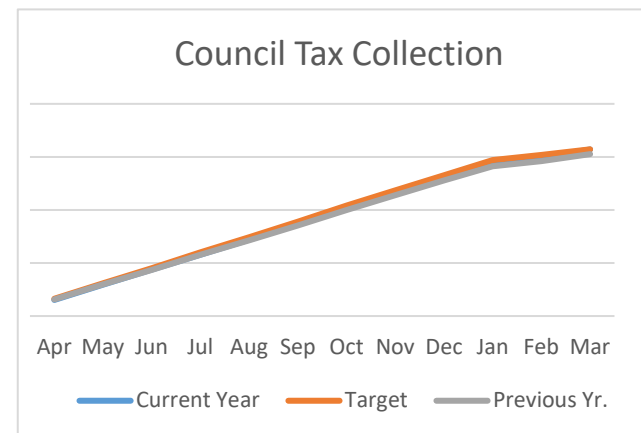
Collection met target for the current financial year. Targets have been amended to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £66,009. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £20,902.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 43,986,884	£ 86,547,244	£ 130,268,131	£ 157,025,532	●
Target	£ 45,144,195	£ 88,858,483	£ 132,855,610	£ 157,132,596	
Refunds	£ 464,206	£ 1,116,190	£ 1,710,530	£ 2,375,415	
2019/20	£ 43,402,134	£ 85,413,139	£ 127,711,105	£ 152,606,485	●

Year End Target	157,132,596	●
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33

Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

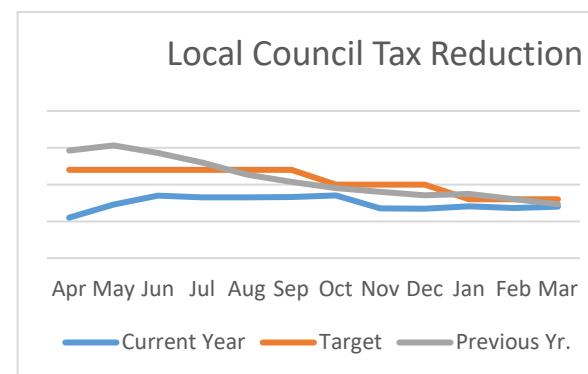
Collection is behind target by £107,065. The Government is funding a hardship scheme which has provided up to £150 to each LCTRS recipient of working age. Targets have been adjusted to reflect these payments. Whilst Covid has affected some customers ability to pay, we were only able to start taking our normal action to recover outstanding amounts through the Magistrates Court in the last quarter of the year. Also, the amount of Council Tax support awarded has increased during this financial year, reducing the amount to be collected.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £161,995. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £683,893.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	8.49	8.32	6.70	6.98	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	14.29	10.36	8.55	7.33	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

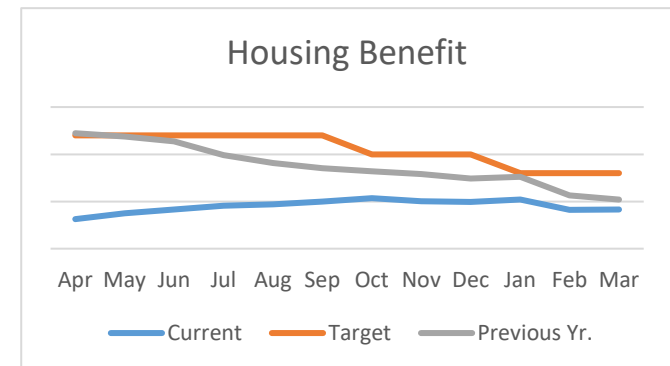
Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year, despite significant increased demand due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 causing rises in Universal Credit claims and change of circumstances.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	4.16	4.98	4.95	4.14	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	11.36	8.52	7.42	5.20	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The reviews of NFI SPD matches and newly awarded Single Person Discounts continue to provide very positive outcomes.

The team work closely with the East Suffolk Corporate Fraud Team and ensure the transfer of fraud referrals across the teams.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are trying to progress closer working relationships with service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

The team have also assisted NNDR in due diligence checks of businesses applying for COVID 19 government grants.

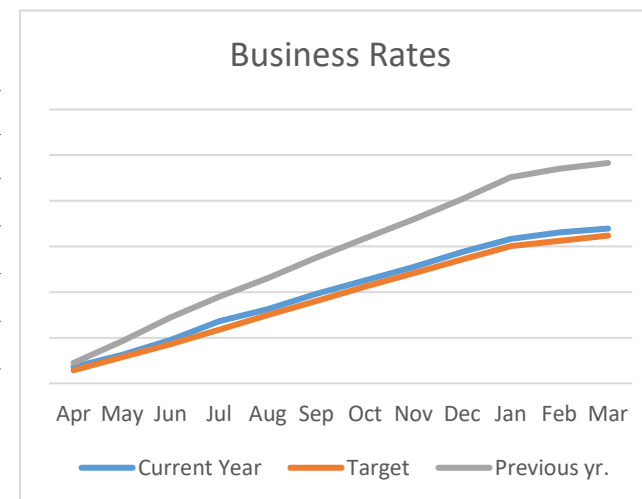
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£191,318	£336,805	£467,765	£537,302
Local Council Tax Support	£254	£2,365	£10,695	£14,814
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£6,353	£14,060	£23,574	£90,786
Fraud Identified	£197,925	£353,230	£502,035	£642,901

Performance Information March 2021

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 4,752,965	£ 9,815,866	£ 14,405,039	£ 16,956,825	●
Target	£ 4,315,013	£ 9,028,512	£ 13,577,091	£ 16,182,693	
Refunds	£ 380,024	£ 767,676	£ 1,114,748	£ 1,389,525	
2019/20	£ 7,228,152	£ 13,789,980	£ 20,173,070	£ 24,137,938	●

Year End Target	£16,182,693	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection met target for the current financial year.

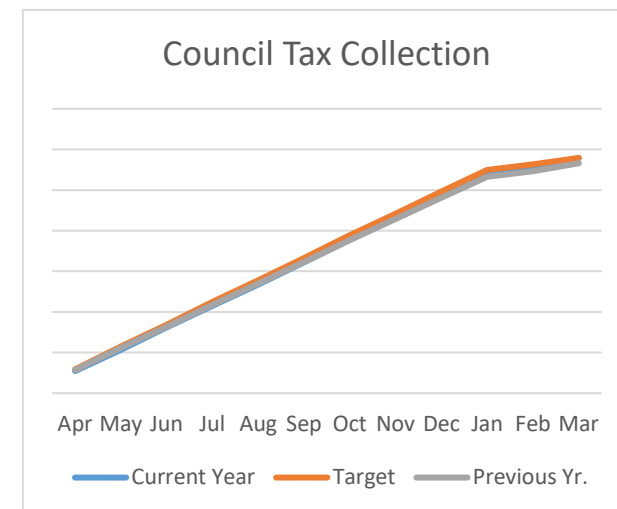
There have been claims by NHS Trusts for charitable rate relief which have been subject to a High Court appeal. If successful this could result in a backdated refund of £553K. The High Court have rejected the claim that the NHS Trusts are charities, however initially the NHS trusts appealed this decision but this has now been withdrawn..

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £112,580. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £55,782.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 16,234,901	£ 32,182,036	£ 48,651,700	£ 57,863,955	●
Target	£ 16,835,316	£ 33,271,032	£ 49,631,461	£ 57,913,023	
Refunds	£ 137,534	£ 395,346	£ 613,237	£ 903,450	
2019/20	£ 16,330,949	£ 32,276,827	£ 48,152,964	£ 56,585,399	●

Year End Target	£57,913,023	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is behind target by £49,068. The Government is funding a hardship scheme which has provided up to £150 to each LCTRS recipient of working age. Targets have been adjusted to reflect these payments. Whilst Covid has affected some customers ability to pay, we were only able to take our normal action to recover outstanding amounts through the Magistrates Court in the last quarter of the year. Also, the amount of Council Tax support awarded has increased during the financial year, reducing the amount to be collected.

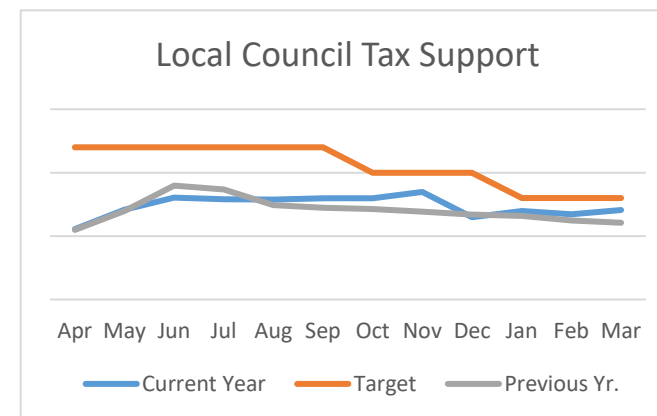
Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £70,219. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £336,996.

Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £359,270 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	8.03	7.98	6.49	7.06	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	8.98	7.24	6.70	6.06	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

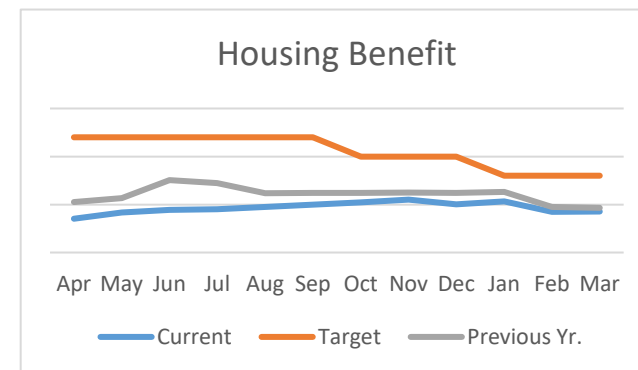
This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year, despite significant increased demand due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 causing rises in Universal Credit claims and change of circumstances.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	4.43	4.98	5.01	4.28	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	7.54	6.20	6.20	4.65	●
Year End Target		8			●



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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are trying to progress closer working relationships with service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

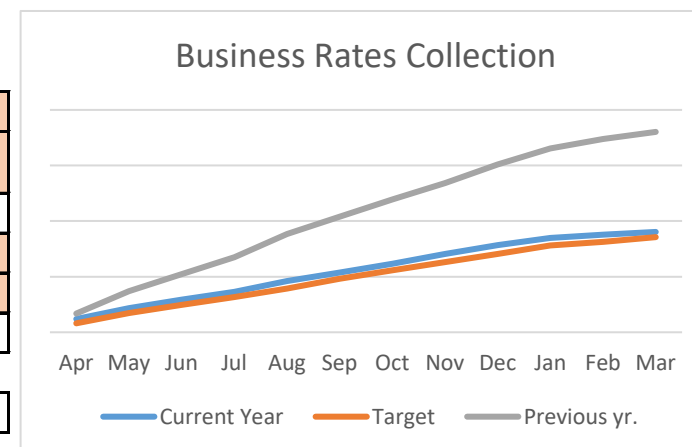
In a broader sense the team are also working with Cambridgeshire County in setting up the Fraud Hub in Cambridgeshire. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. A business case and project team is progressing the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub. An update is expected in terms of its progression and procurement of software. Once operating this will align the work of the fraud team across the partnership.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£51,619	£99,378	£140,717	£170,563
Local Council Tax Support	£0	£2,145	£2,680	£5,612
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£48,463	£93,122	£120,772	£138,631
Fraud Identified	£100,082	£194,644	£264,168	£314,806

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 11,674,180	£ 21,493,157	£ 31,404,393	£ 36,097,792	●
Target	£ 9,836,319	£ 19,252,868	£ 28,233,386	£ 34,227,291	
Refunds	£ 887,279	£ 1,617,524	£ 2,212,623	£ 2,860,568	
2019/20	£ 20,840,864	£ 41,582,956	£ 60,433,764	£ 72,085,422	●

Year End Target	34,227,291	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

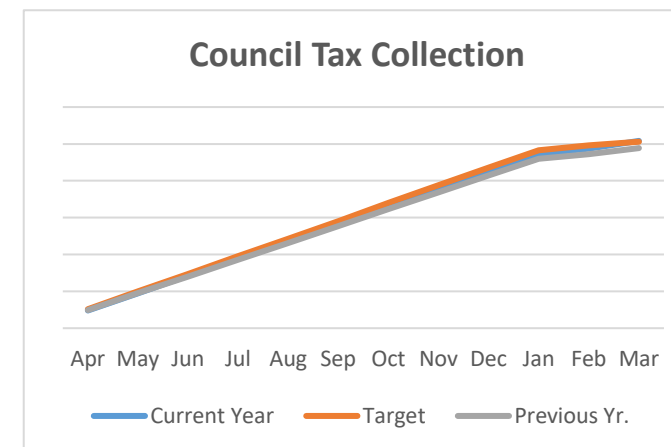
Collection met target for the current financial year.

There have been claims by NHS Trusts for charitable rate relief which have been subject to a High Court appeal. If successful this could result in a backdated refund of £553K. The High Court have rejected the claim that the NHS Trusts are charities, however initially the NHS trusts appealed this decision but this has now been withdrawn.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £26,860. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £68,262.

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	£ 28,542,242	£ 56,371,002	£ 85,229,464	£ 101,634,429	●
Target	£ 29,393,932	£ 58,180,760	£ 87,139,600	£ 101,183,930	
Refunds	£ 281,783	£ 637,124	£ 1,043,597	£ 1,553,222	
2019/20	£ 27,937,932	£ 55,364,351	£ 82,920,290	£ 97,728,100	●

Year End Target	101,183,930	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection met target. The Government is funding a hardship scheme which has provided up to £150 to each LCTRS recipient of working age. Targets have been adjusted to reflect these payments. Whilst Covid has affected some customers ability to pay, we were only able to book a Magistrates Court Hearing to obtain liability orders from January. Also, the amount of Council Tax support awarded has increased during the financial year, reducing the amount to be collected.

Further recovery action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £114,342. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £491,879.

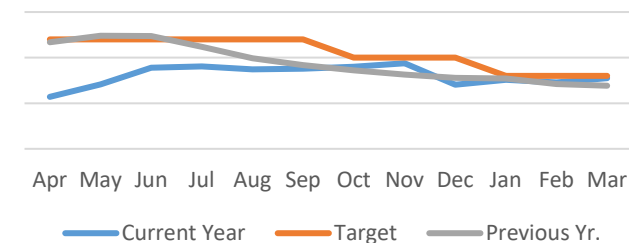
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £489,920 debt.

Days to process Local Council Tax Support

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	8.91	8.79	7.04	7.73	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	12.36	9.18	7.77	6.92	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Council Tax Support



Description

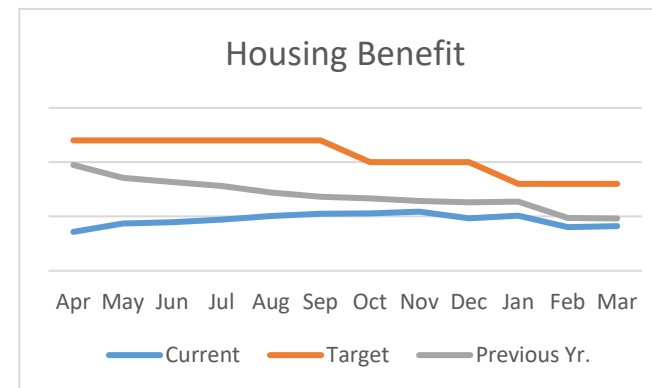
This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year, despite significant increased demand due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 causing rises in Universal Credit claims and change of circumstances.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2020/21	4.47	5.24	4.82	4.10	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2019/20	8.16	6.80	6.30	4.81	●
Year End Target		8			●



Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The team work closely with the Housing Option Team and also with Housing Associations to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse where investigation agreements are in place. The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges. The team are also forging closer working relationships with a number of service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error. A closer working relationship with Planning Enforcement, Public Health and Housing and Economic Development has had a positive effect. The team continue to assist in both pre and post assurance of businesses entitled to the NNDR government business rates grant scheme. The team have been working closely with the Internal Audit team to carry out the assurance work.

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	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£140,444	£229,857	£316,258	£349,482
Local Council Tax Support	£2,327	£7,405	£19,821	£24,402
Tenancy Fraud	£6,480	£12,960	£16,200	£16,200
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£5,177	£27,227	£30,743	£31,977
Fraud Identified	£154,428	£277,449	£383,022	£422,061

Service Updates as at March 2021



Enforcement

All Enforcement visits were suspended from 23 March 2020 until 24 August 2020, however since then we have resumed visits and the amounts collected by the team have risen reaching normal levels by the end of the financial year. In the recent lockdowns we were not required to cease visits and therefore have continued as previously with all the necessary personal protective equipment and risk assessment in place. The risk assessment was reviewed at the beginning of January due to the increased in transmission of Covid 19. We continue to try and engage with customers offering long term payment arrangements and assisting customers where possible. The team has also recently taken on the collection of parking fines for East and West Suffolk and we are due to receive our first cases shortly.

This year we have collected £3.9M compared to £6.3M last year.

Further Recovery

With effect from March 2020 all recovery actions were temporarily suspended until the summer and therefore the amount collected through these actions has been less than in the last financial year. Income of £680K in total has been received this financial year compared to £1.37M last year. We have £2.060 M debt secured through Charging Orders.

Funding has been secured from Norfolk & Suffolk County Council for the forthcoming financial year in respect of this work. Fenland District Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council are also contributing to allow this work to be carried out for all ARP partners.

Non-Domestic Rates

The team had an increased workload over the first two months of this year due to the additional rate reliefs to be awarded and the payment of grants to businesses. This saw extremely high levels of telephone calls and correspondence, however the team worked hard to bring the outstanding work down to near normal levels, although with the delayed recovery cycle, continuation of business grants and preparation for the new financial year it was a challenge. Since the annual bills have been issued for the 2021/22 financial year, work levels have increased.

