



**Performance/Administration  
Cabinet Committee**

Members of the **Performance/Administration Cabinet Committee** of **Gravesham Borough Council** are summoned to attend a meeting to be held at the on **Thursday, 8 September 2016 at 7.30 pm** when the business specified in the following agenda is proposed to be transacted.

S Kilkie  
Assistant Director (Communities)

**Agenda**

**Part A**

**Items likely to be considered in Public**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)
3. Declarations of interest
4. To consider whether any items in Part A of the agenda should be considered in private or those (if any) in Part B in public.
5. Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
6. An update on the Business Rates Agenda (Pages 7 - 14)
7. Corporate Performance Update – Quarter One 2016-17 (Pages 15 - 32)  
To present Members of the Performance and Administration Committee with an update against the Performance Management Framework, as set out within the council's Corporate Plan 2015-19, for Quarter One 2016-17 (April to June 2016).
8. Exclusion  
To move, if required, that pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public be excluded from any items included in Part B of the agenda because it is likely in view of the nature of business to be transacted that if members of the public are present during those items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**Part B**  
**Items likely to be considered in Private**

**Members**

Cllr Leslie Hills (Chair)

Cllr Julia Burgoyne (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:            Colin Caller  
                              Brian Francis  
                              David Hurley  
                              John Knight  
                              Bronwen McGarrity  
                              Peter Scollard  
                              Narinder Singh Thandi

Substitutes:            To be notified

**Performance/Administration Cabinet Committee****Thursday, 17 March 2016****7.30 pm****Present:**

Cllr Leslie Hills (Chair)  
Cllr Julia Burgoyne (Vice-Chair)

Councillors:        John Caller  
                             Brian Francis  
                             David Hurley  
                             John Knight  
                             Lyn Milner  
                             Peter Scollard

Stuart Bobby        Director (Corporate Services)  
Ben Turner            Corporate Performance Manager  
Jackie Baker         Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager  
Chris Wakeford      Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny)

**23. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Colin Caller and Cllr Narinder Singh Thandi. Cllr John Caller and Cllr Lyn Milner attended as their respective substitutes

**24. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2016 were signed by the Chair.

**25. Declarations of interest**

No declarations were made.

**26. Data Quality Policy: Review 2016**

The Corporate Performance Manager provided Members of the Performance / Administration Committee with a copy of the draft Data Quality Policy for review.

To reflect the changes that have recently taken place in relation to the introduction of the new Corporate Plan's Performance Management Framework, and other relevant amendments, it was felt to be prudent to bring the revised Data Quality Policy back to the Performance / Administration Committee for discussion and subsequent approval by the Lead Member, in line with the adopted process outlined in the policy.

The Committee considered the Data Quality Policy in depth. Following questions from Members, the Corporate Performance Manager and Director Corporate Services highlighted the following:

- The Performance Management Framework has been refined and now contains measures that provide better value.
- GBC's Data Quality Policy is considered more comprehensive than other Local Authorities.
- Regarding the shared service with Medway; the same suite of Performance Framework Indicators are used for both Authorities. Data security is ensured by using both Authorities Firewalls.

The Data Quality Policy was discussed by the Committee and approval was taken by the Lead Member for Performance & Administration.

## **27. Universal Credit Update**

The Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager presented Members of the Performance and Administration Committee with an update on the impact of Universal Credit (UC) on Gravesham Borough Council since its introduction on 18 May 2015.

GBC went live in Tranche 2 of UC rollout on 18 May 2015. The remaining Jobcentres and local authorities either went live with Universal Credit in Tranche Three (21 September 2015 – 30 November 2015) or will go live in Tranche Four (7 December 2015 – 25 April 2016).

A Delivery Partnership Agreement (DPA) was signed between Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) up to 31 March 2016. It details how GBC will work in partnership with the DWP to deliver UC services locally. It details what costs the DWP will pay GBC for delivering this service.

GBC have an agreement in place with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for them to deliver Personal Budgeting Support to any customers in receipt of UC who need help in managing their finances.

UC is designed to replace:

- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA(IB))
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- 

However, so far UC has only been rolled out to single customers claiming JSA(IB)

The following statistics (updated since the report was published) confirm the impact of UC on Gravesham Borough Council so far:

- 136 UC notifications received from customers claiming housing costs
- 13 Council Tenants HB cancelled

- 13 Private Tenants HB cancelled
- 1 Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) processed for a UC customer
- 52 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme manual notifications received

It is currently planned to transfer all claims to the DWP between 2018 and 2021, but recently there has been some suggestion that this may not be completed until more like 2024.

