



SERVICE PLAN 2016/2017

The Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits

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1 Council Aims and Priorities:



- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3

Priority 4

Harborough District Council

Working with Communities to develop places in which to live and be happy

Provide public services which are effective and deliver value for money

Encourage a vibrant and sustainable business community intent on prosperity, employment and learning opportunities

Support the vulnerable in the communities where they live



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

- Aim 1
- Aim 2
- Aim 3
- Aim 4

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Creating a vibrant place to work and live

Empowering Communities

Supporting Individuals

Providing Value for money and pro-active services



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

North West Leicestershire District Council

Value for money

Business and jobs

Homes and Communities

Green footprints

2 OVERALL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Purpose | To provide a high quality and secure Revenues and Benefits service to residents at an economical cost and in accordance with the principles of continuous improvement and customer requirements. |
| Objectives | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To assess and pay Housing Benefit and Council Tax Local Support accurately and promptly. 2) To promptly issue accurate Council Tax and NNDR bills to maximise collection rates, and to deal appropriately with non payers to minimise arrears 3) To provide and promote wide access to the Service using a variety of access channels such as internet, e-mail, letter, fax, telephone, face to face or home visit (where appropriate) 4) To widely publicise the availability of all discounts, exemptions, relief's and housing benefit, and provide informed advice on all Revenues and Benefits matters 5) 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 6) To undertake strategic corporate role in promoting and raising awareness of equality for all. To contribute to the mainstreaming of equality and diversity throughout all services and support the development of and promote the Equality and Diversity Strategies in place. 7) Provide and develop innovative facilities for all customers 8) To communicate and consult regularly with our customers and stakeholders, developing our services to meet their changing needs 9) Provide accurate and timely services for our external and internal customers 10) To maximise collection rates but minimize the difficulties faced by customers in making their payments especially with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (Council Tax Support) 11) Develop our services through well trained, empowered and committed staff who are proud to work for the Leicestershire Revenue and Benefits Service 12) Treat all customers fairly and make our services easier to access |

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| Scope of services provided by the partnership | |
|---|---|
| Council Tax Billing and Enforcement | Housing Benefit administration |
| NNDR & BID Billing and Enforcement | Council Tax Reduction Scheme Administration (Council Tax Support) |
| Fraud investigations | Housing Benefit Overpayment enforcement |
| Customer support | Welfare advice and support |
| Support to the DWP regarding Housing Costs for Universal Credit | |

3. National Agenda Items

There are currently matters that need to be addressed during 2016 to meet key central government's legislative and operational changes that will be introduced.

The items are:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Single Fraud Investigation Service 2 Corporate Fraud. 3. Welfare Reform 4. Universal Credit 5. Non domestic Rates (Business Rates) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further reductions to the benefit cap and tax credits. - Potential further roll out of categories for claiming Universal Credit. - Expected changes to funding of Business Rates. |
|--|---|

4. KEY PROJECTS FOR 2016/2017

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | RESP OFFICER | TASKS/MILESTONES FOR 2016/17 | | | |
|--|--|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|---|
| | | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Implement all Capita Connect Modules | Customers will be able to access services via self serve on the internet. | Leigh Butler | | | All modules implemented | |
| Implement Risked Based Verification | Maintain and stabilise new benefit claims processing times | Storme Coop | Implemented | | | |
| SLA to be agreed between the partnership and the three customer service teams | To ensure continuity of service for all customers and understanding on roles and responsible | Sally O'Hanlon | | | | Implementation and agreement of SLA |
| Support of households who are facing severe financial difficulty and unable to meet their Council Tax/Rent liability | Support Vulnerable Households | Storme Coop | Monitor Impact | Monitor Impact | Monitor Impact | Support offered for vulnerable households |
| Partnership Employees have common terms and conditions | Establish a single employer for the partnership. | Sally O'Hanlon | | | | Options appraisal to be drafted |

