

## **A G E N D A**

### **ANGLIA REVENUES & BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DATE & TIME** Tuesday, 7th December, 2021 at 10.00 am

**VENUE:** Seminar and Training Room, Keystone Innovation Centre, Croxton Road,  
Thetford. IP24 1JD

**For the attention of:**

Cllr David Ambrose-Smith, East Cambridgeshire District Council  
(Chairman)  
Cllr Jan French, Fenland District Council (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr E. Back, East Suffolk Council  
Cllr Sarah Broughton, West Suffolk District Council  
Cllr Philip Cowen, Breckland Council

Should members of the public wish to attend this meeting, please email  
[democraticservices@breckland.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@breckland.gov.uk)

#### **PART A** **ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

|   | <b><u>Page(s)<br/>herewith</u></b> |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>1. <u>MINUTES</u></b><br>To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021.  | 1 - 3                              |
| <b>2. <u>APOLOGIES</u></b><br>To receive apologies for absence.   |                                    |
| <b>3. <u>URGENT BUSINESS</u></b><br>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. |                                    |
| <b>4. <u>DECLARATIONS</u></b>   |                                    |
| <b>5. <u>JOINT COMMITTEE SERVICE PLAN AND RISK REGISTER REPORT</u></b><br>Report of Adrian Mills, Assistant Head of ARP.  | 4 - 17                             |
| <b>6. <u>PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM)</u></b><br>Report of Matthew Waite-Wright, Head of NNDR (ARP).  | 18 - 49                            |
| <b>7. <u>ARP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2021-22 (STANDING ITEM)</u></b><br>Report of Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance (BDC).  | 50 - 54                            |

|   | <u>Page(s)<br/>herewith</u> |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 8. <b><u>WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)</u></b><br>Report by Lorraine King, Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP).  | 55 - 58                     |
| 9. <b><u>ARP BUDGET SETTING 2022-23</u></b><br>Report of Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance (BDC).   | 59 - 62                     |
| 10. <b><u>FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)</u></b><br>To note any items.  |                             |
| 11. <b><u>NEXT MEETING</u></b><br>To note the arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 1 March 2022 at 11am, Level 5 meeting room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford.<br><br>Future meetings have been scheduled to be held as follows:<br><br>21 June 2022<br>20 September 2022<br>06 December 2022<br>07 March 2023<br><br>All meetings are held on a Tuesday at 11am unless otherwise notified. |                             |
| 12. <b><u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u></b><br>To consider passing the following resolution:<br><br>“That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.”                  |                             |
| <b><u>PART B</u></b><br><b><u>ITEMS FROM WHICH THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED</u></b>  |                             |
| 13. <b><u>NORWICH FRAUD SERVICES - SECTION 113 AGREEMENT</u></b><br>Report of Adrian Mills, Assistant Head of ARP.  | 63 - 64                     |

**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, 21 September 2021 at 11.00 am in the**  
**Level 5 Meeting Room, at Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford. IP24 1BT**

**PRESENT**

Cllr David Ambrose-Smith  
(Chairman)  
Cllr Jan French (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Sarah Broughton

Cllr Maurice Cook  
Cllr Paul Claussen (Substitute Member)

**In Attendance**

Paul Corney  
Sam Anthony  
Alison Chubbock

Lorraine King

Rachael Mann

Brian Mew

Adrian Mills

Matthew Waite-Wright

Ian Smith

Julie Britton

- Head of ARP
- Head of HR & OD (Fenland)
- Assistant Director Finance (Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
- Operations Manager (Benefits & Billing) ARP
- Assistant Director (Resources & Performance) (West Suffolk)
- Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer (East Suffolk)
- Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (Revenues & Benefits) ARP
- Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement (ARP)
- Finance Manager & S151 Officer (East Cambs)
- Democratic Services Officer

**Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chairman welcomed Lorraine King and Matthew Waite-Wright to their very first ARP Joint Committee meeting.

**26/21 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

**27/21 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Phil Cowen. Councillor Paul Claussen was in attendance as his substitute.

**28/21 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None.

**Action By**

**Action By**

**29/21 DECLARATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

None declared.

**30/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Adrian Mills, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) presented the report.

He was pleased to announce that all target areas were green and was a great improvement since the last meeting.

Demand for Council Tax billing continued at very high levels due to the pandemic and in particular due to the high number of people moving taking advantage of the extended stamp duty holiday. Since April 2021 there had been a 60% increase in people moving home Compared to last year and higher than during 2019.

Further recovery of Council Tax arrears was £167,441 more than for the same point last year.

Parking cases for West Suffolk and East Suffolk were now coming through the enforcement process with positive results on collection. Overall, the Enforcement Team had collected £338,262 thus far compared to £227,543 at the same point last year.

The Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) felt that this was a very positive report in terms of performance.

Councillor French asked for an update on the discussions that were being had with Cambridgeshire County Council in respect of a business case for a County fraud hub.

Members were informed that there had been significant progress on this matter and a subsequent report had already been submitted. ARP had submitted a counter proposal to use National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data and was progressing well.

Paul Corney, the Head of ARP advised that this had been agreed in principle and it was hoped that all would in place by 1 April 2022.

Ian Smith, the Finance Manager & S151 Officer (East Cambs) pointed out that there had been a few meetings and progress had been made on this matter but there were a few more 'tweaks' to be made to the Business Case.

The report was otherwise noted.

**31/21 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

Adrian Mills, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) presented the report.

He drew Members' attention to section 2.1.9 of the report and provided an update on this matter. He explained that DWP had announced a future support offer from April 2022 in terms of providing telephony and digital support to help people to claim and maintain their Universal Credit claim;

**Action By**

DWP intended to bring face-to-face support back in house from Citizen's Advice. Further discussions would be had with the Operational Improvement Board following this Joint Committee meeting.

In response to a question as to whether the contract awarded to Citizen's Advice Bureau by the DWP had been a failure, Members were informed that a DWP report on this matter was still awaited.

Councillor Cook believed that the CAB had been doing a sterling job and had not been told otherwise at the Cabinet meetings that he had attended.

The Chairman stated that East Cambridgeshire Council was not supporting the CAB.

The report was otherwise noted.

**32/21 ARP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2021-22 (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director of fiancé & S151 officer for Breckland Council presented the report.

The figures had been based on information as of 31 July 2021 and the forecast that this stage of the year showed a small underspend against budget of £55k for the whole of ARP; however, enforcement income remained a risk to the Partnership.

It was noted that local authorities would not be able to claim any further grant payments for income lost due to the pandemic in respect of sales fees and charges as the extension to the scheme had ended in July 2021.

The report was otherwise noted.

**33/21 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

Councillor French thanked the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) for attending Fenland District Council's recent Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting and asked if any date had been set for the suggested Joint Leaders and Chief Executives meeting.

Members were informed that the next OIB meeting would be discussing the agenda and when this meeting should take place as it was proving difficult to find a date that was suitable for everyone including IOB members.

The meeting would be to discuss the future strategic direction of the ARP to inform a four-year business plan to commence April 2022.

**34/21 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at 11am in Level 5 meeting room at Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford were noted.

The meeting closed at 11.25 am

CHAIRMAN

**ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP**

**Report of** Adrian Mills – Assistant Head of ARP

**To:** ARP Joint Committee, 07 December 2021

**Subject:** The Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Service Delivery Plan.

**Purpose:** To recommend the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register at Appendix B are approved and to report on the progress in respect of the December 2020 Service Delivery Plan (Appendix A).

**Recommendation(s):**

- That the progress in respect of the December 2020 Service Delivery Plan is noted.
- That the ARP Joint Committee approve the revised Service Delivery Plan and risk register at Appendix B, subject to Strategic Review as detailed below.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background**

- 1.1.1 In accordance with the ARP agreement a revised Service Delivery Plan for the new financial year should be agreed by the Joint Committee by the end of December of the previous year and the risk register is reviewed every 6 months.
- 1.1.2 A Service Delivery Plan was agreed in December 2020 and there is an update below which details progress against this plan.
- 1.1.3 In addition to service aims and objectives the plan includes a risk assessment that ARP will implement in the next year.

**2. April 2021/22 plan objectives performance and update**

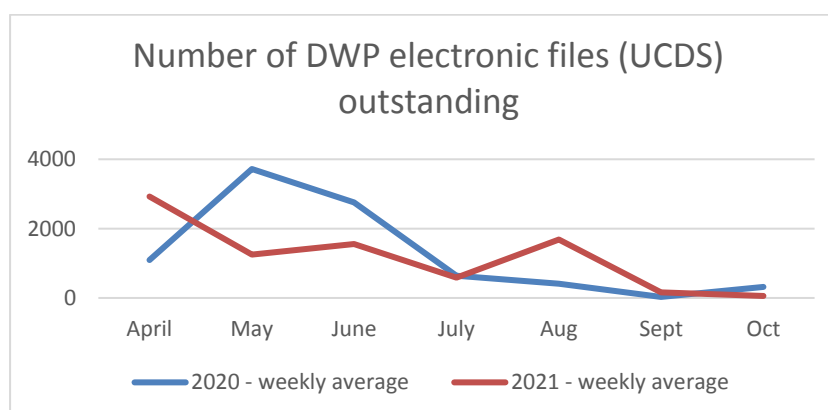
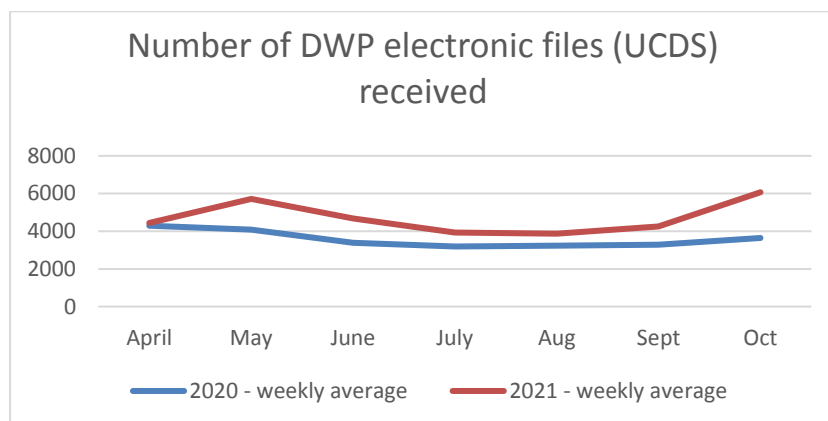
- 2.1 The ARP has seen significant success in 2021/22 and we have achieved the following.
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support new claims and changes are meeting targets even though Covid has affected level of work and enquiries
  - The suite of forms and other functionality is available to all 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 over £680k last year (Covid). This year, as at the end of October the further recovery officers have already secured over £793k which is commendable considering the circumstances.
  - 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 even higher values in 2021/22.
  - The success of the Enforcement Team continues, taking on car parking debt for East and West Suffolk and continuing with South Norfolk and Norwich.
  - We continue to see an overall increase across all work areas as detailed at para 2.6 below.
  - Covid Business Rate reliefs have all been successfully applied to relevant accounts at annual billing – 100% relief applied until the end of June. Accounts were then updated with 66% relief and rebilled for the rest of the year.

- In September 2020 DHSC introduced a self isolation payment support scheme administered by local authorities, subsequently extended to March 2022. We have secured administration funding from the three County Councils to assist with the administration of additional County initiatives and reduce the impact on business as usual activities due to demand.
- We obtained DLUHC approval to roll over underspends from the Covid hardship fund into the 2021/22 year, allowing a discount off new year bills for every working age Council Tax Support customer. Residual funds are available to make further exceptional hardship payments.
- In collaboration with each partner's Housing teams we ran a campaign throughout the Summer to bring empty homes back into use, resulting in a 40% reduction in unoccupied homes. The campaign complemented ongoing work undertaken by ARP throughout the year.
- Following agreement with East Suffolk and West Suffolk Councils, from April 2022 we started to receive car parking debts for enforcement action. This will increase the fee income shared by the partners. The volume of cases received is on track to meet expectations and recovery is being closely monitored.