Following questions from the Committee, the Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager highlighted the following:

- The Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager is currently not aware of any hardship cases in Gravesham as a direct result of UC.
- Supported/Exempt Accommodation will remain with Local Authorities. GBC have 9 different privately owned Supported Accommodations schemes, there are also some Housing Associations Supported Accommodations schemes in the Borough.
- GBC have only received and paid one Discretionary Housing Payment from a Universal Credit claimant.

The Chair felt that it would be beneficial for Members to have training every few months to keep abreast of Revenues & Benefits information.

The Committee noted the Universal Credit update.

### **Close of meeting**

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm

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**Classification:** Public

**Key Decision:** No

### **Gravesham Borough Council**

**Report to:** P&A Committee  
**Date:** 8 September 2016  
**Reporting officer:** Service Manager - Revenues & Benefits  
**Subject:** An update on the Business Rates Agenda

#### **Purpose and summary of report:**

To provide Members of the Committee with an update on future changes to Business Rates

#### **Recommendations:**

1. For information only

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Non-Domestic Rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Under the business rates retention arrangements introduced from 1st April 2013, authorities keep a proportion of the business rates paid locally.
- 1.2 Currently, in two-tier areas such as Kent the business rates 'take' is split: Central Government 50%, Borough Council 40%, County Council 9% and Fire Authority 1%.
- 1.3 In October 2015, the Government announced that, by the end of the Parliament, local government will keep 100% of the income raised through business rates, and will take on new responsibilities to be funded from this additional income as central government grants are phased out.
- 1.4 On 16 March 2016 the Chancellor made a number of announcements on business rates exemptions and discounts.
- 1.5 In July 2016 the Department for Communities and Local Government published two papers – Self-sufficient local government: 100% Business Rates Retention Consultation Document; and Fair Funding Review.
- 1.6 On the 16 August 2016 the Department for Communities and Local Government published a further consultation document on the proposals for reforming the business rates appeals process.

1.7 This report covers the above topics:

## **2. Changes to discounts and exemptions**

- 2.1 Local authorities will be compensated in full for their loss of income as a result of these changes. This compensation will be paid in the same way as it has been previously, by section 31 grant, and calculated on the basis of the returns that councils make under the rates retention scheme.
- 2.2 From 2017-18, Small Business Rate Relief will permanently double from 50% to 100%. The £6,000 and £12,000 thresholds will increase to £12,000 and £15,000 respectively. Therefore, those with rateable values below £12,000 that meet the eligibility criteria will receive 100% relief and those with rateable values between £12,000 and £15,000 will receive tapered relief.
- 2.3 The threshold for the standard business rates multiplier will also increase from £18,000 (£25,500 in London) to a rateable value of £51,000. Both the doubling and the extension of SBRR will be compensated by grants from central government.
- 2.4 The Government will introduce a £1,500 discount for office space occupied by local newspapers, up to a maximum of one discount per local newspaper title and per hereditament, and up to state aid limits, for 2 years from 1 April 2017.
- 2.5 The Government will legislate to enable local authorities to use their existing discretionary relief powers to support publicly owned public toilets from 1 April 2018.
- 2.6 From April 2020, bills will be indexed to the main measure of inflation, currently CPI.
- 2.7 The Government will aim to deliver more frequent revaluations - at least every 3 years - and will publish a discussion paper on delivering this shortly.
- 2.8 The Government will work with local authorities across England to standardise business rate bills and ensure ratepayers have the option to receive and pay bills electronically by April 2017. By 2022, local authority business rate systems will be linked to HMRC digital tax accounts.

