



Harborough District Council,

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council,

North West Leicestershire District Council,

Working in Partnership to provide better services...

Meeting	Joint Committee
Time/Date	4.30 pm on Thursday, 20 JANUARY 2022
Location	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, COALVILLE
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

All persons present are reminded that the meeting may be recorded and by attending this meeting you are giving your consent to being filmed and your image being used. You are kindly requested to make it known to the Chairman if you intend to film or record this meeting.

The Monitoring Officer would like to remind members that when they are considering whether the following items are exempt information under the relevant paragraph under part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 they must have regard to the public interest test. This means that members must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available to the public.

AGENDA

Item		Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE		
	To receive and note any apologies for absence.	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST		
	Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring disclosable interests you should make clear the nature of that interest.	
3. MINUTES		
	To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021	3 - 4

Item	Pages
4. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT	
Report of the Section 151 Officer	5 - 16
5. 2022/23 PROPOSED BUDGET	
Report of the Section 151 Officer	17 - 22
6. SERVICE PLAN 2022/23	
Report of the Head of the Partnership	23 - 34
7. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TO DECEMBER 2021	
Report of the Section 151 Officer	35 - 38
8. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY REPORT DECEMBER 2021	
Report of the Head of the Partnership	39 - 56
9. FORWARD PLAN	
To note the Joint Committee's Forward Plan	57 - 58
10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS	
Thursday, 21 April 2022	
Thursday, 23 June 2022 – Annual Meeting	

Circulation:

Councillor R Ashman
 Councillor R D Bayliss
 Councillor D Bill (Chairman)
 Councillor P Dann (Deputy Chairman)
 Councillor J Hallam
 Councillor K Lynch

MINUTES of a meeting of THE LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES AND BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville on THURSDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2021

Present: Councillor D Bill (Hinckley and Bosworth) (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss (North West Leicestershire), P Dann (Harborough) and J Hallam (Harborough)

Officers: Mrs S O'Hanlon (Leicestershire Partnership - Revenues & Benefits), Mr A Wilson (HBBC), Mrs J Kenny (HBBC), Mr C Mason (HDC), Mrs C Hammond and Mr D Bates (NWLDC)

In attendance:

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors R Ashman and K Lynch

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared

14. MINUTES

Consideration was given to minute of the meeting held on 24 June 2021.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2021 be agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

15. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TO JUNE 2021

Ashley Wilson, Section 151 Officer, presented the report. He noted that salaries were underspent by £9k due to vacant posts and that the reserves agreed at the last meeting had been actioned and would be amended in the next financial report.

Following a question from Councillor R D Bayliss, Mr Wilson noted that the £32k was a reflection of the timing of the report and as of August was the budget was showing £1k overspend and that it was too early to say if there would be anything to charge back at the end of the year.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The financial performance of the Partnership be noted and the recommendation at paragraph 3.5 in relation to invoicing be agreed.

16. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY REPORT - JULY 2021

Sally O'Hanlon, Head of Partnership, presented the report. She noted that all 3 authorities were not meeting their benefit targets, however the figures were now going in the right direction. She advised that the benefit teams had been under significant pressure processing the test and trace payments which were due to end at the end of September.

In terms of Council Tax, there was a significant increase in the performance figures over the previous years, as was the same with Business rates. It was noted in relation to Business rates, performance had improved, though she could not guarantee that the end of year PI's would be met due to businesses still experiencing difficulties.

In response to a question from Councillor D Bill, Mrs O'Hanlon provided further information to the committee on how the track and trace payments were processed and the impact on the team.

Councillor P Dann was pleased to see the improvement in the performance figures, but sought reassurance that the business rates would improve. Ms O'Hanlon stated that the figures would improve, but were businesses continuing to struggle and therefore it would have an impact.

Councillor P Dann sought assurance from officers that all measures had been put in place to ensure that the matter in relation to the court summons that were sent out in error, would not happen again. Ms O'Hanlon provided an update to Members on the work that had been carried out to resolve the matter and any issues that could arise in the future from it.

RESOLVED THAT:

The report be noted.

17. FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the committee's work plan. It was noted that there would be items to be added on, but the exact dates were to be confirmed.

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The Joint Committee Forward Plan be noted.

18. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The committee noted the dates of the future meetings.

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 4.49 pm

Leicestershire Revenue and Benefits Partnership

Test and Trace Support Grant Payment Internal Audit

October 2021

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Report distribution:

For action:

- Sally O'Hanlon, Head of Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits Partnership
- Storme Coop, Benefits Operational Manager
- Bonnie Kipling, Senior Benefits Officer

Responsible Executives:

- Julie Kenny, Director (Corporate Services)

This report is confidential and is intended for use by the management and directors of Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits Partnership. It forms part of our continuing dialogue with you. It should not be made available, in whole or in part, to any third party without our prior written consent. We do not accept responsibility for any reliance that third parties may place upon this report. Any third party relying on this report does so entirely at its own risk. We accept no liability to any third party for any loss or damage suffered or costs incurred, arising out of or in connection with the use of this report, however such loss or damage is caused.

It is the responsibility solely of the Council's management and directors to ensure there are adequate arrangements in place in relation to risk management, governance, control and value for money.

1. Executive Summary

Background

Claiming financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme

The £500 Test and Trace Support Payment is for people on low incomes who have to self isolate due to coronavirus (Covid-19). Individuals may be eligible if they are employed or self-employed, cannot work from home, and will lose income as a result. Individuals can only apply if they've been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, notified to self-isolate by the NHS Covid-19 app, or they are the parent or guardian of a child who has been told to self-isolate.

Government guidance sets out in what circumstances it is possible to claim the payment and is clear about the criteria that should be met. The scheme is administered by local councils and the Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits

✓ Partnership is responsible for administering the scheme locally.

In addition to the national scheme, the Partnership operates a local scheme which allows for discretionary payments to be made. The Partnership has set out the criteria that must be met to receive a discretionary payment.

As at 30th September 2021, the Partnership has received 1,420 applications for Test and Trace Support Payments. Of these 583 (496 main scheme and 87 discretionary) were successful in their application, receiving £500.00 each. Total payments made to date by the Partnership (30th September 2021) is £291,500.

In administering the scheme, the partnership is responsible for::

- Assessing applications to determine whether the eligibility criteria has been met;
- Communicating with applicants on whether they have met the eligibility criteria; and
- Making payments to eligible applicants.

Objectives

Our review focussed on the following potential risks:

- The partnership is making payments to individuals who do not meet the prescribed eligibility criteria; and
- Applications and payments are not being processed accurately or in a timely manner.

Limitations in scope

Our findings and conclusions will be limited to the risks identified above. The scope of this audit does not allow us to provide an independent assessment of all risks and controls across the entire management of the risk management process. Where sample testing is undertaken, our findings and conclusions will be limited to the sample tested only. Please note that there is a risk that our findings and conclusions based on the sample may differ from the findings and conclusions we would reach if we tested the entire population from which the sample is taken.

This report does not constitute an assurance engagement as set out under ISAE 3000.

1. Executive Summary

Conclusion

SIGNIFICANT ASSURANCE (NO RECOMMENDATIONS)

We have reviewed the processes and controls around the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme and have concluded that the processes have provided a **SIGNIFICANT LEVEL OF ASSURANCE**. This was confirmed through testing in specific areas of the Partnership and through discussions with management. No recommendations have been raised.

The Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme was established in September 2020. As such it is a relatively new system. Our testing has focused on the areas of the scheme which present the greatest risk. The controls tested are set out in our Audit Planning Brief.

We have reviewed the Partnership assessment criteria documentation for both the Main Scheme and Discretionary Payments Scheme and found this to be consistent with HM Government guidance.

The Test and Trace Process Map provides a process for the main scheme and incorporates a checklist of requirements in line with the eligibility criteria. The discretionary scheme mirrors this process.

There is a defined team with separation of duties between the assessment, approval, bank checks and payment of applications.

We undertook sample testing in the walkthrough meeting with Partnership staff and no anomalies were identified.

A further 10% sample was reviewed focussing on the criteria and payments. The single finding was, of the 59 additional claims sampled, 1 payment was made outside of the 3 day limit. This was followed up with the Partnership and confirmation received that the approved claim had been omitted from the payment run. The matter was immediately rectified after the applicant made contact.

