

A G E N D A

ANGLIA REVENUES & BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE & TIME Tuesday, 11th June, 2019 at 10.30 am

VENUE: Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford.
IP24 1BT

For the attention of:

Mr J.P. Cowen, Breckland Council
Mrs J. French, Fenland District Council

East Suffolk DC – Member to be confirmed
West Suffolk DC – Member to be confirmed
East Cambridgeshire DC – Member to be confirmed

PART A **ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Page(s)
herewith

1. CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

The terms of reference of the Joint Committee stipulate that:

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

For your information, the Chairmanship has to rotate round so that each Council takes its turn in a 7 year period.

*St Edmundsbury DC - June 2012
Forest Heath DC - June 2013
Breckland DC - June 2014
East Cambs DC - June 2015
Fenland DC - June 2016
Suffolk Coastal - June 2017
Waveney District Council – June 2018 (current)*

	<u>Page(s)</u> <u>herewith</u>
2. <u>TREASURER</u> To appoint a Treasurer for the ensuing year.	
3. <u>MINUTES</u> To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2019.	1 - 6
4. <u>APOLOGIES</u> To receive apologies for absence.	
5. <u>URGENT BUSINESS</u> To note whether the Chairman proposes to accept any items of urgent business pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
6. <u>DECLARATIONS</u>	
7. <u>GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO INTERNAL AUDIT</u> To receive a verbal report from Siobhan Martin, Head of Internal Audit (East Suffolk Council).	
8. <u>PERFORMANCE REPORTS</u> Presented by Stuart Philpot, Strategic Manager (Support Services), ARP.	
a) <u>Joint Committee Performance Report April 2019</u>	7 - 37
b) <u>Presentation of Data Q4 FINAL 18-19</u>	38 - 75
c) <u>ARP Financial Out-turn 2018-19</u> Report by Alison Chubbock, Chief Accountant & Deputy S151 Officer (BDC).	76 - 80
9. <u>SERVICE PLAN AND RISK UPDATE</u> Report of Paul Corney, Head of ARP.	81 - 88
10. <u>WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)</u> Report of Adrian Mills – ARP Strategic Manager (Benefits).	89 - 92
11. <u>FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)</u> To note any items.	
12. <u>NEXT MEETING</u> To note the arrangements for the next meeting to be held on Tuesday, 17 September 2019 at 10.30am (immediately following the pre-briefing), Level 5 meeting room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford.	

BRECKLAND COUNCIL
FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL
EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL
SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday, 26 March 2019 at 10.30 am in the
Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford IP24 1BT

PRESENT

Mr B. Provan (Chairman)	Mr P.D. Claussen
Mr I Houlder (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs A. Hay
Mr D Ambrose Smith	Mr R Kerry

In Attendance

Paul Corney	- Head of ARP
Jo Andrews	- Strategic Manager (Revenues)
Christine Marshall	- Executive Director Commercialisation (S151 Officer)
Emma Grima	- Director of Commercial Services (East Cambs District Council)
Nick Khan	- Strategic Director (Suffolk Coastal & Waveney)
Jill Korwin	- Director (Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury)
Adrian Mills	- Strategic Manager (Benefits) ARP
Stuart Philpot	- Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP
Mark Saunders	- Chief Accountant (FDC)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

1/19 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

a) Discussion of Future Performance Presentation (Minute No. 42/18)

Councillor Ann Hay pointed out that the request she had put forward at the previous meeting had not been included in the new Performance report and she asked again if the figures could be split showing the actual amount collected and the amount of refunds.

b) Minutes

Subject to the above, the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

2/19 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephen Edwards and from his substitute Councillor David Bowman.

3/19 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

Action By

Action By

4/19 DECLARATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None.

5/19 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 5)

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

The ARP Performance measures had been reported to the Joint Committee Members using the Balanced Scorecard and Highlight report in the same format for a number of years. Members had seen a sample draft version at the December meeting and Members had asked for a full version of the new Performance report to be brought to this meeting.

The matters of interest were highlighted as set out at section 2 of the report. It was noted that the Council Tax and Business Rates combined reporting highlighted the size of the ARP operation, with total year collection targets amounting to £650m for the whole of the Partnership. In addition to this, the figures for Fraud and Compliance for all Partners combined amounted to over £2m. It was noted that the presentation of data highlighted the figures up to the end of January 2019.

The ARP Strategic Manager (Support Services) said the combined collection for the 7 partners demonstrated clearly the size of the operation.

Red, amber and green (RAG) indicators had been used in respect of the performance information. Referring to the Business rates performance on page 15 of the agenda pack, Members were informed that the table highlighted the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Attention was then drawn to the Service updates as at January 2019; this information used to be included in the former highlight report. A fuller narrative for each service area had been included. The Annual Billing, shown on page 53 of the agenda pack, had been completed and had gone very well.

Referring to the Corporate Balanced Scorecard – Dashboard, at agenda item 5a, the reason for the collection amounts and budget management being amber for Fenland DC and Waveney DC were due to backdated refunds in respect of successful appeals. These positions would be recovered in due course.

The old style Balanced Scorecard and Highlight report had been appended to the report for comparison to the new style of data reporting and Members were asked which they preferred.

Councillor David Ambrose-Smith asked if a performance rating for customer services could be included in future. He also queried the empty property figure at section 2.2 of the Service Update report. Stuart Philpot confirmed that customer services measures would be added. In response to the latter, it was explained that this figure had been found as a result of a recent review and reviews were carried out every year in May. Paul Corney, the Head of ARP pointed out that an intensive review would be undertaken to maximise the Council Tax base.

Action By

Councillor Houlder asked if all districts were working from the same 'hymn sheet' in respect of discounts for empty properties. Members were informed that each Council had its own empty property discount rate and all information was available on the website.

As from 1 April 2019, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Borough Council would be replaced by a single district council and Councillor Houlder thanked the ARP Teams for all their hard work in amalgamating all dwellings as West Suffolk. All Council Tax bills had been delivered and no issues had been raised.

Councillor Ann Hay referred to discretionary powers in respect of discount for Care Leavers as she was aware that Norfolk & Suffolk County Councils were looking to run a discount scheme and asked if ARP would be following suit. Members were informed that the Norfolk & Suffolk scheme was for people who lived within those counties; however, Jo Andrews, the ARP Strategic Manager for Revenues said that she would be happy to develop a scheme for Cambridgeshire and would share this information with Councillor Hay.

The Chairman, Councillor Bruce Provan, drew attention to the figures in respect of account holders in relation to annual billing on page 53 of the agenda pack that did not correspond to the figures highlighted within the graph. It was noted that the figure of 18,000 was just for Council Tax.

Members' attention was then drawn to the recommendation, and it was

RESOLVED that:

- the performance report at Appendix B and C be noted; and
- the new format for ARP Performance Reporting to the Joint Committee be adopted for use from the new financial year 2019-20; subject to customer services performance data being included when required.

(a) Balance Scorecard and Highlight Report

See Minute no. 5/19 above.

(b) ARP Financial Performance

The Executive Director for Commercialisation & S151 Officer for Breckland Council presented the Financial Performance report for the ARP.

The key points were highlighted including the latest forecast under spend against the budget of £72k that would be shared between the partner authorities at the end of the financial year. Section 1.2 of the report highlighted the amount to be paid to each authority based on the approved shares.

Sections 1.3 and 1.4 of the report were also highlighted. Appendix A provided details of the remaining transformation funding that had been set aside in previous years from below budget spend and grant funding.

No questions were asked, and the report and appendices were otherwise noted.

Action By

6/19 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Adrian Mills, the ARP Strategic Manager (Benefits) provided Members with an update on welfare reform and highlighted two areas of change since the publication of the report.

The first area of change was in relation to Universal Credit. The Government had recently announced that Harrogate would be the first to trial the natural migration of 10,000 cases from the old style benefits system to Universal Credit. This pilot scheme would start in July 2019 subject to parliamentary approval.

The second area of change was in respect of the completion date of moving claimants to Universal Credit that had been extended from 2023 to 2024.

Members were reminded that from 1 April 2019, local authorities would no longer be funded by DWP to provide support to help people claim Universal Credit. The Citizens Advice Bureau would be providing that advice funded by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) on a 12 month contract. A further update on this matter would be provided at the next meeting in June.

Attention was then drawn to section 2.2 of the report, Discretionary Housing Payment. Members were informed that ARP had virtually achieved complete spend of the grant that had been funded by DWP - a very good position to be in.

Councillor Claussen raised concerns about Universal Credit particularly after reading section 2.1.5 of the report and felt that this change could result in problems for customers.

Members were assured that the partner Customer Services teams had advised that they would continue to assist customers with their claims that could include signposting people to CAB. This assistance; however, would be on a voluntary basis due to DWP removing funding with Customer Services teams planning to put certain measures in place.

In response to a question in regard to funding, the Strategic Manager (Benefits) explained that the CAB had only been awarded a 12 month contract that would be subject to a review.

Councillor Houlder felt that ARP had a good case history for Universal Credit and for someone having to claim via a new system could cause problems.

Attention was drawn to section 2.1.8 of the report where it stated that funding to smooth the transition to Universal Credit, including an additional two week run of existing DWP benefit, would apply from 2020 to help with the gap to customers' first Universal Credit payment. It was noted that Housing Benefit had provided a two week 'run on' since April 2018. The Strategic Manager (Benefits) stated that ARP would continue to challenge DWP with issues going forward.

Councillor Claussen was anxious about the more difficult cases and the vulnerable people that could be affected and felt that the CAB was not set up to deal with such complicated matters. It was explained that DWP was prepared to listen to all concerns raised by ARP.

Action By

Councillor Kerry felt that applying on-line for some rural areas could be a problem due to lack of broadband signal. He asked if there was going to be any additional resource for dealing with Universal Credit. In response to the first concern, it was noted that Citizen's Advice planned a telephone system to overcome these issues and, in one location, to have a presence in the local library. ARP was continuing to work with Citizen's Advice and Customer Services as the new service commenced.

Paul Corney, Head of ARP mentioned a report that highlighted the amount of people claiming Universal Credit who were going straight into debt, the statistics relating to this matter would be brought to the next meeting in June. It was noted that DWP was now recognising that not everyone was paid monthly.

Councillor Claussen felt that further engagement with local MPs was required to let them know that the expertise, in respect of Universal Credit, lay with ARP. The Head of ARP said that ARP had previously assisted a partner Leader, Chief Executive and MP and could continue to do so if required.

Councillor Ambrose-Smith asked if there would be any budget constraints for ARP with CAB only having a 12 month contract. Members were reminded that ARP did not actually deliver its customer services and it had been identified that partner customer services teams intended to help as noted above. The Strategic Manager (Benefits) would continue to raise matters with DWP as necessary.

Jill Korwin, the Director of Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury DC said that this was about forming local relationships with the CABs and about weaving together our system response. ARP had a lobbying role. Christine Marshall, the Executive Director for Commercialisation & S151 Officer (BDC) felt that ARP needed to feed in any issues very quickly being only a 12 month contract.

Councillor Hay wanted to know if the Council's Customer Service Team continued to provide advice to the CAB unpaid were any records being kept. The Head of ARP thought that this was a really good point which he would raise with the Customer Service Team. The Strategic Manager (Benefits) said that this should already be in place.

The report was otherwise noted.

7/19 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Councillor Houlder said that he wanted to see a one stop shop for all claims. He also wanted to know if there would be any issues with sharing information with the CAB. The Head of ARP reassured Members that improvements were being made year on year but any issues or concerns should be brought to his attention. In response to the latter, Members were again reassured that ARP would be working closely with the CAB to make the transition of data as smooth as possible. The Strategic Manager (Benefits) explained that customers would have to give their consent to share their data.

8/19 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 8)

The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 11 June 2019 at **10.30am** being held in Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas

Action By

Street, Thetford were noted.

9/19 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 9)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 & 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

10/19 RISK BASED VERIFICATION (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Strategic Manager (Benefits) presented the annual report.

Members were being asked to review and confirm the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Risk Based Verification (RBV) Policy for 2019/20.

No questions were put forward, and it was:

RESOLVED that the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Risk Based Verification Policy for 2019-20 for Breckland Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, West Suffolk Council and East Suffolk Council be approved.