## **3. 100% Business Rates Retention:**

- 3.1 In launching the 100% Business Rates Retention Consultation the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP said this crucial reform will make councils the drivers of economic growth in their communities, while also helping to transform the key services that their residents value.
- 3.2 Key changes will include:
  - Ensuring the system is designed to encourage and reward councils that promote and support economic growth in their areas



- Ensuring a system of redistribution of funding that recognises the needs and demands of different councils, including in cases where there are combined authorities and mayoral areas
- Measures to manage risk within the system, including the improved management of appeals
- Ability to reduce the business rates tax rate (the multiplier) and the ability for Combined Authority Mayors to levy a supplement on business rates bills to fund new infrastructure projects, provided they have the support of the business community through the Local Enterprise Partnership

3.3 Elements of the current system expected to remain include:

- A level of redistribution between councils, through a system of top-ups and tariffs – underpinned by the Fair Funding Review
- Protection built into the system to insulate authorities from shocks, or significant reductions in income
- Enterprise Zones continuing to keep 100% in the growth in business rates for 25 years
- The New burdens Doctrine, which requires Departments to assess and fund the impact on councils of any new policies, will remain in place

3.4 A list of potential responsibilities that could be transferred to councils has been published to be funded from additional retained business rates. No matter which new services councils agree to, the amount of extra business rates income kept by councils must meet their cost, both now and in the future. Government also needs to allow councils to use some of the extra business rates income to meet existing funding gaps. We do not believe demand led services that can increase very quickly, e.g. Attendance Allowance and or where there is a statutory obligation to provide the service, e.g. Disabled Facilities Grants as part of the Improved Better Care Fund are candidates for devolution.

3.5 The Government is to undertake a Fair Funding Review of what the needs assessment formula should be with the implementation of 100% business rates retention and as a first step, has issued a call for evidence. The return date for responses is again 26 September 2016.

3.6 There will need to be some system of redistribution between local authorities to balance revenue with relative needs. Under the 50% scheme, a system of top-ups and tariffs is used to redistribute funding from those local authorities that collect more in business rates than their identified need to those who do not collect enough for their needs. The top-ups and tariffs that each local authority could expect to see will be calculated before the new system is introduced, based on the Fair Funding Review and an assessment of their expected business rates income. Top-ups and tariffs will be fixed for the period between resets.

3.7 The return date for responses to the consultation is 26 September 2016.

#### **4. Reforming the business rates appeals process**

- 4.1 The Government is committed to delivering an improved business rates appeals system. There is widespread agreement that the current system is not working. Too many appeals are held up for too long, creating costs and uncertainty for businesses and local authorities.
- 4.2 In October 2015, the Department for Communities and Local Government consulted on proposals for a new approach to business rates appeals. The reforms would see the introduction of a three stage approach: check, challenge, appeal.
- 4.3 The guiding principles for reform are that ratepayers should set out their issues fully and clearly at the start of each stage, so that the Valuation Office Agency can respond quickly and ratepayers can make an informed decision about whether they need to proceed to the next stage. There should be a structured and transparent approach with clear expectations on all sides about timescales, requirements and action.
- 4.4 The aim of the system overall is to provide a streamlined and efficient system in which the key issues are identified by the ratepayer early, and are resolved as quickly as possible as the case proceeds.
- 4.5 The next steps are to make amendments to the existing regulations to reflect the agreed policy and to finalise a number of outstanding policy issues. The latest consultation document deals with these matters.
- 4.6 The intention is that the reformed system will apply when the new rating list comes into effect in April 2017.
- 4.7 The return date for responses to the consultation is 11 October 2016.

#### **5. Recommendations**

- 5.1 For information only.

#### **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 The Business Rates Retention consultation can be found at the following link;  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/535022/Business\\_Rates\\_Retention\\_Consultation\\_5\\_July\\_2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535022/Business_Rates_Retention_Consultation_5_July_2016.pdf)
- 6.2 The Fair Funding Review consultation can be found at the following link  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/534956/Discussion\\_document\\_-\\_Needs\\_and\\_Redistribution.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/534956/Discussion_document_-_Needs_and_Redistribution.pdf)

- 6.3 The Business rates appeals reforms consultation can be found at the following link;

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/546100/Business\\_rates\\_appeals\\_reforms\\_consultation\\_draft\\_regs.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/546100/Business_rates_appeals_reforms_consultation_draft_regs.pdf)

Anyone wishing to inspect background papers should, in the first place, be directed to Committee & Electoral Services who will make the necessary arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
<b>Legal</b>	<p>The legislative framework for the billing, collection, recovery and administration of national non-domestic rates (business rates) is set out in the Local Government and Finance Act 1988.</p> <p>The Local Government Finance Act 2012 and regulations that followed introduced the current Business Rates Retention scheme.</p>
<b>Finance and Value for Money</b>	<p><b>What is important, is what our baseline funding level will be on the introduction of 100% business rates retention and how this compares to that reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy taking into account transfer of any new responsibilities.</b></p>
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	<p><b>Business rates income volatility and consequent exposure to risk may be greater under 100% business rates retention.</b></p>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<p><b>Screening for Equality Impacts</b></p>
	<p><b>Question</b></p>
	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p>No</p>
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p>N/A</p>
<b>Corporate Plan</b>	<p>Sound and self-sufficient council</p>
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	<p><b>There is no impact.</b></p>
<b>Digital and website implications</b>	<p>There is no impact.</p>
<b>Safeguarding children and vulnerable</b>	<p>N/A</p>