Objectives / Risks reviewed	Assurance rating and number of recommendations
The partnership is making payments to individuals who do not meet the prescribed eligibility criteria.	Significant assurance (no recommendations)
Applications and payments are not being processed by the partnership accurately or in a timely manner.	Significant assurance (no recommendations)

Recommendations

We have raised 0 recommendations.

	High	Med	Low	Imp
Detailed findings	-	-	-	-

Acknowledgement

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Partnership staff for their co-operation during this internal audit review.

2. Detailed Findings & Conclusions

2.1

Low

The Partnership is making payments to individuals who do not meet the prescribed eligibility criteria.

Findings and Conclusion

The testing for this risk incorporated two areas;

- A review of the HM Government guidance and all internal guidance documents held within the Partnership.
- A review of the design and operation of the Partnership's controls for administering the scheme.

We have seen that there is a robust process in place within the Partnership to ensure that all applications are assessed in accordance with the HM Government guidance.

- Management outlined the robust two week preparation process undertaken within the Partnership at the commencement of the scheme to ensure that pre-payment checks were undertaken and evidenced for all applications. The levels of pre-payment checks was stated to be over and above the guidance issued by the Department of Health.
- The team is organised with assessors, all experienced benefits officers, divided into the main scheme, the discretionary scheme with a few hybrid team members to cover absences.
- There is a defined team structure which ensures separation of roles between the assessment, approval, bank checks and payment of applications.
- There is an internal training pack, assessor checklist and claim application flowchart outlining the eligibility criteria for assessors. We have noted that separate checklists are in place and applicable for the main and discretionary payments schemes.
- The online application process rejects applications which do not meet the criteria.
- Three months ago all Test and Trace Support Payment claim applications began to be logged and processed via Ascendent. This system has all the required checks in-built preventing fraudulent applications and it also issues responses via a generic email and is thus not reliant on personal email inboxes being monitored by the assessors. The only local input required is a check of the Test and Trace ID (where applicable) which is undertaken using the Public Health England eligibility checker. All follow up checks are undertaken via Ascendent, providing a robust and time efficient system.
- Currently 3 team members are training on Ascendant; other officers have the knowledge base should there be a requirement to increase resources.
- Current guidance is that the scheme has been extended to March 2022.
- Internal briefing documents ensure that team members are aware of changes implemented as the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme develops.

Conclusion

Our work identified that the Partnership had adopted guidance in line with HM Government guidance and had appropriate controls in place to implement this guidance.

2. Detailed Findings & Conclusions

2.2

Low

Applications and payments are not being processed by the Partnership accurately or in a timely manner.

Findings and Conclusion

The Test and Trace Process Map is a flowchart clearly outlining the application form process from start to end. This flowchart is comprehensive and outlines responsibilities within the team and deadlines to be adhered to.

The assessment checklist mirrors the monitoring spreadsheet maintained for each of the three local authorities. Within the folder structure there is a separate folder for each local authority and within that a separate folder set up for each team member which ensures a complete audit trail per application.

Walkthrough testing was undertaken with key staff to review the processing procedure. During this, a test of key controls for a sample of one main scheme and one discretionary scheme application was reviewed for each of the three local authorities within the Partnership. These 6 applications were all evidenced as being assessed, approved and paid within the national or locally agreed eligibility criteria. All payments were made accurately and in a timely way.

A further 10% sample check was undertaken of paid claims across the main scheme and discretionary scheme for each local authority within the Partnership. These attribute based tests were designed to assess whether the following application controls were adhered to;

- the application submission date met the time limit;
- the applicant met the residency criteria;
- where applicable, the T&T ID had been verified;
- the payment was made to a bank account matching the applicant's name;
- the payment was made by the partnership within 3 working days of the application approval.

We found 100% compliance with those controls designed and implemented by Partnership management to manage the Test & Trace support system with one exception as follows:

- of the 59 claims sampled, 1 payment was made outside of the 3 day limit. However when this was followed up with management it was confirmed that the approved claim had been received in time but had been omitted from the payment run. The matter was immediately rectified after the applicant made contact.

We concluded that this was an oversight, immediately addressed once identified. As such, we have not raised a recommendation or improvement point.

Conclusion

Our testing has enabled us to conclude that in the majority of cases, applications and payments are being proceeded by the Partnership accurately and in a timely manner.

3. Appendices

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Appendix 1 – Staff involved and documents reviewed

Staff involved


- Sally O'Hanlon, Head of Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits Partnership
- Storme Coop, Benefits Operational Manager
- Emma Weaver, Benefits Team Leader
- Bonnie Kipling, Senior Benefits Officer

Documents reviewed

- HM Government Guidance – claiming financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme
- NHS Test and Trace Support Payment – Processing Applications Training Pack (undated)
- Briefing Note Test and Trace Payment Scheme – Discretionary Element (March 2021)
- Briefing Note Test and Trace Payment Scheme – fundamental changes (March 2021)
- Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme Assessor Checklist Main Scheme (v1.2)
- Test and Trace Process Map
- Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme – Assessor Checklist (Discretionary Scheme)
- Monitoring spreadsheets; Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Council, Harborough District Council and North West Leicestershire District Council
- Ascendant system reports
- Test and Trace Expenditure Sheets

Appendix 2 – Our assurance levels

The table below shows the levels of assurance we provide and guidelines for how these are arrived at. We always exercise professional judgement in determining assignment assurance levels, reflective of the circumstances of each individual assignment.

Rating	Description
Significant assurance	<p>Overall, we have concluded that, in the areas examined, the risk management activities and controls are suitably designed to achieve the risk management objectives required by management.</p> <p>These activities and controls were operating with sufficient effectiveness to provide significant assurance that the related risk management objectives were achieved during the period under review.</p> <p>Might be indicated by no weaknesses in design or operation of controls and only IMPROVEMENT recommendations.</p>
 Significant assurance with some improvement required	<p>Overall, we have concluded that in the areas examined, there are only minor weaknesses in the risk management activities and controls designed to achieve the risk management objectives required by management.</p> <p>Those activities and controls that we examined were operating with sufficient effectiveness to provide reasonable assurance that the related risk management objectives were achieved during the period under review.</p> <p>Might be indicated by minor weaknesses in design or operation of controls and only LOW rated recommendations.</p>
Partial assurance with improvement required	<p>Overall, we have concluded that, in the areas examined, there are some moderate weaknesses in the risk management activities and controls designed to achieve the risk management objectives required by management.</p> <p>Those activities and controls that we examined were operating with sufficient effectiveness to provide partial assurance that the related risk management objectives were achieved during the period under review.</p> <p>Might be indicated by moderate weaknesses in design or operation of controls and one or more MEDIUM or HIGH rated recommendations.</p>
No assurance	<p>Overall, we have concluded that, in the areas examined, the risk management activities and controls are not suitably designed to achieve the risk management objectives required by management.</p> <p>Those activities and controls that we examined were not operating with sufficient effectiveness to provide reasonable assurance that the related risk management objectives were achieved during the period under review</p> <p>Might be indicated by significant weaknesses in design or operation of controls and several HIGH rated recommendations.</p>

Appendix 2 – Our assurance levels (cont'd)

The table below describes how we grade our audit recommendations.

Rating	Description	Possible features
High	Findings that are fundamental to the management of risk in the business area, representing a weakness in the design or application of activities or control that requires the immediate attention of management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key activity or control not designed or operating effectively ▪ Potential for fraud identified ▪ Non-compliance with key procedures / standards ▪ Non-compliance with regulation
Medium	Findings that are important to the management of risk in the business area, representing a moderate weakness in the design or application of activities or control that requires the immediate attention of management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Important activity or control not designed or operating effectively ▪ Impact is contained within the department and compensating controls would detect errors ▪ Possibility for fraud exists ▪ Control failures identified but not in key controls ▪ Non-compliance with procedures / standards (but not resulting in key control failure)
Low	Findings that identify non-compliance with established procedures, or which identify changes that could improve the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the activity or control but which are not vital to the management of risk in the business area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minor control design or operational weakness ▪ Minor non-compliance with procedures / standards
Improvement	Items requiring no action but which may be of interest to management or which represent best practice advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information for management ▪ Control operating but not necessarily in accordance with best practice



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Leicestershire Partnership Revenues & Benefits

2022/23 Proposed Budget

Joint Committee

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Management Board of the draft budget for 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the 2022/23 budget proposals for the Partnership is approved for agreement by the by the Joint Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The timetables for budget setting for the Partnership is that the budget will normally be approved prior to the 31st January each year.