Chairman's Announcement

The Chairman announced that this would be his last ARP meeting as he would not be standing for re-election in May and wished the Partnership well for the future.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am

CHAIRMAN



Joint Committee Performance report April 2019



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All Partner Councils Combined



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Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 24,524,892				●
Target	£ 22,181,781				●
2018/19	£ 23,442,013				●
Year End Target			£241,368,703		●

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-19				
2019/20	£44,573,084				●
Target	£43,748,823				●
2018/19	£38,375,886				●
Year End Target			£432,596,541		●

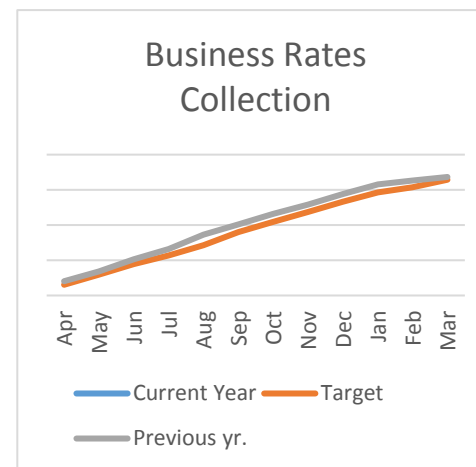
Number of Electronic Forms Received					
	Apr-19				
2019/20	2,796				●
2018/19	2,864				●
Year End Target			37899		●

Fraud and Compliance	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	Yr Target
Single Person Discount Fraud	£353,120.50				£500,000
Local Council Tax Support	£14,225.99				£150,000
Tenancy Fraud	£36,000				£400,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£21,630				£250,000
Fraud Identified	£424,976.43				£1,300,000

Performance Information April 2019

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 4,163,275.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 3,046,254.00	£ 17,972,818.00	£ 26,602,327.00	£ 32,877,803.00	
Refunds	£ 38,547.87	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 4,052,482.00	£ 20,189,166.00	£ 28,860,184.00	£ 33,655,722.00	●



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Year End Target	£ 32,877,803.00	●
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Description

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

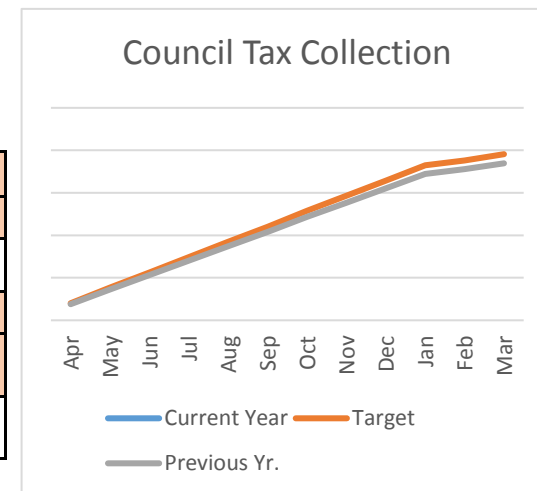
Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year.

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £22,939. However, in April 2019 no further monies have been received. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £85,775.33. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £1,777.26

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 7,927,609	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 8,028,826	£ 44,006,474	£ 65,774,711	£ 78,183,637	
Refunds	£ 98,328	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 7,587,517	£ 41,587,632	£ 62,159,365	£ 73,886,227	●
		Year End Target	£78,183,637		●



Description

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

Narrative

Collection is behind target by £101,217. We have had an increase in the amount of pre-payments for the current financial year which will have had an effect. We are closely monitoring the situation and optimistic that the end of May will show an improved position.

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £116,024. In April 2019 £28,947 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £583,621 In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £41,248

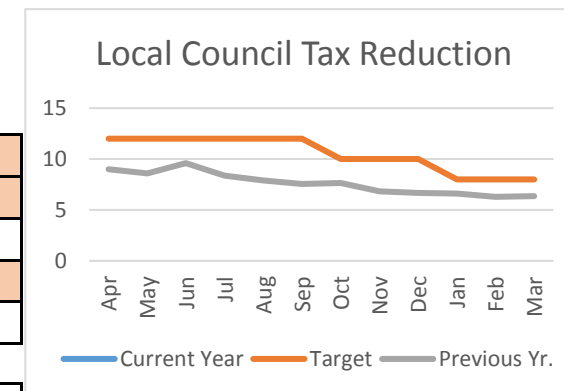
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £325,562 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support

	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	5.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2018/19	9.00	7.54	6.66	6.37	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

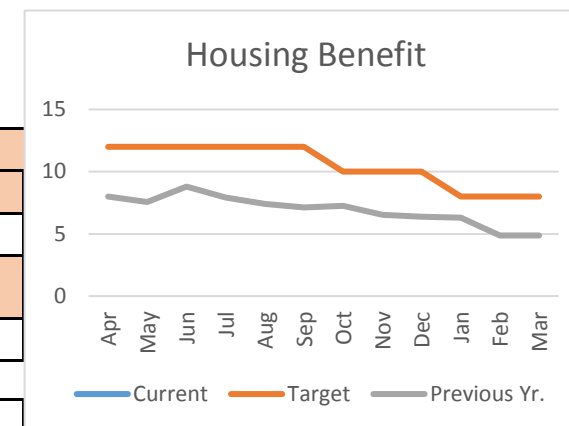
Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted we have overachieved this indicator due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April all processing staff throughout the partnership were working on Breckland, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland cases, thereby resulting in exceptional outcomes.

Looking ahead, we expect performance will slightly edge upwards, but within target, as we aim to harmonise performance for all Councils by bringing performance back on track for East & West Suffolk.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	4.37	0	0	0	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2018/19	8	8.8	6.39	4.87	●
CS					
Year End Target		8	●		



Description

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

Narrative

Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted we have overachieved this indicator due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April all processing staff throughout the partnership were working on Breckland, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland cases, thereby resulting in exceptional outcomes.

Looking ahead, we expect performance will slightly edge upwards, but within target, as we aim to harmonise performance for all Councils by bringing performance back on track for East & West Suffolk.

Fraud and Compliance

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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, Non Domestic Rates and Tenancy fraud.

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. The team will 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.

	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£ 106,642.45	£ -	£ -	£ -
Local Council Tax Support	£ 3,296.96	£ -	£ -	£ -
Tenancy Fraud	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£ 4,103.13	£ -	£ -	£ -
Fraud Identified	£ 114,042.54	£ -	£ -	£ -



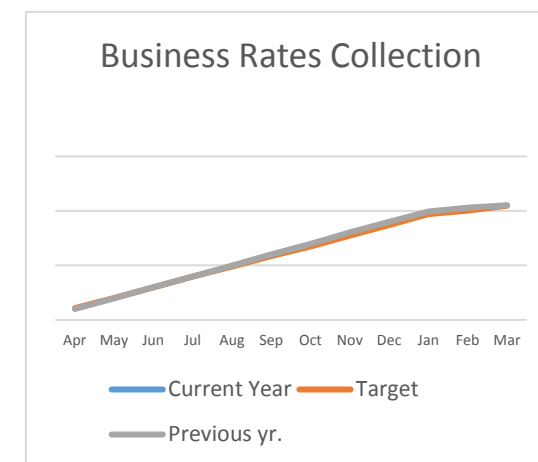
Performance Information April 2019



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 2,459,009	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 2,160,144	£ 11,722,726	£ 17,441,307	£ 20,954,355	
Refunds	£ 11,288	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 2,004,484	£ 11,999,640	£ 18,023,396	£ 21,044,862	●

Full Year Target	£20,954,355	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year.

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £16,463. However, in April 2019 no further monies have been received. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £51,088. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £2,406

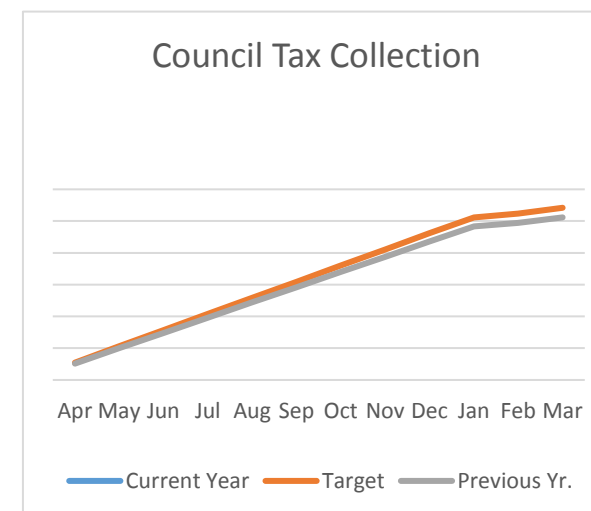


Council Tax



Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 5,483,117	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 5,452,186	£ 30,894,391	£ 46,170,944	£ 54,194,333	
Refunds	£ 59,994	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 5,147,766	£ 29,169,414	£ 43,593,006	£ 51,168,413	●

Year End Target	£ 54,194,333	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £59,705. In April 2019 3,621 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £356,865. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £24,789

Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £267,527 debt.

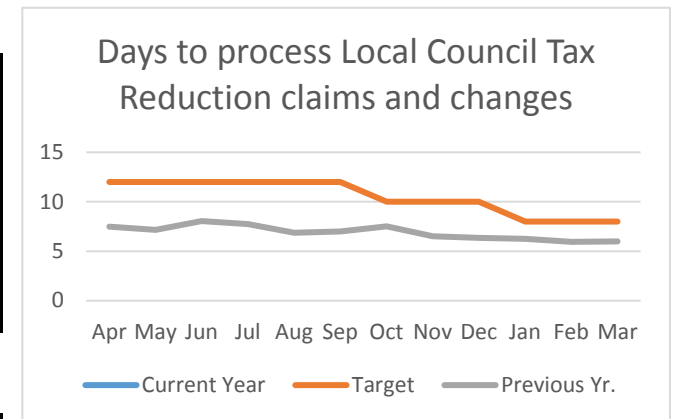


Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	5.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2018/19	7.50	7.00	6.34	5.99	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted we have overachieved this indicator due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April all processing staff throughout the partnership were working on Breckland, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland cases, thereby resulting in exceptional outcomes.

Looking ahead, we expect performance will slightly edge upwards, but within target, as we aim to harmonise performance for all Councils by bringing performance back on track for East & West Suffolk.

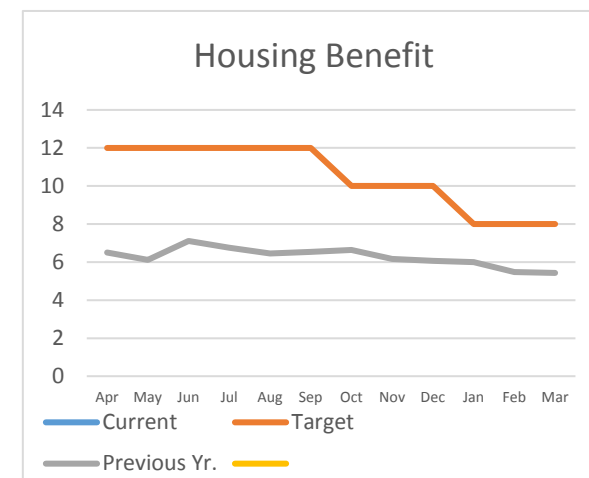


Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	4.19	0	0	0	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2018/19	6.5	6.53	6.06	5.43	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted we have overachieved this indicator due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

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Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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, Non Domestic Rates and Tenancy fraud.

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. The team will 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.

	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£ 14,566.50	£ -	£ -	£ -
Local Council Tax Support	£ 1,751.14	£ -	£ -	£ -
Tenancy Fraud	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Fraud Identified	£ 16,317.64	£ -	£ -	£ -

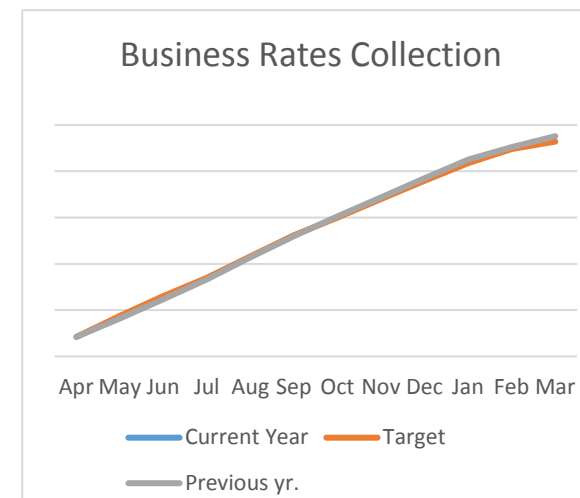
Performance Information April 2019

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 8,922,787	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 8,407,464	£ 52,449,001	£ 75,940,098	£ 92,792,211	
Refunds	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 8,408,770	£ 51,903,997	£ 77,021,085	£ 95,129,303	●

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Year End Target	92,792,211	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year.

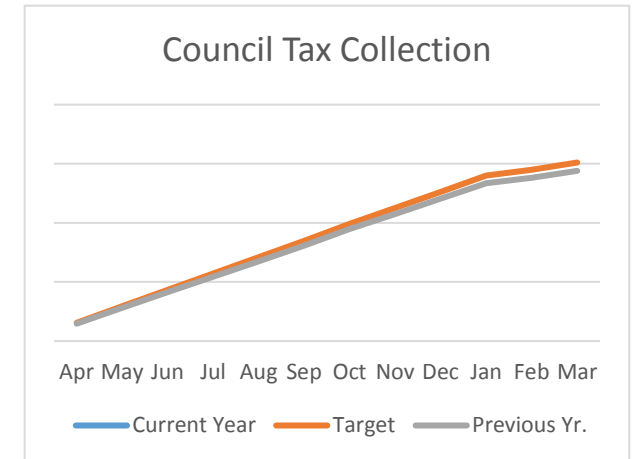
Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £50,376. However, in April 2019 no further monies have been received. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £81,067. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £9,020

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 15,663,308	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 15,444,563	£ 84,797,657	£ 126,320,824	£ 151,052,402	
Refunds	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 14,723,830	£ 80,840,501	£ 120,661,504	£ 144,003,411	●

21

Year End Target	151,052,402	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year

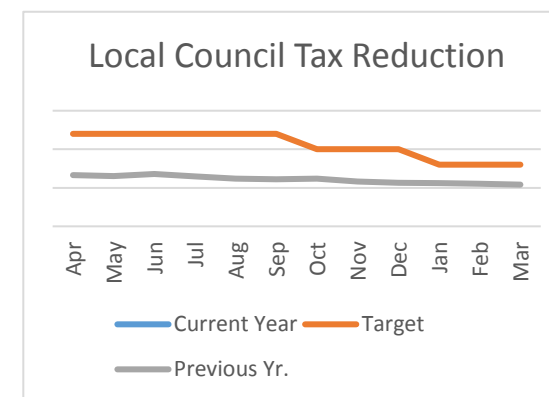
Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £207,044. In April 2019 £7,529 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £990,032. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £79,666.

Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £481,874 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2018/19	6.63	6.12	5.65	5.41	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

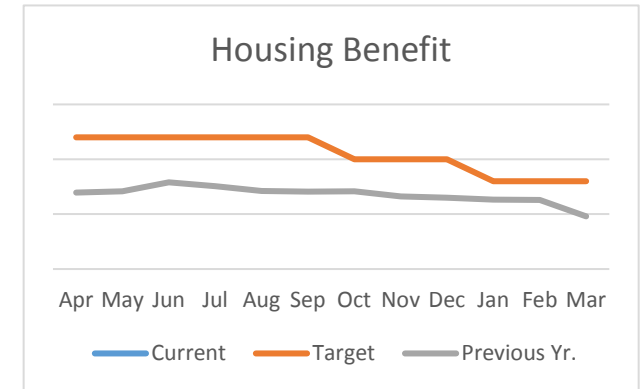
Whilst this indicator has not been met for April, it should be noted we do not expect to achieve the target for quarter 1 due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April we were not able to process East Suffolk cases, and although we are working to recover the position following the merged systems, inevitably this may cause delays. We are targeting cases to minimise customer impact and are expecting we will achieve the annual target at the end of the year.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	12.00	8.00	
2018/19	6.96	7.90	7.05	4.80	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Whilst this indicator has just been exceeded for April, it should be noted we do not expect to achieve the target for quarter 1 due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April we were not able to process East Suffolk cases, and although we are working to recover the position following the merged systems, inevitably this may cause delays. We are targeting cases to minimise customer impact and are expecting we will achieve the annual target at the end of the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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, Non Domestic Rates and Tenancy fraud.

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. The team will 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.

24

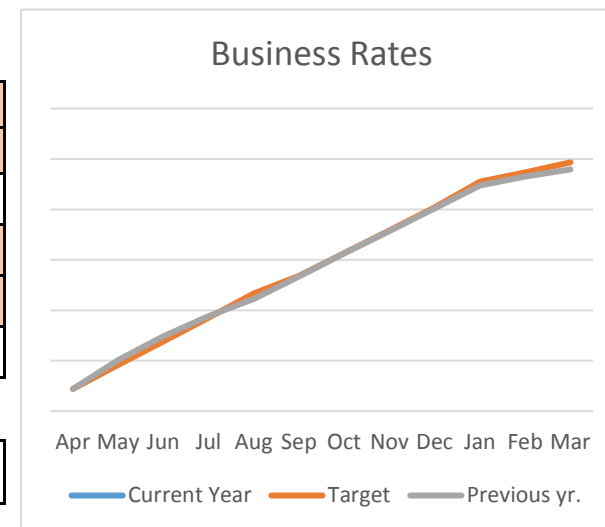
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£ 37,616.72	£ -	£ -	£ -
Local Council Tax Support	£ 5,277.22	£ -	£ -	£ -
Tenancy Fraud	£ 18,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Fraud Identified	£ 60,893.94	£ -	£ -	£ -

Performance Information April 2019

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 2,241,822	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 2,205,365	£ 13,405,561	£ 20,209,506	£ 24,663,273	
Refunds	£ 130,234	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 2,197,133	£ 13,363,473	£ 20,109,071	£ 23,969,262	●

Year End Target	£24,663,273	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year.

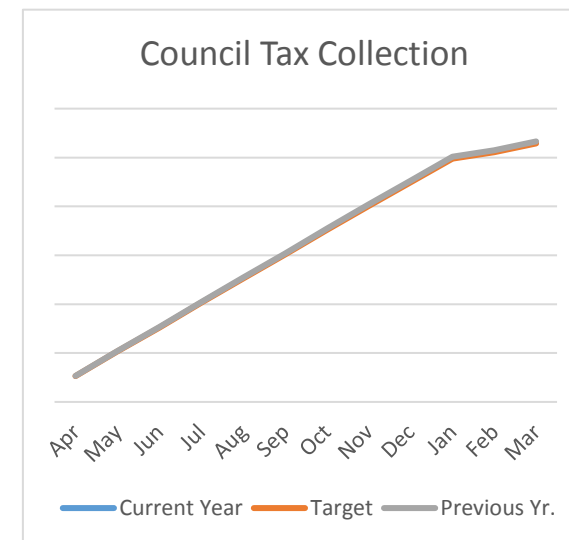
Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £49,633. In April 2019 £22,099 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £44,028. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £26,048

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 5,692,768	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 5,278,248	£ 30,106,771	£ 44,925,775	£ 52,879,158	
Refunds	£ 70,511	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 5,318,884	£ 30,338,553	£ 45,271,643	£ 53,286,256	●

26

Year End Target	£52,879,158	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £54,539. In April 2019 £6,048 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £437,202. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £47,020.

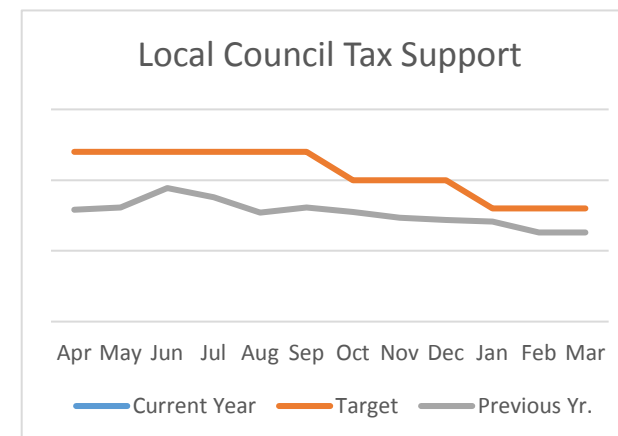
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £214,503 debt.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	5.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2018/19	7.90	8.06	7.18	6.30	●

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Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

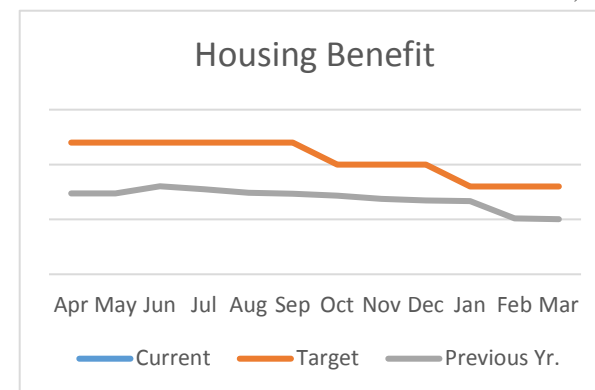
Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted we have overachieved this indicator due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April all processing staff throughout the partnership were working on Breckland, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland cases, thereby resulting in exceptional outcomes.

Looking ahead, we expect performance will slightly edge upwards, but within target, as we aim to harmonise performance for all Councils by bringing performance back on track for East & West Suffolk.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	5.26	0	0	0	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2018/19	7.37	7.33	6.73	5.02	●
Year End Target				8	●



28

Description

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

Narrative

Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted we have overachieved this indicator due to the downtime associated with the merger of East Suffolk and West Suffolk systems.

During the first three weeks of April all processing staff throughout the partnership were working on Breckland, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland cases, thereby resulting in exceptional outcomes.

Looking ahead, we expect performance will slightly edge upwards, but within target, as we aim to harmonise performance for all Councils by bringing performance back on track for East & West Suffolk.

Fraud and Compliance

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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, Non Domestic Rates and Tenancy fraud.

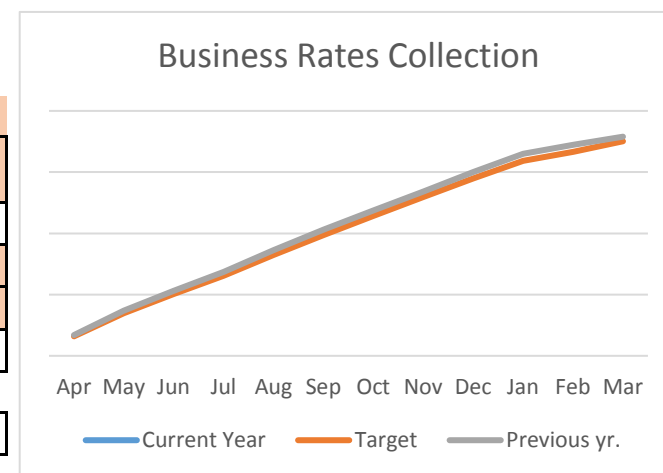
Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. The team will continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£ 64,212.10	£ -	£ -	£ -
Local Council Tax Support	£ 2,302.72	£ -	£ -	£ -
Tenancy Fraud	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£ 9,528.23	£ -	£ -	£ -
Fraud Identified	£ 76,043.05	£ -	£ -	£ -

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 6,737,999	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 6,362,554	£ 39,480,145	£ 57,900,415	£ 70,081,061	
Refunds	£ 43,962	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 6,779,144	£ 41,220,852	£ 60,044,207	£ 71,576,538	●

Year End Target	70,081,061	●
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Description

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

Narrative

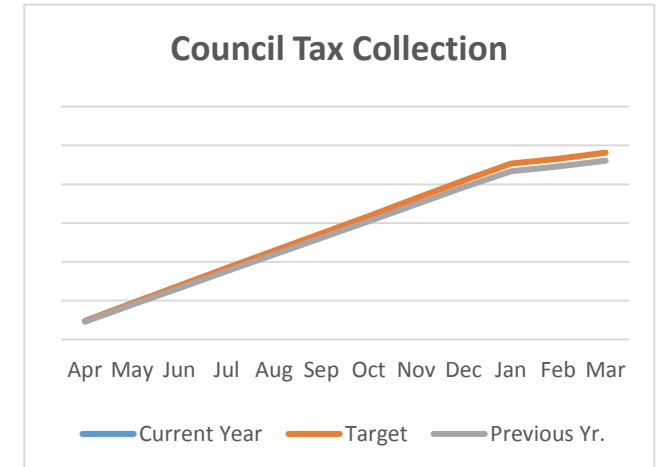
Collection is on target for the current financial year.

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £369,757. In April 2019 £2,551 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £164,592. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £30,916

Council Tax Collection					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	£ 9,806,282	£ -	£ -	£ -	●
Target	£ 9,544,998	£ 54,754,369	£ 81,863,213	£ 96,287,011	
Refunds	£ 2,659	£ -	£ -	£ -	
2018/19	£ 9,132,925	£ 52,390,536	£ 78,369,361	£ 92,130,148	●

31

Year End Target	96,287,011	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection is on target for the current financial year

Further recovery action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £133,530. In April 2019 £11,213 was collected. Enforcement action in 2018/19 resulted in collection of £775,072. In April 2019 Enforcement action has recovered £69,805.

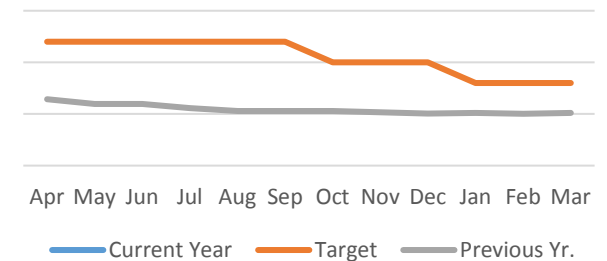
Charging Orders have been obtained to secure £486,904 debt.

Days to process Local Council Tax Support

	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2018/19	6.43	5.29	5.05	5.11	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Council Tax Support



32

Description

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

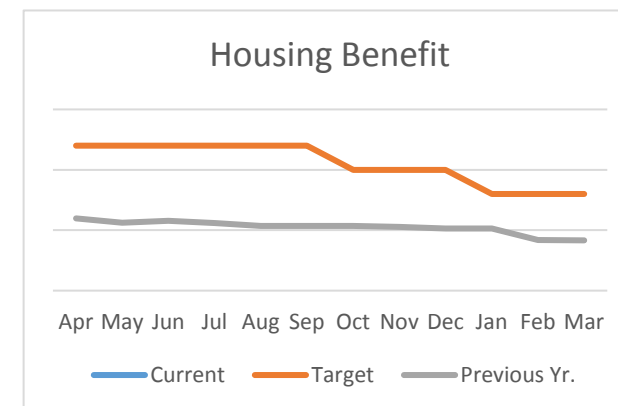
Narrative

Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted, due to the three week downtime in April associated with the merging of systems, the target may not be met for the first quarter of the year. We are working to recover the position following the merged systems, inevitably, this may cause delays, although we are targeting cases to minimise customer impact. We expect the annual target to be met at the end of the year.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2019/20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2018/19	5.98	5.36	5.14	5.14	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Whilst this indicator has been met for April, it should be noted, due to the three week downtime in April associated with the merging of systems, the target may not be met for the first quarter of the year. We are working to recover the position following the merged systems, inevitably, this may cause delays, although we are targeting cases to minimise customer impact. We expect the annual target to be met at the end of the year.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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, Non Domestic Rates and Tenancy fraud.

