

Service Area Plan 2016/17

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.	

	Direct Contribution	Indirect Contribution
Prosperity		Benefits and Procurement assist in providing funding which will circulate in the local 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

	Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand	
	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 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 concurrent services and grants in respect of council tax.		
Audit & Risk	Internal Audit	Provision of comprehensive internal audit service for management in line with the Internal Audit Strategic Plan.	Statutory requirement.	
	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	Council tax payers	61,000

	Service Being Delivered	Priorities (with Justification)	Service Demand	
		tax due, billing and recovery thereof.	Reliefs & discounts	22,500
	Collection of Business Rates	Maintenance of business rates records, award of reliefs, calculation of rates due, billing and recovery thereof.	Business Rate payers	4,700
			Reliefs & discounts	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	6,000
			Reminder notices	25,000
			Collectible per annum	£150m
	Payment of suppliers	Arrange payment to suppliers for goods ordered.	Transactions	10,000
			Paid to suppliers	£48m
	Recovery of sundry debts	Raise sundry debt accounts for sums due to the Council, and recovery thereof.	Transactions	17,200
			Collected pa	£7.7m
	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	£150,000
			Applications per annum	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 400 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				
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 5% savings target for 2016/17 	
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of corporate procurement • Continue provision of Procurement training workshop 1 and roll out workshop 2 (contract management). • 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 2016/17 based on recent 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 update to reflect changes in customer contact arrangements. 	
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 2017
	Procurement Manager	Organising Corporate Procurement advanced training	Met out of existing budgets.	Support from Learning & Development Officer	Dec 2016
	Procurement Manager	Contract management training	Met out of existing budgets.	Support from Learning & Development Officer	October 2016
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. December 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. December 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 2016

Part 4 BUDGET – Main budgetary pressures and changes

Activity	Budgetary Impact	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18
Need to achieve 5% savings 2016/17	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.			
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
Review of Concurrent Services and parish support	Strategic Finance Manager	Potential savings £145k.		Paper to PFH and Leader. Potential subsequent Executive report.	Exec report 27 July
On-line Returns - Live roll-out to RSC and Leisure Centres. Investigate use of OLR for other services.	Strategic Finance Manager	N/A	Culture, Neighbourhood	Rollout for Spa Centre Leisure Centres training Leisure Centres. Roll out. Assess other services for consideration (John Atkinson, Meadow, Car Parking) Training and implementation	April May June October
Arrange investment in Equity Funds in line with 2016/17 Investment Strategy	Strategic Finance Manager	Potential increased investment income		Discuss at Benchmarking Meeting. Acquire Training/knowledge gathering. Engage Capita for Selection of Fund Managers Identify available Deposits, open Account	May Autumn December
Plan for Early Closure of Accounts – inc 2015/16 de-cluttering, improved electronic WPs, planning for 2017/18 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	2015/16 closedown Lessons learned Audit observations re 2015/16 2016/17 Detailed Timetable (will have sub-milestones) Discussions with Auditors	June July + Sept December Jan-Mar
Support Service budget and allocations review as a result of Leisure Centre operational management changes	Strategic Finance Manager	Savings should be sought in line with charges made to leisure centre operations.	All Support service units allocating to leisure centres, ie mainly Culture, Finance, HR, ICT	Finalise projected savings and budget analysis Discussions with affected Service Areas Agree reductions and SMT	April May/June August

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
				Report 2017/18 Base Budget. Savings built into Budgets in line with changes in leisure centre operations.	December
Re-write HRA Business Plan Model	Strategic Finance Manager	N/A	H&PS	Base Budget report, February 2017 Rent and HRA Business Plan Executive reports	December 2016
Budget Review – increase corporate subjective monitoring	Strategic Finance Manager	N/A	All	SMT Budget Review Report, Q1, Executive Budget Review report July 2016	July 2016
Review of Council Tax Reduction Scheme in light of Universal Credit	Benefits & Fraud Manager	N/A	Front line, ICT	Proposals for consultation to Exec Changes agreed by Council to implement 2017/18	27 July Jan
Review of development monitoring by Visiting Officers	Benefits & Fraud Manager	TBC	Development Services	Initial discussion with Dev Servs Further actions TBC	By end June
Auto-matching for Creditor invoices – implement across Council	Exchequer Manager	N/A	DMC, All Services	Agree PID Go Live	April Sept
Council Tax “Self Serve” (Open Channel) module business case	Exchequer Manager	TBC	Front line	Business Case	June
Cost Audit by third party of selected corporate supplies	Exchequer Manager	TBC	All services likely to be impacted.	Appointment of consultant Landline invoices priority.	July
Progress actions from January 2016 Risk Management Review	Audit & Risk Manager	N/A	All Services	Progress in line with agreed action plan	March 17
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 usage being made of Procurement System with a view to its use being made across the Council in managing contracts, updating	Procurement Manager	N/A	All Services	Phase 1 – contract input Phase 2 planning/feasibility	April- June June

Change/Project	Sponsor/Lead Officer	Budget Impact	Impact on other Services	Milestones	Date
contracts register and procuring services.					
Social Value – agree corporate approach and priorities for Social Value	Procurement Manager	N/A	CMT and all services	SMT report	September 2016
Procurement Training for officers across the Council	Procurement Manager		All Services		
Procurement Strategy Action Plan	Procurement Manager	N/A	All Services	As laid out in Action Plan presented to F&A March 2016	