In the budget on 3 March 2021, the Government announced that retail, hospitality & leisure relief would be extended into the 2021/22 financial year but from 1 July 2021 would be reduced to 66%. Rate relief for children's nurseries was similarly extended. We were able to issue the annual bills in time for the 1st instalment on 1 April with full rate relief for those entitled, however we will need to issue revised bills in June 2021 to reduce the rate relief to 66%.

Several businesses have raised appeals with the Valuation Office against their rateable values on the basis that Covid has affected the value. The Government has passed legislation which has meant these reductions cannot be considered and has announced that they will fund further discretionary rate relief to those businesses affected. We await guidance on this matter.

An interim report has been published into the Governments call for evidence on business rates review. We await the outcome in the autumn.

The revaluation planned to take place on 1 April 2021 has been postponed until 1 April 2023 with an antecedent date of 1 April 2021 (this is the date that the valuations are based on).

Council Tax

As expected Covid -19 has had an impact on collection, despite the application of the hardship fund payments to accounts. Prior to recommencing Statutory Reminders in August, for customers in arrears with their Council Tax payments, we had offered the option of a two month payment break to provide more flexibility during Covid-19. An online form had been implemented to allow customers to request a 2 month payment break, a change from 10 to 12 instalments or a change of payment date. We have sent 2 rounds of 'soft reminders' which have had a positive effect on collection. This was in addition to updating our website and phone message to provide help and support to those struggling to pay through this difficult time and we continue to signpost customers to claim Universal Credit and Council Tax Support.

The Magistrates Courts reopened at the end of last year and have stayed open during the latest lockdown; we have Court hearings booked for all Authorities.

Demand for council tax billing has been significantly greater than last year, with the lockdowns causing increased demand as a direct result of the pandemic. We are also seeing increased demand attributed to a combination of recommencing statutory reminders, increases in Universal Credit data share, significant numbers of house moves as people seek to take advantage of the stamp duty holiday and low interest rates, as well as the impact of the Track and Trace Self Isolation payment scheme. Despite the team completing 17.5% more documents this year compared to last year, outstanding work has been below the highest levels it reached the previous year.

Further, the project to introduce the generic Council Tax Billing Officer role, which provides a resilient team who have been able to switch between billing and benefits to help cope with ever changing workloads and priorities during the pandemic, has provided increased flexibility to the use of our resources.

A new statutory provision called "Breathing space" is being introduced on 4 May 2021. This gives debtors a 60 day moratorium from recovery action for their debts. Preparations are being made to our processes and systems to ensure we can comply with the new legislation.

Benefits

Both Council Tax Support and Benefits performance has achieved targets, despite the increased demand attributed to COVID-19.

Throughout the year we have seen significant increases in claims with throughput approximately increased by a third on 2019/2020. In April 2020 we changed the Local Council Tax Support schemes for all partners to include a 'tolerance rule' which is applied to monthly Universal Credit Data Share (UCDS) records from DWP. The new rule means that changes in Universal Credit of under £15.00 per week are ignored by our software system and are automatically processed. We have received an average of just under 4000 UCDS records weekly from the DWP and we fully automating around 53% of these. The introduction of the tolerance rule has reduced the number of Council Tax Support re-assessments resulting from DWP UCDS records by 32%, which is in line with the results of modelling undertaken for the consultation. This in turn has reduced the number of Council Tax adjustment notices, contact and refund requests and allows customers to more flexibility to manage their payments.

The Council Tax Support Hardship Fund awards were issued to every qualifying working age customer by the end of July 2020, either by a credit of up to £150 on to their Council Tax account or by arranging a refund where one is due. We have continued to award a payment to every entitled new working age Council Tax Support customer who made an claim throughout the year and have closely monitored expenditure to ensure the fund for each Council has not been overspent.

Since the end of September we have worked with the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) to implement the COVID-19 Track & Trace Self Isolation payment scheme. This scheme pays £500 to each person notified of a requirement to self-isolate who meets the eligibility criteria, namely receiving specified Benefits, who cannot work from home and has a loss of income/is on a low income. We achieved the scheme launch of 12th October 2020, despite having to quickly design and configure an application form and devise local schemes. Whilst DHSC fund the programme, we have see demand outstrip the forecast volumes, especially with the substantial increase in positive cases seen over Winter, linked to the third national lockdown, although demand reduced towards the very end of the year as Coronavirus numbers decreased. The scheme has now been extended by three months to 30th June 2021 and now includes provision for parents of school age children required to self-isolate to apply for a payment.

ARP Systems and Digital

System admin have recently completed Annual billing process for 21/21, the team worked exceptionally hard this year to adapt to the changes required at short notice for Covid-19. Interpreting the changes whilst ensuring bills were issued in a timely manner was paramount. In particular I would like to highlight the work undertaken for NDR following budget announcement on a Wednesday and processing the billing on the Saturday and Sunday. Information from management was clear and decisive in course of action and the commitment from both system admin and NDR Billing team was excellent.

The team also made late amendments to the CTS hardship payments for 21/22 where excess allowance was available, again I have to credit the combined effort across the partnership to achieve this.

Track and trace forms required regular amendments which required flexibility from team during Annual billing process.

Looking forward we are continuing to carry out reviews with Capita on portal and form developments and implementing Change of Address automation.

Fraud and Compliance

The Fraud Team having had a successful prosecution regarding tenancy fraud continue to work with social housing providers in an attempt to expand the commercial aspect of their investigation service.

With new restrictions in place by Central Government and with the increased cases of Covid-19 infections the fraud team have reviewed the work of the visiting officers, in order to comply with current Government guidance. The team have carried out a full risk assessment which has enabled procedures and protocols for the visiting officers to be put in place, along with the supply of relevant Personal Protective Equipment for visits. Desk based Fraud and Compliance work continues as usual, with all of the Fraud Team able to fully work from home.

Following discussions with East Camb's DC and Fenland DC the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. If approved this would align the Fraud and Compliance work currently being carried out for other partners of the Anglia Revenues Partnership as indicated in the fraud savings on the quarterly performance report. This work has consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over a number of years. An imminent update is expected with regards to the project. Norfolk County Council and now Suffolk County Council have committed to continue providing funding until March 2022. Norfolk County Council have additionally funded a Premium review of Single Person Discounts for both Breckland District Council and Norwich City Council for 2020/2021 with matches against a number of additional data sets held within the National Fraud Initiative (NFI). The results from the 2020/2021 Breckland Council Premium matches continue to be above expectation.

During the pandemic it is not possible to interview customers under caution on a face to face basis. Advice has been taken from the Law Society and the Crown Prosecution Service in relation to alternative methods of interviewing under caution. With assistance from the solicitor used for ARP Fraud prosecutions it has been agreed that customers will be interviewed by letter and a process and procedure has been set up to enable this. A number of sanctions have now been conducted using this process.

With the ARP Management arrangement with Norwich City Council it continues to allow us to employ an additional resource fully funded by Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council, to undertake Single Person Discount Reviews and Council Tax Support investigations for Norwich.

Breckland Council and Norwich City Council are also part of the Norfolk Fraud Hub. As previously mentioned, the Fraud Hub is fully funded by Norfolk County Council and is now matching additional data sets from all authorities to identify Fraud and Error across the county. The Fraud Team to continue to work alongside Norfolk County on this project and are also in the process of reviewing results.

Better Customer Journeys Programme

The Customer Strategy Team (CST) restarted meetings in August 2020 after a pandemic-related hiatus, and since then has completed a gap analysis. First and foremost, this showed there was a gap between the information we hold about service delivery, and how consolidated and easily accessible that information is to the wider team. CST is helping to make the partnership's performance framework even more focused on customer delivery; from these metrics CST will be able to prioritise change projects it wants to sponsor within the revenues and benefits partnership. CST also proposed a new remit (approved by OIB in October 2020) which mandated that it is now the central point of reference for any proposal or project that affects or seeks to change the way customers interact with the shared revenues and benefits service.

In Q4, as a subset of that performance framework evaluation, CST began to scrutinise the existing reporting on 'online metrics', as well as what's proposed within the performance framework. CST's focus is on making sure that as well as build sign-up rates, we monitor the quality and retention of our self-service channels.