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. The team will 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.

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	Apr-19	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£ 130,082.73	£ -	£ -	£ -
Local Council Tax Support	£ 1,597.95	£ -	£ -	£ -
Tenancy Fraud	£ 18,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£ 7,998.58	£ -	£ -	£ -
Fraud Identified	£ 157,679.26	£ -	£ -	£ -

Service Updates as at April 2019 -20



Enforcement

The Enforcement Team continue to perform well, having collected £16.157 Million since the team started of which £5.669 Million has been in the last financial year. The team have collected £527K in April 2019. It is worth noting that in 2018/19 the team collected £599K more in respect of Council Tax & NNDR than external enforcement agents did in the year before our in-house team was created. With effect from July we will be taking on the work of Norwich City Council and we are currently working with their teams to set up all the necessary processes.

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Further Recovery

The Further Recovery team had their best year for collection in 2018/19 collecting £1,111,595 exceeding the amount collected last year by £203K. In addition to the monies collected by the further recovery team we also have a further £1.776 Million in secured debt by way of Charging Orders on property owned by the debtor. A good start has been made to the new financial year with £83K collected in April.

The Further Recovery team is partly funded by Norfolk & Suffolk County Council, however Cambridgeshire County Council has ceased further funding from April 2018. Following a request at Joint Committee June 2018 we have provided a briefing note to East Cambridge and Fenland for discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council. Whilst monies continue to be paid in respect of the cases previously instigated within Cambridgeshire this will gradually decline if this work is not funded. As previously advised Norfolk County Council have committed to continue providing funding until March 2021 and Suffolk County Council until March 2020, at which point a further review will take place.

Benefits

Benefits performance has not met profiled targets for the first month of the year for all Councils, as detailed in each Council's narrative.

Following the merger work for East Suffolk and West Suffolk and loss of systems for three weeks, we are working hard to recover the work position. Inevitably, this will have an impact on performance for quarter 1 and the year to date figure as the year unfolds, although we aim to achieve the end of year target. We continue to prioritise work allocation to ensure benefit is awarded to minimise customer impact.

The Strategic Manager (Benefits) continues to attend national DWP/LA Welfare Steering Groups. These meetings enable input into shaping and influencing current and proposed operational and Government grant funding matters, Universal Credit plans, tackling fraud and error and data share.

Fraud and Compliance

Whilst Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils continue to support the review of Single Person Discounts, Cambridgeshire has ceased further funding from April 2018. Following a request at Joint Committee June 2018, we have provided a briefing note to East Cambridge and Fenland for discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council. As previously advised, Norfolk County Council have committed to continue providing funding until March 2021 and Suffolk County Council until March 2020, at which point a further review will take place. Whilst work on Cambridgeshire cases continues, without County funding the level of fraud identified will decline if this work is not funded.

Through the ARP Management arrangement with Norwich City Council, we have employed an additional resource from the 1st April 2018, fully funded by Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council, to undertake similar work for Norwich City Council.

Annual Billing

The Annual Billing 2019/20 project was completed as planned, with all bills and notifications sent out on time. For the 2019/20 billing, an excess of 18,000 bills and notifications were sent out to those customers who opted for online self-service accounts for Council Tax and Housing Benefit across the ARP and this number is continuing to rise each month. With increasing numbers of residents opting to receive their bills and notifications electronically rather than by traditional letter, this will reduce the postal costs to the partnership. The move away from the traditional method of receiving a Council Tax Bill, Business Rates Bill and Benefits notifications by paper reduces the number of letters sent out not only at Annual Billing but also for the daily output from the ARP during the year.

The bulk E-mail advising all customers with online accounts their 2019/20 bill is ready to view online identifies incorrect or obsolete email addresses in order to either assist with the reset of the account or as a last resort send a paper bill to ensure all bills are delivered.

ARP Website

The Anglia Revenues website design has now been enhanced for Housing Benefit for online use to be as straight forward as possible for the customer. This approach has been used for Council Tax, Business Rates and now Housing Benefit.

Analysis is demonstrating the effectiveness of the transactional design of the ARP website, with seven of the most visited pages requiring action by the customer, for example paying council tax or informing of a change, carried out online.

Customer Services Survey

Following consultation with the Customer Services of teams of the ARP, a new shared ARP satisfaction survey has been trialled with encouraging initial results.

From the first 841 surveys received so far:

- *92% rated 4 or 5 stars for satisfaction
- *58% said service was good/nothing to improve
- *7% suggested letters could be improved
- *8% to improve call waiting times
- *5% experienced online issues
- *The survey will continue to run enabling identification of areas for improvement.



Q4 2018-2019 Performance report March 2019



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All Partner Councils Combined



Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£69,705,667	£138,677,128	£204,057,943	£245,375,687	●
Target	£66,831,812	£134,987,938	£199,579,617	£243,892,497	●
2017/18	£70,008,252	£138,603,091	£199,296,902	£237,584,716	●
Year End Target				£243,892,497	●

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£119,257,339	£234,326,636	£350,054,879	£414,474,455	●
Target	£119,028,066	£233,163,816	£347,054,333	£410,581,171	●
2017/18	£111,640,728	£220,308,994	£329,299,369	£389,387,314	●
Year End Target				£410,581,171	●

Number of Electronic Forms Received					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	9,079	19,042	28,424	37,899	●
2017/18	8,324	17,230	25,329	31,782	●

Fraud and Compliance	Q4	Yr Target
LCTS	£149,515	£150,000
SPD	£1,056,090	£500,000
Tenancy Fraud	£468,000	£400,000
NDR	£777,169	£125,000
Council Tax	£306,929	£125,000
Fraud Identified	£2,757,704	£1,300,000



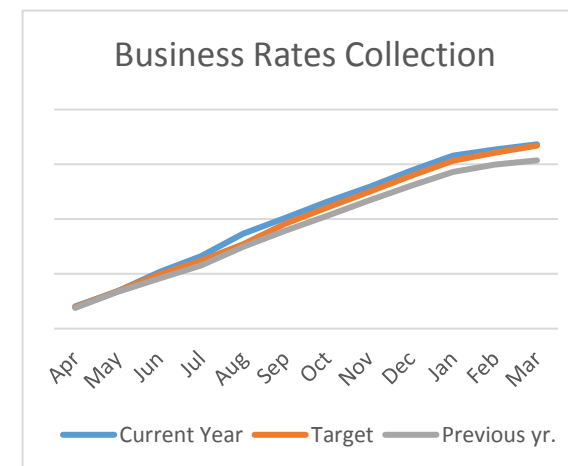
Performance Information March 2018 -19



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 10,313,258	£ 20,189,166	£ 28,860,184	£ 33,655,722	●
Target	£ 9,886,350	£ 19,116,141	£ 27,886,463	£ 33,414,639	
Refunds	£ 384,686	£ 546,511	£ 732,006	£ 1,014,424	
2017/18	£ 9,116,832	£ 17,836,817	£ 26,094,856	£ 30,716,188	●

Year End Target	£33,414,639	●
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Description

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

Narrative

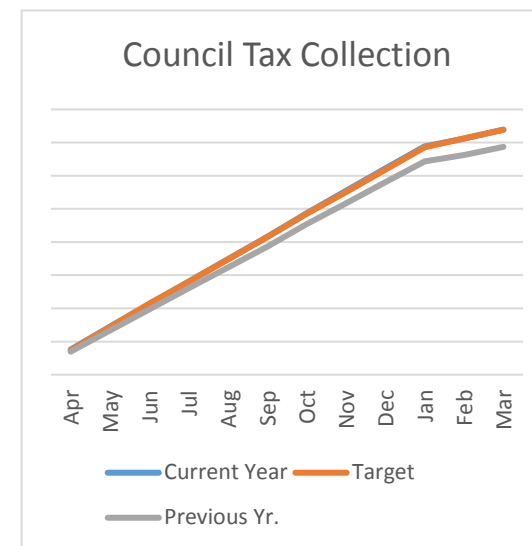
Annual targets have been achieved.



Council Tax



Council Tax Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2018/19	£ 21,259,174	£ 41,587,632	£ 62,159,365	£ 73,886,227		●
Target	£ 21,452,923	£ 41,581,757	£ 61,806,351	£ 73,878,018		
Refunds	£ 196,236	£ 383,340	£ 629,849	£ 879,082		
2017/18	£ 19,723,696	£ 38,673,103	£ 58,013,510	£ 68,710,234		●



42

Year End Target	£73,878,018	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

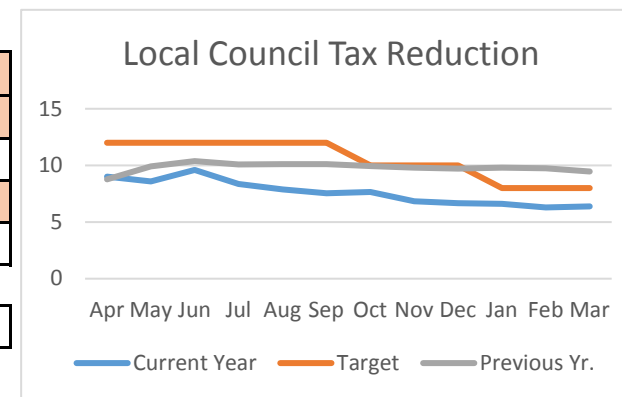


Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	9.60	7.54	6.66	6.37	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	10.38	10.10	9.72	9.45	●

Year End Target	8	●
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43

Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

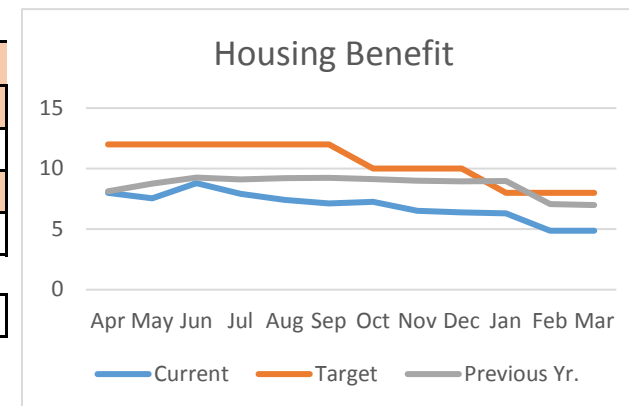


Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	8.8	7.13	6.39	4.87	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2017/18	9.26	9.23	8.96	6.99	●

Year End Target	8	●
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44

Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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:

Single Person Discount
Local Council Tax Support
Tenancy fraud
Council Tax & Non Domestic Rates

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£26,892
SPD	£158,327
Tenancy Fraud	£90,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£83,165
Total Financial savings	£103,193
Fraud Identified	£461,577



Performance Information March 2018 -19

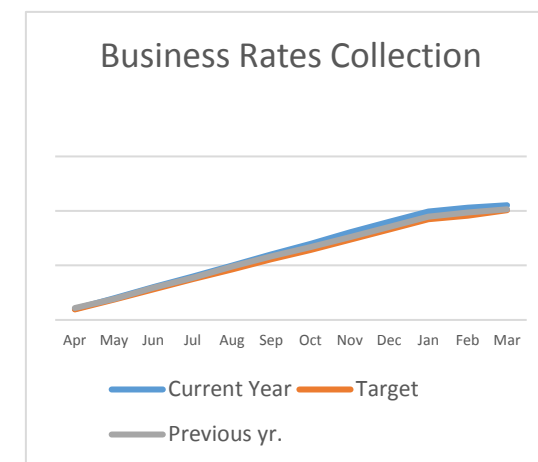


Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 6,038,653	£ 11,999,640	£ 18,023,396	£ 21,044,862	●
Target	£ 5,604,246	£ 11,115,901	£ 16,611,398	£ 20,136,921	
Refunds	£ 202,186	£ 266,204	£ 344,573	£ 484,275	
2017/18	£ 5,932,195	£ 11,688,553	£ 17,068,668	£ 20,299,860	●

46

Full Year Target	£20,136,921	●
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Description

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

Annual targets have been achieved.

