

Service Area Plan 2017/18

Part 1 - Service Information/links to policy

Part 2 - Managing Service Delivery

Part 3 - Managing and Improving People

Part 4 - Budget

Part 5 - Managing Planned Changes/Projects

Service Area :	Finance
Service Area Manager:	Mike Snow – Head of Finance
Deputy Chief Executive:	Andrew Jones
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Peter Whiting

1 Purpose of the Services Provided

- To seek to ensure that the Council's finances are well managed, in accordance with best practice whilst ensuring best value and value for money is always obtained.
- To ensure that suppliers can do business with the Council and be able to tender fairly on an equal basis along with all other prospective businesses.
- To provide sound and understandable financial advice and a responsive support service to enable members and officers to make the right decisions and to ensure the Council's services are properly managed.
- To seek to provide assurance that all risks are being properly managed and controls are in place.
- To provide the right benefits that claimants are due at the right time.

1.1 Linkages to Sustainable Community Strategy

	Direct Contribution	Indirect Contribution
All Themes	The support services within Finance (Accountancy, Audit/Risk, Procurement, FSTeam), and Council Tax/Business Rates directly and indirectly contribute to all the themes by providing finance and support services for the Council's services.	
Prosperity		Benefits and Procurement assist in providing funding which will circulate in the local

	Direct Contribution	Indirect Contribution
		economy.
Health and Well Being	By assisting tenants with their housing, Benefits is contributing to the health and well-being of those households.	Council Tax Reduction
Sustainability		
Housing	Benefits service assists tenants afford their homes	Council Tax Reduction
Safer Communities		

2 Managing Service Delivery

2.1 Service Overview

(NB – Specify main aspects of service delivery during the year)

	Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand	
Accountancy	Budget/Council Tax Setting	Ensure council tax and budget setting complies with legislation, meets Council priorities and is within available resources.	Statutory Requirement	
	Budget Review	To monitor income and expenditure on an on-going basis and assess implications for medium term financial strategy, reporting regularly to SMT and members.	11 Budget Review Reports to SMT, 5 Reports to Executive	
	Final Accounts	Ensure annual accounts closed down correctly and promptly. Production of Annual Statement of Accounts within statutory deadlines. Liaison with external auditors.	Statutory Requirement	
	Treasury Management	Manage the Council's investments to minimise risk whilst securing the optimum return. Manage the Council's cashflow and borrowing. Funding the Council's Capital Programme.		£60m invested as at 31/3/2016
	Financial advice	Advise officers and members of the financial implications of proposed actions and decisions and provide appropriate challenge.		
	Financial Planning	Forecast the Council's income and expenditure for the General		

	Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand	
		Fund and Housing Revenue Account as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and HRA Business Plan.		
	Parish/town council support	Arrange payments to parish/town council in respect of precepts, concurrent services and grants in respect of council tax (latter 2 being phased out).		
Audit & Risk	Internal Audit	Provision of comprehensive internal audit service for management in line with the Internal Audit Strategic Plan.	Statutory requirement.	Approx.36 audits completed p.a.
	Risk Management	Promote and advise on good risk management across the authority.	Statutory requirement. Effective corporate governance.	
	Insurances	Ensure that the Council is appropriately insured in the provision of its services and manage any resulting claims.	Effective corporate governance.	
	Investigations	Undertake ad-hoc internal investigations on behalf of management.	Effective corporate governance.	
Benefits & Fraud	Housing Benefits	Assessment and payment of claims for housing benefit in line with DWP scheme.	Changes processed p.a New claims determined p.a	25,500 2,100
	Council Tax Reduction	Assessment of council tax reduction claims in line with Council's scheme.	Changes processed p.a New claims determined p.a	18,000 2,200
	Fraud investigation	Undertake investigations into fraud against the council in respect of services such as council tax, business rates, house lettings. Promotion of fraud awareness.		
	Customer Service Team	Take Revenues, Benefits and Switchboard telephone calls	Service calls pa Switchboard calls	45,000 estimate 12,000 estimate
Exchequer	Collection of Council Tax	Maintenance of council tax records, award of reliefs, calculation of tax due, billing and recovery thereof.	Council tax payers Reliefs & discounts	62,400 23,000

	Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand	
	Collection of Business Rates	Maintenance of business rates records, award of reliefs, calculation of rates due, billing and recovery thereof.	Business Rate payers Reliefs & discounts	4,700 2,500
	Recovery of CT, BR and Benefit overpayments	Take appropriate action to recover sums due to the Council, including use of magistrates courts.	Summonses Reminder notices Collectible per annum	6,250 25,500 £160m
	Payment of suppliers	Arrange payment to suppliers for goods ordered.	Transactions Paid to suppliers	10,000 £48m
	Recovery of sundry debts	Raise sundry debt accounts for sums due to the Council, and recovery thereof.	Transactions Collected pa	13,000 £7.0m
	Rural and Urban Capital Initiatives Scheme	Manage the Council's RUCI scheme, making recommendations to Executive on grant awards, payment and monitoring of awards agreed.	Budget Applications per annum	£150,000 10-12
Procurement	Manage corporate procurement	Review and develop the Council's approach to procurement, management of the Council's Procurement Strategy and completion of the Procurement Action Plan.		
	Maintain contracts registers	Work with officers across the Council to ensure that the Council's contract register is correct, is duly published, and contracts within the register are appropriately managed.	Approx 240 contracts on Contracts Register	
	Lead/advise on procurement and tenders	Advise and assist officers in the procurement of goods and services in line with the Council's Code of Procurement Practice and EU Regulations.		

2.2 Measures

Key Corporate Measures –

Customer Measures – those important to the people/organisations who use our services

Note : these measures should be used on a daily, weekly or monthly basis to identify the impact of interventions in the system and to plan future interventions. Interventions may be very small adjustments to resources, or may involve transformational change

	Qrt 1	2	3	4
Average number of days from receipt of all information to determine new benefit/reduction claims.				

Prompt payment of invoices within agreed payment terms				
Unqualified audit statement on Statement of Accounts				
Average number of days from receipt of all information to determine changes to benefit/reduction claims.				
Timely and informed Budget and Financial Forecasts				
Number of Benefits/Revenues calls to Customer Service Centre.				
Efficient & timely CTax processing (Age of oldest item) Days				
Efficient & timely NNDR processing (Age of oldest item) Days				
Operational Measures – other (non customer) measures essential to ensure that “purpose” can be achieved.				
Note: <u>this section will not be used by most service areas</u> as their Customer Measures are expected to be sufficient. However, there may be cases where an operational measure is required to ensure the smooth running of a service area.				
	Qrt 1	2	3	4
Sundry Debt balance outstanding over 90 days				
Numbers of transactions – orders, creditor invoices, sundry debtor invoices				
Value cashable and non-cashable fraud savings detected.				
Council tax collection rate				
NNDR collection rate				
Business Rate Growth (Rateable Value)				
Completion of Internal Audit Plan (percentage variation to profiled plan)				
No of Outstanding appeals (Business Rates)				

2.3 Managing Risk

Risk	Planned Actions/Mitigations during year	Comments
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular budget monitoring • Achievement of 1% savings target for 2017/18, and other FFF savings agreed by members. 	
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of corporate procurement • Continue provision of Procurement training. • Attendance of key officers at in-house training. • Maintenance of Finance and Council Contract Register 	
Contract Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance of appropriate officers on Contract Management training. 	
Audits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audits of various Finance functions scheduled for year in accordance with Internal Audit Plan. • External Audit of Statement of Accounts and grant claims. 	
Risk Register and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks reviewed at management team meeting and on on-going basis • Quarterly risk register review with portfolio holder. • Risk Management Action plan being formulated for 2017/18 based on external review of Risk Management. 	
Service Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions arising out of Annual Service Assurance Statement include: - Provision of Procurement training Update of Business Continuity Plan 	
Business Continuity Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCP to be further update to reflect internal and external changes. 	
Corporate Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of H&S Assessments. 	

Part 3 – Managing and Improving People

Workforce Planning

Category	Sponsor	Activity	Budget Impact	Impact on other Service Areas	Milestones
1. Succession Planning (E.g. planning for leavers)	Head of Service and Divisional Managers	Encourage training, coaching etc of staff; assist them to maximise their potential and roles within the organisation.		Support from HR	On-going
2. Skills, Training, Competency Needs	Head of Service and Divisional Managers	Formal staff training / professional qualifications to encourage them to maximise their potential.	Cost of professional training courses.	Support from HR	Staff commencing formal training. Staff completing formal training.
	Divisional Managers	On-going CPD training for staff.	Met out of existing budgets.		On-going, March 2018
	Procurement Manager	Organising Corporate Procurement advanced training	Met out of existing budgets.	Support from Learning & Development Officer	??
	Procurement Manager	Contract management training	Met out of existing budgets.	Support from Learning & Development Officer	??
3. Service Changes – Demands on staff resource	Benefits & Fraud Manager	Review of Benefits Team senior structure in light of Universal Credit and service demands.	TBC	Support from HR.	Staff consultation process. ????? Employment Committee.