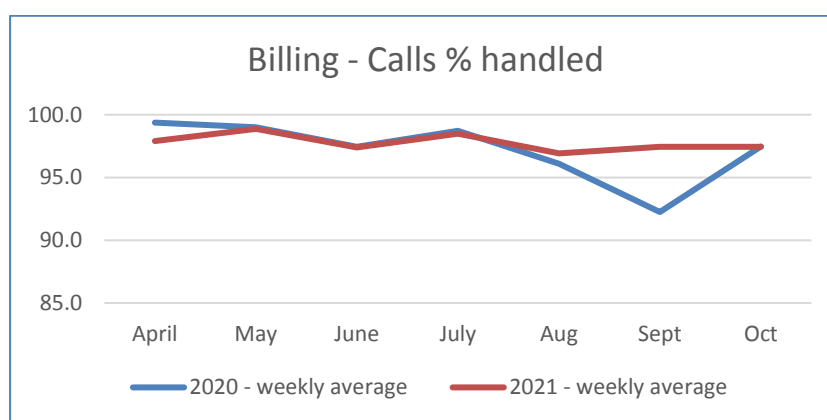
Some other achievements relating to the Transformation Programme are detailed below:

- 2.2 The Digital work stream continues to progress with the automation of new claims and changes in circumstances growing steadily, to such a degree that we have been able to administer the significant increase in Universal Credit Data Service reports of changes in circumstances through automating approximately 85%. This increased from 50% in August following development work with our software supplier. This has resulted in less build up in work outstanding and therefore a quicker response for customers. We have also recently introduced automation of Universal Credit new claim files following functionality enhancements by our software supplier.

UCDS received and outstanding

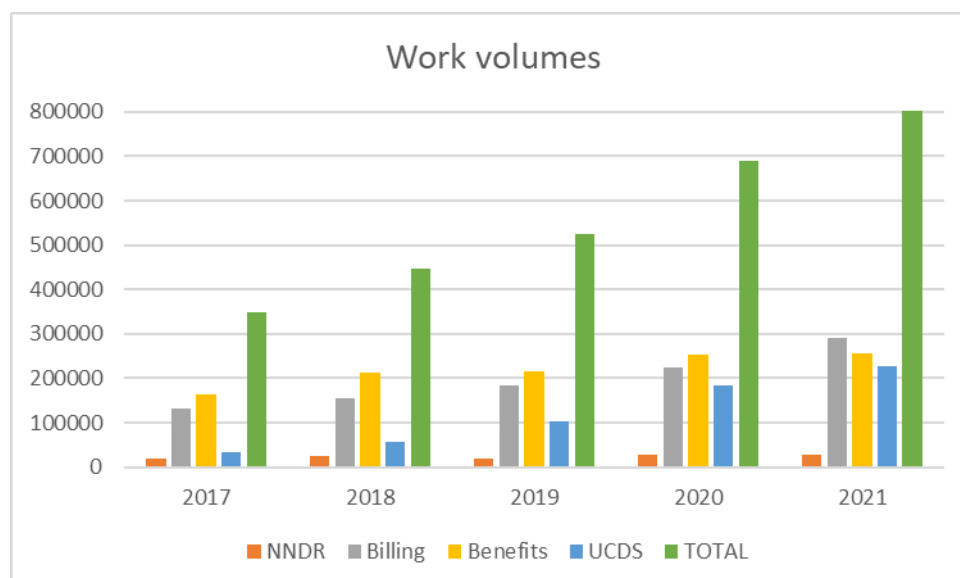


- 2.2 Automation of Universal Credit records included the introduction of the “Tolerance Rule” into our Council Tax Support Schemes two years ago. Approximately one 3<sup>rd</sup> of the changes in income received did not result in a revised bill and payment profile for our customers, leading to a clearer picture of what they have to pay. We did not have any cases where we needed to reassess due to the tolerance rule causing hardship in cases where income reduced. In reviewing each partner Council’s Local Council Tax Support Schemes this year, we obtained approval to consult on increasing the tolerance level to further reduce customer contact, as well as agreement to consult on additional proposals to streamline the customer experience. At time of writing the consultations are all live and on track to inform setting the schemes for the 2022/23 year.
- 2.3 It has continued to be the case that the new phone technology (RAD messages) we introduced in 2019 continues to allow us to achieve strong call handling response times. We have achieved this through allowing ARP to manage calls so that the simpler calls go to our less experienced staff and customers are offered online services as an alternative to needing to speak to an officer, thereby releasing experienced staff for more complex calls and to assess more difficult cases. The improvement in performance has continued throughout 2021/22 as shown by the graph below.



- 2.4 The introduction of a generic role, called a Council Tax Billing Officer, continues to be a great success, providing flexibility and resilience whilst increasing the skills of staff. These posts process Council Tax changes and certain types of Council Tax Support (CTS) cases (where there is no Housing Benefit). This role means that resource is more flexible and can be moved from CTS to billing as the workload demands.
- 2.5 Overall workload across Council Tax, Benefits and NNDR has increased by 130% since 2017 with a 31% increase seen during the pandemic in 2020.

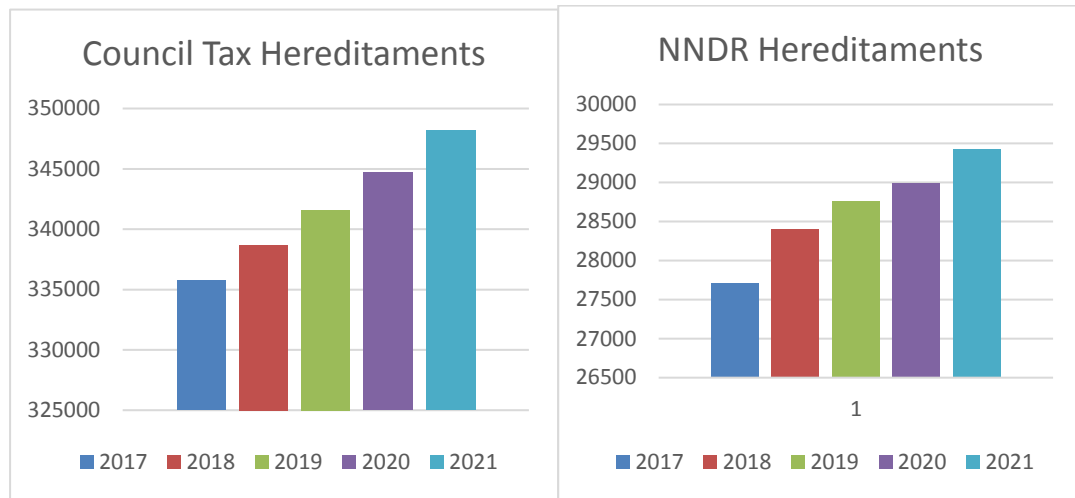
#### OVERALL WORK VOLUMES



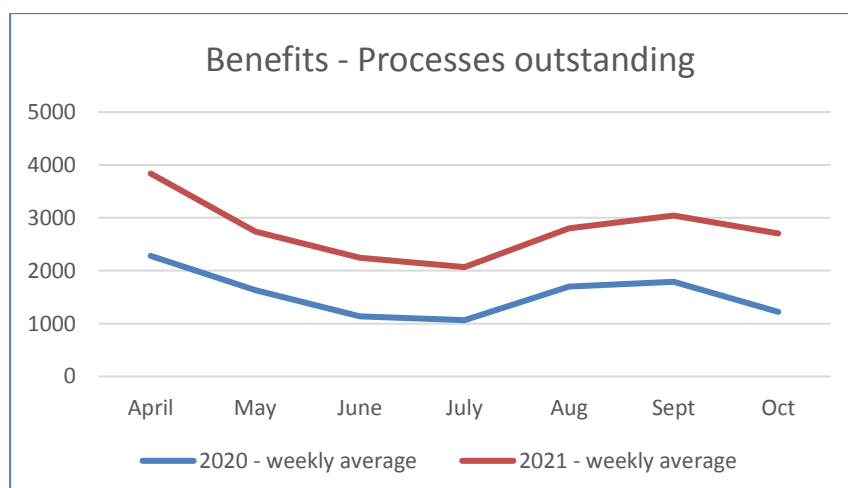
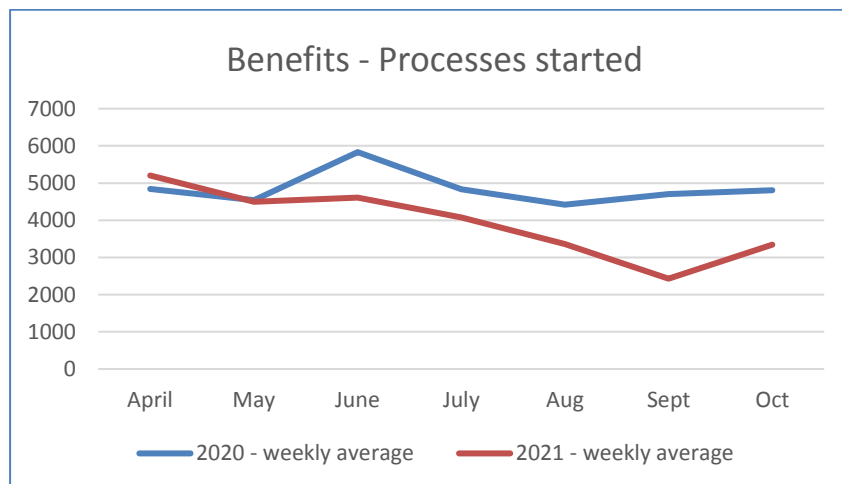


## HEREDITAMENTS

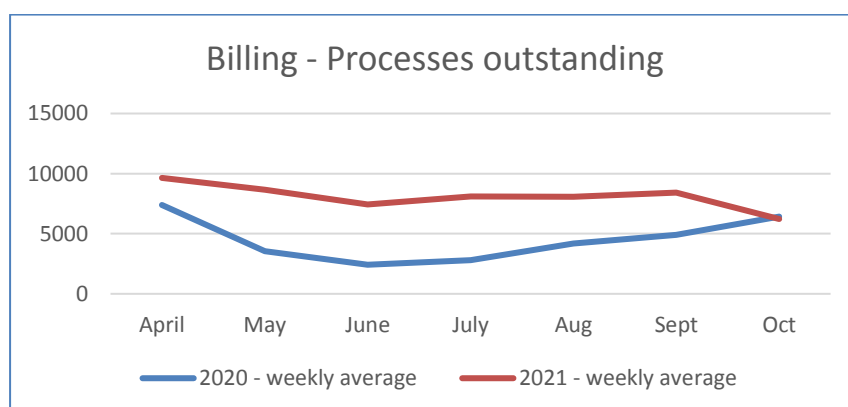
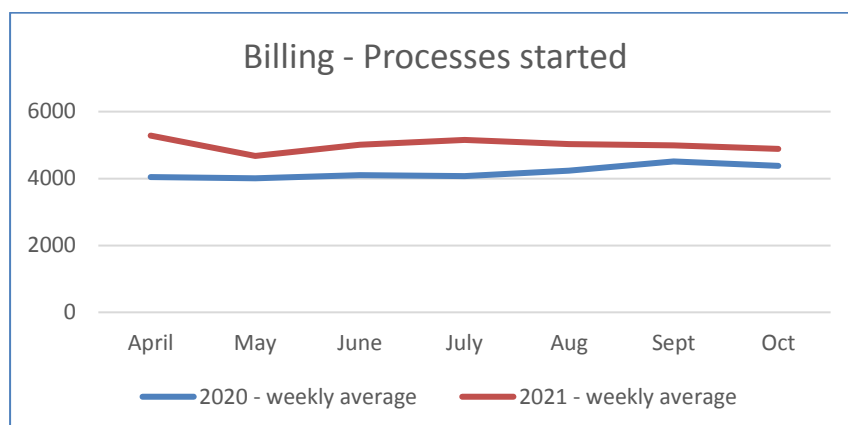
Hereditaments have also steadily increased over the past 4 years with NNDR seeing a 6.21% increase overall and Council Tax 3.70%.



## BENEFITS



## BILLING



- 2.6 Norwich have delegated their enforcement services (previously known as Bailiff) to Breckland Council from July 2019 who pass this work to the ARP team. This increases the team's resilience and ability to collect debt in a fair manner taking account of people's ability to pay and vulnerability.
- 2.7 Following the retirements of two Strategic Managers and subsequent restructure this year, Joint Committee agreed to terminate the Norwich management agreement from April 2022.
- 2.8 The Enforcement services delegation with Norwich will continue, although we expect to see less cases than anticipated, due to their approach to ethical debt collection, and to continue the good working arrangements for fraud cases work is underway to agree a fraud services delegation from April 2022.
- 2.9 With Self-isolation Payments extended to March 2022 and business grants we are seeing more pressure on the teams. However, the partnership working between teams across all councils and the ARP teams has worked fantastically and it remains a priority to ensure that we continue to work as closely in the future.
- 2.10 Appendix A attached to the report shows the status of the priorities agreed in December 2020.
- 2.11 The draft budget for 2022/23 has met requirements, with efficiency target being met. Increased costs attributed to rising inflation have been offset through a combination of reduced complement as we see automation gains, the senior management restructure and other efficiencies. Nevertheless, the budget has risen due to the 1.25% increase in National Insurance from April 2022.