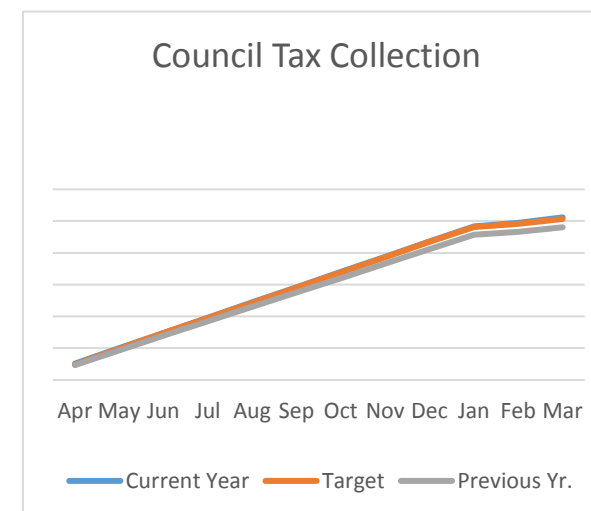


Council Tax



Council Tax Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2018/19	£ 14,815,307	£ 29,169,414	£ 43,593,006	£ 51,168,413		●
Target	£ 14,770,143	£ 29,097,000	£ 43,450,329	£ 50,669,823		
Refunds	£ 219,892	£ 219,892	£ 400,545	£ 708,577		
2017/18	£ 13,926,273	£ 27,595,309	£ 41,207,865	£ 48,054,762		●

Year End Target	£50,669,823	●
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Description

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

Narrative

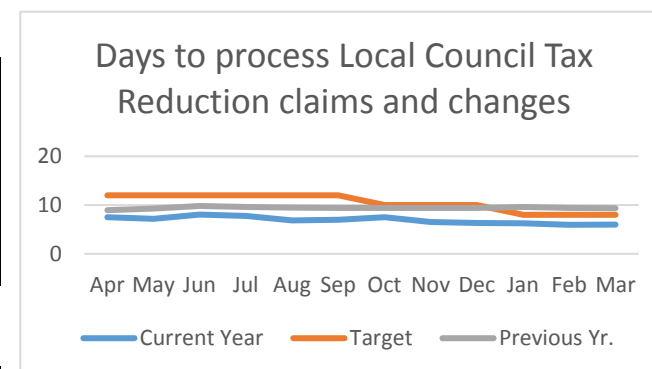
Annual targets have been achieved.



Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	8.05	7	6.34	5.99	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2017/18	9.81	9.43	9.38	9.33	●



48

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

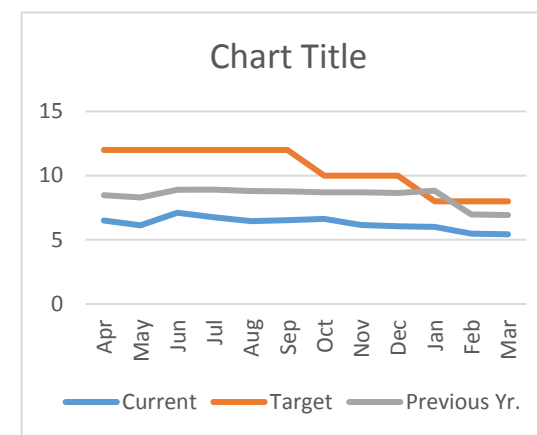


Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	7.11	6.53	6.06	5.43	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
2017/18	8.9	8.78	8.64	6.93	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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 & Non Domestic Rates
Tenancy fraud

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

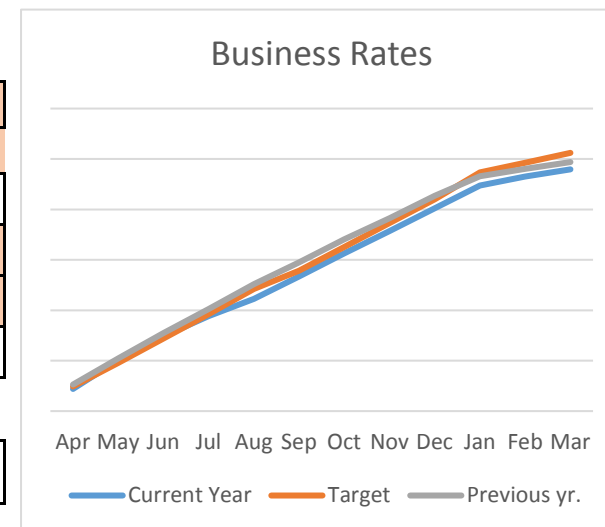
Fraud and Compliance	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£9,271
SPD	£90,214
Tenancy Fraud	£72,000
Business Rates	£41,690
Council Tax	£81,977
Fraud Identified	£295,152

Performance Information March 2018 -19

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 7,407,980.0	£ 13,363,473.0	£ 20,109,071.0	£ 23,969,262.0	●
Target	£ 7,199,524.0	£ 13,939,690.0	£ 21,003,422.0	£ 25,604,958.0	
Refunds	£ 229,346.2	£ 1,399,134.7	£ 1,648,069.2	£ 1,780,154.1	
2017/18	£ 7,731,991.0	£ 14,748,603.0	£ 21,362,953.0	£ 24,692,443.0	●

Year End Target	£25,604,958	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Collection for 2018/19 was under target by £1.636 Million. This can be mainly attributed to a large number of successful appeals against rateable values effective from 2010. In year we have made £1.780M of refunds. However, due to the risk that outstanding appeals has on collection, a provision is made in the accounts for the estimated refunds that may have to be made.

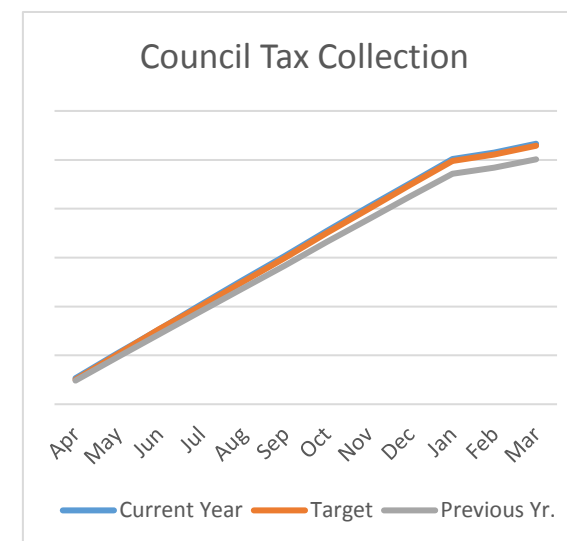


Council Tax



Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 15,322,657	£ 30,338,553	£ 45,271,643	£ 53,286,256	●
Target	£ 15,419,193	£ 29,948,933	£ 44,895,662	£ 52,879,158	
Refunds	£ 185,515	£ 246,254	£ 604,584	£ 801,827	
2017/18	£ 14,313,608	£ 28,375,317	£ 42,536,696	£ 50,100,713	●

Year End Target	£52,879,158	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

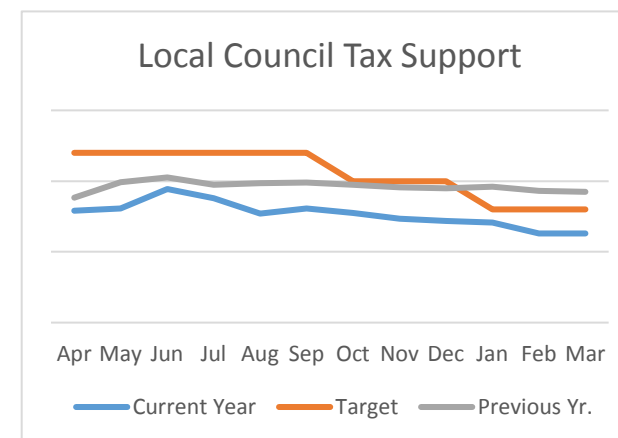


Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	9.44	8.06	7.18	6.30	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	10.26	9.89	9.49	9.24	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

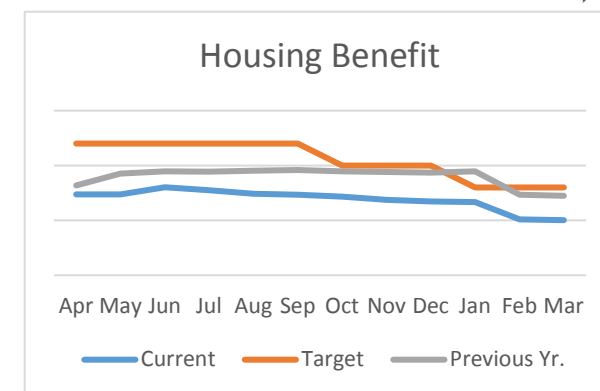
Annual targets have been achieved.



Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Oct	Q4	
2018/19	8.02	7.33	6.73	5.02	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
Previous year	9.47	9.59	9.35	7.24	●
Year End Target				8	●



Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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 & Non Domestic Rates
 Tenancy fraud

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

Fraud and Compliance	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£23,410
SPD	£81,064
Tenancy Fraud	£54,000
Business Rates	£272,736
Council Tax	£23,274
Fraud Identified	£454,484



Forest Heath
District Council

Performance Information March 2018 -19

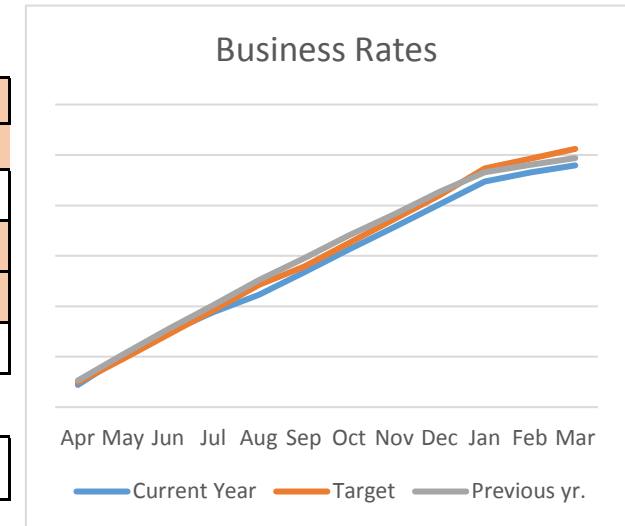


Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 6,862,608	£ 13,737,813	£ 20,322,812	£ 24,720,283	●
Target	£ 6,342,473	£ 13,088,755	£ 19,543,834	£ 23,972,646	
Refunds	£ 216,659	£ 299,563	£ 501,107	£ 570,989	
2017/18	£ 6,886,707	£ 13,524,059	£ 19,155,981	£ 23,029,748	●

56

Year End Target	£23,972,646	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 8,586,604	£ 16,925,235	£ 25,362,630	£ 30,326,829	●
Target	£ 8,610,409	£ 16,802,103	£ 25,119,583	£ 29,963,269	
Refunds	£ 92,754	£ 217,627	£ 342,735	£ 483,557	
2017/18	£ 8,096,580	£ 15,910,779	£ 23,787,030	£ 28,373,767	●

Year End Target	£29,963,269	●
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Description

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

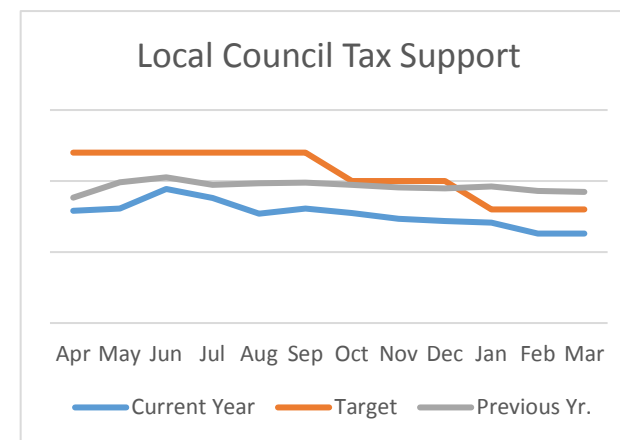
Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	9.21	7.42	6.93	6.54	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	10.14	9.62	9.34	9.24	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

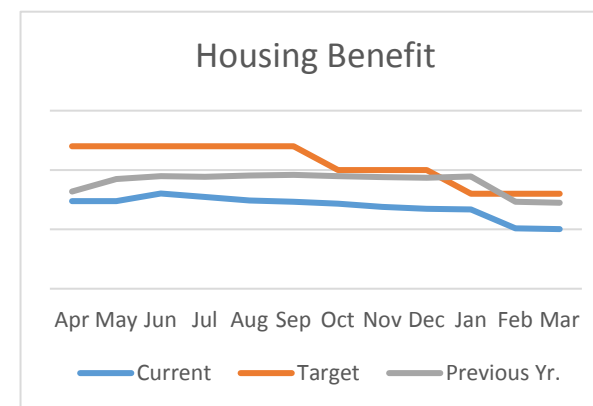
Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Oct	Q4	
2018/19	7.11	7.27	6.13	4.88	●
Target	12	12	10	8	
Of Previous year	8.38	8.5	8.27	6.75	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Please note we are on target for the current year.

