



SERVICE PLAN 2020/21

The Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits

CONTENTS

Page(s)

1. COUNCILS' AIMS AND PRIORITIES	3
2. OVERALL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE	4 to 5
3. NATIONAL AGENDA ITEMS	5
4. KEY PROJECTS – OUR IMPROVEMENT PLAN	6
5. CUSTOMERS	7
6. PERFORMANCE	8 to 10
7. RISKS	11 to 12

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

OVERALL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE	To provide a high quality and secure Revenues and Benefits service to our residents and businesses at an economical cost and in accordance with the principles of continuous improvement and customer requirements.
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<p>Objectives</p>	<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. 4) To provide residents with a choice of how to engage with the service via access channels of their choice e.g. online, e-mail, letter, fax, telephone, face to face or home visit (where appropriate). 5) To widely publicise the availability of all discounts, exemptions, reliefs and housing benefit, and to provide informed 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 facilities for all customers. 9) To communicate and consult regularly 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 maximise 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.
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Scope of services provided by the partnership	
Council Tax Billing and Enforcement	Housing Benefit administration
NNDR Billing and Enforcement (including BIDs)	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	Welfare advice and support
DWP Liaison in respect of Housing Benefit Fraud	Supporting the delivery of Universal Credit

3. National Agenda Items

There are currently matters that need to be addressed during 2020 to meet key central government's legislative and operational changes that will be introduced.

The items are:

1. Universal Credit roll out programme
2. Changes to Business Rates
3. Prepare for "cooling off" period changes

KEY PROJECTS

In addition to the 'business as usual' projects we are currently working on a number of new projects during 2020/21

What does this mean	Key deliverables (Action)	Responsible Officer	Task/Milestones for 2020-21			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Re-tender for mailing services as existing arrangements come to and end on 16 February 2021	Contract awarded to supply mailing services from September 2020	LB	Commence tender/framework	Contract Awarded	Set up routines and automation inclusive of testing	
One logon to access Capita systems for partnership staff	Install Capita Shared Service Desktop	LB/SC		Preparation	Go Live	
Liasion with DWP	Universal Credit	SC	Monitor impact	Monitor impact	Monitor impact	Monitor impact
Supporting Vulnerable Households	Continue support of households who are facing difficulty and unable to meet their Council Tax/Rent liability feel supported	SC	Monitor impact	Monitor impact	Monitor impact	Monitor impact
Making services available on the web for customers to self serve (Digital Inclusion)	Capita Advantage Digital Modules	SOH		Commence phased approach to install range of online modules E-Claim, E- COC etc		
Capita Ingress 11 & Red Hat upgrades	Test interface routines, batch programs, printing etc. for six databases	LB/SC	Arrange detailed test plan testing commence May 2020	Testing	Go Live - Dec 2020	
Data Protection (GDPR 2018) - personal data removal	Agree rules with partners, testing batch programs and update customer information on websites	LB/SC	Prepare test plans and agree rules	Testing + data redaction and removal on all core software applications		
Promotion and marketing the partnership	Deliver as directed by both management board and joint committee	SOH	Marketing strategy	Deliver strategy		

4. 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. We also offer visits to discuss any aspect of the service with customers and their advisors.
 - 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 2019/20 out-turn. The targets below are those for 2019/20.

Hinckley & Bosworth	End of Year Target 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Council Tax in year collection rate	98.1%	11.0%	20.3%	29.4%	38.6%	47.8%	57.2%	66.4%	75.7%	84.7%	93.8%	96.2%	98.1%
Combined benefits performance	11	8.3	6.9	8.9	6.1	6.7	7.4	6.9	8.4	9.2	8.5	2.6	7.8
Successful fraud prosecution & sanctions	6	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
NNDR in year collection rate	98.8%	11.4%	21.1%	30.7%	39.3%	48.7%	58.2%	67.1%	75.5%	84.8%	93.6%	96.5%	98.8%
Housing Benefit overpayments collection rate	36%	5%	8%	11%	13%	16%	19%	21%	22%	26%	27%	30%	36%
Processing new claims	17	18.1	14.3	15.4	11.7	12.8	14.2	13.3	14.7	12.5	13.3	12.1	13.2
Processing of Change of Circumstances	7	7.4	6.1	8.1	5.4	5.8	6.3	5.9	7.5	8.6	7.9	2.2	6.7
Sickness Absence	TBC												