### 3. Revised Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register

- 3.1 The service Delivery Plan (Appendix B) 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 matrix
- 3.2 The Service Delivery Plan seeks to detail actions to achieve the visioning detailed in the Strategic Direction.
- 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 2022/23 we will continue to invest time and resource into developing automated processes to deliver savings and to streamline the customer experience as we seek to maximise the use of secure data share to design our services.
- 3.8 We positioned ourselves to be selected to participate in a Cabinet Office pilot to receive employer details held by DWP & HMRC for the purposes of Council Tax debt recovery. These provisions are contained in the Digital Economy Act. This enhanced data share is expected to improve Council Tax collection. We are also in discussions with the Cabinet Office and DWP to identify further opportunities to share data permitted by the Digital Economy Act.
- 3.9 The ARP strategic team will continue to influence national initiatives such as Universal Credit and Business Rates reform, to influence system design to improve performance and generate efficiencies where possible and to enhance data share to help inform service design.

- 3.10 We will also continue to maintain our flexible workforce. We have seen great success in the new Council Tax Billing role which works generically across Council Tax and Council Tax Support cases and we will continue to recruit vacancies to this new role as we see Universal Credit and automation changing the way in which we receive and process our work.
- 3.11 We need to ensure that we have resilience in key roles and so have developed a planning framework to ensure continued service delivery. We continue to work closely with HR who have led on a programme to identify future leaders as well as leadership development, career pathways and use of coaching/mentoring, professional training/qualifications and external experiences in leadership.
- 3.12 Welfare reform is still high on the Governments agenda which may lead to fundamental changes in our service provision and so the plan includes actions to understand the impact on the partner councils of the changes, as information becomes available, there are also actions concerning the monitoring of the financial impact of the changes we have already seen.
- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 A four year Business Plan, to complement the annual Service Plan, is scheduled to be developed with Members from December 2021, with Joint Committee approval in March 2022, to commence from April 2022.
- 3.15 Any resultant outcomes and actions from the Strategic Review will be incorporated into the Service Plan.

#### **4 Options**

1. To suggest changes and additions to the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register.
2. To approve the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register at Appendix B.

#### **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

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### **Lead Contact Officer**

Name/Post: Adrian Mills (Assistant Head of the ARP)

Email: [adrian.mills@angliarevenues.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.mills@angliarevenues.gov.uk)

### **Appendices attached to this report:**

**Appendix A – Service Delivery Plan December 2020 progress**

**Appendix B – Service Delivery Plan December 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 |
|---|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|--|------|
| <b>Universal Credit implementation and other Welfare Reform</b> | <b>Customer Relationships Sustainability</b>                     | 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 now 2025   | 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 2018 - still awaiting info on Managed migration of existing cases.   |      |
| <b>Review of Council Tax Support Scheme</b>                     | <b>Colleagues Customer Digital Relationships Sustainability</b>  | 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                                     | Proposals from the project group have been put forward for consultation by each partner's Cabinet. The results will inform recommendation to each Cabinet & Council to determine the scheme for the 2022/23 year.  |      |
| <b>Customer Journey - online services</b>                       | <b>Customer Digital Sustainability</b>                           | 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 portal and online form functionality | A reliance on Capita providing data and software enabling automation   | The new Capita COA went live early Summer 2021 following testing with the Customer Strategy Team (leads from all LAs and ARP). We have seen greater customer usage than expected as we test automation of back office processing with a dedicated team, working with Capita to further enhance the product.  |      |
| <b>Customer Journey - Automation of Services</b>                | <b>Customer Digital Sustainability</b>                           | 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 2021 - 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 has increased from 50% to 85% during Summer 2021 as work continues with Capita to improve. We have also implemented UCDS new claim automation following functionality release from Capita.  |      |
| <b>NDR, Recovery and Enforcement - EDMS</b>                     | <b>colleagues Digital sustainability</b>                         | 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 Admin and Capita                               | EDMS team, System Admin and Capita   | Some reports and processes already developed - Covid has meant some other priorities have suspended action but, still on target to achieve by January 22.  |      |
| <b>Covid 19 - agile workforce</b>                               | <b>Colleagues Customers Digital Relationships Sustainability</b> | 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 enabling ARP to provide a full service. Quarterly staff surveys continue to be inform our agile working approach.   |      |
| <b>Billing and Benefits letter production</b>                   | <b>Customer Sustainability</b>                                   | 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  | External mailing Contract  | Preceptors setting their Council Tax early enough for bills to be produced   | The project plan successfully delivered annual Billing for March 2021 and a new project plan is being developed by end January 2022 for next year's annual billing exercise - Capita release scheduled for late Dec/early January 2022.  |      |
| <b>Learning &amp; Development Strategy</b>                      | <b>Colleagues Customers Sustainability</b>                       | 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 Operational projects  | Jul-21   | 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 with some undertaking mgt qualification during 2021-2022 via Levy). Career pathways on HUB. Coordinating with LA's online info for all staff development. |      |

|   |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| <b>Leadership &amp; Succession Planning</b> | <b>Colleagues<br/>Customers<br/>Sustainability</b>                               | 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. New SMT team in place following 3 senior retirements.  |  |
| <b>Work force Strategy</b>                  | <b>Colleagues<br/>Customers<br/>Sustainability</b>                               | 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<br>Operational project timelines<br>Customer Service level agreements<br>Staffing Budget | 01/12/2020 - ongoing                                | OIB, SMT & Operational Mgmt. team<br>Financial team across ARP<br>HRBP's  | Current organisational structure and establishment to remain constant. LA's policies across partnership with regard to workforce planning strategies   | A significant amount of material and workshops made available to officers before and during lockdown continues to be available. APR WB Charter progressing well with Thriving Places accreditation obtained during the summer. WB virtual events planned every month, WB page promoted each month with different theme. WB Champions and MHFA meetings held. ARP surveys completed in Jan 21, May 21 and September 21. |  |
| <b>Well-Being Strategy</b>                  | <b>Colleagues<br/>Customers<br/>Sustainability</b>                               | 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<br>HRBP's<br>OIB, SMT and Ops mgmt.<br>ALL Staff<br>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 made available to officers before and during lockdown and is regularly updated. Quarterly staff surveys have informed our approach to agile working and we have achieved Thriving Places accreditation.   |  |
| <b>Resourcing Strategy</b>                  | <b>Colleagues<br/>Customers<br/>Sustainability</b>                               | 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)<br>ARP Corporate Comms  | Links with partnership website remain unchanged and HR SLA arrangement   | A process for interviewing and training remotely has been successfully implemented as well as candidate testing tools.   |  |
| <b>Communication and Digital Strategy</b>   |  | 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   |  |
| <b>Sharing of Good Practice</b>             | <b>Colleagues<br/>Customers<br/>Relationships<br/>Sustainability</b>             | 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 and these will continue.  |  |
| <b>Performance management</b>               | <b>Colleagues<br/>Customers<br/>Digital<br/>Relationships<br/>Sustainability</b> | 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 approved.                              | OIB, SMT, Function Support Teams  | All officers on each group must engage with group and complete tasks agreed by the groups  | Performance measures are embedded in most teams and are in the process of being rolled out to the remaining teams to complete the Performance Management Framework   |  |
| <b>Quality/GDPR/Audit</b>                   | <b>Customer<br/>Relationships<br/>Sustainability</b>                             | 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.<br>ARP Trainers & Resilience Officers<br>L&D teams  | Link to Partnership audit requirements and advice  | Quarterly updates are provided   |  |

|  |  |   |  |   |  |  |   |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Maximising tax base Council Tax</b> | <b>Relationships Sustainability</b>                      | 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 tax base 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 was started at the end of May, completed end of September, working with partner housing teams, to review all long term empty properties before the Council Tax Base is calculated for DLUHC.   |  |
| <b>Maximising tax base NNDR</b>        | <b>Relationships Sustainability</b>                      | 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 tax base 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 started at the end of May. Additional information has been acquired from Destin solutions, prompting further investigation. Furthermore, all small business premises that did not receive a Covid grant have been visited to ensure validity of SBRR and liable party. |  |
| <b>Budget monitoring</b>               | <b>Relationships Sustainability</b>                      | 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<br>Financial team across ARP<br>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. Draft budget prepared for December JC.   |  |
| <b>Team Cohesion</b>                   | <b>Colleagues Customers Relationships Sustainability</b> | To develop an improved understanding of each service area within ARP, build team work through projects, cross cutting events and well-being initiatives   | Service area awareness events, improve induction programmes and cross-skilling opportunities through job shadowing   | ARP Communications Strategy<br>HR Strategy<br>Operational Service Plans | Ongoing  | All Ops mgmt.  |   | Initial stage was to scope suggested activities and assess cost of events. Staff responded in surveys that they prefer successes to be celebrated in staff briefings, scheduled for December 2021.   |  |



| Ref. | Risk Title   | Risk Description   | Consequences   | Opportunities  | Risk Owner                           | Risk Manager                         | Current Controls  | Mitigating Actions   | Date added | Date Updated | Curr. Score | Tgt Score | Trend   |
|------|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|---|
|      | <b>Business continuity</b>                                 | 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 Heads of Service     | Head of ARP                          | Staff are encouraged to take IRRV exams and NVQs and management qualifications 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 | 04/11/2021   | C4          | C4        | Reached target score  |
|      | <b>Business continuity</b>                                 | 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 as well as ability to work from home securely on laptops. | Head of Billing, Benefits & Systems  | Head of ARP                          | Systems mirrored at 2 sites enabling work to continue. All staff enable to work securely from home. West Suffolk IT update systems with new patches and protection regularly and systems are PSN compliant  | Access to mirrored servers in Mildenhall 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 | 04/11/2021   | E2          | E2        | Reached target score  |
|      | <b>Economic recovery from COVID-19</b>                     | Increased demand due to economic impact of Covid-19 and extra Government requirements e.g. continuation of Self Isolation schemes and new business rates grants. Economic recovery could impact enforcement income.    | Processing delays, deterioration in customer service, risk to LA error, risk to collection and recovery, increased complaints          | To continue to engage with DWP/DLUHC/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.  | taking a balanced approach to recovery having regard to vulnerability. Extra/redeployed resources, agency working and overtime might be required.  | 29/10/2020 | 04/11/2021   | B3          | B3        | Dependant upon Government management of the pandemic                                |
|      | <b>Income from retained Business rates and Council Tax</b> | 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 & Enforcement | Head of NNDR, Recovery & Enforcement | Monitoring will continue for 2021/22. Revaluation 2017, appeals adds risk for life of 2017 list. Revaluation due 2023.  | 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 | 04/11/2021   | D2          | D2        | We have yet to see whether Covid and/or Brexit will cause bankruptcy and insolvency |
|      | <b>Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b>              | Unemployment levels rise to a level that make the scheme unaffordable - this risk has risen due to economic recovery from Covid.   | Customers are asked to pay more than they can afford and arrears accrue  | Increased income from Council Tax could be achieved  | Head of Billing, Benefits & Systems. | Head of Billing, Benefits & Systems. | 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 | Annual review proposals approved for consultation, results will inform setting schemes for the 2022/23 year.   | 01/04/2014 | 04/11/2021   | D3          | D3        | Reached target score  |
|      | <b>A partner or partners leave the partnership</b>         | 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 | 04/11/2021   | E3          | E3        | Reached target score  |

|  |  |  |  |   |                                      |                                      |  |   |            |            |    |    |                      |
|--|--|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|------------|------------|----|----|----------------------|
|  | <b>Billing and Benefit letter production</b> | External printer does not issue daily or annual bills and letters within legal timescale   | Bills may have first instalment date later than 01/4/2022 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 Billing, Benefits & Systems. | Head of Billing, Benefits & Systems. | 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 | 04/11/2021 | E2 | E2 | Reached target score |
|  | <b>Housing benefit subsidy shortfall</b>     | 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 the 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 Billing, Benefits & Systems. | Head of Billing, Benefits & Systems. | Rigorous procedures and high level of professional training. We have a quality assurance programme designed to 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 | 04/11/2021 | D3 | D3 | Reached target score |
|  | <b>Universal Credit implementation</b>       | Uncertainty over future funding from DWP and DLUC. Affect upon customers currently receiving HB and resultant impact on customer teams   | UC has been rolled out to new claimants but later 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 Billing, Benefits & Systems. | Head of Billing, Benefits & Systems. | Despite DWP stalling the managed migration programme we continue to monitor the position. Latest completion date 2025.   | 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 | 04/11/2021 | D3 | D3 | Reached target score |
|  | <b>Fraud and Error</b>                       | 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 & Enforcement | Head of NNDR, Recovery & Enforcement | Team retained to investigate LCTRS, Tenancy, Ctax discount/exemptions and NNDR since 01/09/15  | Both Norfolk & Suffolk County Council's have agreed funding for Fraud team till 31/03/24, and Cambridgeshire County Council now agreed funding a new fraud hub. Quarterly reporting to County Councils to demonstrate the impact of the Fraud team. | 11/12/2014 | 04/11/2021 | C2 | C2 | Reached target score |