Joint Committee Performance Report

April 2021



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All Partner Councils Combined



Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 19,006,185	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 15,189,770	£ 84,442,614	£ 128,305,577	£ 161,555,776	●
2020/21	£ 14,619,386	£ 80,234,076	£ 109,252,556	£ 151,680,832	●
Year End Target				£161,555,776	●

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£47,839,291	£0	£0	£0	●
Target	£46,999,294	£268,533,270	£403,621,187	£475,114,297	●
2020/21	£43,558,025	£251,468,250	£337,359,826	£454,493,276	●
Year End Target				£475,114,297	●

Number of Electronic Forms Received					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	4,009	0	0	0	●
2020/21	4,460	23,189	37,184	55,159	●
Year End Target				55159	●

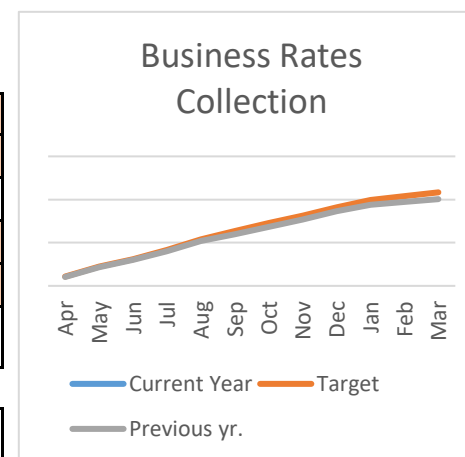
Fraud and Compliance	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	Yr Target
Single Person Discount Fraud	£268,389	£0	£0	£0	£500,000
Local Council Tax Support	£6,295	£0	£0	£0	£150,000
Tenancy Fraud	£3,240	£0	£0	£0	£400,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£47,547	£0	£0	£0	£250,000
Fraud Identified	£325,472	£0	£0	£0	£1,300,000

Performance Information April 2021

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 3,291,836	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 2,157,262	£ 12,716,509	£ 18,161,309	£ 21,663,386	
Refunds	£ 36,798	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 2,056,640	£ 11,935,167	£ 17,330,233	£ 20,092,010	●

Year End Target	£ 21,663,386	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

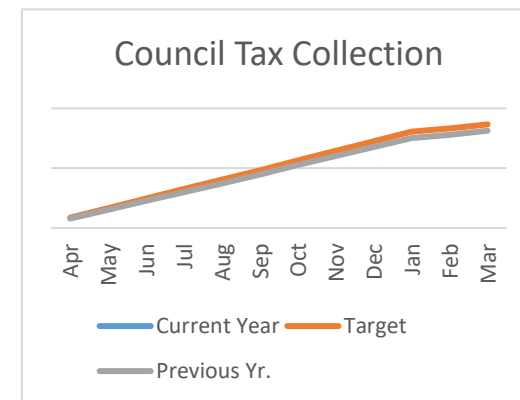
Collection is on target. Targets will be adjusted to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £200. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £1,402.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 8,523,495	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 8,713,237	£ 48,331,128	£ 72,611,966	£ 86,608,060	
Refunds	£ 79,178	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 7,960,294	£ 44,806,050	£ 67,828,605	£ 81,338,654	●

Year End Target	£86,608,060	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is behind target by £189,742. In the last financial year formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers made extended arrangements into this financial year. We will continue to monitor the effect this may have on current year collection.

Further recovery action in 21/22 has resulted in collection of £15,452. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £58,029.

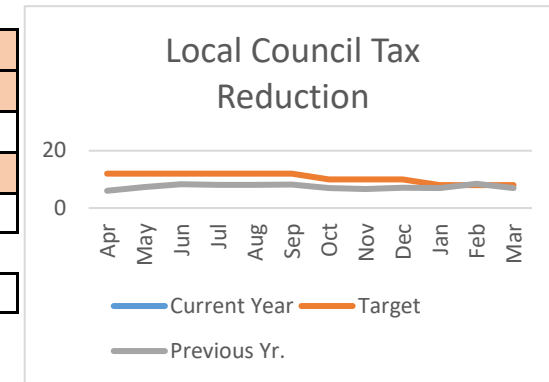
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £387,986 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support

	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	8.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	6.02	8.20	7.04	6.98	●

Year End Target	8	●
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57

Description

This indicator measures the average year to date number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

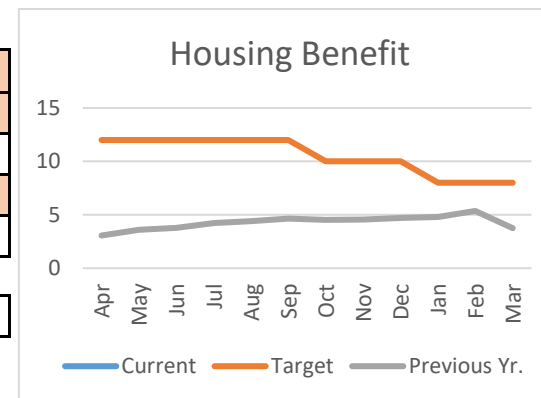
Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	8.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	3.06	4.64	4.72	3.74	●

Year End Target	8	●
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58

Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The team continue to proactively seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are also forging closer working relationships with a number of service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

A close working relationship with both Planning Enforcement has resulted in a number of positive outcomes.

56 In a broader sense the team continue to work closely with County in the management of the Fraud Hub in Norfolk. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. Funding from Norfolk county continues to support Single Person Discount Reviews.

The team have also been working with NNDR in post assurance business rates grants and also have investigations in respect of false applications. One prosecution under the Fraud Act 2006 has been sanctioned and a defendant is awaiting court appearance during late May 2021.

	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£76,694	£0	£0	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£0	£0	£0	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£6,820	£0	£0	£0
Fraud Identified	£83,514	£0	£0	£0



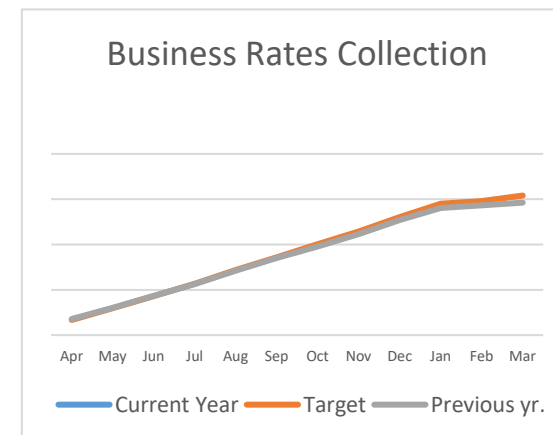
Performance Information April 2021



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 1,489,238	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 1,673,872	£ 8,581,891	£ 13,028,927	£ 15,404,924	
Refunds	£ 801,406	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 1,778,163	£ 8,513,137	£ 12,702,067	£ 14,622,123	●

Full Year Target	£15,404,924	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is behind target for the current financial year, however this is due to some internal transfers which have not yet been actioned. It is expected the situation will be reversed in May. Targets will be adjusted to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

There had been claims by NHS Trusts for charitable rate relief which were subject to a High Court appeal. If successful this could have resulted in a backdated refund of £553K. The High Court rejected the claim that the NHS Trusts are charities, however initially the NHS trusts appealed this decision but this has now been withdrawn.

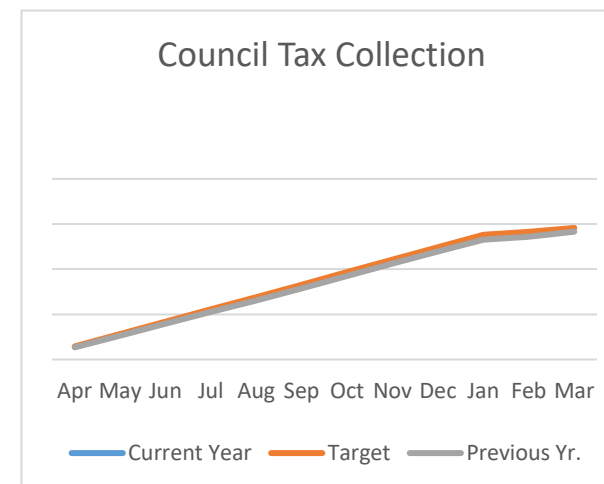


Council Tax



Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 5,932,949	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 5,786,385	£ 33,160,487	£ 49,781,334	£ 58,281,818	
Refunds	£ 60,467	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 5,378,194	£ 31,561,919	£ 47,847,998	£ 56,630,706	●

Year End Target	£ 58,281,818	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year. In the last financial year formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers made extended arrangements into this financial year. We will continue to monitor the effect this may have on current year collection.

Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £12,241. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £35,227.

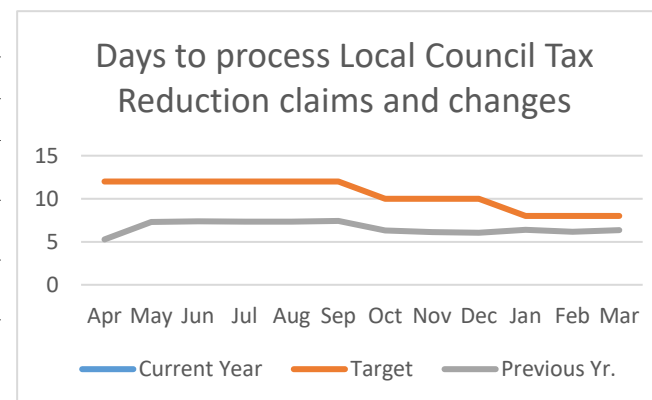
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £322,421 debt.



Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	8.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	5.27	7.42	6.03	6.36	●



Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.