Harborough	End of Year Target 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Council Tax in year collection rate	98.6%	11.2%	20.6%	29.8%	39.0%	48.3%	57.6%	67.1%	76.1%	85.0%	94.2%	96.6%	98.6%
Combined benefit performance	11	8.9	6.9	8.6	7.0	7.8	6.7	8.0	8.9	10.1	9.1	2.7	7.9
Number of successful fraud prosecution & sanctions	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
NNDR in year collection rate	99.2%	10.6%	19.6%	28.7%	37.6%	46.5%	55.1%	64.0%	74.1%	82.6%	92.8%	96.9%	99.2%
Housing Benefit overpayments collection rate	31%	3%	5%	8%	10%	13%	16%	18%	21%	24%	24%	27%	31%
Processing of new claims	17	17.4	15.7	20.3	15.8	17.3	14.9	17.5	15.5	16.6	16.8	12.7	16.3
Processing of Change of Circumstances	7	7.6	5.9	7.4	5.8	6.0	5.5	6.9	8.1	9.1	8.0	2.3	6.1
Sickness Absence	TBC												

North West Leicestershire	End of Year Target 2019/20	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Council Tax in year collection rate	97.8%	10.3%	19.6%	28.7%	37.9%	47.1%	56.1%	65.3%	74.5%	83.6%	92.9%	95.6%	97.8%
Combined benefits performance	11	9.6	7.5	9.4	7.6	7.8	7.7	7.8	8.8	9.7	7.5	2.4	7.5
Number of successful fraud prosecution & sanctions	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0
NNDR in year collection rate	99.0%	10.6%	20.8%	29.0%	39.8%	47.4%	56.1%	66.3%	75.5%	84.2%	92.7%	95.8%	99.0%
Housing Benefit overpayments collection rate	34%	4%	8%	11%	16%	19%	20%	23%	24%	26%	29%	31%	34%
Processing of new claims	17	17.3	16.0	18.9	15.0	14.5	14.9	15.4	13.9	17.2	14.5	11.9	13.0
Processing of Change of Circumstances	7	8.7	6.7	8.3	6.6	6.7	6.8	6.5	8.2	8.7	6.7	2.1	6.6
Sickness Absence	TBC												

Risks

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

Risk	Additional Mitigating Actions	Review comments	Last reviewed	Owner
<u>Insufficient Business Continuity arrangements/plans</u>	<u>Business continuity plans developed to ensure minimum resources are available to deliver services</u> <u>Risk Assessment to prioritise resource against priority/critical services using generic corporate risk assessment</u>	Information provided monthly to the partnership management board	Dec-16	MB
<u>Reduced benefit subsidy as a result of a high level of error within the work sampled</u>	Robust quality checking measures within benefits Additional refresher training on those areas that were highlighted by the subsidy audit.	QA procedures revised to focus on earnings	Nov-19	SC
Impact of loss of Business rate income (closure of large business , impact of appeals, fluctuations in rating list)	<u>Review and report to stakeholders monthly/quarterly</u>	Finance teams receive monthly detailed analysis	Nov-19	LB
High levels of sickness absence within the partnership	<u>Continue to set absence targets and monitor against targets. Use of preceptors admin grant funding to secure additional resources.</u>	Information provided monthly to the partnership	Nov-19	LB/SC
Failure to bring in projects on time	Effective project management and forward planning of available resources.	Monthly update report provided to partnership management board	Nov-19	SOH
Possible vulnerability with the provision of Revenues and Benefits software due to the financial position of the provider and the exit from the existing contracts by other government bodies	Ensure continual dialogue with provider	Information provided to the partnership management board	Dec-19	SOH

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.