Risk management process and toolkit

**Step 3 – Prioritisation using the matrix below**

- How likely is this risk?
- How big an impact will this risk have?

|   |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| A |  |  |  |  |  |
| B |  |  |  |  |  |
| C |  |  |  |  |  |
| D |  |  |  |  |  |
| E |  |  |  |  |  |
| F |  |  |  |  |  |

Likelihood

Impossible  
Very Low  
Low  
Significant  
High  
Very High

Impact

Negligible  
Marginal  
Critical  
Catastrophic

**Steps 4 and 5 – Mitigation and monitoring**

| Mitigation  | Monitoring  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess current actions and controls ....</li><li>• Adequate or more needed.</li><li>• Within your Service Plans –develop specific SMART actions that will either reduce the likelihood of the risks or minimise the impact.</li><li>• What should the score be after you have taken action?</li></ul> | <p>Review the Risk Register with colleagues (for example, as part of your Service Plan) at least quarterly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risks changed?</li><li>• New risks?</li><li>• Need to report or escalate risks?</li><li>• Risks ranking changed?</li></ul> |

**Definitions**

| Likelihood                   | Impact       | Example Descriptions   |
|------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Very High<br>> 90%           | Negligible   | Financial impact below £10k, no effect on partnership / service provision or reputation, minor delays to a project, limited physical consequences  |
| High<br>55% -90%             | Marginal     | £10k - £200K, service slightly reduced<br>broken bones/illness, objectives of one team not met, minor adverse local media, impact on an external inspection (s)  |
| Significant<br>15%- 55%      | Critical     | £200K - £500K, service suspended short term / reduced, loss of life/major illness, service objectives not met, industrial action, adverse national publicity, service taken over temporarily   |
| Low<br>5% - 15%              | Catastrophic | £500K +, partnership / service suspended long term, statutory duties not delivered, major loss of life/large scale major illness, corporate objectives not met, mass staff leaving/units closed to attract staff, Remembrance for all Service taken over permanently |
| Very Low<br>1% - 5%          |              |  |
| Almost Impossible<br>0% - 1% |              |  |



## Joint Committee Performance Report October 2021



CONTENT PAGE

Section

|    |   |        |
|----|---|--------|
| 1) | Combined Partner Performance            | 1      |
| 2) | Breckland Performance Reports           | 2-6    |
| 3) | East Cambridgeshire Performance Reports | 7-11   |
| 4) | East Suffolk Performance Reports        | 12-16  |
| 5) | Fenland Performance Reports             | 17-21  |
| 6) | West Suffolk Performance Reports        | 22-26  |
| 7) | Anglia Revenues Service Update Report   | 27 -30 |

# All Partner Councils Combined



| Business Rates Collection |              |               |               |                     |   |
|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---|
|                           | Q1           | Q2            | Oct-21        | Q4                  |   |
| 2021/22                   | £ 51,853,578 | £ 112,789,537 | £ 132,313,962 | £ -                 | ● |
| Target                    | £ 48,450,483 | £ 106,693,333 | £ 125,909,483 | £ 206,288,251       | ● |
| 2020/21                   | £ 40,382,156 | £ 80,234,076  | £ 94,112,908  | £ 151,680,832       | ● |
| Year End Target           |              |               |               | <b>£206,288,251</b> | ● |

| Council Tax Collection |              |              |              |                     |   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---|
|                        | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4                  |   |
| 2021/22                | £138,277,607 | £272,346,866 | £317,459,382 | £ -                 | ● |
| Target                 | £135,996,887 | £268,533,270 | £314,155,778 | £475,114,297        | ● |
| 2020/21                | £127,454,324 | £251,468,250 | £294,950,715 | £454,493,276        | ● |
| Year End Target        |              |              |              | <b>£475,114,297</b> | ● |

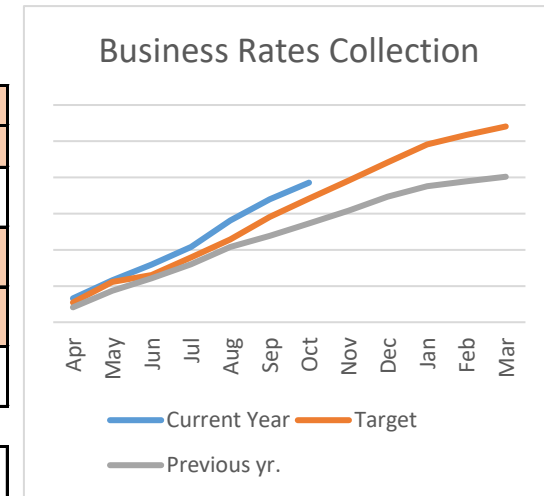
| Number of Electronic Forms Received |        |        |        |              |   |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|---|
|                                     | Q1     | Q2     | Oct-21 | Q4           |   |
| 2021/22                             | 14,052 | 32,059 | 39,266 | £ -          | ● |
| 2020/21                             | 12,089 | 23,189 | 27,950 | 55,159       | ● |
| Year End Target                     |        |        |        | <b>55159</b> | ● |

| Fraud and Compliance         | Q1              | Q2                | Oct-21            | Q4         | Yr Target         |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Single Person Discount Fraud | £501,867        | £865,687          | £1,013,691        | £ -        | £500,000          |
| Local Council Tax Support    | £35,778         | £74,758           | £116,431          | £ -        | £150,000          |
| Tenancy Fraud                | £195,720        | £288,720          | £474,720          | £ -        | £400,000          |
| Other (Council Tax and NDR)  | £112,776        | £243,015          | £381,752          | £ -        | £250,000          |
| <b>Fraud Identified</b>      | <b>£846,141</b> | <b>£1,472,179</b> | <b>£1,986,593</b> | <b>£ -</b> | <b>£1,300,000</b> |

## Performance Information October 2021

### Business Rates

| Business Rates Collection |              |              |              |              |   |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                           | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| <b>2021/22</b>            | £ 7,948,881  | £ 16,972,674 | £ 19,277,061 | £ -          | ● |
| <b>Target</b>             | £ 6,522,632  | £ 14,548,273 | £ 17,050,050 | £ 27,034,111 |   |
| <b>Refunds</b>            | £ 207,992    | £ 452,743    | £ 717,979    | £ -          |   |
| <b>2020/21</b>            | £ 6,046,513  | £ 11,935,167 | £ 13,639,228 | £ 20,092,010 | ● |
|                           |              |              |              |              |   |
| <b>Year End Target</b>    | £ 27,034,111 |              |              |              | ● |



#### 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.

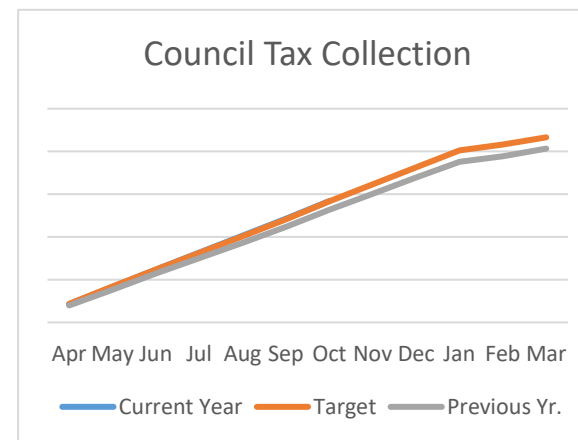
#### Narrative

Collection is on target.

## Council Tax

| Council Tax Collection |              |              |              |              |   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                        | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| 2021/22                | £ 24,672,337 | £ 48,614,835 | £ 56,825,672 | £ -          | ● |
| Target                 | £ 24,656,445 | £ 48,331,128 | £ 56,620,135 | £ 86,608,060 |   |
| Refunds                | £ 236,148    | £ 511,663    | £ 609,375    | £ -          |   |
| 2020/21                | £ 22,830,485 | £ 44,806,050 | £ 52,687,463 | £ 81,338,654 | ● |

|                 |             |   |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Year End Target | £86,608,060 | ● |
|-----------------|-------------|---|



23

### 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

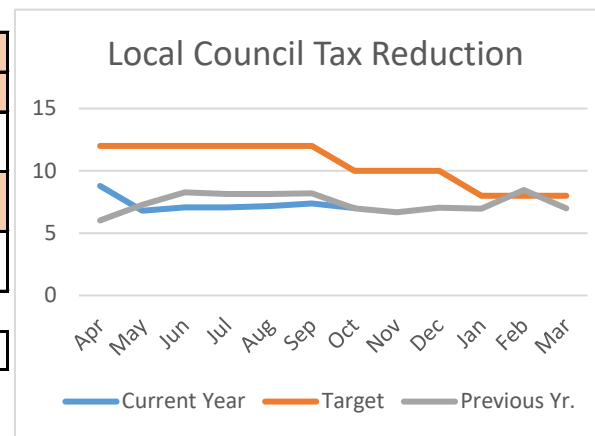
Collection remains on target for the current financial year. New recovery measures are being introduced using a 3 touch approach via phone, text messaging and emails prior to reminders to encourage early payment.



## Local Council Tax Reduction

### Days to process Local Council Tax Support

|                 | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |     |
|-----------------|------|------|--------|------|-----|
| 2021/22         | 7.08 | 7.38 | 7.02   | -    | ●   |
| Target          | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |     |
| 2020/21         | 8.26 | 8.20 | 6.98   | 6.98 | ●   |
| Year End Target |      |      |        |      | 8 ● |



#### Description

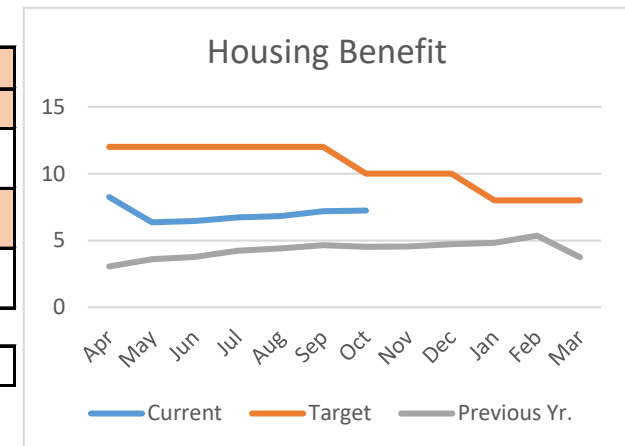
This indicator measures the average year to date number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

#### 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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

## Housing Benefit

| Days to process Housing Benefit |      |      |        |      |   |
|---------------------------------|------|------|--------|------|---|
|                                 | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                         | 6.45 | 7.18 | 7.23   | -    | ● |
| Target                          | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                         | 3.77 | 4.64 | 4.52   | 3.74 | ● |
|                                 |      |      |        |      |   |
| Year End Target                 |      | 8    |        |      | ● |



24

### 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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

### 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.

More recent discussions with the extended Housing Team has resulted in positive moves and greater planned collaboration

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 continue to work with both the Covid Grants Team and NNDR in post assurance business rates grants and further investigation and enquiries where required.

|                              | Q1              | Q2              | Oct-21          | Q4       |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Single Person Discount Fraud | £129,085        | £204,094        | £210,094        | -        |
| Local Council Tax Support    | £2,516          | £10,792         | £12,307         | -        |
| Tenancy Fraud                | £0              | £0              | £0              | -        |
| Other (Council Tax and NDR)  | £6,820          | £48,612         | £61,365         | -        |
| <b>Fraud Identified</b>      | <b>£138,422</b> | <b>£263,498</b> | <b>£283,766</b> | <b>-</b> |



