THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

REVENUES & BENEFIT SERVICE PLAN
2019 – 2022

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Head of Revenues & Benefit

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

This year has seen a new head of service being appointed who will continue to build on the improvements already achieved in the performance of both the customer's experience and revenues and benefit's service delivery.

The service outturn for 2018/19 is expected to exceed that achieved in 2017/18 in the areas of processing times for Benefit cases and collection rates for council tax and business rates.

Service area priorities

For each element of the Service areas for development and service improvement have been identified and are below.

Revenues (Council Tax, NNDR, Housing Benefit Overpayments and Sundry Debtors)

- Maximising revenues collection for council tax and NNDR
- Further focus on arrears collection
- Targeted use of charging orders, possession orders and committals
- Direct Debit take up campaign
- Campaign to increase usage of self-service for council tax and NNDR
- Review and consult on changes to the council tax reduction scheme, to be effective from 01.04.2020,
- Introduce an on-line claim form for discounts and exemptions for Council Tax and Business Rates and automate these where possible.
- Introduce further automation of Addaccs and Arruds.
- Introduce mobile working for Inspectors for Business rates and Council Tax.
- Carry out a health check of the Capita systems to ensure they are being used in the most efficient way.
- Introduce single sign on with Firmstep.
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Benefits

- Carry out a review of all claims where there is self employed income where the income has not changed in over 12 months
- Promote and encourage use of on line claims form for new claims
- Introduce an on-line change of circumstance form
- Roll out DHP on line claim form
- Continue to reduce the time taken to process new claims and changes in circumstances
- Use VEP (Verification of Earnings and Pensions) module to speed up the verification of earnings and pensions
- Carry out a health check of the Capita systems to ensure they are being used in the most efficient way
- Introduce single sign on via Firmstep.

General

- Carry out a health check of the Document Imaging system (Information@work) to ensure it is being used in the most efficient way.
- Plan the upgrade of the Information@work system to release 5.20 which is due in early 2019 and move to the browser version of the product.
- Processes and procedures for all service areas to be reviewed and updated.
- Consider whether we need a restructure of the service following the completion of the Watford 2020 project.

Challenges

In order to deliver our aims and objectives for 2019/22 we have identified the following challenges:

- IT upgrades and hardware road map modernisation agenda
- Stable IT platform
- Government legislative changes
- Welfare reform and continued roll out of universal Credit
- Economic environment and caseload profile changes
- Effective management of staff and staff performance

The progress of this service plan will be monitored in the following ways:

- Through regular discussion at departmental management team (DMT) and Section Heads meetings
- Logged in the version control section of this document
- Performance indicator monitoring by the Council's Management Board on a quarterly basis
- By Committee reports twice a year (at the end of quarters two and four)

Service Plans will be formally updated on an annual basis, taking into account internal and external influences arising from monitoring arrangements throughout the year.

SECTION 2:   INPUTS

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Budgets</td></tr>
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	2017/18 Latest	2018/19 Latest	2019/20 Latest
	£	£	£
Net Cost of Service (Direct cost / Income Only)	**0**	**0**	**0**

Further financial analysis can be found by using this link

SECTION 3: OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

3.1	Performance management

Contribution to the Councils' Strategic Aims and Objectives

Strategic Plan Priority theme	Strategic Plan objective (inc. ref)	Measure (including the reference)	Target
Safety and Wellbeing	Process benefit claims quickly and accurately will help communities remain safe and well	New claim processing time Change of circumstances processing time	15 days 9 days
Clean and Green	High collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates will enable money to be reinvested in the region promoting a clean and green environment	Council Tax collection rates NNDR collection rates	98% 99%
Economic Prosperity	Ensure businesses and council tax payers are properly advised what discounts they are entitled to. Reducing their liability for NNDR and Council Tax increases their spending power which is of benefit to the wider local economy. Ensuring people do not get discounts they are not entitled to reduce the burden on other rate and tax payers.	Council Tax collection rates NNDR collection rates	98% 99%
Customer Service	Processing benefit claims on time and accurately ensures claimants can budget accordingly. This reduces complaints and overpayments by processing change of circumstances.	New claim processing time Change of circumstances processing time	15 days 9 days

3.2 **Performance indicators**

See Data Quality Strategy for further details

Performance indicators are used to aid the decision making process as well as assess the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. The data that we use must be accurate, reliable and timely. To meet these requirements we have adopted the Audit Commission's Standards for Better Data Quality. Further details of the Council's commitment to data quality can be found in the Strategic Plan.