<b>adults</b>	
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**Classification:** Public

**Key Decision:** No

### **Gravesham Borough Council**

**Report to:** Performance and Administration Committee

**Date:** 8 September 2016

**Reporting officer:** Stuart Bobby – Director (Corporate Services)

**Subject:** Corporate Performance Update – Quarter One 2016-17  
(April to June 2016)

#### **Purpose and summary of report:**

To present Members of the Performance and Administration Committee with an update against the Performance Management Framework, as set out within the council's Corporate Plan 2015-19, for Quarter One 2016-17 (April to June 2016).

#### **Recommendations:**

This report is for information purposes only.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In October 2015 the council formally adopted its new Corporate Plan for 2015-19. The plan sets out the council's vision for the borough, complete with a suite of corporate objectives and policy commitments that will shape the council's activities over the four year period.
- 1.2 In order to evaluate if the council is effectively achieving against its stated policy commitments, and is ultimately delivering consistently high quality services, the council needs to have a sound performance management process in place. Developed by senior council officers and Cabinet portfolio holders, the council's Corporate Plan presents a new Performance Management Framework (PMF) that will form the basis of reporting corporate performance to council Members and residents.

## **2. Performance Management Process**

- 2.1 The effective management of the council relies upon good quality and timely performance information on which to base informed decisions. The council's PMF presents a range of performance information which includes;

- Performance Measures (PM): These are target-based measures identified and established specifically for being essential to the delivery of the Corporate Plan's key objectives e.g. waste recycling rates.
  - Performance Indicators (PI): These represent important contextual performance information related to the Corporate Plan's key objectives. PI's are not target based as the council, whilst having influence over their delivery, does not directly control their outcomes e.g. crime statistics.
- 2.2 Appendix Two to this report provides Members with an overview of the council's performance against the Performance and Administration portfolio for Quarter One 2016-17 (April to June 2016).
- 2.3 Information on performance over the period is presented in tabular form for all indicators and graphically for PMs. Where any PMs have not met their set target for the quarter, exception notes have been provided for review. In addition, for PIs the tables provide 'direction of travel' arrows to give Members an indication of progress made against the previous reporting period i.e. green arrows representing an improvement in performance levels.
- 2.4 For future reference, equivalent performance reports will be presented to Members of the Committee on a quarterly basis.
- 2.5 This report is for information purposes only.

### **3. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 3.1 There are no background papers pertaining to this report.



IMPLICATIONS		APPENDIX 1
<b>Legal</b>	The council's Corporate Plan is an integral part of the authority's policy framework as defined by the Constitution. The new Plan will ensure the council has in place an effective framework to delivery its responsibilities and delivers better results for vulnerable local residents, with the assistance of relevant partner agencies.	
<b>Finance and Value for Money</b>	There are no significant costs associated with the monitoring of the council's Corporate Plan from which council activities should be based and which therefore should be accounted for as part of on-going financial planning processes.	
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Implementation of a performance management framework allows the council to evidence how successful it is in achieving against its stated objectives, and for residents it provides genuine accountability in how successfully the council is administering its resources.	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<b>Question</b>	
	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. N/A	
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. N/A	
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.</i>	
<b>Corporate Plan</b>	The council's adopted Corporate Plan sets the strategic vision and objectives for the authority over the 2015-19 period. This report provides Cabinet with a quarterly assessment of how the council is delivering against its objectives through its performance management framework.  All future committee reports will be presented in consideration of the new Corporate Plan.	
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Community safety is an integral theme of new Corporate Plan and work by the council in this area, alongside its key partners, will go towards delivering corporate objective 1: 'a Safer Gravesham'.	
<b>Digital and website implications</b>	In terms of the council's performance management framework, digital implications are represented and assessed through the outturns relating to 'PI 49 - web self-help forms'.	
<b>Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</b>	There are no implications in respect of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.  It should be noted however, that the council's work in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults helps contribute towards delivering corporate objective 1: 'a Safer Gravesham' and corporate objective 2: 'a Stronger Gravesham'.	