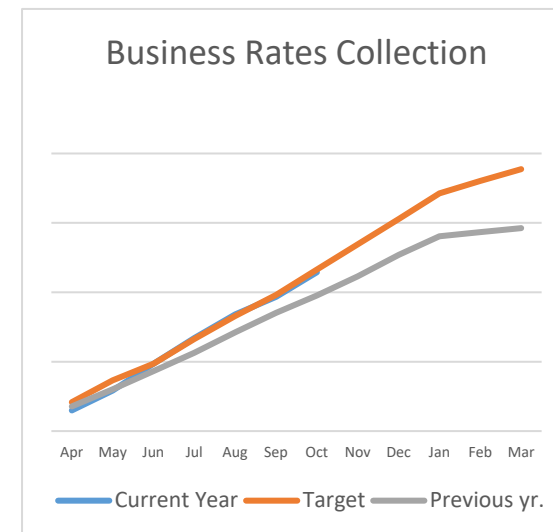
# Performance Information October 2021



## Business Rates

| Business Rates Collection |             |             |              |              |   |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                           | Q1          | Q2          | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| 2021/22                   | £ 4,854,955 | £ 9,670,643 | £ 11,446,400 | £ -          | ● |
| Target                    | £ 4,850,561 | £ 9,813,754 | £ 11,638,167 | £ 18,870,377 |   |
| Refunds                   | £ 215,059   | £ 1,076,342 | £ 1,117,630  | £ -          |   |
| 2020/21                   | £ 4,321,819 | £ 8,513,137 | £ 9,770,943  | £ 14,622,123 | ● |

|                  |             |   |
|------------------|-------------|---|
| Full Year Target | £18,870,377 | ● |
|------------------|-------------|---|



### 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

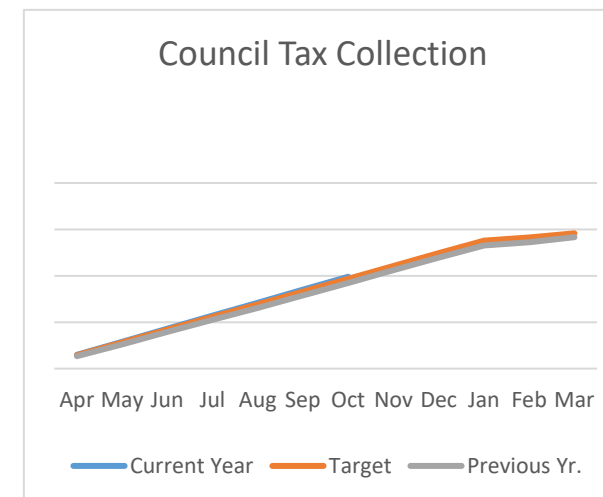
Collection is slightly below target. Collectable debt has increased by £500K and is showing a large increase in arrears due to the a single new assessment being backdated to 2017. This a property brought into to list, backdated 2 years, producing a bill of £2.5m. This being individually pursued.



## Council Tax



| Council Tax Collection |              |              |              |              |   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                        | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| 2021/22                | £ 17,191,094 | £ 34,009,954 | £ 39,586,118 | £ -          | ● |
| Target                 | £ 16,766,400 | £ 33,160,487 | £ 38,740,420 | £ 58,281,818 |   |
| Refunds                | £ 192,547    | £ 382,265    | £ 484,083    | £ -          |   |
| 2020/21                | £ 15,859,812 | £ 31,561,919 | £ 36,957,731 | £ 56,630,706 | ● |
| Year End Target        |              | £ 58,281,818 |              | ●            |   |



### 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

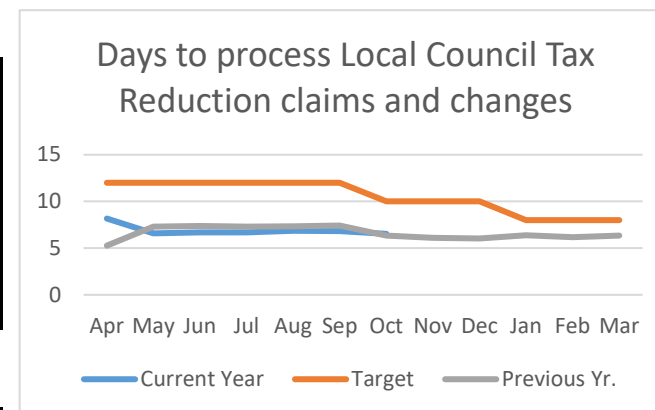
Collection remains on target for the current financial year. New recovery measures are being introduced using a 3 touch approach via phone, text messaging and emails prior to reminders to encourage early payment.



## Local Council Tax Reduction



| Days to process Local Council Tax Support |      |      |        |      |   |
|---|------|------|--------|------|---|
|   | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                                   | 6.68 | 6.82 | 6.53   | -    | ● |
| Target                                    | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                                   | 7.37 | 7.42 | 6.33   | 6.36 | ● |



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|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Year End Target | 8 | ● |
|-----------------|---|---|

### 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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

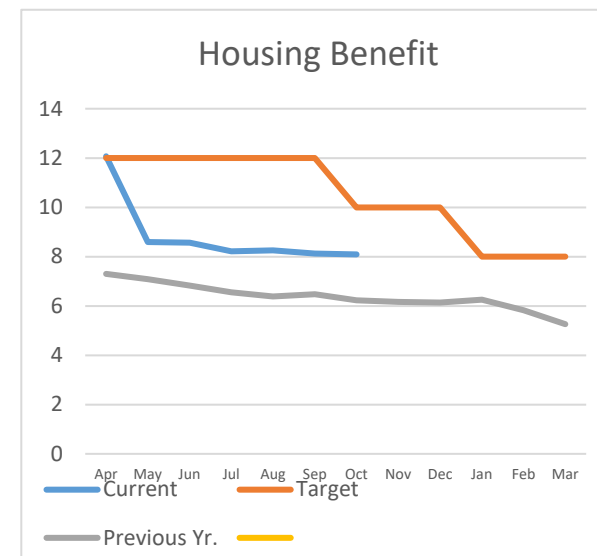


## Housing Benefit



|         | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
|---------|------|------|--------|------|---|
| 2021/22 | 8.57 | 8.13 | 8.09   | -    | ● |
| Target  | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21 | 6.82 | 6.48 | 6.23   | 5.26 | ● |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| 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 this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.



## 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.

There has been some recent progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and East Camb's DC and Fenland DC approving the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. 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 again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. Funding for 2 additional posts from County has been secured for 2 years.

|                              | Q1              | Q2              | Oct-21          | Q4       |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Single Person Discount Fraud | £51,848         | £67,958         | £174,497        | -        |
| Local Council Tax Support    | £927            | £2,744          | £30,904         | -        |
| Tenancy Fraud                | £93,000         | £93,000         | £186,000        | -        |
| Other (Council Tax and NDR)  | £58,291         | £91,838         | £188,620        | -        |
| <b>Fraud Identified</b>      | <b>£204,065</b> | <b>£255,541</b> | <b>£580,021</b> | <b>-</b> |

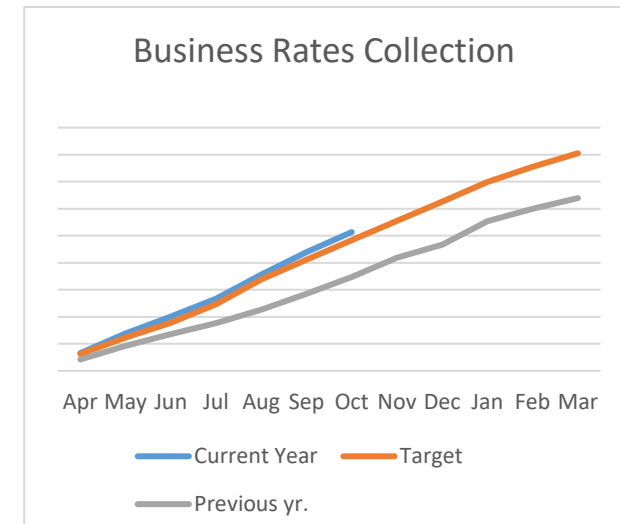


## Performance Information October 2021

### Business Rates

| Business Rates Collection |              |              |              |              |   |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                           | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| <b>2021/22</b>            | £ 20,107,177 | £ 43,843,831 | £ 51,346,746 | £ -          | ● |
| <b>Target</b>             | £ 17,758,942 | £ 41,058,827 | £ 48,301,951 | £ 80,506,639 |   |
| <b>Refunds</b>            | £ 467,003    | £ 1,637,421  | £ 1,810,305  | £ -          |   |
| <b>2020/21</b>            | £ 13,586,679 | £ 28,476,749 | £ 34,751,486 | £ 63,912,082 | ● |

|                        |                   |   |
|------------------------|-------------------|---|
| <b>Year End Target</b> | <b>80,506,639</b> | ● |
|------------------------|-------------------|---|



#### 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.

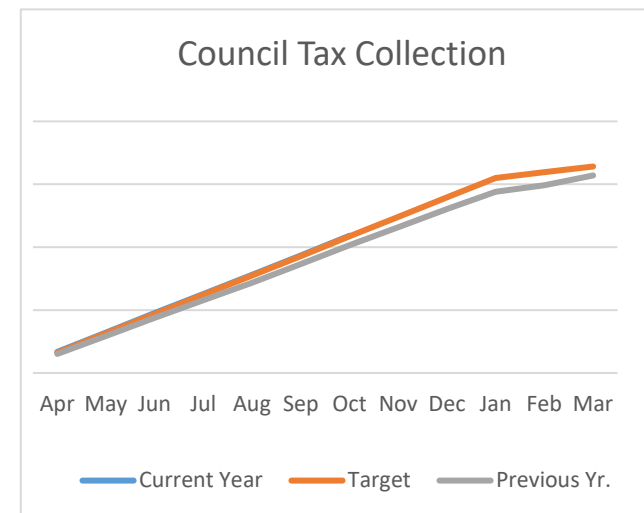
#### Narrative

Collection continues to run above target.

## Council Tax

| Council Tax Collection |              |              |               |               |  |   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--|---|
|                        | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21        | Q4            |  |   |
| <b>2021/22</b>         | £ 47,659,907 | £ 93,493,803 | £ 109,127,628 | £ -           |  | ● |
| <b>Target</b>          | £ 46,989,812 | £ 92,913,773 | £ 108,696,003 | £ 164,143,078 |  |   |
| <b>Refunds</b>         | £ 523,435    | £ 1,108,793  | £ 1,309,636   | £ -           |  |   |
| <b>2020/21</b>         | £ 43,986,884 | £ 86,547,244 | £ 101,529,943 | £ 157,025,532 |  | ● |

|                        |                    |   |
|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| <b>Year End Target</b> | <b>164,143,078</b> | ● |
|------------------------|--------------------|---|



32

### 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

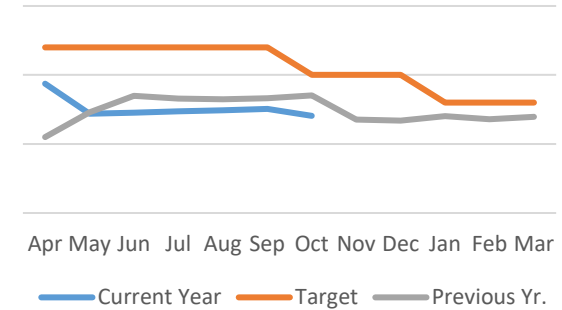
Collection remains on target for the current financial year. New recovery measures are being introduced using a 3 touch approach via phone, text messaging and emails prior to reminders to encourage early payment.