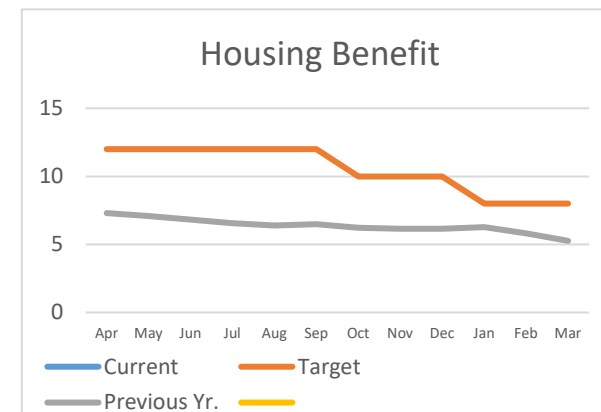
Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	12.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	7.30	6.48	6.14	5.26	●



Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

The target has been met for April, despite one off delays with annual rent increases. We expect to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes.

The team are working with the largest Social Housing provider in the authority to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

In a broader sense the team are also working with Cambridgeshire County in setting up the Fraud Hub in Cambridgeshire. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. A business case and project team is progressing the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and an update is expected in terms of its progression and procurement of software. Once operating this will align the work of the fraud team across the partnership.

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	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£19,811	£0	£0	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£0	£0	£0	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£22,112	£0	£0	£0
Fraud Identified	£41,923	£0	£0	£0

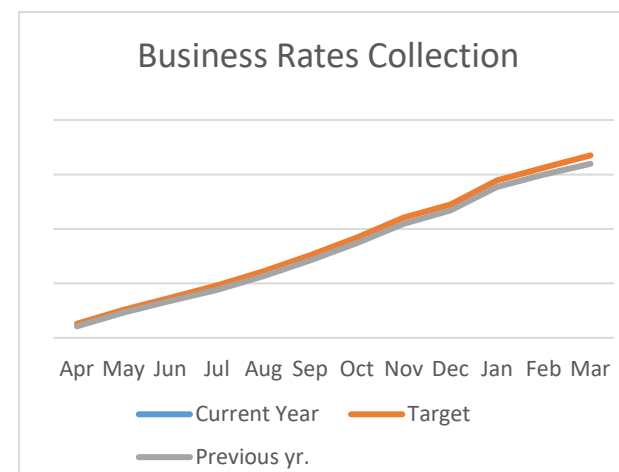
Performance Information April 2021

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 6,567,353	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 5,157,542	£ 30,313,003	£ 48,902,987	£ 66,998,352	
Refunds	£ 179,722	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 4,222,524	£ 28,476,749	£ 46,751,882	£ 63,912,082	●



Year End Target	66,998,352	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

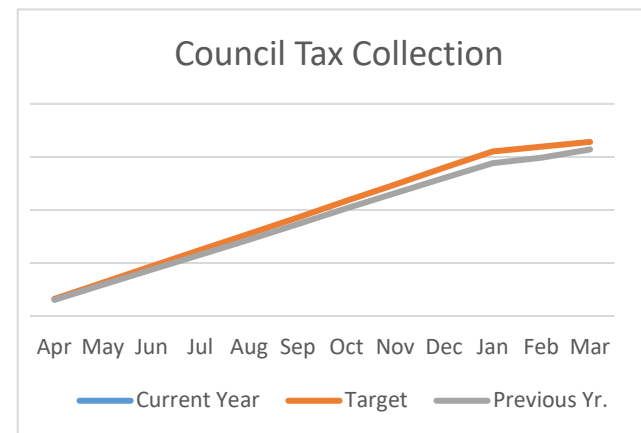
Collection is on target. Targets will be adjusted to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £1,363. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £650.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 16,813,631	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 16,148,957	£ 92,913,773	£ 139,808,907	£ 164,143,078	
Refunds	£ 173,068	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 4,222,524	£ 86,547,244	£ 130,268,131	£ 157,025,532	●

Year End Target	164,143,078	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year. In the last financial year formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers made extended arrangements into this financial year. We will continue to monitor the effect this may have on current year collection.

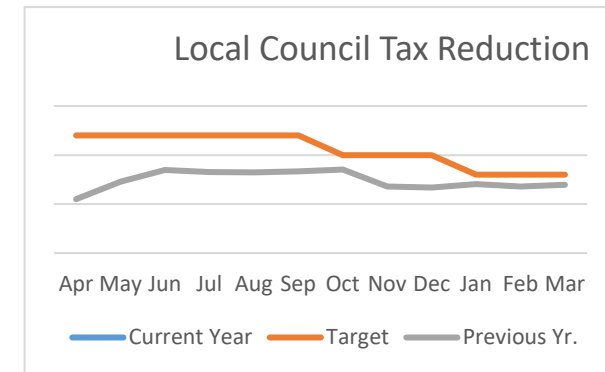
Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £12,681. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £61,825.

Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £516,143 debt

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	9.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	5.50	8.32	6.70	6.98	●

Year End Target	8	●
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67

Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

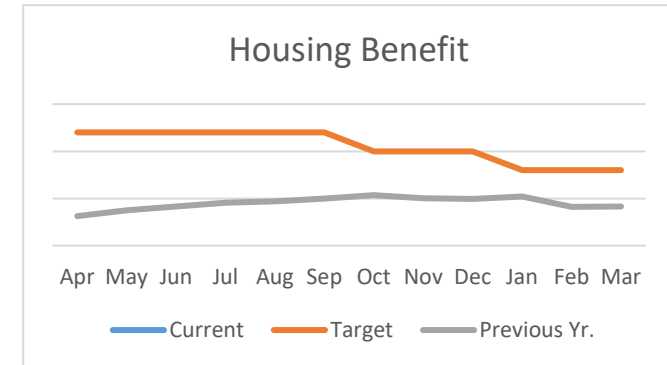
Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	9.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	3.13	4.98	4.95	4.14	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The reviews of NFI SPD matches and newly awarded Single Person Discounts continue to provide very positive outcomes.

The team work closely with the East Suffolk Corporate Fraud Team and ensure the transfer of fraud referrals across the teams.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are trying to progress closer working relationships with service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

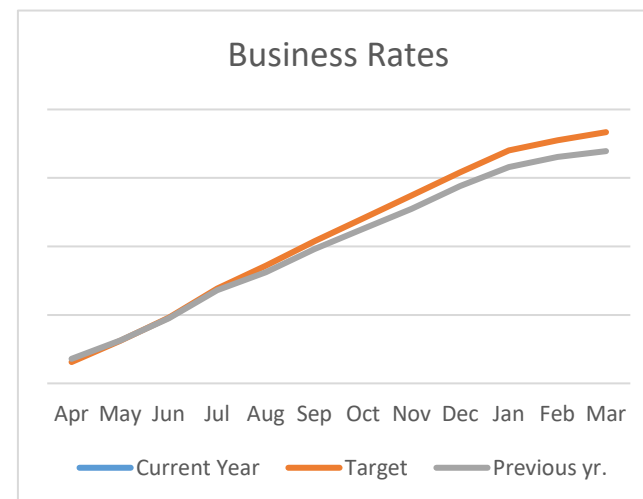
The team have also assisted NNDR in due diligence checks of businesses applying for COVID 19 government grants.

	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£79,291	£0	£0	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£1,581	£0	£0	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£0	£0	£0	£0
Fraud Identified	£80,872	£0	£0	£0

Performance Information April 2021

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 1,785,160	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 1,556,992	£ 10,380,723	£ 15,415,767	£ 18,341,776	
Refunds	£ 119,913	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 1,790,970	£ 9,815,866	£ 14,405,039	£ 16,956,825	●



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Year End Target	£18,341,776	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is on target. Targets will be adjusted to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

There had been claims by NHS Trusts for charitable rate relief which were subject to a High Court appeal. If successful this could have resulted in a large backdated refund. The High Court rejected the claim that the NHS Trusts are charities, however initially the NHS trusts appealed this decision but this has now been withdrawn.

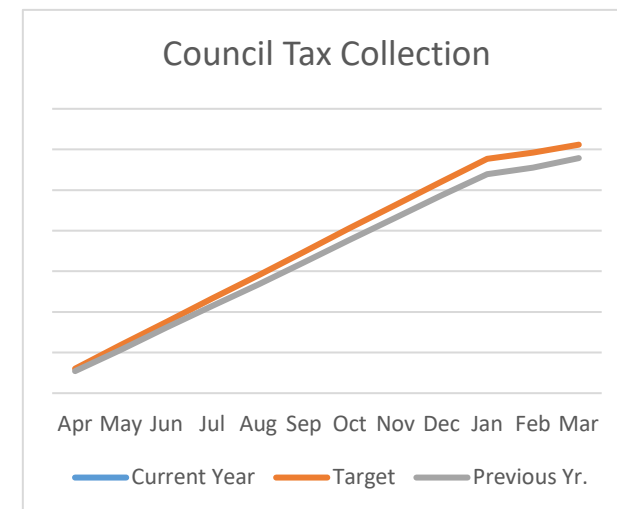
Further recovery action in 2021/22 has not resulted in any collection. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £6,914.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 6,005,097	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 6,029,408	£ 34,743,756	£ 52,062,693	£ 61,172,317	
Refunds	£ 71,586	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 5,431,478	£ 32,182,036	£ 48,651,700	£ 57,863,955	●

71

Year End Target	£61,172,317	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is behind target by £24,310. In the last financial year formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers made extended arrangements into this financial year. We will continue to monitor the effect this may have on current year collection.