Budget overview

3.2 In preparing this draft budget for 2022/23 the following factors and assumptions have been taken into account:

- Actual spend for 2021/22 has been used as an indicator where relevant.
- A provision has been made on salaries of a 1.75% pay award based on the current establishment provided by each Partner.
- In terms of general inflation, no provision has been made other than for contractual increases at RPI.
- Salary costs also include additional costs associated to pension contributions and annual pay increments due during 2022/23.

The draft 2022/23 budget shows an increase of £193,810 for the Partnership (net of other body contributions) and is detailed below (Table 1).

3.3 The main cause of the changes in the 2022/23 budget is due to moving from a 2% vacancy factor to a 5% factor and employer costs in relation to increased pay costs including NI and pension contributions. There is also pressure from the IT service costs. These are given in table 3.

TABLE 1 Expenditure / Income Type	2021/2022 Budget (Original Budget)	2021/2022 Budget (Revised)	2022/23 Draft Budget (5% Vacancy Factor)	Increase/ Decrease on 2021/22 Original Budget	2021/2022 Budget (Revised Budget)
		£	£		
Employees	2,698,460	2,743,086	2,826,560	128,100	83,474
Premises Related Expenditure	97,220	97,220	98,220	1,000	1,000
Transport Related Expenditure	20,000	20,000	15,000	-5,000	-5,000
Supplies & Services	853,190	858,710	922,900	69,710	64,190
Central & Administrative Exp	31,200	31,200	31,200	0	0
Total Expenditure	3,700,070	3,750,216	3,893,880	193,810	143,664
Partner Contributions	-3,647,720	-3,568,428	-3,874,880	-227,160	-306,452
Contributions from Other Bodies	-49,000	-49,000	-19,000	30,000	30,000
Contributions from Reserves	-3,350	-88,162	0	3,350	88,162
Contributions from Reserves - C/fwds		-44,626		0	44,626
Total Funding	-3,700,070	-3,750,216	-3,893,880	-193,810	-143,664
Net (Income)/Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0

3.4 After allowing for a 5% vacancy factor, the budget for the Partnership will increase expenditure by £193,810.

Partner Contributions

3.7 Partner contributions have been calculated based on the budget and split in accordance with the Partnership Agreement: The only exception to this split is:

- Search and liability expenses which are charged to each partner based on activity. Partners will be billed quarterly for actual costs incurred and will receive any recovered income directly into their own General Fund

Based on this methodology, the estimated contributions for each partner are detailed below for a budget with a vacancy factor at 5%. The impact of Covid is still placing pressure on the partnership, there it may mean savings might not be delivered as hoped.

Table 2 Allocation method %	Total	Other Bodies	HBBC 37.32%	HDC 28.87%	NWL 33.81%
Total Partnership Contributions excluding Searches and Liability Orders	3,827,280		1,428,338	1,104,942	1,294,000
Searches	8,700		2,070	1,660	4,970
Liability Order Expenses	38,900		13,240	12,730	12,930
Total contribution (A)	3,874,880		1,443,648	1,119,332	1,311,900
Contributions from Other Bodies	19,000	19,000	0	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	0		0	0	0
Total contribution 2022/23	3,893,880	19,000	1,443,648	1,119,332	1,311,900
2021/22 Revised Contribution (B)	-3,568,428		-1,329,289	-1,030,848	-1,208,291
Contributions from Other Bodies	-49,000	-49,000	0	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	-3,350		-1,250	-967	-1,133
Additional Contribution from Reserves	-79,292		-29,591	-22,892	-26,809
Total funding and contribution 2021/22	-3,700,070	-49,000	-1,360,130	-1,054,707	-1,236,233
Difference – Increase/(Decrease)	193,810	-30,000	83,518	64,625	75,667
Actual Increase from requested contribution in year (A)-(B)	306,452	0	114,359	88,484	103,609

3.7.1 The change in contributions is mainly due to staff cost changes, see table 3 below.

3.7.2

Table 2: Cost pressures	£
Pay Award	36,610
NI & Pension Contribution	62,740
Increments, Spinal point increase year on year	6,500
1.75% pay award not budgeted for in 2021/22 - Replaced £250 Lump Sum	22,200
Contributions Reserves/other	3,350
Change in ICT Arrangements (Under review)	64,000
Loss of Income from Oadby & Wigston to cover Capita Costs	30,000
Estimated Reduction in Capita Costs as Oadby & Wigston no longer included in cost	-20,000
Other Budget Variances (Mostly inflation pf 3%	21,760
Net	227,160
Loss of contributions from reserves	79,292
Invoiced contributions pressure	306,452
Partner Contributions (Actual increase)	-227,160

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of budgets

Detail Code Name	2021/2022 Budget (OR)	2021/2022 Budget (LA)	2022/23 Budget 5% vacancy Factor
Salaries - Full Time	2,686,630	2,686,630	2,814,680
Shared Service Employees- Salaries	0	44,626	0
Criminal Records Bureau Checks	800	800	820
Training Incl Conferences & Seminars	10,000	10,000	10,000
Professional Subscriptions	1,030	1,030	1,060
Electricity	4,700	4,700	4,850
Gas	2,900	2,900	2,990
Rent	53,450	53,450	53,450
Services Charges	14,540	14,540	15,170
NNDR	17,240	17,240	17,240
Water Metered	1,730	1,730	1,780
Caretaking & Cleaning	2,660	2,660	2,740
Mileage	20,000	20,000	15,000
Computer Software Maintenance & Upgrade	482,970	482,970	535,450
Computer Consumables	5,000	5,000	5,000
Flexible Working	33,360	33,360	33,350
Clothes & Uniforms	600	600	600
Printing & Stationery	16,940	16,940	16,940
Library (Other)	0	0	0
Consultancy Fees	2,000	2,000	2,000
Legal Fees	0	0	0
Audit Fees	6,800	6,800	7,010
Liability Order Expenses	38,900	38,900	38,900
Postages	15,500	15,500	16,280
Virtual Mail Room	219,860	219,860	230,850
Telephone	6,760	6,760	11,970
Mobile Telephone	1,550	1,550	1,600
Remote Access	5,000	10,520	5,000
Subsistence	500	500	500
Travel Arrangements	500	500	500
Subscriptions	7,250	7,250	7,250
Company Searches	8,700	8,700	8,700
Room Hire & Expenses	0	0	0
Other - Miscellaneous	1,000	1,000	1,000
S151 Officer - Shared Services	12,000	12,000	12,000
Accountancy Support - Shared Services	6,000	6,000	6,000
Democratic Services - Shared Services	1,200	1,200	1,200
Monitoring Officer - Shared Services	12,000	12,000	12,000

Total Costs	3,700,070	3,750,216	3,893,880
Miscellaneous Income	(49,000)	(49,000)	(19,000)
Contributions from Outside Bodies	(3,647,720)	(3,568,428)	(3,874,880)
Contribution from Reserves	(3,350)	(82,642)	0
Use of Reserves for CFwds	0	(5,520)	0
FERIS	0	(44,626)	0
Contributions and funding Total	(3,700,070)	(3,750,216)	(3,893,880)



SERVICE PLAN 2022/23

The Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits

CONTENTS

1. COUNCILS' AIMS AND PRIORITIES
2. OVERALL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE
3. NATIONAL & LOCAL AGENDA ITEMS
4. KEY PROJECTS – OUR IMPROVEMENT PLAN
5. CUSTOMERS
6. PERFORMANCE
7. RISKS

1 Councils' Aims and Priorities:



- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3

Harborough District Council

The Place: a safe enterprising and vibrant place
The People: a healthy, inclusive, and empowered community
Your Council: creative, proactive, and efficient



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

People: Helping people to stay healthy, active, and protected from harm.
Places: Creating clean and attractive places to live and work.
Prosperity: Encouraging growth, attracting businesses improving skills and supporting regeneration.



- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3
- Priority 4
- Priority 5

North West Leicestershire District Council

Supporting Coalville to be a more vibrant, family town
Our communities are safe, healthy, and connected
Local people live in high quality, affordable homes
Supporting businesses and helping people into local jobs
Developing a clean and green district

2. OVERALL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE	To provide a high-quality Revenues and Benefits service to our residents and businesses at an economical cost and in accordance with the principles of continuous improvement and changing customer requirements.
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To assess and pay Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support accurately and promptly. 2) As part of our DWP liaison role to ensure all referrals are made in accordance with the requirements of the DWP. 3) To issue accurate and prompt Council Tax and NNDR bills to maximise collection rates, and to deal appropriately with non-payers to minimise arrears, whilst supporting those in need . 4) To provide residents with a choice of how to engage with services via access channels that ensure customer choice, safety and are covid compliant 5) To widely publicise the availability of business rate grants, discounts, exemptions, reliefs, and housing benefit, and to provide proactive advice on all Revenues and Benefits matters. 6) To ensure that the service observes all statutory requirements including those governing the administration of Revenues and Benefits, Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Human Rights and Health and Safety. 7) To adhere to our commitment to promote equality and diversity among our residents and staff. 8) To provide and develop innovative services for all customers. 9) To communicate effectively with our customers and stakeholders, developing our services to meet their changing needs. 10) To provide accurate and timely services for our external and internal customers. 11) To maximize collection rates whilst having due regard to the difficulties faced by some customers in making their payments. 12) Develop our services through well trained, empowered and committed staff who are proud to work for the Leicestershire Revenue and Benefits Service. 13) To treat all our customers consistently and fairly. 14) To provide Value for Money services by delivering both financial and processing efficiencies.

Scope of services provided by the partnership	
Council Tax Billing, Recovery & Enforcement	Housing Benefit administration
NNDR Billing Enforcement (including BIDs for both HBBC and NWLDC)	Council Tax Reduction Scheme Administration (Council Tax Support)
The investigation of Council Tax Support Fraud	Housing Benefit Overpayment enforcement
Provision of customer support and guidance	Housing Benefit advice and support
DWP Liaison in respect of Housing Benefit Fraud	Administration and payment of business grants to those impacted by the pandemic
Payment of Test & Trace Isolation Support Payments	Administration of hardship awards and reliefs in any discipline
Certification & audit of grant claims	Response to covid related initiatives as required

3. National & Local Agenda Items

There are new and existing matters that will need to be addressed during 2022 to meet both central government objectives and the Partnerships. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the way we currently deliver our services and the need to switch resources to deliver new initiatives, that continue to emerge without notice or planning. This has a significant impact on the service, and maintaining all business as usual activities to our communities.

The items are:

1. Supporting Businesses through grants payments (most recently the Omicron Grant Scheme)
2. Administration of the Covid-19 Additional relief Fund (CARF)
3. The financial impact on individuals and businesses
4. Expanded retail discount (business rates holiday)
5. Payment of Household support grants
6. Test and Trace Isolation Support Payments
7. The Housing Benefit Award Accuracy initiative
8. Reconciliation, post payment assurance and debt recovery linked to grants work

9. Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) (started in 2021, though not planned)
10. Changes to service delivery brought about by unplanned changes beyond our control
11. New Business Improvement District (BID) for NWLDC

Supporting communities

A number of national measures have been introduced to support businesses and individuals because of the pandemic. It is important to note that the partnership are administering the mandatory grant schemes, the discretionary schemes are dealt with by the host authorities. This is in addition to our business as usual operation.

There are currently:

- Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)
- Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant (OHLG)
- Test and Trace Isolation Support Payment
- Expanded retail discount
- Administering an element of the Household Support Payment

The financial impact on individuals

In 2020/21 Central Government announced an additional £500m exceptional hardship funding to support working age council taxpayers which meant that all working age recipients of LCTS (both existing and new) received a reduction of up to £150 on their council tax demand.

Leicestershire County Council have taken a decision that £60 of funding will be awarded to all working age CTS claimants. Whilst the funding has been issued to LCC, this element will be administered by the districts.

From Monday 28 September 2020, people in England were required by law to self-isolate if they tested positive for coronavirus or are contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service. To support those affected a Test and Trace payment scheme was set up which allowed them to claim for a one-off payment of £500 to support them during their isolation period. The scheme was originally intended to end on 31 January 2022 but it has been extended to at least the 31 March 2022.

We have seen and continue to see an increasing number of Council Tax and Business Rates payers experiencing difficulties to meet their liabilities, this impacts on our levels of recovery, performance and the volume of contact with the LRBP and our colleagues in customer services.

During 2021/22 all business as usual activities recommenced, these continue whilst administering the above.

Changes to Service Delivery

The Housing Benefit Award Accuracy initiative

The Housing Benefit Award Accuracy is a new initiative from the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) to ensure awards of Housing Benefit are correct, and that those who are entitled, get the right amount.

From 1st April 2022 all LA's will be required to undertake mandated activities to identify unreported changes of circumstances. This includes a full case review where we will need to contact the claimant who will need to supply all their current details and evidence so that we may check that their a Housing Benefit award is correct.

4 KEY PROJECTS

In addition to the 'business as usual' projects we are currently working on a number of new projects during 2022/23

Description	Key actions	Responsible Officer	Critical Support
Business case on an invest to save basis for the following: e-ndr e-automation (e-claim/e-cics) Connect & Serve for customer services	Review and provide business case for the descriptor Review case with a view to a move to e-automation Review and provide business case for the descriptor	L Butler (LB) A Hough(AH) SOHanlon (SOH)	PMT, Systems team, Capita Benefit Teamleaders, PMT, Capita PMT, Systems team, strategic CS group, Capita

XL-print	Review operation & Scope	AHough	PMT, Systems team
Extending services available to customers to enable self service	To include; E-Claim E-Change of circumstances Discount & Exemption module	Scoop (SC) /LB	Academy/Systems/IT
Automation of benefit file transfers into LA systems	Testing to ensure that DWP data is updated as required and not compromised	SOH	Academy/Systems
Compliance with GDPR and data removal/retention	Testing and removal of data	LB/SC	GDPR officer/Legal/systems
Ascendant	Review continued use & costings	SOH	Legal, Systems, PMT
Destin	Review all offers, and if appropriate provide business case to MB	SC	PMT, Systems, LRBP Teamleaders
Promotion & marketing the partnership	As directed by Management Board & Joint Committee	SOH	Comms team /Legal/finance
Consideration of a single employer	Project Delivery as led by CEX	SOH	All partners
Working with potential new partner (s) to onboard and put together business case	As descriptor	SOH	MB, PMT, legal, HR, finance
Accommodation	Work with HBBC programme team with regard to the possibility of moving from the Atkins Building to the Hub. Implementing the agile working arrangements	SOH	HBBC FOM Project team, PMT, LRBP staff

5. CUSTOMERS

Service Standards

- The Leicestershire Partnership aims to demonstrate its commitment to equality, diversity and fairness by:
 - Providing services which are accessible to all and which meet customer needs. We do this by providing information in different languages, in large type or on tape or using British sign language where appropriate.
 - Promoting and demonstrating fairness and equality of opportunity in the employment of staff. This is achieved through a corporate approach to recruitment and staff retention that aims to be inclusive.
 - Being proactive in the promotion of equality and diversity with each council and all its operations.
 - Maintaining and improving turnaround times for new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support

6 PERFORMANCE

All targets will be reviewed following the 2021/22 out-turn. The setting of targets for the 2022/2023 financial year will be reported back to Joint Committee for approval

7 Risks

It is our intention to manage our business risks in a consistent and cost-effective manner.