Fraud and Compliance

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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 & Non Domestic Rates
Tenancy fraud

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

Fraud and Compliance	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£30,585
SPD	£207,373
Tenancy Fraud	£90,000
Business Rates	£26,759
Council Tax	£23,794
Fraud Identified	£378,511



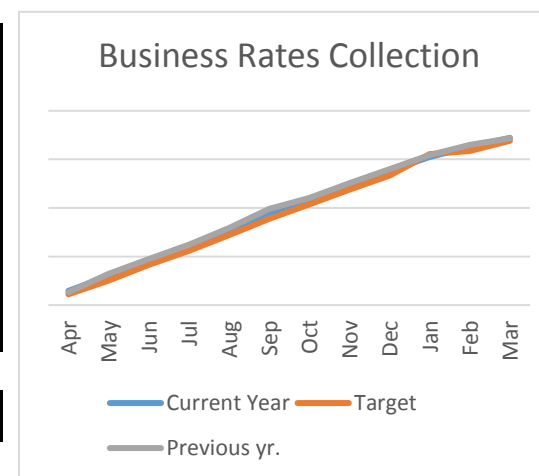
Performance Information March 2018 -19



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 18,179,139	£ 37,377,862	£ 55,249,821	£ 68,864,219	●
Target	£ 16,485,527	£ 35,584,440	£ 53,313,960	£ 67,643,776	
Refunds	£ 249,032	£ 571,149	£ 777,072	£ 1,051,604	
2017/18	£ 18,861,334	£ 39,664,102	£ 55,969,669	£ 68,680,280	●

Year End Target	67,643,776	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

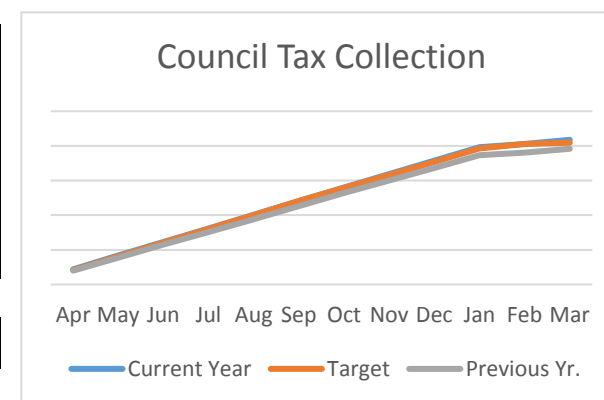


Council Tax



Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	£ 24,606,298	£ 48,232,267	£ 71,506,232	£ 83,524,494	●
Target	£ 24,206,014	£ 48,252,118	£ 70,769,772	£ 81,852,617	
Refunds	£ 334,367	£ 529,715	£ 826,928	£ 1,152,611	
2017/18	£ 23,002,812	£ 45,340,413	£ 67,334,140	£ 78,338,085	●

Year End Target	81,852,617	●
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Description

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

Narrative

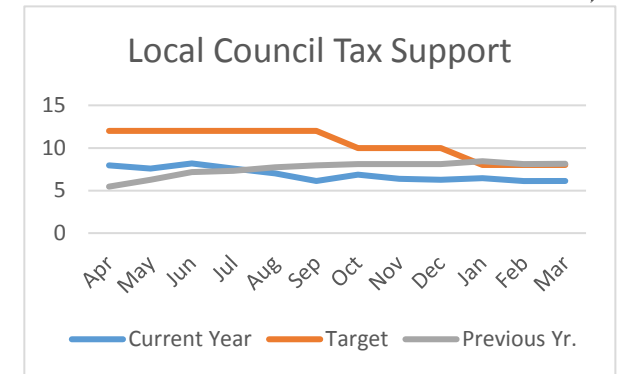
Annual targets have been achieved.



Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	8.18	6.12	6.28	6.12	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	7.17	7.95	8.11	8.14	●



Description

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

Narrative

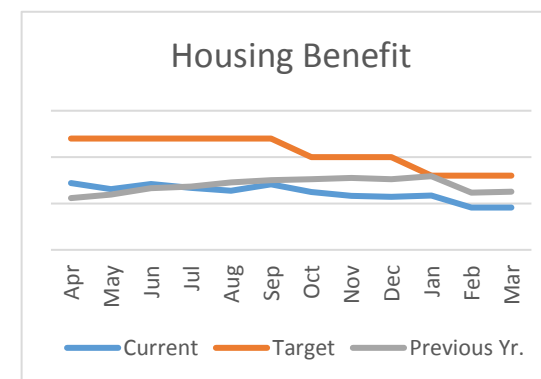
Annual targets have been achieved.



Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	7.11	7.05	5.73	4.56	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	6.65	7.50	7.60	6.26	●



64

Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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 & Non Domestic Rates
Tenancy fraud

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£20,774
SPD	£211,921
Tenancy Fraud	£0
Business Rates	£142,705
Council Tax	£5,508
Fraud Identified	£380,907.46



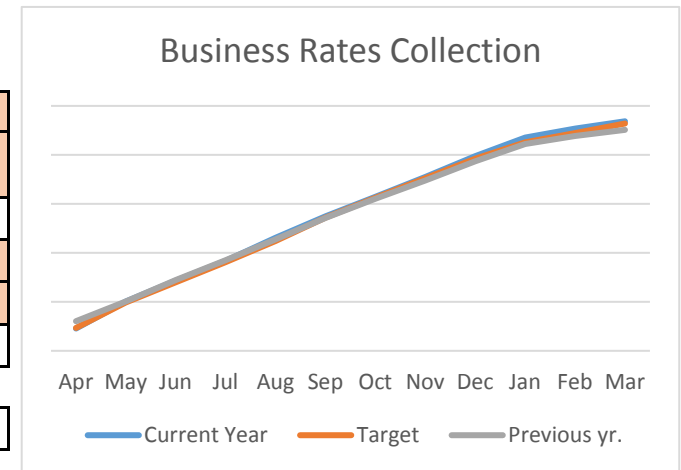
Performance Information March 2018 -19



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2018/19	£ 14,344,109	£ 27,483,039	£ 39,721,395	£ 46,856,255		●
Target	£ 13,990,243	£ 27,168,184	£ 39,192,901	£ 46,401,382		
Refunds	£ 281,524	£ 482,708	£ 874,090	£ 1,034,749		
2017/18	£ 14,421,878	£ 27,129,323	£ 38,700,611	£ 45,108,685		●

Year End Target	46,401,382	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.



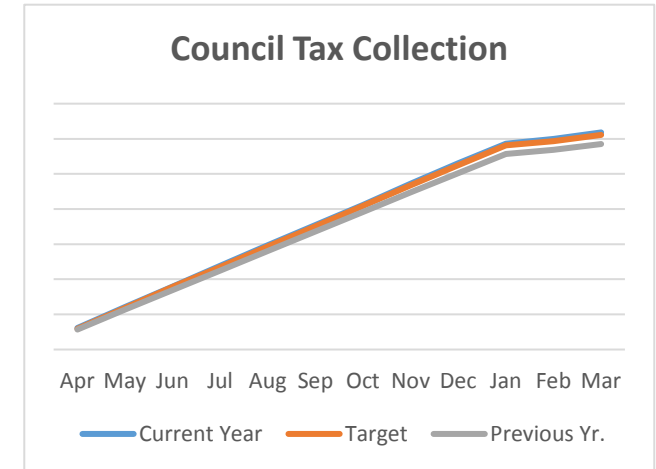
Council Tax



Council Tax Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2018/19	£ 17,954,986	£ 35,465,301	£ 53,006,731	£ 61,803,319		●
Target	£ 17,855,867	£ 35,088,793	£ 52,472,774	£ 61,098,618		
Refunds	£ 151,289	£ 315,011	£ 536,053	£ 763,588		
2017/18	£ 16,892,888	£ 33,597,536	£ 50,242,707	£ 58,501,957		●

67

Year End Target	61,098,618	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

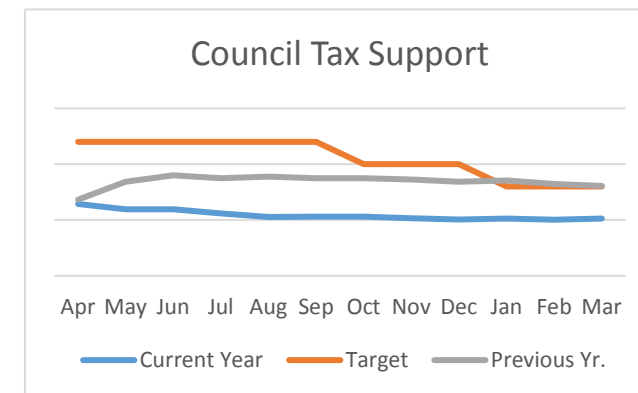


Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	5.97	5.29	5.05	5.11	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	9.00	8.73	8.43	8.04	●

Year End Target	8	●
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68

Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

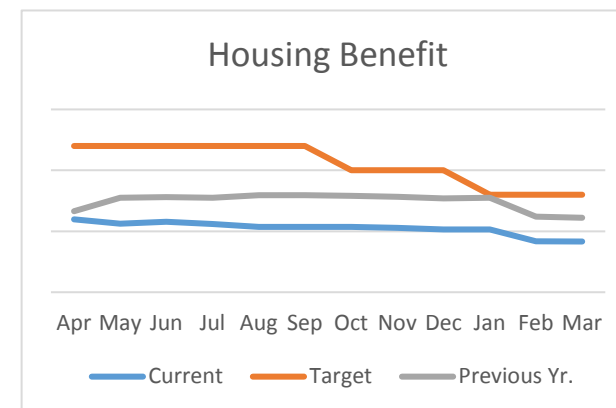


Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	5.79	5.36	5.14	4.16	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	7.81	7.95	7.71	6.11	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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 & Non Domestic Rates
Tenancy fraud

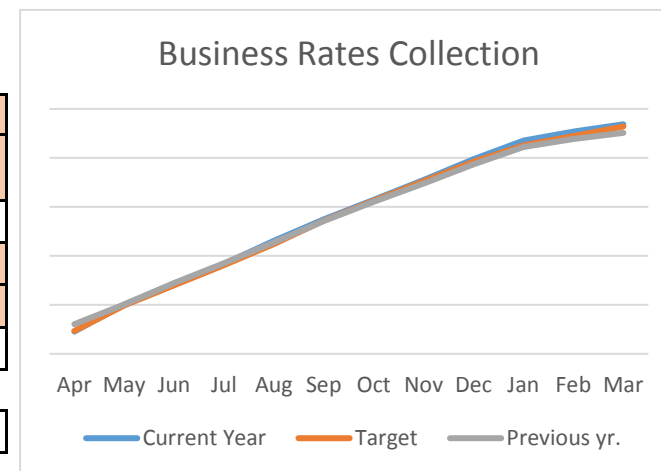
Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£21,419
SPD	£147,082
Tenancy Fraud	£162,000
Business Rates	£191,402
Council Tax	£43,316
Fraud Identified	£565,218

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2018/19	£ 6,559,920	£ 14,526,135	£ 21,771,264	£ 26,265,084		●
Target	£ 7,323,449	£ 14,974,827	£ 22,027,639	£ 26,718,175		
Refunds	£ 891,243	£ 1,170,098	£ 1,619,722	£ 2,042,799		
2017/18	£ 7,057,315	£ 14,011,634	£ 20,944,164	£ 25,057,512		●

Year End Target	26,718,175	●
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Description

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

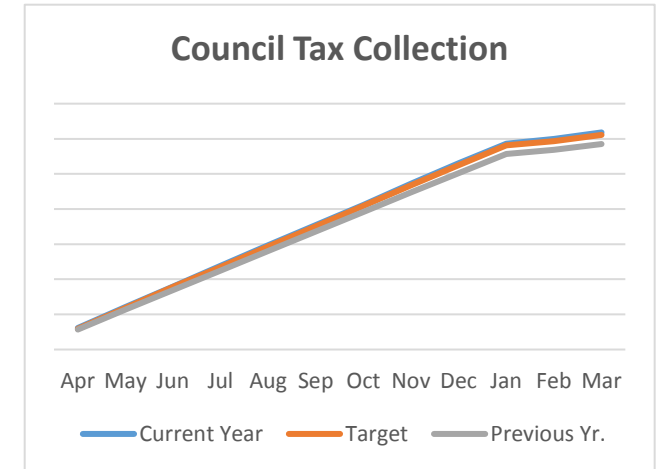
Narrative

Collection for 2018/19 was under target by £453K. Earlier in the year we had to award backdated mandatory charity relief to an organization amounting to £600K which is one of the reasons for the shortfall, however there have also been other backdated refunds of £1M due to successful appeals. Due to the risk that outstanding appeals has on collection, a provision is made in the accounts for the estimated refunds that may have to be made.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2018/19	£ 16,712,313	£ 32,608,234	£ 49,155,272	£ 60,478,917		●
Target	£ 16,713,517	£ 32,393,113	£ 48,539,862	£ 60,239,668		
Refunds	£ 181,583	£ 397,271	£ 601,757	£ 809,152		
2017/18	£ 15,684,871	£ 30,816,536	£ 46,177,421	£ 57,307,796		●

Year End Target	60,239,668	●
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Description

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

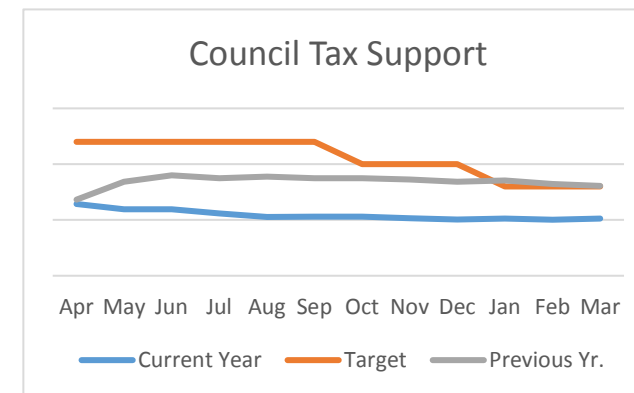
Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	6.79	6.12	5.65	5.41	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	7.39	7.78	7.82	7.59	●

Year End Target	8	●
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73

Description

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

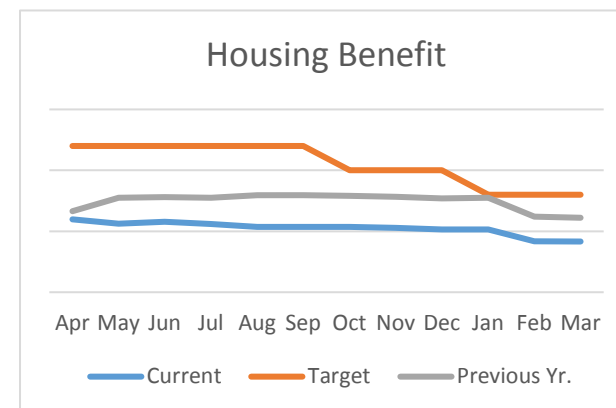
Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2018/19	7.90	7.05	6.51	4.80	●
Target	12.00	12.00	10.00	8.00	
2017/18	8.44	8.99	8.88	6.73	●

Year End Target	8	●
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Description

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

Narrative

Annual targets have been achieved.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been 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 & Non Domestic Rates
Tenancy fraud

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and are having success in this area. During the year the team have identified several dwellings and businesses either not registered or having had an undeclared change in use that has led to increased charges - in some cases significant higher retrospective charges.