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## Gravesham Borough Council *Delivering for the Community*

*Performance Report - Performance and Administration: Quarter One 2016/17*



### 04 Sound & Self-sufficient Council

*"a well-run and innovative council supporting its staff to realise commercial opportunities whilst transforming its services to deliver at the best possible value for money"*

#### Policy Commitment





#### 1. Underpin all council activity with sound governance and internal control measures minimising the opportunities for fraud and corruption.

- The new Audit & Counter Fraud Shared service for Gravesham and Medway Council went live on 1 March 2016, so the first quarter of the new financial year has seen significant changes to working practices, performance management arrangements and reporting formats. The team continue to respond with positivity and enthusiasm, with early indications that performance and outputs at this point in the year are on par with previous years despite the significant changes staff have experienced, and the reduction in FTE and cost of the service to the councils.
- In June 2016 the Audit & Counter Fraud Team presented the Annual Internal Audit Report 2015-16 to the Finance & Audit Committee. This gave the opinion of the Head of Audit & Counter Fraud (the council's Chief Audit Executive) that, based on the work of the team during the year: Gravesham Borough Council's system of internal control adequately contributes to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources in achieving the council's objectives. The team also presented the Annual Fraud Report to the same meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee, summarising the results of the investigation activity during the year. Future reporting will incorporate both Audit & Counter Fraud work.
- Following the annual governance review completed by the council's Assurance Group, the Annual Governance Statement for 2015-16 was presented to the Finance & Audit Committee in June 2016. This concluded that the council's governance arrangements are: considered fit for purpose and in accordance with the council's governance framework, with no significant areas requiring attention.
- Work is underway by the Audit & Counter Fraud Team to deliver the planned work for Gravesham for 2016-17 and progress against the plan to the end of Q1 is on par with previous years; while the percentage of planned work complete is low, a significant amount of the plan is currently underway and it is anticipated that the full plan as agreed will be delivered by the end of the year. The plan will be continuously reviewed to ensure it reflects the highest risk areas of the council's operations to ensure the team's resources are put to maximum use.
- The Audit & Counter Fraud Team have agreed a revised recommendation follow up process with Management Team and this is now in operation. The new process is more risk based and will result in the team's follow up resources being focussed on verifying (through audit testing) the implementation of high priority/risk recommendations while more reliance will be placed on management to demonstrate confirm they have implemented lower priority/risk recommendations.
- The Audit & Counter Fraud Team have continued to support the implementation of the Kent Intelligence Network; a data matching exercise lead by Kent County Council on behalf of all Kent local authorities to detect possible instances of fraud through sharing of data sets. The final version of the legal agreement between the KIN and the local authorities was received in Q1 and is on schedule to be adopted imminently, with data matching commencing in Q2.
- On 1 March 2016, responsibility for investigating Housing Benefit fraud transferred from local authorities to the Department for Work & Pensions Fraud & Error Service. The Audit & Counter Fraud Team is responsible for responding to requests for information on council systems to the DWP and to other investigating bodies including the police, NHS and other local authorities (under exemptions in the Data Protection Act). During Q1 the team experienced a significantly higher volume of such requests from the DWP than either body anticipated in the preparations for the transfer, due to the DWP clearing a backlog of referrals. The Audit & Counter Fraud Team (and the Assistant in particular who is primarily responsible for this work) have received formal complements for the quality and speed of the responses being provided.

#### Actions for Improvement

N/A

## Performance Indicator

PI 41 <i>Percentage of internal audit recommendations implemented</i>								
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	50.00%	79.00%	89.00%	93.00%	81.00%			
<b>Direction of Travel</b>	N/A							

**Policy Commitment**

2. Quality frontline services delivered on time and to the right people.

**Revenues and Benefits update**

New Claims and Change of Circumstances

The processing time for new claims is 19.4 days, below the set target of 20 days.

The processing time for change of circumstances is 2.6 days, below the set target of 6 days.

Based on previous years information these outturns represent a significant improvement to what usually happens in the first quarter of the year, and in particular Q1 in 2015/16.

The team has overseen a slight increase in caseload, alongside an increase in the actual workload (volume of administration) within the section, and therefore it is considered that the performance for Q1 is is very good in the circumstances.