Risk	Mitigating Actions in place	Actions put in place	Owner
Insufficient Business Continuity arrangements/plans: could	Business continuity plans in place Risk Assessment to prioritise resource against	Following Pandemic vast majority of officers working from home and office attendance is at a minimum. Revised procedures/protocols put in place to facilitate this. We have	SC/LB

prevent ability to deliver services	priority/critical services using generic corporate risk assessment	reviewed a number of processes that deliver the same outcome but do not require an actual visit or for staff to attend the office (ie making payments remotely)	
Failure to keep up to date or not complying with latest legislation and regulations such as Health & Safety policy could lead to damage to reputation and potential prosecution	Implement revised requirements of new H&S Policy once approved by Council Attend training and adopt policy Enforcement of existing H&S policy and procedures	Each partner authority has their own policies which are reviewed and implemented as required Revised protocols concerning use of Atkins building and office attendance during Pandemic in place and strictly observed Risk assessments also updated to include role of visiting officers	SC/LB
Failure to improve sickness absence: causes reduced capacity leading to failure/inability to deliver services/objectives efficiently	Continue to set absence targets and monitor against targets Compliance with Management of Absence arrangements Monthly monitoring of absence statistics provided by HR Setting of targets. Continued focus on long-term absence management and alternative options i.e. rehabilitation	The appropriate sickness absence monitoring framework is adhered to and reported monthly to the Management Board	SC/LB
Reduced benefits subsidy from Central Govt. as a result of poor performance: will have significant impact on reserves and reputation for the authority	Introduced a Quality Checking Procedure within Benefits	Subsidy audit will be undertaken remotely , with an action plan to follow	SC
Effects of the pandemic on collection and increase in Benefit Claims: need to deal with new claims and change of circumstance as quickly as possible to relieve financial hardship and avoid benefit overpayments	Regularly report on performance to Management Board.	As a result of the pandemic a number of Centrally funded initiatives have been introduced including test and trace isolation payments Additionally, we continue to promote the availability of DHP and Council tax Support	SC/LB

Failure to bring projects in on time	Effective Project management and forward planning of available resources	Adherence to project timetables	SOH
Partners do not involve LRBP in planning stage of projects, therefore meaning either BAU is compromised, or we are unable to support partners	All partners contribute to the LRBP service plan effectively	Following repeated incidents, all asked to contribute to the service plan, direct requests for resource via HoP	LRBP Management Board

How?

- Maintain a robust and consistent risk management approach that will identify and effectively manage strategic, operational, partnership and project risks
- Ensure accountabilities, roles and responsibilities for managing risks are clearly defined and communicated
- Consider risk as an integral part of service improvement planning, key decision-making processes, and project and partnership governance
- Communicate risk information effectively through a clear reporting framework
- Increase understanding and expertise in risk management through targeted training and the sharing of best practice.

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Leicestershire Partnership Revenues & Benefits

Financial Performance to December 2021

Joint Committee

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Joint Committee of the financial performance of the Partnership for the period April to December 2021.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the financial performance of the Partnership be noted.

3. INFORMATION

Budget Position

- 3.1. The financial position of the Partnership has been outlined in **Appendix 1** to this report. The key headlines have been detailed below for information.
- 3.2. As at 31 December 2021, the Partnership had a net overspend on the budget of £196,510. After adjusting for timing difference of £222,638 the remaining net underspend is £26,128. The timing differences will be billed to partners following the quarter end.

Table 1	Budget December 2021	Actual to December 2021	Variance to Date	Timing Differences	Variance after Timing Differences
INCOME	(£2,796,602)	(£2,123,980)	£672,622	(£619,271)	£53,350
EXPENDITURE	£2,756,793	£2,280,681	(£476,112)	£396,633	(£79,479)
Over / (Under) Spend	(£39,809)	£156,701	£196,510	(£222,638)	(£26,128)

- 3.3 The key variances to the end of December 2020 to bring to the attention of the Joint Committee are:
- Salaries are underspent by £7,000
 - Postage savings of £10,000, and
 - Car allowances are underspent by £10,000
 - Liability Expense £17,000 for reduced summons costs
- 3.4 There is a direct link between partner contributions and expenditure incurred and therefore partner contributions have been adjusted by £79,000 to reflect the actual expenditure to date.
- 3.5 The timing difference are due to the first quarter invoices not being issued and payroll costs not yet transferred for inclusion.

Appendix 1: Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits Partnership Monitoring Report to 31st December 2021

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Expenditure / Income Type	2020/21 Latest Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Timing Differences	Variance after Timing Differences		2021/22 Total Estimate (Original)		2021/22 Total Estimate (Revised)
	£	£	£	£		£		£
Employees	2,022,926	1,619,587	392,739	10,601		2,698,460		2,698,460
Premises Related Expenditure	83,228	85,201	0	-1,973		97,220		97,220
Transport Related Expenditure	15,005	3,946	1,290	9,770		20,000		20,000
Supplies & Services	578,764	549,447	2,605	26,712		853,190		858,710
Central & Administrative Exp	23,400	22,500	0	900		31,200		31,200
Revenue Income	-2,699,523	-2,000,901	-619,271	-79,350		-3,700,070		-3,620,778
Approved Cfwds	-37,610	-37,610	0	0		0		-50,146
Transfer from Reserves	-59,469	-59,469	0	0		0		-79,292
Transfer from Reserves Covid Grant review	0	-26,000		26,000				
Other Expenditure - FERIS	33,470	0		33,470		0		44,626
Other Income - FERIS	0	0		0		0		0
				0		0		0
Sum:	-39,809	156,701	-222,638	26,128		0		0

Timing Differences

	HDC	NWLDC	HBBC	Total
Salaries - December 2021	177,549	215,190		392,739
Mileage & Disturbance Costs - December 2021	226	1,063		1,290
Supplies & Services - December 2021	231	2,374		2,605
Contributions - December 2021	-171,179	-210,285	-237,807	-619,271
	6,827	8,342	-237,807	-222,638

Explanations

	Variance at 30/06/21(Over) / Under Spend £	Year End £	Explanation £5k+
Salaries	7,000		Underspend due to a number of vacancies
Training	4,000		Variance > £5k
Premises Related Expenditure	-2,000		Variance > £5k
Car Allowances	10,000		Travelling expenses lower than anticipated due to reduced travel relating to COVID
Computer Software Maintenance & Upgrade	5,000		Variance > £5k
Computer Consumables	3,000		Variance > £5k
Flexible working	3,000		Variance > £5k
Printing & Stationery	7,000		Printing costs lower than anticipated
Postages	10,000		Postage costs incurred later than anticipated
Audit Fees (Additional Fees)	-26,000		Additional Audit Fees incurred relating to Grant verifications
Audit Fees (annual Fees)	4,000		Variance > £5k
Liability Expenses	17,000		The Courts have reduced the summons cost fee per case
Minor Variances	4,000		Variance > £5k
Central & Administrative Exp	0		Variance > £5k
Transfer from Reserves Covid Grant review	26,000		Transfer from Reserves to cover additional audit costs associated grant verification as a result of COVID
Contributions	-79,000		There is a direct link between partner contributions and expenditure incurred and therefore partner contributions have been adjusted to reflect the actual expenditure to date.
Net Other Expenditure & Income - FERIS	33,000		Fraud and Error Reduction Incentive Scheme (FERIS) A budget of £45k has been bfwd from 2020/21
	26,000	0	



PAPER

Revenue and Benefit Service

Performance Summary Report

December 2021

Caseload Analysis													
Caseload Data													
Position at:	Position at 31/3/2018	2017/18 In Year Movement	Poition at 31/3/19	2018/19 In Year Movement	Position at 31/3/20	2019/20 In Year Movement	Position at 31/3/21	2020/21 In Year Movement	2021/22			Overall Movement since April 2011	
Council Tax Dwellings									Current Position	In Year Movement	In Year Percentage Movement		
HBBC	49,906	418	50,359	453	50,601	242	50,852	251	51,093	241	0.5%	4,921	9.7%
HDC	39,089	584	39,739	650	40,532	793	41,554	1,022	42,433	879	2.1%	6,510	15.7%
NWLDC	44,207	1,003	44,940	733	45,564	624	46,277	713	47,007	730	1.6%	6,981	15.1%
Totals	133,202		135,038		136,697		138,683	Current Total:	140,533			Total Movement:	18,412
NDR Rated Assessments									Current Position	In Year Movement	In Year Percentage		
HBBC	3,162	80	3,181	19	3,179	-2	3,224	45	3,245	21	0.65%	369	11.4%
HDC	3,040	91	3,086	46	3,123	37	3,189	66	3,215	26	0.82%	599	18.8%
NWLDC	3,417	130	3,440	23	3,519	79	3,563	44	3,549	-14	-0.39%	367	10.3%
Totals	9,619		9,707		9,821		9,976	Current Total:	10,009			Total Movement:	1,335
HB/CTLS Live Caseload									Current Caseload	In Year Movement	Caseload %		
HBBC	5,783	-282	5,579	-204	5,321	-258	5,517	196	5,292	-225		-1,808	-32.8%
					Current Caseload Analysis	Joint HB/CTS			2,092	1,975	-117	37%	
						HB only			360	306	-54	6%	
						CTS only			3,065	3,011	-54	57%	
HDC	3,388	-169	3,243	-145	3,185	-58	3,408	223	3,246	-162		-943	-29.1%
					Current Caseload Analysis	Joint HB/CTS			1,411	1,341	-70	6%	
						HB only			211	190	-21	41%	
						CTS only			1,786	1,715	-71	53%	
NWLDC	5,696	-329	5,413	-283	5,118	-295	5,276	158	5,042	-234		-2,145	-42.5%
					Current Caseload Analysis	Joint HB/CTS			2,406	2,266	-140	4%	
						HB only			237	229	-8	45%	
						CTS only			2,633	2,547	-86	51%	
Totals	14,867		14,235		13,624			Current Total:	13,580			Total Movement:	-4,896