	Q4
Local Council Tax Support	£17,165
SPD	£160,109
Tenancy Fraud	£0
Business Rates	£18,713
Council Tax	£25,868
Fraud Identified	£221,854

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Christine Marshall, ARP Treasurer

To: ARP Joint Committee, 11 June 2019

Author: [Christine Marshall, Executive Director, Commercialisation]

Subject: ARP Financial Out-turn 2018-19

Purpose: To update the Joint Committee on the financial out-turn position for 18-19

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the report and appendix be noted.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The 2018-19 financial year has resulted in a below budget spend of £91k overall (1% of the net budget). Appendix A provides more details on the variances.
- 1.2 Joint Committee in December 2018 approved the distribution of the 2018-19 surplus back to partners in the approved shares and the table below details the year end savings by partner:

Partner	Saving Share
Breckland Council	£25k
East Cambridgeshire Council	£16k
Fenland Council	£6k
Forest Heath Council	£11k
St Edmundsbury Council	£21k
Suffolk Coastal Council	£11k
Waveney Council	£1k
	£91k

- 1.3 The appendix also provides details on the remaining transformation funding held for the ARP, £50k is allocated for specific projects already which are continuing into 2019-20 and £100k remains un-allocated and available for future investment projects.
- 1.4 Joint Committee in December 2018 also approved the use of a 'smoothing' reserve to cover ICT refresh costs and the balances held in this reserve are shown in the appendix.
- 1.5 The efficiency targets have been fully achieved and are shown on the final page of Appendix A for information purposes.

2.0 OPTIONS

- 2.1 That the report and appendix be noted.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 The partner authorities have been fully supportive of ARP and have been prepared to take risks in order to generate returns, therefore it is appropriate that they should benefit from the surplus generated.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

- 4.1 To provide savings directly to the partners.

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 surplus distribution is based on the agreed principles and sharing methodology in the Shareholder Agreement.

5.2 **Financial**

- 5.2.1 Financial information is included at Appendix A.

5.3 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

- 5.3.1 In preparing this report, the Head of ARP and the Accountants at each authority have been involved in the preparation of the out-turn.

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

- 6.1 N/A.

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

- 7.1 EDMS – Electronic Document Management System

Background papers:-

Lead Contact Officer

Name and Post:	Alison Chubbock, Chief Accountant
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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to Mandatory Service and Discretionary Services

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A	Financial performance report
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Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee

Actual Full Year Financial Performance as at 31/03/19

Description	Approved Budget 2018/19 £	Outturn 2018/19 £	Variance Over/(Under) £	Variance %	Notes
Employee Related Costs	8,628,977	8,632,371	3,394	0.04	
Premises Related Costs	272,300	258,046	(14,254)	(5.23)	1
Transport Related Costs	147,523	131,629	(15,894)	(10.77)	2
Supplies & Services	1,742,856	1,706,804	(36,052)	(2.07)	3
Support Services	631,126	604,102	(27,024)	(4.28)	4
Income	(2,535,283)	(2,536,591)	(1,308)	0.05	
Efficiency Target	0	0	0	0.00	
TOTAL PARTNERSHIP COSTS	8,887,499	8,796,361	(91,138)	(1.03)	5

Variance Notes

All costs in the above table are split based on the Joint Committee agreement

1. Reorganising of space at the ARP office has currently reduced office space usage.
2. The under spend is due to the accounting treatment applied for the lease vehicles for the Enforcement service, an element of the lease charge has been pre-paid to 2019/20.
3. More work being passed to the external printer has led to an underspend in postages. Online take up and success in the fraud team in applying penalties so less need to prosecute has led to an underspend in Legal fees.
4. The underspend is due to less postages being franked as the procured service is utilised more and is better value.
5. The outturn surplus will be shared between the partner authorities in the approved shares (agreed at JC 04.12.18).

Transformation funding - committed expenditure as follows;

Description	Approved Budget 2018/19 £	Outturn 2018/19 £	Forecast Actuals 2019/20 £	Approved by OIB
<i>The funding below is from previous years' surpluses and new burdens funding.</i>				
Mitel Join Up	35,000	0	35,000	2015-16
EDMS	20,000	20,000	0	2015-16
Organisational - Develop agile organisation	10,000	0	10,000	2016-17
Commercial - Accredited trainer	5,409	0	5,409	2016-17
Robotics	30,000	30,000	0	2016-17
Total	100,409	50,000	50,409	
Unallocated	100,000	0	0	2018-19
Grand Total	200,409	50,000	50,409	

The committed funding is £100,409 and is expected to be spent by the end of 2019/20. The remaining balance of £100,000 includes the top up from other reserves for unallocated projects yet to be determined.

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ICT reserve	Approved Budget 2018/19 £	Approved Budget 2019/20 £	Approved Budget 2020/21 £
Opening balance	0	89,428	161,928
Partnership contribution	121,428	72,500	72,500
Spend to date	(32,000)	0	0
Total	89,428	161,928	234,428
The contribution from reserve in 18/19 is for ICT refresh costs			

Efficiency Target	Approved Budget 2018/19 £	Approved Budget 2019/20 £	Approved Budget 2020/21 £
Target	(373,567)	(424,100)	(444,315)
New Burdens Welfare Reform	176,146	176,146	176,146
Universal Credit	57,170	57,170	57,170
Additional authority joining the Enforcement service	0	50,000	50,000
Support Services	0	72,264	72,264
Enforcement income*	140,251	68,520	88,735
Total Efficiencies made to date within ARP	373,567	424,100	444,315
Total Efficiency Target to achieve	0	0	0
*Additional Enforcement income over and above values shown here have been included in the future budgets			

ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

Report of Paul Corney - Head of ARP

To: ARP Joint Committee, June 2019

Subject: The Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Service Delivery Plan and risk register.

Purpose: To provide an update on the Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register at Appendix A.

Recommendation(s):

- That the progress in respect of the December 2018 Service Delivery Plan is noted.
- That the ARP Joint Committee Approve the revised Service Delivery Plan and risk register at Appendix A

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In accordance with the ARP agreement a revised Service Delivery Plan is agreed by the Joint Committee by the end of December each year and the risk register is reviewed 6 monthly.
- 1.1.2 A Service Delivery Plan was agreed in December 2018 and information below details progress against this plan. In addition to service aims and objectives the plan includes a risk assessment and detail of the major projects that ARP will implement in the next year.

1.2 December 2018 plan update

- 1.2.1 The ARP has seen significant success in the last year and we have achieved the following;
- Housing Benefit new claims and changes exceeded targets
 - All Councils have successfully moved to Universal Credit Full Service
 - All customer teams are able to use customer contact software to sign customers up to e-services upon contact.
 - The further recovery work jointly funded by County Councils secured recovery of over £1.1 Million last year
 - The Fraud teams work also jointly funded by the County Councils identified over £2.75 Million in fraud and error.
 - The Enforcement Agency had a surplus of over £720k whilst providing a more sympathetic service to debtors
 - The merge of databases for East Suffolk (previously Waveney and Suffolk Coastal) and West Suffolk (previously St. Edmundsbury and Forest Heath) has been completed for all revenues and benefits systems.

Some other achievements are detailed below:

- 1.2.2 On the 1st April 2017 the shared management arrangement with Norwich City commenced and has been very successful to date. Partnership arrangements have been extended to include the provision of fraud services for Norwich (jointly funded by

Norfolk County Council) and from the 1st July 2019 their enforcement work will also be dealt with by the ARP.

- 1.2.3 The website redesign has been completed for Council tax and Business Rates and Benefits transactional pages have gone live. The redesign uses UX (user experience) methodologies from the interaction lab of the City of London University. The amount of traffic on the site has risen significantly.
- 1.2.4 The Digital work stream has progressed with the development of online forms that integrate with the Capita system. Robotics/automation software is also being further developed to provide automation of the assessment process in selected cases for benefits and Council Tax forms. The benefits from these purchases will be seen from 2019/20 onwards.
- 1.2.5 A number of letters, bills and reminders have been redesigned using nudge techniques to deliver messages that will emphasise key data and encourage customers to respond to the information in a manner that will resolve any issues.
- 1.2.6 The Service Delivery Plan sought to deliver annual efficiencies to the partner councils of £531k in 2017/18 increasing to over £1 million which has been achieved. The target was set on the basis of assessed loss of grants from the DWP. It should be noted that all partner councils budgets for 2019/20 are less than the budgets they had on entering the partnership (Breckland and Forest Heath joined in 2003).

1.3 Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register

- 1.3.1 The service Delivery Plan (Appendix A) details the high level actions that the service must implement to ensure that the varied demands on the service are met. The plan has 3 areas:
 - Service plan – business as usual and innovative activities
 - Projects
 - Risk matrix

There will be an amount of overlap between these areas but the intention of separating them out in this way is to provide clarity over the high level work programmes for ARP.

- 1.3.2 The Joint Committee reconsidered the strategic direction of the ARP going forward and the Service Delivery Plan seeks to detail actions to achieve the visioning detailed in the report to members in September 2017.
- 1.3.3 The strategic priorities are:
 - Not to lose focus on its core business
 - To endeavour to influence DWP and other Government Departments.
 - To continue to promote specialist services
 - To develop its existing offer
- 1.3.4 Norwich have delegated their enforcement work to Breckland Council who will be passing this work to the ARP Enforcement Agency from July 2019. Other Councils are interested in delegating services to partner Councils leading to ARP collecting the debts which will grow the resilience of the Enforcement team.
- 1.3.5 The infrastructure to be able to increase on-line transactions has been put in place and software to enable automation of assessment processes has been installed. In 2018/19 and 2019/20 the digital transformation team (the customer service lead officers from each Council and the ARP strategic team) will continue to drive cultural change to enable officers to assist customers to learn to use the on-line services to reduce future footfall and telephone calls.