Category	Sponsor	Activity	Budget Impact	Impact on other Service Areas	Milestones
	Exchequer Manager	Review of Generic working	TBC	Support from HR.	Staff consultation process commencing June. September Employment Committee.
	Procurement Manager	Review Procurement staffing resources against workload and agree requirement and how to implement.	Use of existing budget plus potential call upon Service Transformation Reserve.	Support from HR	Agree approach June 2017

Part 4 BUDGET – Main budgetary pressures and changes

Activity	Budgetary Impact	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Need to achieve 1% savings 2017/18	Not achieving savings will increase savings to be found across the Council, with potential impact upon services.			
Potential reductions in Government grants/subsidy above reductions currently projected.	Will increase savings requirement of Council and potential impact upon service provision.			
Review Support Service provision to make savings from Service in line with Medium Term Financial Strategy.			£28k staff + £8k other savings recurring	
Court fees income continuing to be volatile.				
Benefits/Benefits Overpayments -				

Part 5 – Managing Planned Changes, Major Workstreams and Projects

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
Early Closure of Accounts – for 2016/17 inc de-cluttering, improved electronic WPs, planning for 2018/19 closedown.	Strategic Finance Manager	N/A	All services will be required to be committed to earlier deadline for provision of financial information in line with the Final Accounts timetable	2016/17 Detailed Timetable (will have sub-milestones). F&A	July 2017
Re-write HRA Business Plan Model	Strategic Finance Manager	N/A	H&PS	Base Budget report, February 2018 Rent and HRA Business Plan Executive report. Updated Business Plan Report to Executives	December 2017
Budget Review – increase engagement across all Services	Strategic Finance Manager	N/A	All	Quarters One and Two Reports to Executive (August and November 2017. Closure of 2017/18 Accounts (Summer 2018)	ongoing
Revenues Visiting Officer mobilisation	Benefits & Fraud Manager	£xxxx from Digital Transformation Work Programme budget.	ICT	?????	????
Universal Credit – prepare for June 2018 rollout to new working age housing benefits claimants.	Benefits & Fraud Manager	?? some funding from DWP??	Front Line/Reception	????	???
Auto-matching for Creditor invoices – implement across Council	Exchequer Manager	N/A	DMC, All Services	Cease non-order payments Implementation of scanning	July 2017 October 2017
Council Tax “Self Serve” (Open Channel) module	Exchequer Manager	£48,380 from Digital Transformation Work Programme	Front line/Reception	Project plan in development. Project completed	December 2017

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
		budget. Running costs to be found from existing budgets.			
Total Upgrade	Strategic Finance Manager & Exchequer Manager	N/A	ICT	Complete Auto Matching Project. Complete testing, go live	January 2018
Progress actions from January 2016 Risk Management Review	Audit & Risk Manager	N/A	All Services	Progress in line with agreed action plan	March 18
Progress actions from April 2016 Internal Audit Review	Audit & Risk Manager	N/A	All Services	Progress in line with agreed action plan	On-going
Review of Procurement function.	Procurement Manager	£10k Contingency Budget funding likely to be required.	All services	Appointment of consultant	1 April 2017
Enhance use being made of Intend system for reports etc to assist procurement process.	Procurement Manager	N/A	All Services	????	?????
Updated Code of Procurement Practice and Procurement Strategy – rollout across organisation.	Procurement Manager	N/A	All services Support from HR and Media	Intranet notices Training plan	?? ??
Review Contract storage	Procurement Manager	???	All Services. DMC currently manage storage.	?????	????
Contract Register – review with ICT format held, how shared and accessed.	Procurement Manager	Internal resources.	ICT All services	?? ??	?? ??
Review Support Service provision to make savings from Service in line with Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Audit and Risk Manager/Exchequer Manager/Strategic Finance Manager/	£36k saving within MTFS from 2018/19.	HR will need to support any staffing review. Savings may impact upon other services which are supported by Finance, which will need full consideration.	November 2017 Base Budget Report	Novemb er 2017