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, British Sign Language or in large type or on tape. We also offer visits to discuss any aspect of the service with customers and advocates.
- 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.
- To maintain and improve turnaround times for new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

6. PERFORMANCE

| Hinckley & Bosworth | Target 2016/17 | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Council Tax in year collection rate | 98.1% | 11% | 20% | 29.3% | 38.4% | 48% | 57.2% | 66.4% | 76% | 85.2% | 94.3% | 96.5% | 98% |
| Council Tax Outturn | 2011/12 98.60 % Target 98.6% | 2012/13 98.2% Target 98.1% | | 2013/14 98.00% Target 98.1% | | 2014/15 97.9% Target 98.1 | | 2015/16 tbc Target 98.1 | | | | | |
| Combined benefits performance | 11 | 14.1 | 14.8 | 14.7 | 11.0 | 10.9 | 10.2 | 10.8 | 9.3 | 10.4 | 9.8 | 3.4 | 10.9 |
| Successful fraud prosecution & sanctions | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| NDR in year collection rate | 98.3% | 11.2% | 20% | 29.5% | 38.6% | 47.5% | 56.5% | 65.3% | 74.5% | 84.2% | 93.5% | 96.5% | 98.3% |
| NDR Outturn | 2011/12 98.3% Target 98.5% | 2012/13 97.74 Target 98.5% | | 2013/14 98% Target 98.3% | | 2014/15 98.3% Target 98.3% | | 2015/16 tbc Target 98.3% | | | | | |
| Housing Benefit overpayments collection rate | 36% | 5% | 9% | 15% | 19% | 23% | 25% | 27% | 28% | 30% | 32% | 34% | 36% |
| Processing new claims | 19 | 24 | 22.0 | 22.9 | 18.4 | 16.8 | 16.7 | 14.4 | 15.0 | 16.2 | 16.2 | 17.5 | 18.9 |
| Processing of Change of Circumstances | 9 | 13.5 | 13.7 | 13.2 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 9.1 | 10.0 | 8.2 | 9.0 | 8.6 | 2.5 | 9.4 |
| Sickness Absence | TBC | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Harborough | Target 2016/17 | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|--|-------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Council Tax in year collection rate | 98.6% | 11.3% | 20.8% | 30.3% | 39.4% | 48.6% | 58% | 68.2% | 77.2% | 86.4% | 98.4% | 97.2% | 98.6% |
| Council Tax Outturn | 2011/12 97.7% Target 98.9% | | 2012/13 98.53% Target 98.5% | | 2013/14 98.6% Target 98.1% | | 2014/2015 98.6% Target 98.1% | | 2015/16 tbc Target 98.1% | | | | |
| Combined benefit performance | 11 | 9.8 | 11.1 | 11.9 | 10.1 | 10.2 | 10.8 | 12.0 | 10.8 | 9.6 | 9.5 | 3 | 8 |
| Number of successful fraud prosecution & sanctions | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| NNDR in year collection rate | 99.2% | 10.6% | 19.6% | 29.3% | 38.6% | 47.6% | 57.5% | 66.3% | 75.1% | 84.6% | 93.4% | 96.9% | 99.2% |
| NNDR Outturn | 2011/12 98.05% Target 99% | | 2012/13 98.4% Target 98.25% | | 2013/14 99.1% Target 98.35% | | 2014/15 99.2% Target 98.5% | | 2015/16 tbc Target 98.5% | | | | |
| Housing Benefit overpayments collection rate | 31% | 3% | 7% | 11% | 15% | 17% | 18% | 21% | 23% | 25% | 26% | 29% | 31% |
| Processing of new claims | 19 | 20.6 | 22.6 | 20.9 | 18.0 | 16.7 | 18.9 | 19.3 | 19.3 | 19.2 | 19.2 | 19.1 | 19 |
| Processing of Change of Circumstances | 9 | 8.3 | 9.5 | 10.2 | 8.8 | 8.9 | 9.4 | 10.8 | 8.9 | 8.5 | 8.2 | 3 | 9 |
| Sickness Absence | TBC | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| North West Leicestershire | Target 2016/17 | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|--|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Council Tax in year collection rate | 97.8% | 10.4% | 19.5% | 28.8% | 38% | 47.3% | 56.5% | 65.5% | 75% | 84.6% | 93.8% | 96% | 97.6% |
| Council Tax Outturn | 2011/12 97.53% Target 98.1% | | 2012/13 97.8% Target 98.3% | | 2013/14 97.42% Target 97.8% | | 2014/15 97.6% Target 97.8% | | 2015/16 tbc Target 97.8% | | | | |
| Combined benefits performance | 11 | 12.3 | 10.5 | 14.2 | 11.3 | 11.4 | 11.6 | 10.3 | 12.4 | 12 | 11 | 3 | 8 |
| Number of successful fraud prosecution & sanctions | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| NNDR in year collection rate | 99% | 10.4% | 19.7% | 29% | 38% | 46.4% | 56.5% | 65.2% | 74.5% | 84.5% | 93% | 97% | 99% |
| NNDR Outturn | 2011/12 99.18% Target 98.4% | | 2012/13 99.2% Target 98.2% | | 2013/14 98.2% Target 99% | | 2014 99% Target 99% | | 2015/16 tbc Target 99% | | | | |
| Housing Benefit overpayments collection rate | 34% | 4% | 4% | 11% | 16% | 19% | 20% | 23% | 24% | 26% | 29% | 31% | 34% |
| Processing of new claims | 19 | 23.8 | 22.2 | 20.8 | 20.0 | 17.6 | 19.7 | 20.7 | 19.4 | 19 | 19 | 19 | 19 |
| Processing of Change of Circumstances | 9 | 10.5 | 8.9 | 12.9 | 9.5 | 10.5 | 10.1 | 8.9 | 10.9 | 10.6 | 10.9 | 3 | 10 |
| Sickness Absence | TBC | | | | | | | | | | | | |