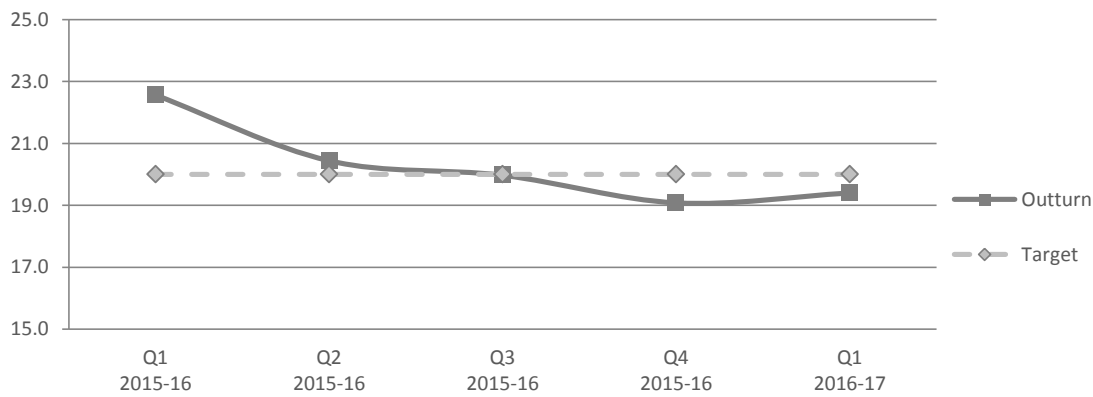
**Actions for Improvement**

**Revenues and Benefits update**

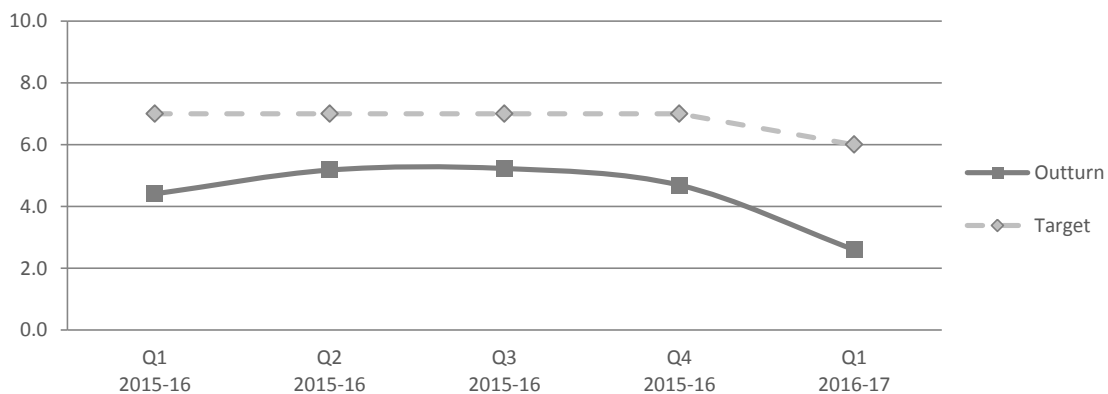
N/A

### Performance Measures

(NB: Cumulative Outturn)								
PM 11	Average time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council Tax new claims (days)							
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	22.6	20.4	20.0	19.1	19.4			
<b>Target</b>	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
<b>Target Met</b>	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓			
<b>Exception Notes</b>								



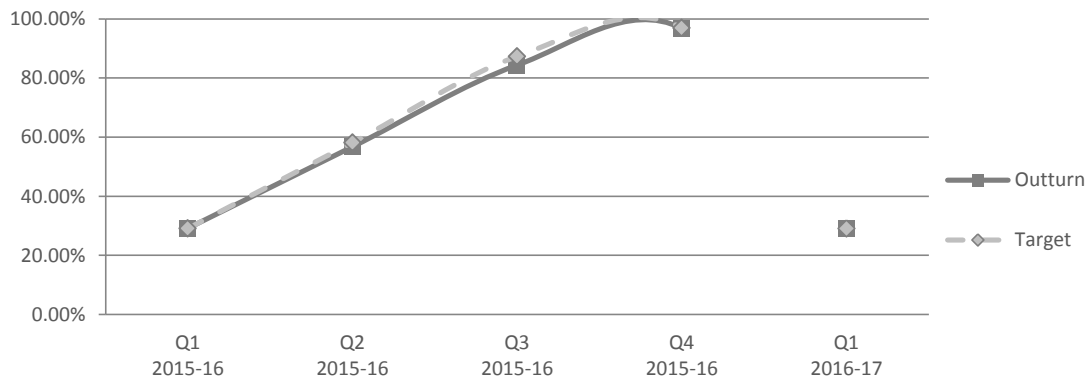
(NB: Cumulative Outturn)								
PM 12	Average time taken to process Housing Benefit / Council Tax change of circumstances (days)							
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	4.4	5.2	5.2	4.7	2.6			
<b>Target</b>	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
<b>Target Met</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<b>Exception Notes</b>								