Dashboards Performance Summaries for each Council follows below:

Harborough District Council													2021/22	Year -End 2021/22 target	2020/21 Same month cumulative comparison
BENEFITS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Cumulative		
In month: Right Time (days)	12.3	10.9	12.3	7.8	7.1	7.4	5.9	6.6	6.1				8.5	11	
Position for 2020/21	4.4	7.5	5.4	6.4	6.6	6.6	n/a	7.2	7.3	11.1	2.7	6.7			6.4
In month: New Claims (Days)	16.8	19.3	15.9	12.0	12.4	17.1	14.0	15.2	14.0				16.2	15	
Position for 2020/21	14.7	15.4	11.7	12.7	15.4	15.4	n/a	13.7	11.0	16.7	14.8	17.3			13.9
In month: Change Events (Days)	9.3	10.1	12.0	7.2	6.2	6.1	5.1	5.6	4.5				7.9	6	
Position for 2020/21	3.2	5.7	4.3	4.4	4.9	4.9	n/a	5.4	6.5	10	2.2	4.8			4.6
Right Time profiled in month target 20/21	8.9	6.9	8.6	7.0	7.8	6.7	8.0	8.9	10.1	9.1	2.7	7.9			
New Claims profiled in month target 20/21	17.4	15.7	20.3	15.8	17.3	14.9	17.5	15.5	16.6	16.8	12.7	16.3			
Change Events profiled in month target 20/21	7.6	5.9	7.4	5.8	6.0	5.5	6.9	8.1	9.1	8.0	2.3	6.1			
COUNCIL TAX	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In Year (%)	10.9%	19.8%	28.9%	38.0%	47.1%	56.3%	65.4%	74.5%	83.5%				83.5%	98.1%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	10.6%	19.5%	28.6%	37.5%	46.7%	56.1%	65.2%	74.5%	83.6%	92.6%	95.3%	97.6%			
Arrears Reduction (£m) end of month	£3.3m	£3.0m	£2.9m	£2.8m	£2.7m	£2.6m	£2.5m	£2.4m	£2.4m				£2.4m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21	£2.5m	£2.5m	£2.4m	£2.4m	£2.3m	£2.3m	£2.1m	£2.0m	£2.0m	£1.9m	£1.9m	£1.8m			
NON DOMESTIC RATES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In Year (%)	8.3%	16.5%	24.2%	33.5%	42.7%	52.2%	61.4%	72.6%	81.4%				81.4%	99.2%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	7.1%	13.9%	22.5%	30.6%	38.4%	47.5%	56.5%	65.7%	74.1%	81.5%	86.2%	92.0%			
Arrears Reduction (£m) end of month	£3.4m	£3.1m	£2.7m	£2.6m	£2.1m	£1.6m	£1.2m	£0.49m	£0.44m				£0.44m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21	£0.45m	£1.6m	£0.49m	£0.69m	£0.59m	£0.50m	£0.49m	£0.41m	£0.46m	£0.55m	£0.85m	£0.45m			
HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
HB Overpayments outstanding	£0.76m	£0.74m	£0.74m	£0.75m	£0.75m	£0.75m	£0.75m	£0.75m	£0.74m				£0.74m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21 (£m)	£0.82m	£0.81m	£0.81m	£0.80m	£0.79m	£0.78m	£0.78m	£0.76m	£0.77m	£0.76m	£0.76m	£0.75m			
HB Overpayments Recovered end of month	1%	3%	5%	7%	9%	11%	11%	13%	14%				14%	31%	
This year sprofiled target															
Position for 2020/21	2%	5%	6%	9%	11%	12%	13%	16%	17%	19%	20%	27%			
FRAUD	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
CTLS Sanctions gained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0	0	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council													Cumulative e2021/22	Year-End 2021/22 Target	2020/21 Same month cumulative comparison
BENEFITS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In month: Right Time (days)	11.0	10.7	12.5	8.7	7.6	7.1	5.6	6.4	6.0				8.4	11	
Position for 2020/21	4.4	6.7	6.4	6.2	6.3	7.0	7.0	7.4	7.5	12.1	7.0	7.0			6.5
In month: New Claims (Days)	21.5	19.8	15.4	12.7	14.4	17.1	13.5	15.4	10.2				15.8	15	
Position for 2020/21	13.6	13.0	11.3	10.6	12.9	14.6	13.9	14.2	14.5	16.1	14.0	14.0			13.1
In month: Change Events (Days)	9.3	9.7	12.3	8.1	6.4	5.4	4.7	5.4	5.3				7.7	6	
Position for 2020/21	3.5	5.5	5.5	5.2	4.8	5.5	5.4	5.8	5.8	11.3	4	4			5.0
Right Time profiled in month target 20/21	8.3	6.9	8.9	6.1	6.7	7.4	6.9	8.4	9.2	8.5	2.6	7.8			
New Claims profiled in month target 20/21	18.1	14.3	15.4	11.7	12.8	14.2	13.3	14.7	12.5	13.3	12.1	13.2			
Change Events profiled in month target 20/21	7.4	6.1	8.1	5.4	5.8	6.3	5.9	7.5	8.6	7.9	2.2	6.7			
COUNCIL TAX	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In Year (%)	10.7%	19.7%	28.8%	37.9%	47.0%	56.2%	65.4%	74.5%	83.4%				83.4%	97.6%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	10.4%	19.2%	28.3%	37.2%	46.4%	55.9%	64.9%	74.2%	83.2%	92.3%	95.0%	97.2%			
In Year Arrears Reduction (£) end of month	£4.8m	£4.6m	£4.5m	£4.4m	£4.2m	£4.1m	£4.1m	£4.0m	£3.9m				£3.9m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21	£3.7m	£3.6m	£3.6m	£3.6m	£3.5m	£3.4m	£3.4m	£3.3m	£3.3m	£3.2m	£3.1m	£3.0m			
NON DOMESTIC RATES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In Year (%)	10.8%	19.9%	26.2%	35.1%	43.8%	51.6%	58.8%	67.2%	76.1%				76.1%	98.8%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	9.8%	16.8%	24.3%	33.1%	41.3%	50.2%	59.4%	67.9%	76.3%	84.5%	87.1%	90.5%			
Arrears Reduction (£m) end of month	£2.9m	£2.8m	£2.3m	£2.2m	£2.1m	£2.0m	£2.0m	£1.7m	£2.0m				£2.0m	INFO	
Position for: 2019/20	£0.66m	£0.70m	£0.58m	£0.63m	£0.63m	£0.57m	£0.57m	£0.55m	£0.57m	£0.58m	£0.55m	£0.51m			
HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
HB Overpayments outstanding end of month	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.2m				£1.2m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21 £m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.1m	£1.1m			
HB Overpayments Recovered	2%	4%	6%	8%	9%	13%	14%	17%	18%				18%	36%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	2%	3%	6%	9%	10%	12%	13%	15%	17%	18%	21%	23%			
FRAUD	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
CTLS Sanctions gained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0	0	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			