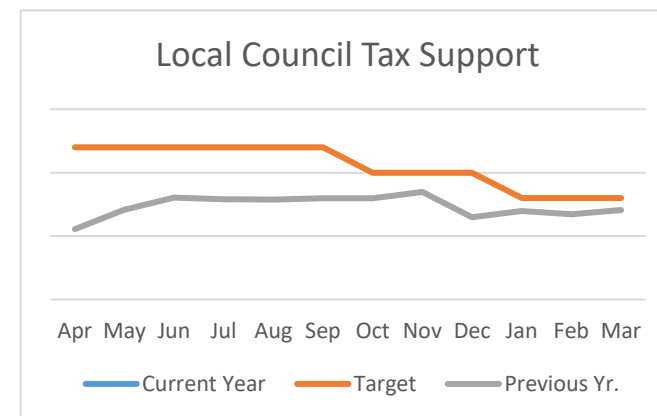
Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £5,752. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £56,438.

Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £373,638 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	9.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	5.55	7.98	6.49	7.06	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

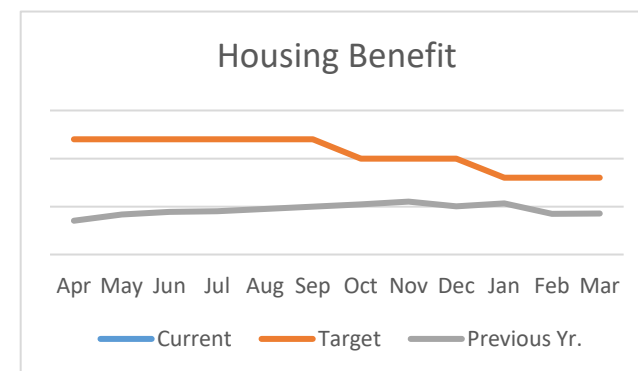
Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	8.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	3.52	4.98	5.01	4.28	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are trying to progress closer working relationships with service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

In a broader sense the team are also working with Cambridgeshire County in setting up the Fraud Hub in Cambridgeshire. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. A business case and project team is progressing the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub. An update is expected in terms of its progression and procurement of software. Once operating this will align the work of the fraud team across the partnership.

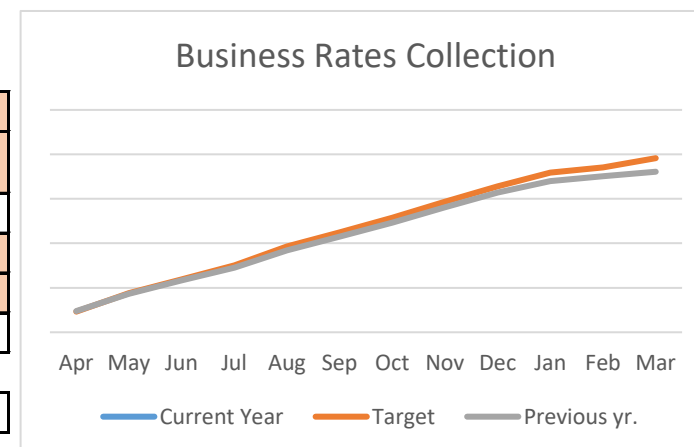
74

	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£39,118	£0	£0	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£834	£0	£0	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£6,464	£0	£0	£0
Fraud Identified	£46,416	£0	£0	£0

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 5,872,598	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 4,644,102	£ 22,450,488	£ 32,796,587	£ 39,147,338	
Refunds	£ 119,809	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 4,771,089	£ 21,493,157	£ 31,404,393	£ 36,097,792	●

Year End Target	39,147,338	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is on target. Targets will be adjusted to reflect the grants which will be received this year in respect of the rate reliefs funded by Government.

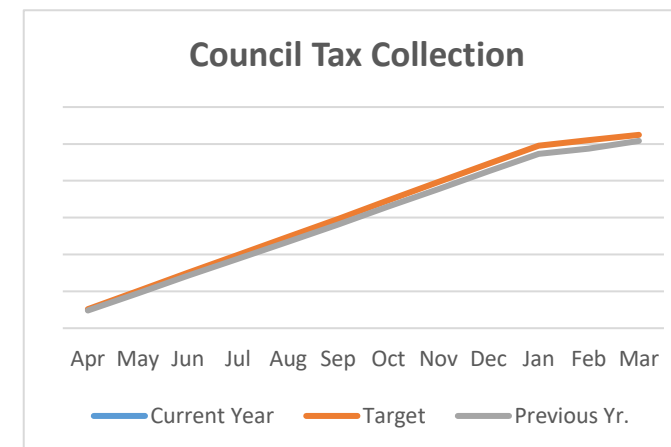
There had been claims by NHS Trusts for charitable rate relief which were subject to a High Court appeal. If successful this could have resulted in a large backdated refund. The High Court rejected the claim that the NHS Trusts are charities, however initially the NHS trusts appealed this decision but this has now been withdrawn.

Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £34,127. Enforcement action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £8,161.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	£ 10,564,118	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 10,321,308	£ 59,384,126	£ 89,356,287	£ 104,909,024	
Refunds	£ 113,064	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2020/21	£ 9,604,636	£ 56,371,002	£ 85,229,464	£ 101,634,429	●

Year End Target	104,909,024	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year. In the last financial year formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers made extended arrangements into this financial year. We will continue to monitor the effect this may have on current year collection.

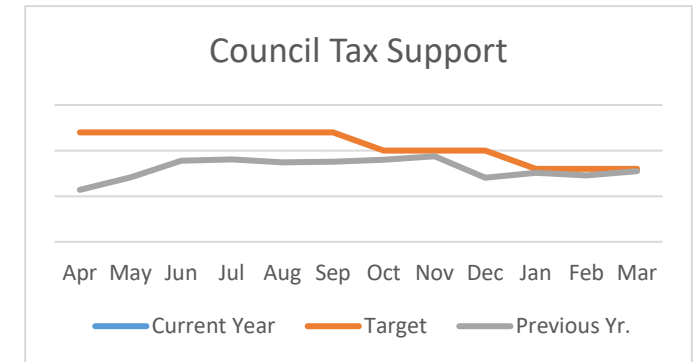
Further recovery action in 2021/22 has resulted in collection of £12,284. Enforcement action in 2020/21 has resulted in collection of £60,114.

Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £509,949 debt.

Days to process Local Council Tax Support

	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	9.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	5.70	8.79	7.04	7.73	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

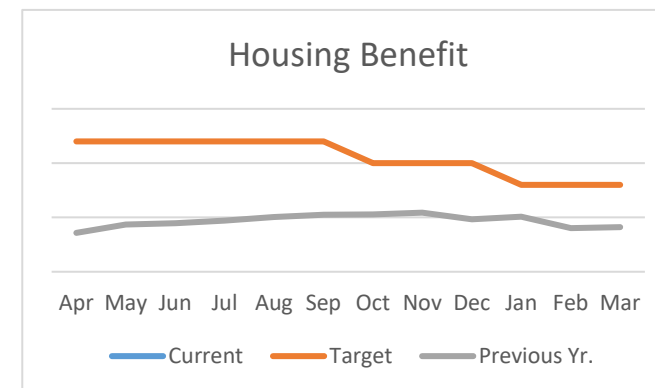
This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2021/22	7.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2020/21	3.58	5.24	4.82	4.10	●
Year End Target		8			●



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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the easing of Covid-19 funding schemes later in the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

Local Council Tax Support, Single Person Discount, Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates.

The team work closely with the Housing Option Team and also with Housing Associations to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse where investigation agreements are in place. The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges. The team are also forging closer working relationships with a number of service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error. A closer working relationship with Planning Enforcement, Public Health and Housing and Economic Development has had a positive effect. The team continue to assist in both pre and post assurance of businesses entitled to the NNDR government business rates grant scheme. The team continue to work closely with the Internal Audit team to carry out the assurance work. Through this close relationship working a number of Council Tax investigations have been identified with significant savings recorded.

	Apr-21	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£53,475	£0	£0	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£3,880	£0	£0	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£3,240	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£12,152	£0	£0	£0
Fraud Identified	£72,746	£0	£0	£0

Service Updates as at April 2021



Enforcement

Enforcement visits are continuing with all the necessary personal protective equipment and risk assessment in place. Collection has continued to rise back to near normal levels. We continue to try and engage with customers offering long term payment arrangements and assisting customers where possible.

The first parking cases for West Suffolk have recently been sent to the team and we have collected our first payments in respect of these cases.

This year we £426K in April compared to £304K at the same point last year.

Further Recovery

Collection through further recovery actions can continue as usual this year and we would expect to see collection reach the levels we achieved prior to Covid.