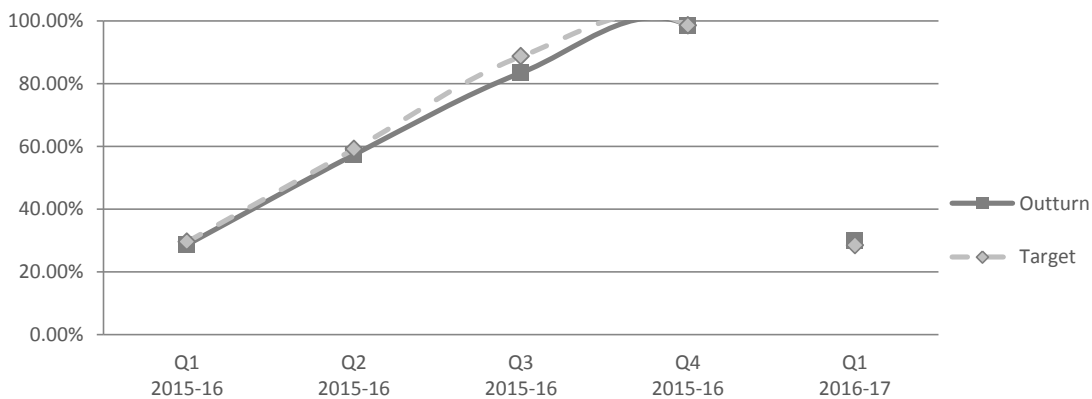
Policy Commitment
<p><b>3. Work to maximise income collection through the robust management and recovery of debts owed to the council.</b></p> <p>During the first quarter of 2016/17, the council's Management Team has received comprehensive updates from council services regarding the levels of outstanding debt across the authority. This has resulted in the re-establishment and refocus of the Corporate Debt Working Group. The first meeting of the group will be held in July 2016 with focus on delivering a detailed action plan intended to address the overall debt levels across the council and look at corporate debt solutions. Updates against this action plan will be presented to Management Team on a regular basis.</p> <p><b>Council Tax</b> The collection rate of 29.12% is slightly below what we achieved in the first quarter of 2015/16 of 29.16% however it is above our quarterly target of 29.10% and it usually fluctuates from month to month on a yearly basis.</p> <p><b>Business Rates</b> The collection rate of 30.07% is slightly above what we achieved in the first quarter of 2015/16 of 28.63% and it is above our quarterly target of 28.50% and, as with Council Tax, it usually fluctuates from month to month on a yearly basis</p> <p><b>HB Overpayments</b> Total amount of housing benefit overpayments raised was £449,402, compared with £387,743 raised in the first quarter of 2015/16.  Total amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered is £311,388, which compares with £271,947 raised in the first quarter of 2015/16.</p>
<p><b>Actions for Improvement</b></p> <p>N/A</p>

### Performance Measures

PM 9	Percentage of council tax collected				(NB: Cumulative Outturn)			
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	29.16%	56.78%	84.40%	96.86%	29.12%			
<b>Target</b>	29.10%	58.20%	87.30%	97.00%	29.10%	56.70%	84.30%	97.00%
<b>Target Met</b>	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓			
<b>Exception Notes</b>								











PM 10	Percentage of NNDR collected				(NB: Cumulative Outturn)			
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	28.63%	57.32%	83.43%	98.51%	30.07%			
<b>Target</b>	29.55%	59.10%	88.65%	98.50%	28.50%	57.20%	83.30%	98.50%
<b>Target Met</b>	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓			
<b>Exception Notes</b>								





### Performance Indicators

PI 42 <i>Total amount of housing benefit overpayments raised</i>								
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	387,743	1,006,130	470,107	675,375	449,402			
<b>Direction of Travel</b>	N/A							

PI 43 <i>Total amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered</i>								
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	271,947	302,594	304,403	298,316	311,388			
<b>Direction of Travel</b>	N/A							

**Policy Commitment**

4. Implement genuine channel shift through an enhanced IT infrastructure, enabling customers to access key services online, anytime, anywhere.