## Local Council Tax Reduction

| Days to process Local Council Tax Support |      |      |        |      |   |
|---|------|------|--------|------|---|
|   | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                                   | 7.27 | 7.55 | 7.04   | -    | ● |
| Target                                    | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                                   | 8.49 | 8.32 | 8.52   | 6.98 | ● |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Year End Target | 8 | ● |
|-----------------|---|---|

### Local Council Tax Reduction



33

#### Description

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

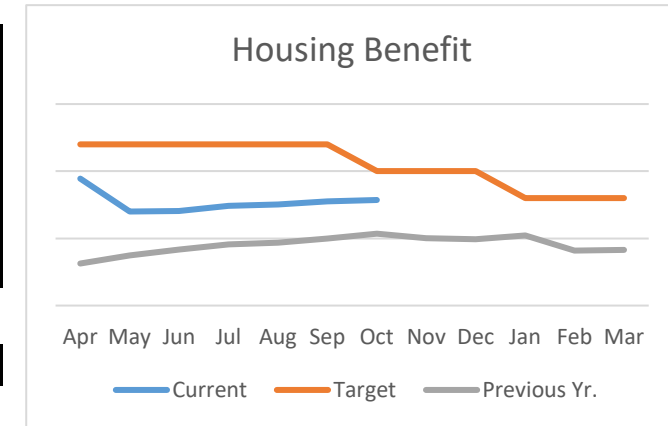
#### Narrative

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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

## Housing Benefit

| Days to process Housing Benefit |      |      |        |      |   |
|---------------------------------|------|------|--------|------|---|
|                                 | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                         | 7.03 | 7.75 | 7.86   | -    | ● |
| Target                          | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                         | 4.16 | 4.98 | 5.35   | 4.14 | ● |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Year End Target | 8 | ● |
|-----------------|---|---|



34

### 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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

### **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.

Work within the NFI SPD review process continues to provide a number of positive outcomes.

35

|                              | Q1              | Q2              | Oct-21          | Q4       |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Single Person Discount Fraud | £124,407        | £257,865        | £276,856        | -        |
| Local Council Tax Support    | £8,793          | £28,910         | £33,388         | -        |
| Tenancy Fraud                | £0              | £0              | £0              | -        |
| Other (Council Tax and NDR)  | £1,676          | £13,879         | £13,879         | -        |
| <b>Fraud Identified</b>      | <b>£134,876</b> | <b>£300,654</b> | <b>£324,123</b> | <b>-</b> |

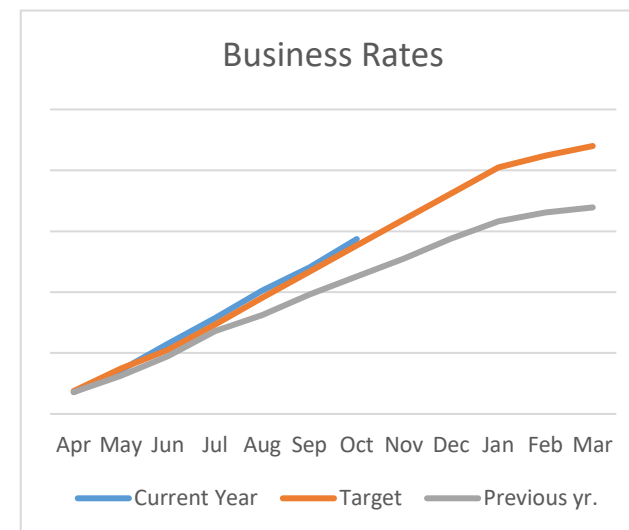
## Performance Information October 2021

### Business Rates

| Business Rates Collection |             |              |              |              |   |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                           | Q1          | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| 2021/22                   | £ 5,750,467 | £ 12,027,514 | £ 14,357,236 | £ -          | ● |
| Target                    | £ 5,252,660 | £ 11,697,906 | £ 13,834,339 | £ 21,998,313 |   |
| Refunds                   | £ 291,391   | £ 641,198    | £ 650,794    | £ -          |   |
| 2020/21                   | £ 4,752,965 | £ 9,815,866  | £ 11,279,721 | £ 16,956,825 | ● |

3  
9

|                 |             |   |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Year End Target | £21,998,313 | ● |
|-----------------|-------------|---|



#### 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

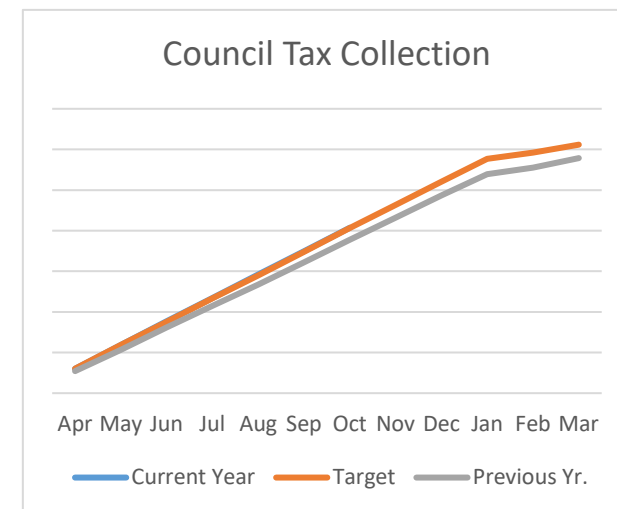
Collection remains on target

## Council Tax

| Council Tax Collection |              |              |              |              |   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                        | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| 2021/22                | £ 17,701,900 | £ 34,963,410 | £ 40,731,571 | £ -          | ● |
| Target                 | £ 17,551,558 | £ 34,743,756 | £ 40,628,173 | £ 61,172,317 |   |
| Refunds                | £ 213,560    | £ 434,573    | £ 523,249    | £ -          |   |
| 2020/21                | £ 16,234,901 | £ 32,182,036 | £ 37,721,322 | £ 57,863,955 | ● |

37

|                 |             |   |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Year End Target | £61,172,317 | ● |
|-----------------|-------------|---|



### 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.

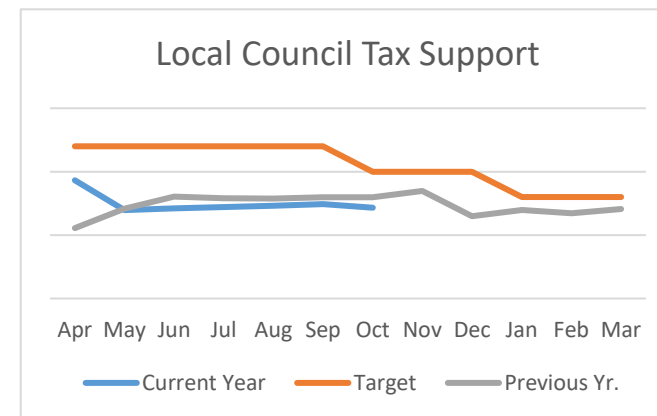
### Narrative

Collection remains on target for the current financial year. New recovery measures are being introduced using a 3 touch approach via phone, text messaging and emails prior to reminders to encourage early payment.

## Local Council Tax Reduction

| Days to process Local Council Tax Support |      |      |        |      |   |
|---|------|------|--------|------|---|
|   | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                                   | 7.11 | 7.44 | 7.16   | -    | ● |
| Target                                    | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                                   | 8.03 | 7.98 | 7.99   | 7.06 | ● |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Year End Target | 8 | ● |
|-----------------|---|---|



### Description

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

### Narrative

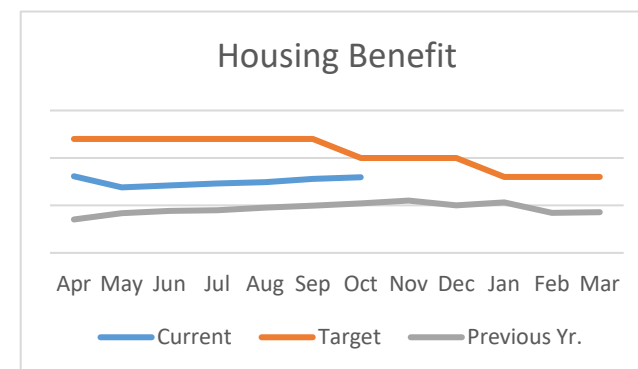
This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.



## Housing Benefit

| Days to process Housing Benefit |      |      |        |      |   |
|---------------------------------|------|------|--------|------|---|
|                                 | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                         | 7.09 | 7.79 | 7.97   | -    | ● |
| Target                          | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                         | 4.43 | 4.98 | 5.21   | 4.28 | ● |

|                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Year End Target | 8 | ● |
|-----------------|---|---|



39

### 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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

## 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.

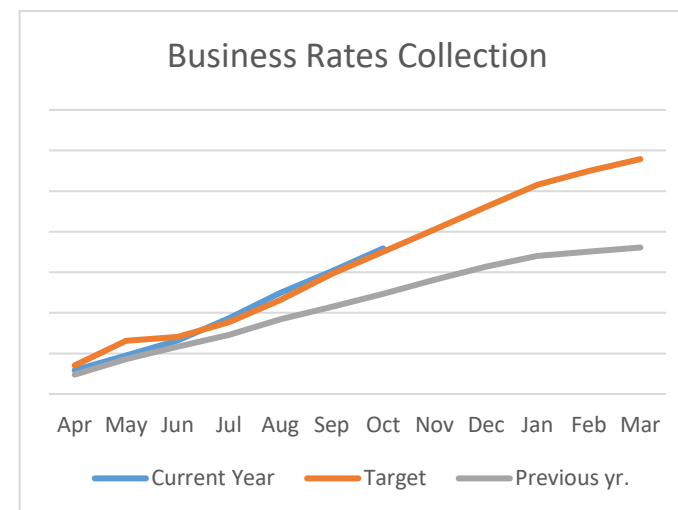
The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

There has been some recent progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and East Camb's DC and Fenland DC approving the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. 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 again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. Funding for 2 additional posts from County has been secured for 2 years.

|                              | Q1              | Q2              | Oct-21          | Q4       |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Single Person Discount Fraud | £72,811         | £105,397        | £105,711        | -        |
| Local Council Tax Support    | £16,333         | £22,342         | £28,130         | -        |
| Tenancy Fraud                | £93,000         | £93,000         | £93,000         | -        |
| Other (Council Tax and NDR)  | £33,838         | £65,919         | £92,650         | -        |
| <b>Fraud Identified</b>      | <b>£215,982</b> | <b>£286,658</b> | <b>£319,491</b> | <b>-</b> |

## Business Rates

| Business Rates Collection |              |                   |              |              |   |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|---|
|                           | Q1           | Q2                | Oct-21       | Q4           |   |
| <b>2021/22</b>            | £ 13,192,098 | £ 30,274,875      | £ 35,886,519 | £ -          | ● |
| <b>Target</b>             | £ 14,065,688 | £ 29,574,573      | £ 35,084,976 | £ 57,878,811 |   |
| <b>Refunds</b>            | £ 460,862    | £ 1,351,136       | £ 1,774,501  | £ -          |   |
| <b>2020/21</b>            | £ 11,674,180 | £ 21,493,157      | £ 24,671,530 | £ 36,097,792 | ● |
| <b>Year End Target</b>    |              | <b>57,878,811</b> |              |              | ● |



### Description

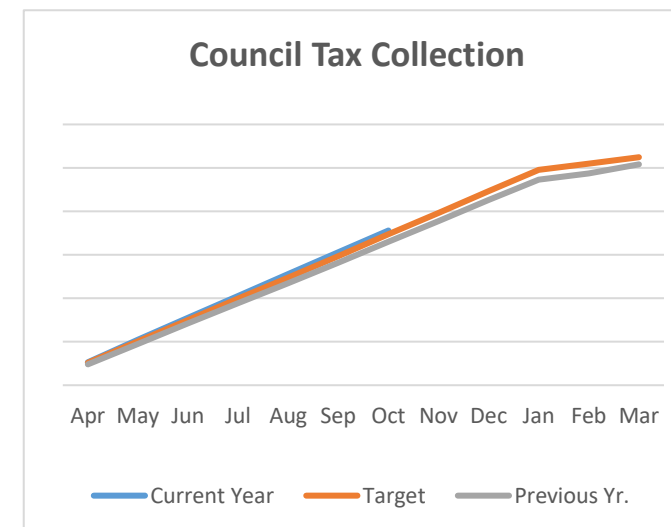
This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

### Narrative

Collection is on target.

| Council Tax Collection |              |              |              |               |   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---|
|                        | Q1           | Q2           | Oct-21       | Q4            |   |
| 2021/22                | £ 31,052,369 | £ 61,264,863 | £ 71,188,392 | £ -           | ● |
| Target                 | £ 30,032,672 | £ 59,384,126 | £ 69,471,047 | £ 104,909,024 |   |
| Refunds                | £ 335,028    | £ 715,406    | £ 849,293    | £ -           |   |
| 2020/21                | £ 28,542,242 | £ 56,371,002 | £ 66,054,256 | £ 101,634,429 | ● |

|                 |             |   |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Year End Target | 104,909,024 | ● |
|-----------------|-------------|---|



**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 remains on target for the current financial year. New recovery measures are being introduced using a 3 touch approach via phone, text messaging and emails prior to reminders to encourage early payment.