Funding has been secured from Norfolk & Suffolk County Council for this financial year in respect of this work. Fenland District Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council are also contributing to allow this work to be carried out for all ARP partners.

Non-Domestic Rates

In the budget on 3 March 2021, the Government announced that retail, hospitality & leisure relief would be extended into the 2021/22 financial year but from 1 July 2021 would be reduced to 66%. Rate relief for children's nurseries was similarly extended. We were able to issue the annual bills in time for the 1st instalment on 1 April with full rate relief for those entitled, however we will need to issue revised bills in June 2021 to reduce the rate relief to 66%. Correspondence to the team increased when the bills were issued.

Several businesses have raised appeals with the Valuation Office against their rateable values on the basis that Covid has affected the value. The Government has passed legislation which has meant these reductions cannot be considered and has announced that they will fund further discretionary rate relief to those businesses affected. We await guidance and funding on this matter and will then design a scheme for approval.

An interim report has been published into the Governments call for evidence on business rates review. We await the outcome in the autumn.

Legislation has finally been passed which allows 100% rate relief in respect of public conveniences. Accounts will be amended shortly and revised accounts issued showing the rate relief.

The revaluation planned to take place on 1 April 2021 has been postponed until 1 April 2023 with an antecedent date of 1 April 2021 (this is the date that the valuations are based on).

Council Tax

Demand for council tax billing continues at very high levels due to Covid-19, in particular the high number of people moving to take advantage of the extended stamp duty holiday. However, outstanding work continues to be below the peaks previously seen which is testament to our project to introduce the generic Council Tax Billing Officer role, which provides a resilient team who have been able to switch between billing and benefits to help cope with ever changing workloads and priorities during the pandemic, providing increased flexibility to the use of our resources, along with maximisation automation functionality.

In the last financial year formal recovery proceedings were delayed and some customers made extended arrangements into this financial year. This may impact on current year collection and we will monitor the situation closely.

A new statutory provision called "Breathing space" was introduced on 4 May 2021. This gives debtors a 60 day moratorium from recovery action for their debts. Changes to our processes and systems have been put in place to ensure we can comply with the new legislation.

Benefits

Both Council Tax Support and Benefits performance has achieved targets, despite the increased demand attributed to COVID-19 and the usual increased demand generated by issuing annual Council Tax bills and uprating notifications.

We continue to see increases in claims, in particular we are seeing a 130% increase in change of addresses as people take advantage of the extended stamp duty holiday and low interest rates. We will continue to utilise generically trained staff to focus resource where it is most needed.

The Track & Trace Self Isolation payment scheme continues to 30th June, with claims possible up to 28 days later, so we anticipate continuing to determine them into July. We have updated our schemes to include provision for parents of school age children required to self-isolate to apply for a payment.

ARP Systems and Digital

System admin's main priority this quarter is rebilling for Ndr retail relief, expectations are that we should receive a software patch from Capita on 4th June 2021 and testing/ updating live needs to be expedited to ensure we rebill as soon as possible.

Going forward both System admin and EDMS team are working on a multitude of projects and developments that have been prioritised. This will involve engaging with both Capita and Civica on areas of improvement, development. In particular we are focused on Change of Address for Council tax automation. We are very keen to work with Capita and other Local authorities on identifying strengths and weaknesses to ensure that we maximise the automation level.

Fraud and Compliance

The Fraud Team continue to work with social housing providers in an attempt to expand the commercial aspect of their investigation service. With Covid 19 restrictions still in place by Central Government the fraud team have further reviewed the work of the visiting officers, in order to comply with current Government guidance. The team have carried out a review of the risk assessment which has enabled procedures and protocols for the visiting officers to be put in place, along with the supply of relevant Personal Protective Equipment for visits. Desk based Fraud and Compliance work continues as usual, with all of the Fraud Team able to fully work from home.

There has been some progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and continued discussion with East Camb's DC and Fenland DC for the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. If approved this would align the Fraud and Compliance work currently being carried out for other partners of the Anglia Revenues Partnership as indicated in the fraud savings on the quarterly performance report. This work has consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over a number of years. Norfolk County Council and now Suffolk County Council have committed to continue providing funding until March 2022. Norfolk County Council have additionally funded one Council Tax compliance Officer for 2021/2022 to continue Single Person Discount reviews for Norwich City Council and any additional work identified through the Norfolk Fraud Hub.

During the pandemic it has not been possible to interview customers under caution on a face to face basis. Advice has been taken from the Law Society and the Crown Prosecution Service in relation to alternative methods of interviewing under caution. With assistance from the solicitor used for ARP Fraud prosecutions it has been agreed that customers will be interviewed by letter and a process and procedure has been set up to enable this. A number of sanctions have now been conducted using this process.

Joint working with the DWP is now part of ongoing discussions and it is planned that from June 2021 joint investigations and interviews will recommence.

The Fraud and Compliance Team have yet again had an exceptional year in terms of Fraud identified within the partnership despite a number of challenges though the year.

A current project within the Visiting Team is Total Mobile and agile working electronic method of raising and conducting Council Tax inspections across the partnership. The second phase will include the inspection of empty business rate properties.

Better Customer Journeys Programme

Customer Strategy Team (CST) has met once in Q1 (as at 20 May). Its main priority in 2021-22 will be ensuring that customer teams and the shared revenues and benefits team collaborate to refine the key performance measures that will help it prioritise customer journey projects. For example, CST has specified a tightening of telephone handling rates from 85% to 90% and a reduction in complaint response timeframes from 28 to 21 calendar days.

At OIB's input, the CST chair has been added to the question-and-answer segment of the recruitment process for strategic management, which has added to the already strong focus on customer priorities for these roles.

Notwithstanding performance framework outputs, CST is preparing in any case to review out-facing communications to customers, across eforms, selfservice platforms, paper and electronic correspondence, phone call handling and web content. The team will be evaluating a mooted transition towards revenues and benefits services being badged more clearly as council services, with less emphasis on an 'ARP' identity. An update by CST to Joint Committee in September, on each partner's position on customer self-service, will form part of this evaluation. A key theme for CST will be making sure that we monitor not only the volume of self-service sign-up, but more importantly the quality and retention of those channels, to make sure they are as responsive and useful as more traditional phone and face-to-face contact.

ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

Report of Adrian Mills – ARP Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits)

To: ARP Joint Committee, 22nd June 2021

Subject: Welfare Reform

Purpose: To provide an update on welfare reform

Recommendation(s):

- That the report is noted.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1** Welfare Reform was introduced by Government in 2012 as part of wider fiscal measures to reduce deficits, with the intention to encourage work whilst reducing welfare expenditure. This report contains the latest updates on welfare reform and builds on previous reports to Joint Committee.

2.0 Matters of interest

2.1 Universal Credit – situation to date. Update at para 2.1.8 to 2.1.9

2.1.1 Universal Support

- 2.1.2** The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) established Universal Support to help people to claim Universal Credit and budgeting support to help customers to manage their payments.

- 2.1.3** Since the introduction of Universal Credit, the DWP has funded Local Authorities to provide these services, who in turn have been free to do so either directly or through commissioning arrangements. The ARP partner Councils provided direct help to claim within their Customer Services teams, with all bar one of the Councils funding Citizen's Advice to provide budgeting support.

- 2.1.4** In April 2019 DWP changed their strategy, awarding a 12-month contract, subsequently extended to the 2021-2022 year, to Citizens Advice (CAB) to provide these services. CAB nationally have, through their various CAB networks throughout Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, established the following arrangements locally:
- Advisors dial into a national call centre
 - Web chat
 - Initially Face to face arrangements – remote working this year has improved customer accessibility, assisted by corporate funding to CAB.

- 2.1.5** Concerns have been raised that CAB are only funded to help to the first payment. Given DWP's processing figures show approximately 80% of claims are paid on time (at five weeks) and given that the Housing Element (for rent) is typically the cause of delay, concerns have been expressed that vulnerable people may be affected and at risk of falling into rent arrears and subsequent consequences. CAB have said they will continue to help such customers, drawing on their usual funding streams.

- 2.1.6** The partner Customer Services teams continue to help customers to claim, which may include signposting to CAB.
- 2.1.7** ARP continues to monitor the position and through meetings with the LGA and DWP, will continue to raise issues and concerns.
- 2.1.8** DWP are yet to publish a review of the CAB Help to Claim service but have confirmed the CAB arrangement will continue into the 2021-2022 year, with a review underway for provision from 2022.

2.1.9 Summary of the current position on the expansion of Universal Credit

- Due to redeploying staff to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, DWP pulled the Harrogate pilot of managed migration of existing cases in Spring 2020. DWP now plan to recommence the pilot this Spring and report to Parliament with the aim of completing migration by 2024. DWP have not released any further details or indicative timetable at this stage.
- DWP are launching a UC awareness campaign to encourage voluntary migration as numbers are very low and not meeting UC business case volumes or costings. Difficulty presents that voluntary customers will not receive the transitional protection afforded to managed customers – DWP itself estimates 30-50% will be worse off at the point of transfer, with Ministers advocating caution when advising customers.
- Pensioner Housing Benefit to continue until at least 2025
- As a response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Universal Credit rates were temporarily increased by £20 per week for the 2020-2021 year and extended in the recent budget to 30th September 2021. It should be noted all the partner Local Council Tax Support schemes provide for customers to receive the full benefit of that uplift.