**IT Service update**

IT Services have been assisting the Digital Team with the technical aspects of the website redesign and the back office mechanics of the Firmstep customer contact software whilst also delivering further improvements to the overall IT Infrastructure. These have included;

- \* Implementation of a new Income Cash Management system to replace the legacy Bank Reconciliation system.
- \* Upgrade of the Parking Enforcement System
- \* Evaluating a new card payment system which will bring greater flexibility for people wishing to pay the Council by introducing new channels such as Paypal, Apple Pay and Android Pay, enable payment reminders to be sent by text message, introduce recurring card payments, and provide payment "tablets" that can be used as kiosks in reception.
- \* Upgrade of the print management system and replacement of all Multi-Function Devices (copiers/printers/scanners) in the Council.

In addition to this, IT Services have made ongoing improvements to the security and protection of data within the infrastructure. This includes;

- \* Continued progress with the migration of legacy servers to new platforms.
- \* Installation of a new security log management appliance.
- \* Installation of a new data backup system which will lead to better recovery for "business continuity" once replication is achieved to the Medway Data Centre (which is part two of the project).
- \* Continued migration of data to a hybrid cloud storage device and service.

Finally, IT Services have been working with outside organisations and partners on;





- \* Setting up shared infrastrucutre with Medway Council for the Shared Audit and Counter Fraud Service.
- \* Providing historic planning data from the Uniform system to the Ebbsfleet Urban Development Corporation.

**Actions for Improvement**

**IT Service update**

N/A

## Performance Indicators

PI 48 <i>Percentage of council tax accounts signed up for e-billing</i>								
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%	1.1%	7.3%			
<b>Direction of Travel</b>	N/A							

**Policy Commitment****5. Deliver on opportunities for the sharing and selling of council services.**

One of the key drivers for the creation of the Internal Audit and Fraud partnership with Medway Council was to deliver savings, particularly in light of the challenging financial position and the transfer of responsibility for Housing Benefit Fraud investigation work to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This transfer of responsibility for Housing Benefit Fraud investigation work was originally planned to result in a reduction in Administration Grant from the DWP of £58,000 - with this therefore forming the minimum level of savings required from the partnership arrangement.

As reported to the F&A committee report on 16 June 2016; "The Shared Service and restructure has realised a saving of £66,320 in relation to historical budgeted levels, which mitigates the loss of Benefit Administration Grant that had previously been received for the provision of the Housing Benefit Fraud investigation service."





Following the success of the Internal Audit and Fraud shared service, the Cabinet agreed, at its meeting in June 2016, to the exploration of a potential shared service for the delivery of Legal Services with Medway Council. Work has been ongoing in reviewing this potential shared service and a report will be presented to Cabinet in due course with an update against this work stream.

In addition, work has also been ongoing to progress the delivery of a shared service for the Revenues and Benefits service with Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. Given that this is such a significant frontline service for both authorities, consideration is being given to ensure that the customer's needs will continue to be met, whilst achieving efficiency savings for both authorities. Discussions are ongoing and an update report will be brought back to the Cabinet in due course.

**Actions for Improvement**

Reports on both the implementation of a shared service for legal Services and an update report on the progression of a Revenues and Benefits shared service will be presented to Cabinet in due course.

## Performance Indicators

PI 45 <i>Percentage of posts involved in shared services arrangements</i>								
	Q1 2015-16	Q2 2015-16	Q3 2015-16	Q4 2015-16	Q1 2016-17	Q2 2016-17	Q3 2016-17	Q4 2016-17
<b>Outturn</b>	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%			
<b>Direction of Travel</b>	N/A							

**Policy Commitment**

6. Continuously review and adapt how we deliver our services to achieve financial efficiencies and improved performance.

The Service review process has continued and the report on the Direct Services Operation (DSO) at Brookvale depot is in the process of being finalised.

A report on the process for the discussion and selection of options coming out of the service review process will be presented to Cabinet on 05 September and Overview Scrutiny Committee on 15 September 2016.

**Actions for Improvement**

N/A

**Policy Commitment**

**Any other areas of work (relevant to the strategic objective)**

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