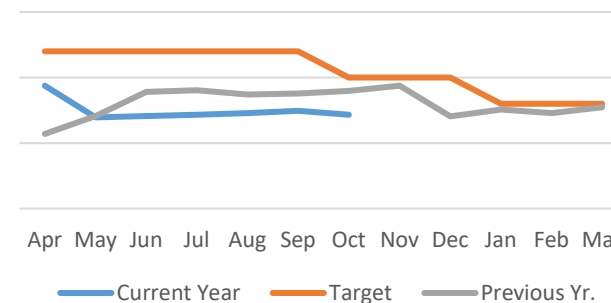
**Days to process Local Council Tax Support**

|         | Q1   | Q2   | Oct-21 | Q4   |   |
|---------|------|------|--------|------|---|
| 2021/22 | 7.07 | 7.47 | 7.15   | -    | ● |
| Target  | 12   | 12   | 10     | 8    |   |
| 2020/21 | 8.91 | 8.79 | 8.99   | 7.73 | ● |

43

|                        |          |   |
|------------------------|----------|---|
| <b>Year End Target</b> | <b>8</b> | ● |
|------------------------|----------|---|

**Council Tax Support**



**Description**

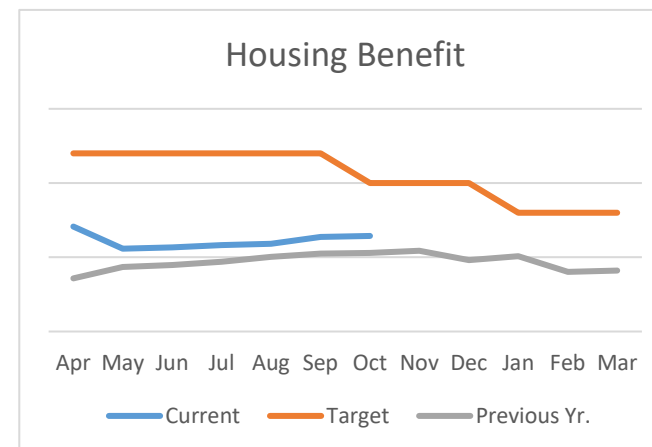
This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

**Narrative**

This indicator has been met for this period and is expected to achieve year end target, subject to potential demand growth due to the economic impacts of the pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

## Housing Benefit

| Days to process Housing Benefit |      |                        |          |      |   |
|---------------------------------|------|------------------------|----------|------|---|
|                                 | Q1   | Q2                     | Oct-21   | Q4   |   |
| 2021/22                         | 5.66 | 6.37                   | 6.43     | -    | ● |
| Target                          | 12   | 12                     | 10       | 8    |   |
| 2020/21                         | 4.47 | 5.24                   | 5.29     | 4.10 | ● |
|                                 |      |                        |          |      |   |
|                                 |      | <b>Year End Target</b> | <b>8</b> |      | ● |



44

### 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 pandemic recovery and the ending of furlough schemes.

### **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. 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 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.

The NFI SPD review process and SPD New awards continue to provide positive outcomes.

|                              | Q1              | Q2              | Oct-21          | Q4       |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Single Person Discount Fraud | £123,716        | £230,372        | £246,533        | -        |
| Local Council Tax Support    | £7,209          | £9,970          | £11,702         | -        |
| Tenancy Fraud                | £9,720          | £102,720        | £195,720        | -        |
| Other (Council Tax and NDR)  | £12,152         | £22,766         | £25,238         | -        |
| <b>Fraud Identified</b>      | <b>£152,797</b> | <b>£365,828</b> | <b>£479,192</b> | <b>-</b> |

# Service Updates as at October 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. Short term sickness has impacted, but year on year our collection continues to improve.

Parking cases for West Suffolk and East Suffolk are coming through to Enforcement with positive results on collection.

Q1. This year we collected in July £383,262.49 compared to £227,543.66 at the same point last year.

Q2. This year we collected in October £442,596.09 compared to £282,112.06 at the same point last year

46 Total for financial Year 2021/2022 is £2,666,539.27 debt with £693,759.03 in fees.

## **Further Recovery**

Total collected to date is £774,966.97 which is £434,687.71 more than at the same point last year. It is at a similar level to 2019 values of £790,701.93 at the same point.

The team have done well to bring us back to pre COVID recovery levels.



## Non-Domestic Rates

Reviews of SBRR reductions have commenced and will be done on a rolling basis going forward , whilst reviews of discretionary reliefs have been issued.

Work volumes and outstanding processes are in a better position than earlier this year although the return of relief reviews may impact over the next few months.

We are still awaiting information on business support that was announced in the Spring Budget. This will involve local discretionary schemes for each LA to identify businesses that have been adversely affected by the pandemic but as yet, received no support.

## Council Tax

Demand for council tax billing continues at very high levels, in particular the high number of people moving continues to be 50% more than last year. However, outstanding work continues to reduce and is 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 maximising 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, we will monitor the situation closely.

The amount of recovery work remains significant as we pick up the recovery that was delayed from last year. Call volumes in excess of 4000 per month illustrate the response and engagement from the public and how the team can negotiate identifying vulnerability and tailoring recovery actions where appropriate.

We are currently awaiting the return of information from HMRC and DWP in relation to a Cabinet Office pilot to share data to provide information that will allow us to identify cases that can be recovered through attachment to earning or benefits, and assist us in consideration of debtors financial vulnerability. Around 16,000 cases were sent so the impact of the returned data processing and recording the success of the pilot scheme will be significant on the team. If the pilot is successful we may in the future be able to make this an integral part of our recovery process.

## Benefits

Both Council Tax Support and Benefits performance has achieved targets, despite the increased demand attributed to the economic recovery from the pandemic. We continue to see increases in demand from the continuing high levels of changes of addresses and continue to utilise generically trained staff to focus resource where it is most needed.

The Test & Trace Self Isolation payment scheme has been extended to 31 March 2022 with additional Government funding.

## ARP Systems and Digital

Work is progressing with Capita to review their Digital product working with other LA's to provide feedback from a wider group of Capita users. We are working with a large Unitary Council where we are sharing our knowledge and experiences, this will be beneficial for ARP in the future.

Work volumes with both System admin and EDMS have been quite high, but through working with the project Manager we are making a strong plan of priorities so we can ensure that resources can meet expectations and demands.

## Fraud and Compliance

There has been some recent progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and East Camb's DC and Fenland DC approving the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. 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 again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. Funding for 2 additional posts from County has been secured for 2 years. Norfolk County Council and now Suffolk County Council have provided funding to 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. Funding from Norfolk County Council has now been secured for two years from April 2022, whilst Suffolk County Council are considering our request.

We are still unable to interview customers under caution on a face-to-face basis and continue to interview customers by letter and a process and procedure has been set up to enable this. Sanctions and prosecutions continue to be conducted using this process. However, we are now looking to identify interview rooms to enable safe interviews to be conducted under the guidance of the Health and Safety Teams. The Fraud Manager has visited and inspected interview room facilities at Dereham, Mildenhall and plans are in place to visit other sites shortly. We hope to return to face to face interviews by the end of the year.

49

## Better Customer Experience Programme

Our new online Council Tax change of address service is now live for all partners, following testing with Customer Service teams. Customer take-up is above expectations, we had anticipated 30% of moves would come through the new facility as we encourage customers to transact that way. Through close working with customer service teams that level is currently 40%, which is testament to excellent work with customers and the effectiveness of the new on line form. The project team is now investing resources to implement automation, working closely with Capita to ensure it fulfils its potential.

During October we have started to implement UCDS first payment file automation, which will improve processing speeds and customer experience. Our Tel solutions treble-touch nudging is working well within the Enforcement team whilst roll out to other areas continues, including Council Tax reminders.

On a partner-specific basis, we have supported Breckland's chatbot launch, and we are investigating more efficient ways to plug revenues and benefits data into East Suffolk's channel shift analysis, which should help inform future improvements. along with the Customer Strategy group we are considering a review of website content and an evaluation of the ease of journeys across websites, supported by a trial of more integrated web analytics.

**BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report of:** Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance

**To:** ARP Joint Committee, 7 December 2021

**Author:** Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance

**Subject:** ARP Forecast Financial Performance

**Purpose:** To provide information on the forecast full year financial position against budget for the ARP

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1) That the report and appendix be noted
- 2) That the final full year variance at 31 March 2022 is shared between the partner authorities in the approved shares

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

1.1 Each of the partner Councils provides forecast 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 progress against budget. This report is based on information as of 31 October 2021 and all costs are included and shared based on the Partnership agreement.

1.2 The forecast at this stage of the year shows a small underspend against budget of £62k (0.64%) for the whole of the ARP and this is shown further in Appendix A along with details of the variances.

1.3 Appendix A also provides details on the remaining transformation funding which was set aside in previous years from below budget spend and grant funding. £96k is earmarked for projects in progress or due 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.

1.4 The Government have continued the grants to local authorities to offset the losses from sales fees and charges income for the first quarter only of 2021-22. 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. Due to the profiling of income received, we have been able to claim for some Enforcement income under this scheme for each partner.

This report recommends that the end of year variance is distributed between the partner authorities in the approved shares (distribution of year end balances is a JC decision). Determining this recommendation at this stage enables the accounts to be produced to faster closedown timeframes at each individual authority.

The table below shows the share of the forecast outturn for each partner based on the JC agreement and income compensation expected to be retained by each authority, however this will change for the final values at the end of March 2022.

|              | <b>Forecast Out-turn</b> | <b>Enforcement income claim</b> |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Breckland    | (£11,017)                | (£14,374)                       |
| East Cambs   | (£7,128)                 | (£6,599)                        |
| East Suffolk | (£18,814)                | (£23,591)                       |
| Fenland      | (£8,204)                 | (£13,220)                       |
| West Suffolk | (£16,417)                | (£17,202)                       |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>(£61,580)</b>         | <b>(£74,986)</b>                |

## 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 forecasts.

## 6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 N/A

## 7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 ARP – Anglia Revenues Partnership

7.2 JC – Joint Committee

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

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**Lead Contact Officer**

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Telephone Number: 07967 325037  
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**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

### Forecast Full Year Financial Performance as at 31/10/21

| Description                    | Approved Budget<br>2021/22<br>£ | Forecast Actuals<br>2021/22<br>£ | Forecast Variance<br>Over/(Under)<br>£ | Variance<br>% | Notes |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---------------|-------|
| Employee Related Costs         | 9,871,248                       | 9,742,758                        | (128,490)                              | (1.30)        | 1     |
| Premises Related Costs         | 275,886                         | 275,832                          | (54)                                   | (0.02)        |       |
| Transport Related Costs        | 103,805                         | 99,481                           | (4,324)                                | (4.17)        | 2     |
| Supplies & Services            | 1,788,765                       | 1,780,853                        | (7,912)                                | (0.44)        |       |
| Support Services               | 495,228                         | 484,468                          | (10,760)                               | (2.17)        |       |
| Income                         | (2,877,051)                     | (2,787,092)                      | 89,959                                 | (3.13)        | 3     |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERSHIP COSTS</b> | <b>9,657,881</b>                | <b>9,596,300</b>                 | <b>(61,581)</b>                        | <b>(0.64)</b> |       |

#### Variance Notes

1. The employee under spend is due to senior managers vacancies and other staff vacancies year to date.
2. Transport is under spent due to post covid more people are working from home and meetings are mainly held virtually
3. The shortfall in income is due to lower enforcement cases than budgeted for Norwich.

**Transformation funding - committed expenditure as follows:**

| Description  | Approved Budget<br>2021/22<br>£ | Forecast Actuals<br>2022/23<br>£ | Forecast Actuals<br>2023/24<br>£ |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Already committed from grant funding received in previous years</b> |                                 |                                  |                                  |
| Call management replacement (Teams)                                    | 0                               | 20,000                           | 0                                |
| Fines officer  | 6,500                           | 0                                | 0                                |
| Self isolation   | 39,148                          | 0                                | 0                                |
| IRRV training  | 5,985                           | 0                                | 0                                |
| Compliance officer for Norwich City work                               | 25,000                          | 0                                | 0                                |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>76,633</b>                   | <b>20,000</b>                    | <b>0</b>                         |
| <b>Unallocated</b>   | <b>133,009</b>                  | <b>0</b>                         | <b>0</b>                         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>   | <b>209,642</b>                  | <b>20,000</b>                    | <b>0</b>                         |

The committed transformation funding is £96,633. Expenditure totalling £76k has been funded from the Reserve in 2021/22 and it is expected £20k will be spent in 2022/23. The remaining £133k will be used for future projects which will come to fruition next year.