2.2 At a national level the following concerns have been raised:

- How DWP will monitor and report Citizen's Advice performance delivering Universal Support
- The lack of Managed Migration detailed plans and schedule
- Failure to take advantage of existing data to prepopulate UC systems with legacy systems data – all existing customers including Housing Benefit will be expected to make a new claim. DWP say they cannot 'lift and shift' existing known data held on their systems to the UC system. I have challenged that as a missed opportunity to smooth the customer migration journey.
- Concerns the Managed Migration process will leave customers without benefit during the transfer - DWP adopting a 'who knows me approach'
- The five weeks wait for UC payments – rent element often lags behind
- Alternative Payment Arrangements and data share for Private Landlords
- Housing Benefit Debt
- DWP and HMCLG administration and New Burdens funding
- Management Information including LA access to UC Information

2.3 Discretionary Housing Payment – no new matters arising

- 2.3.1** Discretionary Housing Payment grant is funded by DWP, designed to help customers remain in their homes or to move to affordable and sustainable accommodation. For the 2020–2021-year DWP increased funding to offset the impact of private sector rents increasing above the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates used to calculate Housing Benefit.
- 2.3.2** However, funding for 2021-2022 has returned to 2019-2020 levels, despite concerns the pandemic will increase demand throughout this year. We are in close conversations with individual Housing teams to plan, profile and monitor demand and expenditure to meet requirements to ensure full spend, but not to exceed funding levels, given a budget does not exist to top up.

2.4 Benefit Cap – no new matters arising

- 2.4.1** DWP introduced the reduced Benefit Cap on the 7th November 2016; the maximum family income before the Benefit Cap applies reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 (£13,400 for single adults with no children).
- 2.4.2** The Benefit Service continues to work with colleagues in Customer Service and Housing Options teams to seek to avoid homelessness and the cost of temporary housing.

2.5 Social rented sector rent restrictions – no new matters arising

- 2.5.1** In August 2020 Government responded to consultation on funding for supported housing, dropping proposals to move away from a subsidised demand led model to a grant model. For the foreseeable future, supported accommodation, including hostel tenancies, will remain in Housing Benefit and will not move to Universal Credit.

3.0 Welfare Benefit Up-rating April 2021 – no new matters arising

- 3.1** Government ended the four year Benefit up-rating freeze in 2020. From April 2021 all Benefits increased by the September 2020 CPI inflation measure which is 0.5% with the State Pension rising by 2.5% due to the 'Triple Lock' (lower of CPI, average earnings or 2.5%).

4.0 Options

- 4.1** The report is for information purposes

5.0 Reasons for recommendations

- 5.1** The report is for information only

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Risk

The report is for information only

6.2 Financial

The report is for information only

6.3 Legal

The report is for information only

6.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Background papers: - None

Lead Contact Officer

Name/Post: Adrian Mills – Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits)

Email: Adrian.mills@angliarevenues.gov.uk

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Maxine O'Mahony, Executive Director Strategy & Governance

To: ARP Joint Committee, 22 June 2021

Author: Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance

Subject: ARP Financial Out-turn 2020-21

Purpose: To update the Joint Committee on the financial out-turn position against budget for 2020-21 for the ARP

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the report and appendix be noted
- 2) That the final full year variance at 31 March 2021 is shared between the partner authorities in the approved shares

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Each of the partner Councils provides full year financial information against budget for the ARP. The information is collated to provide an overall financial performance report, to provide information to Joint Committee on the out-turn against budget.
- 1.2 The actual out-turn is an overspend against budget of £551k. This is mainly due to reduced enforcement income as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic which had a significant effect on the ability for ARP to generate income from this service, but this is offset by savings in other areas.
- 1.3 Appendix A provides further details of the variances against budget and also details on the remaining transformation funding which was set aside in previous years from below budget spend and grant funding. £97k is earmarked for projects in progress next year and there is a further £133k available for future transformation projects.

The appendix also provides detail on the values held and earmarked in the ICT reserve, which was introduced to smooth the financial effects of major ICT spend. The reserve was fully utilised in 2020-21 due to additional IT requirements for homeworking although the balance was not sufficient to cover all costs and additional spend is included in the supplies & services total.

- 1.4 All authorities have directly received new burdens funding from Government to cover the costs of administering the Covid-19 grant schemes. It has been agreed that these grants are retained directly by each authority and will help to offset the overspend within ARP. These grants may have been used by each authority to cover additional resource costs for administering the schemes internally.

In addition, Government are providing grants to individual local authorities to offset the losses from sales fees and charges income. Authorities are expected to absorb the initial 5% of lost income against budget and after that the grant will provide 75p in every £ of lost income. The lost Enforcement income has been claimed under this scheme for each partner.

The table below shows the share of the ARP overspend for each partner alongside the Covid-19 income compensation to be retained by each authority.

	ARP Over spend	Enforcement Income claim
Breckland	£77k	(£88k)
East Cambs	£28k	(£41k)
East Suffolk	£245k	(£214k)
Fenland	£100k	(£86k)
West Suffolk	£101k	(£113k)
TOTAL	£551k	(£542k)

The variation in cost share reflects that the main overspend is from lost enforcement income and the percentage shares for this area are based on the enforcement caseloads as per the ARP agreement.

2.0 OPTIONS

2.1 That the report and appendices are noted.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 To provide Members information on the financial position against budget for the whole of the ARP.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 To provide Members information on the financial position against budget for the whole of the ARP.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.2 Financial

5.2.1 This report is financial in nature and financial information is included within the report and appendices.

5.2 Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales

5.12.1 Accountants at the partner Councils have been consulted on their financial out-turn.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 N/A

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 ARP – Anglia Revenues Partnership

7.2 JC – Joint Committee

Background papers:- [See The Committee Report Guide for guidance on how to complete this section](#)

Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post: Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance
Telephone Number: 07967 325037
Email: alison.chubbock@breckland.gov.uk

Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory & Discretionary Services

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Financial performance report

Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee

Actual Full Year Financial Performance as at 31st March 2021

Description	Approved Budget 2020/21 £	Actuals 2020/21 £	Variance Over/(Under) £	Variance Notes %
Employee Related Costs	9,486,382	9,312,970	(173,412)	(1.83) 1
Premises Related Costs	285,440	261,337	(24,103)	(8.44)
Transport Related Costs	149,856	90,189	(59,667)	(39.82) 2
Supplies & Services	1,912,626	1,832,233	(80,393)	(4.20) 3
Support Services	555,000	504,269	(50,731)	(9.14) 3
Income	(2,580,510)	(1,640,831)	939,679	(36.41) 4
TOTAL PARTNERSHIP COSTS	9,808,793	10,360,167	551,373	5.62 5

Variance Notes

1. The under spend is due to posts that are vacant and these have been carried forward into savings that have been included in the 2021/22 budget
2. The under spend is due to meetings being carried out by microsoft teams, suspension of visiting officers work and officers working from home.
3. More use of the digital Critiqom service has resulted in the underspend in the budget for postages, and a reduction has been made to the budget in 2021/22. The outturn also includes legal costs for £21k agreed to be paid by partners for charging orders, these were billed direct in previous years. There are also additional costs relating to IT as a result of homeworking needs which were not covered from the IT reserve (see note against IT reserve at end of this appendix).
4. The shortfall in income is due to less Enforcement work carried out this year as a result of the Covid pandemic restrictions.
5. Each council has received grants from government to cover extra burden placed on the business rate team to award business grants due to Covid and for compensation for part of the lost ARPE income. These grants have been retained by each council and have therefore not offset the partnership overspend.

Reserve funding - committed expenditure as follows;

Description	Approved Budget 2020/21 £	Forecast Actuals 2021/22 £	Forecast Actuals 2022/23 £
Already committed from grant funding received last year			
Mitel Teams integration	0	20,000	0
Fines officer	0	6,500	
Self isolation	0	39,148	
IRRV training	0	5,985	
Compliance officer for Norwich City work	0	25,000	
Total	0	96,633	0
Unallocated Transformation funding	133,009	0	0
Grand Total	133,009	96,633	0

The committed reserve funding is £97k. The remaining balance of £133k will be used for future transformation projects.

Bailiff income to be reclaimed	2020/21
Breckland	(87,871)
East Cambs	(41,388)
East Suffolk	(214,096)
Fenland	(85,736)
West suffolk	(113,228)
	(542,319)

ICT Reserve	Approved Budget 2020/21 £	Approved Budget 2021/22 £	Approved Budget 2022/23 £
Opening Balance	88,700	0	22,500
Partnership contribution	72,500	72,500	72,500
ICT refresh servers software element and working from home kit	(161,200)	(50,000)	(72,500)
	0	22,500	22,500

In 2020/21 an overspend has resulted due to homeworking needs/covid and the additional cost of £25k is included in Supplies & Services