- 1.3.6 The ARP strategic team will continue to influence national initiatives such as Universal Credit and to influence system design to improve performance and generate efficiencies where possible.
- 1.3.7 Welfare reform is still high on the Governments agenda which will 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.
- 1.3.8 The risk surrounding income from Business Rates remains red at this time because there is still risk in relation to subsequent appeals that may be received and reduce rates payable
- 1.3.9 The 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.
- 1.3.10 The risk relating to Housing Benefit subsidy has been reduced, as discussed with members, because the hard work of the teams in managing the risk means that no loss of subsidy has been incurred for a number of years.
- 1.3.11 The merge of databases for East and West Suffolk has been successfully implemented and so the risk has been removed from the risk register.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 Legal

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

4.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Background papers:- None

Lead Contact Officer

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Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A – Service Delivery Plan December 2018

Revenues and Benefits Service Plan 2013/14

Type	Ref	Action	Inter-dependencies / impacts	Lead officer	Intended outcomes	measures	target dates	progress	Status (R-A-G)
Lead	1	Complete ARP single IT solution ES - single log on	West Suffolk IT resource required	Strategic Manager (Support) and Strategic Team	Offers quicker access and speed of transactions providing efficiencies		30/06/2019	Final elements being ironed out - some concern over Wyse terminals at East Suffolk needing updating	
		EDMS - redesign use of Civica workflow - implement dripfeed for NNDR			To ensure even distribution of workload for all partners and to reduce manual intervention necessary to allocate work	All Documents held on Civica and new documents being scanned to Civica ditributed using dripfeed where possible	30/06/2019	Benefits and Council Tax live with dripfeed and NDR processes starting to go live - still on target for end June 19	
Lead	2	Monitor income, expenditure and Subsidy in the light of NNDR retention scheme, LCTRS, UC and conversion issues	Finance need to understand performance against financial targets	Strategic managers and Head of ARP	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	Early notification for S151 officers where there is significant variation from target from budgets	Ongoing to inform end of year position 31/03/2018 and 2019	2018/19 positions reported on balance scorecard every quarter to JC and to finance officers by exception on an ongoing basis.	
		Prepare for business rates retention changes announced - Councils to retain increased percentage of Business Rates and full business rates review		Strategic Manager (Revenues)	To advise and recommend potential for maximising income for the 7 partners residents - pros and cons and opportunities	Information to be provided to officers and members concerning the impact of changes to the NNDR system.	ongoing as information provided - changes by 31/3/2020	Working with Finance officers and County Councils to understand impact	
Lead	3	East and West Suffolk MergersMerge of Capita systems and changes to other IT systems such as Civica	Work with WS IT team and both Councils project teams to deliver	Strategic Manager (Support)	To bring systems and processes together so that all future data is merged and all policies and contractual arrangements are updated	All processes procedures and policies merged	22/04/2019	Systems live - resual tidy up taking place	Completed
		Policies agreements and contracts to be amended	Work with WS IT team and both Councils project teams to deliver	Directors for East and West Suffolk and Head of ARP	To bring systems and processes together so that all future data is merged and all policies and contractual arrangements are updated	All processes procedures and policies merged	30/09/2019	WS legal team looking at ARP agreement - other policies highlighted and being progressed.	
		Ensure that all statutory requirements can be met during transition and after merger complete	Work with WS IT team and both Councils project teams to deliver	ARP	To bring systems and processes together so that all future data is merged and all policies and contractual arrangements are updated	All processes procedures and policies merged	01/04/2019	Year end processes ensured new year bills were accurate and on time	Completed

Revenues and Benefits: Projects

Project	Responsible Officer	Description	Location	Project Type	Project Manager	Timescales	Benefits	Next Milestone	RAG Profile
Training Plan	Support Manager/ Training Officers	To create a Training Programme that encompasses ARP's vision of Generic working		Service delivery	Support Manager	31/01/19	With the Training Officers, produce a Training programme that embraces ARP's vision of generic working.	Completed	
Office Accommodation Review	Support Manager	To maximise current office space by purchasing ergonomic furniture	Breckland House	Logistics	Support Manager	Level 4 before end February 2019	The 13 staff in enforcement and future expansion of that team means that we otherwise need additional accommodation which would cost more	Office moves first 2 weeks of May - moves managed without the need for significant purchase of furniture	
Billing and Benefit letter production	Strategic Manager (support)	The production and dispatch of year end bills and benefit letters		Service delivery	Strategic Manager (support)	Mid March 2019	Annual project to get bills for new Council tax year and benefit letters to customers with in prescribed time to collect instalments	Completed	

Risks

Ref.	Risk Title	Risk Description	Consequences	Opportunities	Risk Owner	Risk Manager	Current Controls	Mitigating Actions	Date added	Date Updated	Curr. Score	Tgt Score	Trend
	Business continuity	Loss of key staff due to welfare reform and potential reduction in required resource	Inability to meet statutory requirements and to deliver services according to performance targets	With the expanded partnership we can ensure that skills are more widely held	Head of ARP and Strategic managers	Head of ARP	Staff are encouraged to take IRRV exams and NVQs and internal structures allow for career progression - reasons for staff leaving are being monitored to identify whether this becomes a reason for staff leaving	Transformation programme has identified opportunities for training and staff development - monitoring of reasons for staff leaving shows that it is not currently due to concerns over	01/04/14	31/05/2019	C4	C4	Reached target score
	Business continuity	Loss of premises, loss of power/telecoms and/or loss of systems - a new emphasis must be placed on loss of systems in relation to cyber attack	Difficulty in finding some members of staff access to systems or, loss of systems	Shared services mean that we operate from 4 centres and work can be carried out from 6 sites	Strategic Manager (Support)	Strategic Manager (Support)	Systems mirrored at 2 sites enabling work to continue. A large number of staff are home enabled and more could be on a short term basis. Workers can be asked to travel to alternative sites. West Suffolk IT update systems with new patches and protection regularly and systems are PSN compliant	Access to mirrored servers in FHEC regularly tested. Business Continuity plan agreed with partners - fail testing to be arranged. West Suffolk IT are working on specific mitigation of cyber attack and this will be reported in future risk reports	01/04/14	31/05/2019	E2	E2	Reached target score
	Transformation Programme and budget efficiencies	Income/efficiencies equal to the reduction in Administration Grant are not achieved	If income is not secured to meet shortfall then reductions in budget will be required through savings which will impact on service provision	Income may exceed projected budget	Strategic Management Team and OIB (Revenues)	Strategic Management Team and OIB (Revenues)	Target for efficiencies of over £1,000,000 achieved for 2018/19	Actions in transformation programme has seen savings and income generation achieved savings - progress is monitored by OIB	11/11/2016	31/05/2019	D3	D3	Efficiency target reached for 2018/19 - Digital transformation required in 18/19 to achieve 19/20 and beyond
	Income from retained Business rates and Council Tax	Income from NDR and Council Tax do not meet budgeted amount	The income available to the Councils is insufficient to meet needs	Income may exceed projected budget	Strategic Manager (Revenues)	Strategic Manager (Revenues)	Monitoring will continue for 2019/20. Revaluation 2017, appeals adds risk for life of 2017 list	The NNDRT and Taxbase calculations include provision for bad debt and appeals on target to meet spending requirements this risk increased with Re-val in 2017	01/04/14	31/05/2019	C1	D2	Appeals from Doctors surgeries are leading to significant refunds that mean that income is below target for some councils
	Localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Upon LCTRS review the reduction in help received by LCTRS claimants is reduced to the point where they can not afford to pay or, unemployment levels rise to a level that make the scheme unaffordable	Customers are asked to pay more than they can afford and arrears accrue	Increased income from Council Tax could be achieved	Strategic Manager (Benefits)	Strategic Manager (Benefits)	Current scheme has set payment levels at or below Attachment of Benefit levels for all but one Council which gives realistic opportunity to recover	If revised scheme reduces awards of LCTRS then funding from County Councils should be sought to fund additional recovery officers	01/04/14	31/05/2019	D3	D3	Reached target score
	A partner or partners leave the partnership	A reduction in partners could occur for a number of reasons in the future such as Local Govt reorganisation	Possible loss of key staff and TUPE implications - loss of resilience - also leading to increased cost of service and reduction in VEM	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	01/04/14	31/05/2019	E3	E3	Reached target score

Risks

	Billing and Benefit letter production	External printer does not issue daily or annual bills and letters within legal timescale	Bills may have first instalment date later than 01/04/2018 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	Strategic manager (support)	Strategic manager (support)	2015/16 to 2019/20 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	01/04/14	31/05/2019	E2	E2	Reached target score
	Housing benefit subsidy shortfall	Overpayments that are a local authority's fault can be claimed back as income if the value is less than 0.48% of the overall HB expenditure. Extrapolation by External Audit teams can also take Councils over this threshold	If LA error is not kept below this level it can have a significant financial impact on councils	To ensure that processes and procedures are correct and are followed and to ensure that backlogs do not effect LA error and that error is kept to a minimum so that Audit do not have cause to extrapolate subsidy overpayments	Strategic Manager (Benefits)	Strategic Manager (Benefits)	Rigorous procedures and high level of professional training. We have a Quality Assurance team that test accuracy levels and looks for and at areas of weakness. All councils were kept below LA error levels for audited claims from 2013/14 to 2017/18 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	11/12/14	31/05/2019	D3	D3	Reached target score
	Universal Credit implementation	Uncertainty over future funding from DWP and CLG from 2016/17. Affect upon customers currently receiving HB and resultant impact on customer teams	From April 16 UC will be rolled out to new claimants but later a managed migration of HB caseload will occur the impact on customers and social Landlords will be enormous if the migration falters	To continue to work with the DWP and Stakeholders to jointly offer customers assistance in making the transition	Strategic Manager (Benefits)	Strategic Manager (Benefits)	We have entered in to an agreement with DWP to jointly help customers to make the transition and agreed a Universal Support Partnership with them.	Assess the impact of claims moving to the DWP - modelling can take place to understand how ARP will be impacted as the timetable for all councils is issued.	11/12/14	31/05/2019	D3	D3	Reached target score

ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

Report of Adrian Mills – ARP Strategic Manager (Benefits)

To: ARP Joint Committee, 11th June 2019

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 the Joint Committee.

2.0 Matters of interest

2.1 Universal Credit – situation to date

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 customer's 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 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 From the 1st April 2019 the DWP awarded a 12 month contract to Citizens Advice (CAB) to provide these services. Having met with various CAB networks throughout Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, we have established the following arrangements are being implemented:

- Local advisors will dial into a national call centre
- Web chat will be provided
- Face to face arrangements will be in place – some on an appointment basis, others on a drop in basis or a mixture of the two. Rural provision may be patchy
- Thetford & Diss CAB are trialling the new service from January
- The help to claim service is funded to the point of first payment only.

- 2.1.5 Concerns have been raised that CAB are only funded to help to the first payment. Given DWP's processing figures show 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. Through

regular liaison meetings we will monitor this as increasing demand might jeopardise this approach.

2.1.6 The partner Customer Services teams intend to continue to help customers to claim, which may include signposting to CAB.

2.1.7 ARP continues to monitor the position and through meetings with the LGA and DWP, will continue to raise issues and concerns.

2.1.8 Summary of the latest position on the expansion of Universal Credit

- Funding to smooth the transition to Universal Credit, including an additional two week run on of existing DWP benefit, will apply from 2020 to help with the gap to customers first Universal Credit payment. NB – Housing Benefit has provided a two week run on since April 2018
- Funding to increase in work allowances - thereby boosting UC payments
- Managed migration of existing cases to commence from November 2020, but only after testing of up to 10,000 claimants from July 2019 and completion set by December 2023
- Reductions in maximum deductions from Universal Credit – to offset criticisms advance payments were being deducted too quickly and at punitive rates
- For newly self-employed the introduction from September 2019 of a longer grace period before a minimum income floor calculation is applied
- Pensioner Housing Benefit to continue until at least 2023

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

- How Citizen's Advice will deliver Universal Support from April 2019
- The lack of Managed Migration detailed plans and schedule
- Failure to populate UC systems with legacy systems data – all existing customers for HB will be expected to make a new claim
- Concerns the Managed Migration process will leave customers without benefit during the transfer
- The five week wait for UC payments
- Alternative Payment Arrangements and data share for Private Landlords
- Housing Benefit Debt
- LA funding
- Management Information
- LA access to UC Information

2.2 Universal Credit – new matters arising

2.2.1 DWP have started work on a managed migration trial at Harrogate Jobcentre, scheduled to commence July 2019, subject to Parliamentary approval. This will test:

- The 'who knows me' approach
- methods to 'warm up' customers selected to migrate to UC
- options to explain the UC claiming process
- how to UC claim – on line and evidence requirements
- how to understand monthly UC payments and how to budget
- understanding award letters and customer journal requirements to ensure UC conditionality compliance
- testing pre population of existing customer data
- testing how transitional protection can work
- those participating in the trial will not have their legacy benefit stopped without UC entitlement established

2.2.2 On 15TH May 2019 DWP introduced new legislation that means new claims from mixed age couples, where one partner is a pensioner and the other working age, must claim UC and be subject to UC conditionality rules, with certain exceptions. Given benefit rates are higher for existing pensioners, this will have the effect of reducing benefit entitlement.

Protections are in place for existing customers and a number of significant exemptions are being clarified by DWP.

2.3 Discretionary Housing Payment - no new matters arising

2.3.1 Discretionary Housing Payment grant is funded by DWP, designed to help customers remain in their homes or to move to affordable and sustainable accommodation. Generally the allocations for 2018/19 have been reduced with further reductions due for 2019/20.

2.3.2 Spend continues to be within DWP grant. The main area of expenditure continues to be to assist customers with rent shortfalls, in particular due to restrictions on Housing Benefit rent levels. The scheme is promoted through our stakeholder contacts.

2.4 Benefit Cap – no new matters arising

2.4.1 DWP introduced the reduced Benefit Cap on the 7th November 2016; the maximum family income before the Benefit Cap applies reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 (£13,400 for single adults with no children).

2.4.2 The Benefit Service continues to work with colleagues in Customer Service and Housing Options teams to seek to avoid homelessness and the cost of temporary housing.

2.4.5 DWP have provided New Burdens funding to assist Councils with extra administrative costs and have increased Discretionary Housing Payment grants to help customers with the reduction – it should be noted the increase does not cover all the reductions.

2.5 Social rented sector rent restrictions – no new matters arising

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

3 Options

3.1 The report is for information purposes

4.0 Reasons for recommendations

4.1 The report is for information only

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Risk

The report is for information only

5.2 Financial

The report is for information only

5.3 Legal

The report is for information only

5.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Background papers: - None

Lead Contact Officer

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