54

| ICT Reserve  | Approved Budget<br>2021/22<br>£ | Approved Budget<br>2022/23<br>£ | Approved Budget<br>2023/24<br>£ |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Opening Balance  | 0                               | 22,500                          | 35,000                          |
| Partnership contribution   | 72,500                          | 72,500                          | 72,500                          |
| Earmarked - ICT refresh replacement servers software element and kit for working from home | (50,000)                        | (60,000)                        | (70,000)                        |
|  | <b>22,500</b>                   | <b>35,000</b>                   | <b>37,500</b>                   |



## ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

**Report of** Lorraine King – Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing, ARP

**To:** ARP Joint Committee, 7<sup>th</sup> December 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 2.1.12 & 2.1.13

#### 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 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
- Face to face arrangements – some on an appointment basis, others on a drop in basis or a mixture of the two. Rural provision can be patchy

- 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, continues 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** DWP recently requested expressions of interest from public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver a digital and telephony help to claim service from April 2022, stating DWP will take responsibility for face to face assistance. An expression of interest was made.
- 2.1.10** The Customer Services Team, comprising of partner Heads of Customer Service, support the ARP view that the best fit for our residents would be for DWP to take full responsibility for helping customers to claim UC, a benefit they administer. To provide a seamless service DWP could utilise their existing digital and telephony capability to provide assistance to supplement their face to face Job Centre capability.
- 2.1.11** At Joint Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 Members requested a briefing note to assist with any discussions with their MPs, subsequently issued.
- 2.1.12** DWP have commenced a formal process, apparently preferring bids from national organisations or consortiums, to request bids for a digital and telephony service, intending to award contract from April 2022 for one year.

**2.1.13 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 year and report to Parliament with the aim of completing migration by 2024, delayed to 2025, see below. DWP have not released any further detail 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.
- 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 budget. This ended on 06<sup>th</sup> October, and we have received change files for all UC recipients. Due to the recent improvements to automation, we have been able to automate approximately 96% of these changes seamlessly, requiring no intervention from the team, whilst other Councils are struggling to cope with the increase in manual assessments. It should be noted all the partner Local Council Tax Support schemes provided for customers to receive the full benefit of that uplift.
- The Chancellor announced at the 2021 Budget that by 1<sup>st</sup> December the taper for UC will be reduced from 63p to 55p per pound to help plug the gap left by the removal of the uplift which affected 4.4 million households nationally. This change is expected to benefit around 1.9m families. The Chancellor confirmed on 24<sup>th</sup> November that the changes are being implemented that day.
- The UC work allowance for families and disabled persons will also increase by £500 per year from the same date and a new target of March 2025 was set for the rollout of UC to be complete, and for the introduction of a pension age housing costs scheme.

## **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
- LA funding
- Management Information including LA access to UC Information

## **2.3 Discretionary Housing Payment – update at para 2.3.3**

- 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.
- 2.3.3** Funding for 2021-2022 was allocated in two parts with £100m at the start of the year and £40m at mid-year. We received the second allocation in September.

## **2.4 Benefit Cap – no new matters arising**

- 2.4.1** DWP introduced the reduced Benefit Cap on the 7<sup>th</sup> 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 2022 - update**

- 3.1** Government ended the four-year Benefit up-rating freeze in 2020. However, the link between pensions and the triple lock was severed in September 2021 because of wage inflation. Instead, in 2022/23 the State Pension will rise in line with the highest of inflation or 2.5%, with CPI for September historically being the figure used, reported at 3.1%.

#### **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

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#### **Lead Contact Officer**

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**BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report of:** Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance

**To:** ARP Joint Committee, 7 December 2021

**Author:** Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director Finance

**Subject:** ARP Joint Committee Partnership Budget

**Purpose:** To set the annual budgets relevant to the Joint Committee for 2022-23 and to provide indicative budget values for future years.

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1) That the partnership budget at Appendix A for 2022-23 be approved.

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Each year a budget is prepared for the ARP Joint Committee. Working papers are prepared by the service accountants at each authority in conjunction with the ARP Management team and these are reviewed by OIB before being brought to the Joint Committee for formal approval. Approval is sought from the ARP JC in December to allow time for the ARP budgets to be incorporated into the 5 partners' individual budgets for their own budget setting. The budgets cover the costs and income for providing Council Tax, Housing Benefit payments, Non-Domestic Rates collection and the Enforcement service for the five partners.

- 1.2 Benefits payments and subsidies, court fee income and other grants specific to the individual authorities are not included within the partnership budgets, as these are the direct responsibility of the individual authority and will be reflected in their direct budgets.

**Budget**

- 1.3 Appendix A sets out the proposed budget for 2022-23 compared to the current year, with indicative budgets for the following two years. Further tables show the share of costs for each authority and the proportion that any additional costs or savings against the budget will be shared. The proportionate share of costs has remained fairly constant since last year and the bailiff shares have been amended to be based on an average of the last 3 years in order to smooth the annual changes in this area.

There are savings in office rents at the Thetford office due to reducing space now that more staff are working from home, this has reduced the budget share for Breckland, East Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk, the other partners are not charged for the Thetford accommodation costs.

- 1.4 The budgets have been set using the same principles as previous years and the current approved establishment staffing levels.

When the budget was set last year an efficiency target of £220k was included to be achieved from 2022-23 and this has been achieved in full. There are no further targets included in this budget, however where new opportunities arise for savings or additional income these will be considered and built into the budget where appropriate.

In setting the budget the following key assumptions have been made:

- A pay award of 2% each year
- A vacancy factor of 2.5% in all years
- No inflation on general non-contracted supplies and services

1.5 The overall budget shows an increase of £250k (2.6%) when compared to 2021-22. Behind this value are:

- Salary costs – increased due to higher National Insurance contributions (£121k), annual pay increases, salary increments and Living Wage pressures (offset by the efficiency achieved).
- Reduced travel costs and allowances through increased home working.
- Un-avoidable inflationary increases on contracts (i.e. software and licences).
- A reduction in the 3 partners costs share as a result of reduced space rented at Breckland House due to increased home working.

The total proposed budget for 2022-23 in this report is in line with the indicative 2022-23 budget shown last year, despite the new cost pressures faced.

1.6 Forecasting for budget setting remains challenging in the current circumstances and this budget has been set on the assumption that services will continue 'as normal' in the future.

## 2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 That the partnership budget at Appendix A for 2022-23 be approved.

2.2 Make changes to the partnership budget before approving.

## 3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 These budgets will enable ARP to continue its strategic focus moving forwards and will form the basis for monitoring financial performance in next financial year. The contributions form part of the individual partner's base budgets.

## 4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 By setting these budgets the partner authorities are able to use the approved values to set their own budgets and we have a basis for monitoring financial performance next year.

## 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; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

### 5.1 **Constitution & Legal**

5.1.1 The ARP Joint Committee is required to approve the budget each year.

### 5.2 **Financial**

5.2.1 Financial information is included within the appendix.

### 5.3 **Staffing**

5.3.1 The budget has been prepared based on the current approved establishment.

### 5.4 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.4.1 The budget approved at this meeting runs from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, with future years given as indicative values only.

5.4.2 Partner authorities accountants have provided the financial information for their own authorities which has been collated to form this budget.

## 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 N/A.

## 7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 ARP – Anglia Revenues Partnership.

7.2 OIB – Operational Improvement Board

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### Background papers:-

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#### **Lead Contact Officer**

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**Key Decision:** No

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to Mandatory and Discretionary Services**

#### **Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A ARP Budgets

# **Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee - 2022-23 - Budget Setting Summary**

| Description                    | Shared between 5 authorities |                           |                           | Shared between 3 authorities |                           |                           | Total            |                           |                           |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                | 2022-23 Budget               | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget | 2022-23 Budget               | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget | 2022-23 Budget   | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget |
|                                | £                            | £                         | £                         | £                            | £                         | £                         | £                | £                         | £                         |
| Employee Costs                 | 9,946,701                    | 10,231,235                | 10,516,400                | 0                            | 0                         | 0                         | 9,946,701        | 10,231,235                | 10,516,400                |
| Premises Costs                 | 1,900                        | 1,938                     | 1,977                     | 174,772                      | 175,591                   | 176,427                   | 176,672          | 177,529                   | 178,404                   |
| Transport Costs                | 82,194                       | 82,742                    | 83,296                    | 0                            | 0                         | 0                         | 82,194           | 82,742                    | 83,296                    |
| Supplies & Services            | 1,785,512                    | 1,828,936                 | 1,873,604                 | 12,000                       | 12,000                    | 12,000                    | 1,797,512        | 1,840,936                 | 1,885,604                 |
| Support Services               | 230,415                      | 235,441                   | 240,595                   | 275,661                      | 281,174                   | 286,798                   | 506,076          | 516,615                   | 527,393                   |
| Income                         | (2,601,106)                  | (2,598,096)               | (2,615,280)               | 0                            | 0                         | 0                         | (2,601,106)      | (2,598,096)               | (2,615,280)               |
| <b>TOTAL PARTNERSHIP COSTS</b> | <b>9,445,616</b>             | <b>9,782,196</b>          | <b>10,100,592</b>         | <b>462,433</b>               | <b>468,765</b>            | <b>475,225</b>            | <b>9,908,049</b> | <b>10,250,961</b>         | <b>10,575,817</b>         |

| Analysis of Partner Gain Share Percentages | 5 Partner Share exc Bailiff |                           |                           | 3 Partner Share exc Bailiff |                           |                           | 5 Partner Share Bailiff only |                           |                           |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | 2022-23 Budget              | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget | 2022-23 Budget              | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget | 2022-23 Budget               | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget |
|  | %                           | %                         | %                         | %                           | %                         | %                         | %                            | %                         | %                         |
| Breckland Council                          | 17.90%                      | 17.90%                    | 17.90%                    | 34.80%                      | 34.80%                    | 34.80%                    | 18.81%                       | 18.81%                    | 18.81%                    |
| East Cambridgeshire Council                | 10.63%                      | 10.63%                    | 10.63%                    | 20.66%                      | 20.66%                    | 20.66%                    | 8.57%                        | 8.57%                     | 8.57%                     |
| Fenland Council                            | 13.49%                      | 13.49%                    | 13.49%                    | 0.00%                       | 0.00%                     | 0.00%                     | 14.21%                       | 14.21%                    | 14.21%                    |
| West Suffolk                               | 22.90%                      | 22.90%                    | 22.90%                    | 44.53%                      | 44.53%                    | 44.53%                    | 22.93%                       | 22.93%                    | 22.93%                    |
| East Suffolk                               | 35.09%                      | 35.09%                    | 35.09%                    | 0.00%                       | 0.00%                     | 0.00%                     | 35.48%                       | 35.48%                    | 35.48%                    |
|  | 100.00%                     | 100.00%                   | 100.00%                   | 100.00%                     | 100.00%                   | 100.00%                   | 100.00%                      | 100.00%                   | 100.00%                   |

| Analysis of Total Partner Contributions | Shared between 5 authorities |                           |                           | Shared between 3 authorities |                           |                           | Total          |                           |                           |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|   | 2022-23 Budget               | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget | 2022-23 Budget               | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget | 2022-23 Budget | 2023-24 Indicative Budget | 2024-25 Indicative Budget |
|   | £                            | £                         | £                         | £                            | £                         | £                         | £              | £                         | £                         |
| Breckland Council                       | 1,780,310                    | 1,840,805                 | 1,898,042                 | 160,510                      | 162,714                   | 164,962                   | 1,940,820      | 2,003,519                 | 2,063,004                 |
| East Cambridgeshire Council             | 995,561                      | 1,030,741                 | 1,063,999                 | 95,586                       | 96,895                    | 98,230                    | 1,091,147      | 1,127,636                 | 1,162,229                 |
| Fenland Council                         | 1,299,569                    | 1,345,172                 | 1,388,319                 | 0                            | 0                         | 0                         | 1,299,569      | 1,345,172                 | 1,388,319                 |
| West Suffolk                            | 2,129,481                    | 2,206,563                 | 2,279,481                 | 206,337                      | 209,156                   | 212,033                   | 2,335,817      | 2,415,719                 | 2,491,514                 |
| East Suffolk                            | 3,240,696                    | 3,358,915                 | 3,470,752                 | 0                            | 0                         | 0                         | 3,240,696      | 3,358,915                 | 3,470,752                 |
|   | 9,445,616                    | 9,782,196                 | 10,100,592                | 462,433                      | 468,765                   | 475,225                   | 9,908,049      | 10,250,961                | 10,575,817                |



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