North West Leicestershire District Council													2021/22	Year End 2021/22 target	2020/21 Same month cumulative comparison
BENEFITS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Cumulative		
In month: Right Time (days)	13.0	11.1	12.1	8.7	8.0	7.2	6.1	6.6	7.7				8.9	11	
Position for 2020/21	4.3	6.9	6.6	6.0	6.3	6.8	6.9	7.7	n/a	12.8	2.4	6			N/A
In month: New Claims (Days)	21.2	19.7	19.2	13.1	15.1	14.5	14.6	15.2	17.0				16.7	15	
Position for 2020/21	15.2	14.9	13.1	12.3	13.9	14.6	12.9	13.5	n/a	17.7	15.1	15			N/A
In month: Change Events (Days)	11.8	10.3	11.5	8.1	6.8	6.0	5.2	5.5	5.8				8.2	6	
Position for 2020/21	3.3	5.3	5.3	4.6	4.8	5.1	5.3	6.4	n/a	11.7	1.9	4			N/A
Right Time profiled in month target 20/21	9.6	7.5	9.4	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.8	8.8	9.7	7.5	2.4	7.5			
New Claims profiled in month target 20/21	17.3	16.0	18.9	15.0	14.5	14.9	15.4	13.9	17.2	14.5	11.9	13.0			
Change Events profiled in month target 20/21	8.7	6.7	8.3	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.5	8.2	8.7	6.7	2.1	6.6			
COUNCIL TAX	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In Year (%)	10.3%	19.3%	28.2%	37.1%	46.1%	55.2%	64.2%	73.4%	82.4%				82.4%	97.3%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	9.9%	18.6%	27.5%	36.6%	45.7%	54.9%	63.9%	73.0%	82.2%	91.1%	94.1%	96.6%			
Arrears Reduction (£m) end of month	£5.4m	£5.2m	£5.1m	£5.0m	£4.7m	£4.6m	£4.5m	£4.4m	£4.3m				£4.3m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21	£4.1m	£4.1m	£4.0m	£3.9m	£3.9m	£3.8m	£3.8m	£3.7m	£3.7m	£3.6m	£3.6m	£3.5m			
NON DOMESTIC RATES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
In Year (%)	9.3%	18.4%	25.9%	35.3%	43.1%	51.5%	59.8%	68.0%	74.8%				74.8%	99.0%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	9.6%	14.1%	20.6%	30.2%	40.9%	50.3%	61.9%	70.4%	80.6%	87.6%	92.0%	96.6%			
Arrears Reduction (£m) end of month	£2.5m	£4.3m	£3.9m	£3.2m	£4.6m	£4.3m	£4.5m	£2.7m	£2.6m				£2.6m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21	£0.71m	£1.6m	£1.6m	£1.8m	£1.6m	£0.79m	£0.74m	£0.71m	£0.70m	£0.74m	£0.68m	£0.64m			
HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
HB Overpayments outstanding end of month	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m				£1.2m	INFO	
Position for 2020/21 (£m)	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.2m			
HB Overpayments Recovered	1%	3%	5%	7%	8%	9%	10%	11%	12%				12%	34%	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	2%	6%	9%	11%	13%	14%	15%	17%	18%	19%	20%	22%			
FRAUD	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
CTLS Sanctions gained	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				0	0	
This years profiled target															
Position for 2020/21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			

DWP Housing Benefit Subsidy impact – ‘Local Authority Error/ Time Delay’

HBBC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Lower Threshold	£4,474	£8,504	£14,397	£18,742	£22,919	£26,913	£31,195	£35,453	£39,994			
Upper Threshold	£5,034	£9,567	£16,196	£21,085	£25,784	£30,278	£35,094	£39,884	£44,994			
Actual	£557	£1,989	£3,411	£5,507	£5,852	£6,504	£7,305	£8,881	£9,229			
Lower Tolerance	£3,918	£6,515	£10,986	£13,234	£17,066	£20,410	£23,890	£26,571	£30,765	£0	£0	£0
Upper Tolerance	£4,477	£7,578	£12,786	£15,577	£19,931	£23,774	£27,789	£31,003	£35,764	£0	£0	£0
HDC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Lower Threshold	£2,856	£5,735	£8,618	£13,592	£16,444	£19,409	£22,180	£24,939	£27,959			
Upper Threshold	£3,213	£6,452	£9,696	£15,291	£18,499	£21,835	£24,953	£28,056	£31,454			
Actual	£188	£97	£3,175	£3,276	£3,360	£3,307	£3,651	£3,652	£5,237			
Lower Tolerance	£2,668	£5,638	£5,443	£10,316	£13,083	£16,102	£18,529	£21,286	£22,722	£0	£0	£0
Upper Tolerance	£3,025	£6,355	£6,520	£12,015	£15,139	£18,528	£21,302	£24,404	£26,217	£0	£0	£0
NWLDC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Lower Threshold	£4,596	£8,759	£12,911	£19,636	£23,659	£27,689	£32,238	£36,282	£39,862			
Upper threshold	£5,170	£9,854	£14,524	£22,091	£26,617	£31,150	£36,268	£40,817	£44,845			
Actual	£1,706	£2,186	£2,604	£4,694	£15,559	£15,741	£16,958	£18,458	£18,896			
Lower Tolerance	£2,891	£6,572	£10,306	£14,942	£8,100	£11,948	£15,280	£17,824	£20,966	£0	£0	£0
Upper Tolerance	£3,464	£7,667	£11,920	£17,396	£11,058	£15,409	£19,310	£22,359	£25,949	£0	£0	£0

HB and CTLS Claim Activity 2021/22

HBBC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Cumulative Totals
(SHBE)													
New claims	162	159	146	163	146	133	162	152	100				1323
Change events	944	1427	1647	962	834	778	1453	1284	581				9910
Atlas activity	927	826	727	770	772	785	795	779	738				7119
HDC													Cumulative Totals
(SHBE)													
New claims	141	88	96	104	91	74	90	89	69				842
Change events	702	882	1116	685	540	534	923	713	342				6437
Atlas activity	611	544	507	469	477	479	509	502	494				4592
NWLDC													Cumulative Totals
(SHBE)													
New claims	178	140	141	147	135	135	140	163	119				1298
Change events	1188	1519	1673	987	835	860	1471	1275	591				10399
Atlas activity	1060	930	761	747	821	858	891	789	780				7637

Data below for same position for last year

HBBC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Cumulative Totals
(SHBE)													
New claims	209	258	194	164	146	159	168	183	146	150	n/a	n/a	1777
Change events	2033	1385	1026	760	649	772	714	793	606	739	n/a	n/a	9477
Atlas activity	1749	747	741	726	664	789	773	1713	681	1944	1477	1364	13368
HDC													Cumulative Totals
(SHBE)													
New claims	153	205	117	147	89	106	n/a	131	77	96	91	123	1335
Change events	1361	911	672	466	454	558	n/a	496	359	493	1862	685	8317
Atlas activity	1131	539	394	507	378	537	572	937	394	1183	1008	882	8462
NWLDC													Cumulative Totals
(SHBE)													
New claims	206	266	212	171	131	173	183	174	n/a	162	133	n/a	1811
Change events	2254	1348	1038	758	681	800	709	768	n/a	790	3057	n/a	12203
Atlas activity	2182	784	791	766	629	771	812	1767	668	1850	1422	n/a	12442

Sickness

Sickness position for November is given below:

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council		Annual Target 8 days	
	Month		
	November		Cumulative
Long Term	59.00		192.00
Short Term	4.00		71.50
Days lost	63.00		263.50
FTE Average	2.18 days		9.12 Days
Profiled Target Average	0.67 Days		5.36 Days
Harborough District Council		Annual Target 9 days	
	Month		
	November		Cumulative
Long Term	15.00		162.00
Short Term	0.00		72.53
Days lost	15.00		234.53
FTE Average	1.14 Days		10.09 Days
Profiled Target Average	0.75 Days		6.00 Days
North West Leicestershire District Council		Annual Target 8.5 days	
	Month		
	November		Cumulative
Long Term	33.25		33.25
Short Term	8.55		65.45
Days lost	41.80		98.70
FTE Average	1.83 days		4.33 Days
Profiled Target Average	0.71 Days		5.68 Days

Government Initiatives

Test and Trace Isolation Payments

The position for these payments at 31 December is as follows:

Harborough

Total cases paid	208	Value	£104,0000
Total paid this month	12		

Hinckley & Bosworth

Total case paid	281	Value	£140,500
Total paid this month	23		

North West Leicestershire

Total cases paid	261	Value	£130,500
Total paid this month	15		

Other Matters

Our Resources - Covid transmission

Staff absence due to the above is continuing.

Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant Scheme

On 21st December the Government announced the introduction of a grant support scheme for hospitality and leisure businesses in England.

The primary principle of the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant scheme is to support businesses that offer in-person services, where the main service and activity takes place in a fixed rate-paying premises, in the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors. The scheme provides support to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses, in recognition that the rise of the Omicron variant means that some businesses are likely to struggle over the coming weeks.

The grant scheme is **only** available to businesses who pay business rates (or receive business rate relief) and will be a one-off grant of up to £6,000 based upon the rateable value of the premises.

- Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £15,000 or under on 30 December 2021 will receive a payment of £2,667,
- Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on 30 December 2021 will receive a payment of £4,000,
- Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or over on 30 December 2021 will receive a payment of £6,000

Further guidance for local authorities has since been provided and the grant scheme was opened for applications on 5th January 2022.

Benefits Operational Team

(Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Fraud)

Speed of Processing

All 3 LA's are meeting the in-month targets for processing changes in circumstances and both HDC and NWLDC are meeting the in-month target for new claims. The focus continues to be on keeping the work up to date and reducing processing time across all 3 LA's.

LA error and Subsidy

There has been no negative impact on subsidy as all LA's are below the lower threshold for LA error.

Test and Trace Payment Scheme

There have been a number of recent changes to the isolation rules and following a meeting with the DWP it is apparent that all LA's are experiencing a significant increase in the number of claims being made. It was previously thought that the scheme would not continue beyond 31 March 22, but we are now being advised to 'watch this space'.

From 22.12.21 for positive cases, isolation can be reduced to 7 days if negative result on day 6 and then day 7, 24 hours apart. If not day 6, then day 7 & 8 or so on. Must be 2 consecutive days but payment remains the same at £500 even if can stop isolating on day 7.

Overlapping period for applications is still 10 days regardless if isolation could end on day 7.

If a parent is applying for a positive child, it doesn't matter if out of term time. Cannot expect anyone outside of household to care for a positive case. If one parent does not work, the expectation is that they care for the child unless they are too ill with Covid themselves.

Adult Social Care Infection Control fund (ICF) – applies to care home workers and care workers who visit people's homes. They cannot claim from the LA and should be directed back to their employer. However, all care workers must be vaccinated. If they aren't, they cannot claim as they wouldn't be in work anyway.

Fully vaccinated people should be rejected even if the workplace (probably a care setting) is refusing entry due to another household member testing positive.

Revenues Operational Team

(Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayments)

Council Tax

In year collection rates position is as follows:

Harborough	In-month collection target: (End of year target 98.1%)	Actual: Position last year	83.5% 83.6%
Hinckley & Bosworth	In-month collection target: (End of year target 97.6%)	Actual: Position last year:	83.4% 83.2%
North West Leicestershire	In-month collection target: (End of year target 97.3%)	Actual: Position last Year:	82.4% 82.2%

Other matters

- Key recovery documentation Issued this month

	Reminders	Statutory Final Notices	Summonses
For Harborough	12	60	1
For Hinckley & Bosworth	27	78	76
For North West Leicestershire	25	75	84

- Disabled Band Review

Next month we will commence review for those in receipt of a band reduction to ensure our records are accurate for this reduction.

- Student review

Next month for those that have not returned form discounts and/or exemptions will be removed with effect from September 2021

NNDR (Business Rates)

In year collection rates position is as follows:

Harborough	In-month collection target: (End of year target 99.2%)	Actual: Position last year:	81.4% 74.1%
Hinckley & Bosworth	In-month collection target: (End of year target 98.8%)	Actual: Position last year:	76.1% 76.3%
North West Leicestershire	In-month collection target: (End of year target 99.0%)	Actual: Position last year:	*74.8% 80.6%

*For North West Leicestershire

New collectable debit added this month amounting to £1.27m and the ratepayer will be paying this whole amount towards the end of January 2022.

Section 44a matters – new assessments

Two new assessments 21/22 charge £2m due.

- For one assessment £1.1m due current year and £1.6m for arrears, payment plan has been set up to pay this in 3 instalments to be cleared by March 2022.
- The second one, we are in discussion with ratepayer and its agents in seeking required information and they owe £900k for this year only.

Other matters

- Key recovery documentation issued this month

	Reminders	Final Notices	Summonses
▪ For Harborough	40	24	9
▪ For Hinckley & Bosworth	30	30	17
▪ For North West Leicestershire	47	37	18

- Next month it is preparing for NDR1 returns with submission date at end of January 2022.
- Ashby BIDS testing is underway, and the intention is that bills are issued for quarter 4 charge at the end of January. This is subject to that all testing to include finance team has been fully completed.

Housing Benefit Overpayments

Harborough

- Debt raised this year £107,813
- Overall debt reduced by £117,282
- Collection rate against all debt (arrears and new) 14%
- Overall debt position is: £743,505

Hinckley & Bosworth

- Debt raised this year £232,381
- Overall debt reduced by £266,963
- Collection rate against all debt (arrears and new) 20%
- Overall debt position is: £1.098m

North West Leicestershire

- Debt raised this year £181,326
- Overall debt reduced by £162,327
- Collection rate against all debt (arrears and new) 12%
- Overall debt position is: £1.163m

Channel Shift Analysis (Digital Service)

Tables below illustrate how customers are transacting online for setting up direct debits to include payment arrangements, council tax change of address. This also includes viewing their own records for council tax, housing benefit, council tax support and business rates.

Connect Stats - HDC				
Service Subscriptions				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of Subscriptions			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	7041	7251	7391	140
Housing Benefit Online	342	326	327	1
Landlord Online	48	48	48	0
Business Rates Online	245	247	247	0
E-Billing and E-Notifications				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of Subscriptions			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	2083	2168	2212	44
Housing Benefit Online	140	141	142	1
Landlord Online	26	26	26	0
Business Rates Online	82	82	82	0
Direct Debits over the Web				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of DD's Set Up			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	425	327	212	-115
Business Rates Online	3	2	0	-2
Change of Address				
	October	November	December	Total Since Live (02/10/2018)
Total for the Month	422	427	406	7878

March-17 HDC

Service Subscriptions

Application	Subscriptions
Council Tax Online	275
Housing Benefit Online	30
Landlord Online	25
Business Rates Online	22

Ebilling & Enotifications

Application	Subscriptions
Council Tax Online	94
Business Rates Online	6
Landlord Online	9
Housing Benefit Online	10

Connect Stats - HBBC				
Service Subscriptions				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of Subscriptions			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	8964	9070	9182	112
Housing Benefit Online	356	357	328	-29
Landlord Online	94	94	94	0
Business Rates Online	477	477	480	3
E-Billing and E-Notifications				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of Subscriptions			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	4324	4398	4461	63
Housing Benefit Online	164	164	164	0
Landlord Online	33	33	33	0
Business Rates Online	386	386	387	1
Direct Debits over the Web				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of DD's Set Up			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	196	172	131	-41
Business Rates Online	2	1	1	0
Change of Address				
	October	November	December	Total Since Live (04/10/2018)
Total for the Month	215	309	263	6206

March-17 HBBC

Service Subscriptions

Application	Subscriptions
Council Tax Online	1705
Housing Benefit Online	70
Landlord Online	58
Business Rates Online	34

Ebilling & Enotifications

Application	Subscriptions
Council Tax Online	163
Business Rates Online	9
Landlord Online	4
Housing Benefit Online	8

Connect Stats - NWLDC				
Service Subscriptions				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of Subscriptions			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	6873	7000	7140	140
Housing Benefit Online	333	336	336	0
Landlord Online	76	76	76	0
Business Rates Online	237	239	242	3
E-Billing and E-Notifications				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of Subscriptions			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	3994	4063	4132	69
Housing Benefit Online	188	189	189	0
Landlord Online	33	33	33	0
Business Rates Online	151	151	154	3
Direct Debits over the Web				
	October	November	December	
Application	Total Number of DD's Set Up			Difference Since Last Month
Council Tax Online	195	149	109	-40
Business Rates Online	0	2	1	-1
Change of Address				
	October	November	December	Total Since Live (05/10/2018)
Total for the Month	431	430	357	10990

March-17 NWL

Service Subscriptions

Application	Subscriptions
Council Tax Online	195
Housing Benefit Online	21
Landlord Online	19
Business Rates Online	4

Ebilling & Enotifications

Application	Subscriptions
Council Tax Online	58
Business Rates Online	1
Landlord Online	4
Housing Benefit Online	7

FORWARD PLAN FOR JOINT COMMITTEE 2021-2022

Decision	Date of Decision (approx.)	Contacts
Budget Setting Report	20 January 2022	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Financial Performance Report	20 January 2022	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Service Plan 2020/21	20 January 2022	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Performance Report	20 January 2022	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Financial Performance Report	21 April 2022	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Performance Report	21 April 2022	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Annual Meeting		
Schedule of meetings	23 June 2022	Clare Hammond – Democratic Services Officer
Year End Performance Report	23 June 2022	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Year End Financial Report	23 June 2022	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer

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