7. Risks

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

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

Risk matrix to determine risk level

| | | | |
|---------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| High Impact | 6 | 8 | 9 |
| Medium Impact | 3 | 5 | 7 |
| Low Impact | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| | Low Likelihood | Medium Likelihood | High Likelihood |

| Risk | Mitigating Actions | Review comments | Risk Level | Owner |
|---|--|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Insufficient Business Continuity arrangements/plans | Business continuity plans developed to ensure minimum resources are available to deliver services Risk Assessment to prioritise resource against priority/critical services using generic corporate risk assessment | | 2 | Sally O'Hanlon |
| Reduced benefit subsidy as a result of high levels of error | Extend the quality checking measures within benefits Refresher training on those areas that were highlighted by the subsidy audit. | | 6 | Storme Coop |
| NNDR 2017 Revaluation | Ensure we are fully prepared for the implementation of the new local rating list effective from 1/4/2017 | | 6 | Sue Williams-Lee |
| Impact of loss of Business rate income (closure of large business , impact of appeals, fluctuations in rating list) | Review and report to stakeholders monthly/quarterly | | 6 | Sue Williams-Lee |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|----------------|
| Effects of Universal Credit implementation | Monitored & reported on monthly | | 1 | Storme Coop |
| High levels of sickness absence within the partnership | The appropriate sickness absence monitoring framework is adhered to and reported monthly. Continue to set absence targets and monitor against targets. Use of preceptors admin grant funding to secure additional resources. | | 6 | Sally O'Hanlon |
| Transfer of fraud staff to the DWP fraud and error service Failure to detect fraud | Detailed analysis of the type of work that will be staying with the LA and resource planning for that. | | 5 | Storme Coop |
| Failure to bring in projects on time | Effective project management and forward planning of available resources. | | 3 | Leigh Butler |
| Additional Budget Pressures due to JE appeals | Ensure Managers and Head of Partnership are kept in the communication loop to ensure that any appeals are in accordance with the requirements of the job role | | 5 | Sally O'Hanlon |

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