Ref	Description	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target
Benefit	Av time to process new claims (housing benefit)	19	15.75 days	12 days	15 days	15 days
Benefit	Av time to process change of circumstances	8	8 days	6 days	9 days	9 days
Benefit	Accuracy of Financial assessments of HB cases in payment	n/a	>90%	>90%	>90%	>90%
Council Tax	Collection rates of council tax	98.01%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Council Tax	Time taken to register new liabilities as are result of notifications from VOA	100%	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days
Business Rates	Collection rates of NNDR (against profiled target)	99.7%	99%	99%	99%	99%
Business Rates	Time taken to process any changes affecting NNDR liability including rate reliefs	100%	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days
Business Rates	Time taken to register new liabilities as are result of notifications from VOA	100%	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days	90% within 10 days
Business Rates	Time taken to set up a Direct Debit	100%	100% within 2 days	100% within 2 days	100% within 2 days	100% within 2 days
HB Overpayments	% of HB overpayments recovered in year	96.29%	>92.5%	>92.5%	>92.5%	>92.5%
HB Overpayments	% of all HB overpayments recovered as a **%** of total outstanding overpayments	32.84%	>20%	>20%	>20%	>20%
HB Overpayments	% of overpayments classified as "LA error	0.44%	<0.54%	<0.54%	<0.54%	<0.54%

Overpayments and sundry debtors	% of invoices raised within 10 days of a debt being received	**n/a**	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sundry debtors	Value of total outstanding invoices >2 months <12 months old compared to total raised in a rolling 12 month period	**1%**	<3% of total outstanding debt under 12 months old	<3% of total outstanding debt under 12 months old	<3% of total outstanding debt under 12 months old	<3% of total outstanding debt under 12 months old
Sundry debtors	Value of total outstanding invoices with unsecured debt over 12 months old	**0.69%**	<10% of total unsecured outstanding debt	<10% of total unsecured outstanding debt	<10% of total unsecured outstanding debt	<10% of total unsecured outstanding debt

The Head of Revenues & Benefit is responsible for the source data, data entry and checking the data. The purpose of collating this data is to ensure that our services improve.

4 Projects

See the Project Management Framework for further details

Project details		Project timescales		
Project title	**Proposed outcome**	**2017/18**	**2018/19**	**2019/20**
Cold Reports for Information at Work	Enable officers to work effectively and efficiently			
Online DHP module	Make the process more effective for the customer			
Retention and Destruction Module	To reduce the number of documents held in the Information at Work system to enable it to run more efficiently.			

RISK REGISTER

Service Plan: Revenues and Benefits Plan 2017-2020							
Risk Ref	Risk	Impact	Impact Classification	Likelihood Classification	Reason for Assessment		
	Brief Description – Title of Risk	*See Impact Table*	*See Impact Table*	*See Likelihood Table*	*Use this box to describe how the score has been derived*		
1	Insufficient staff	Service Disruption	III			Requires Treatment	No
		Financial Loss	III	E		Last Review Date	24/02/17
		Reputation	IV			Next Milestone Date	30/09/17
		Legal Implications	IV			Next Review Date	24/02/18
		People	-			Date Closed	
2	Total failure of ICT systems	Service Disruption	V			Requires Treatment	No
		Financial Loss	IV	C		Last Review Date	24/02/17
		Reputation	IV			Next Milestone Date	30/09/17
		Legal Implications	III			Next Review Date	24/02/18
		People	-			Date Closed	
3	Loss of accommodation	Service Disruption	III			Requires Treatment	No
		Financial Loss	-	E		Last Review Date	24/02/17
		Reputation	-			Next Milestone Date	30/09/17
		Legal Implications	-			Next Review Date	24/02/18
		People	III			Date Closed	
4	Fraudulent activity	Service Disruption	II			Requires Treatment	No
		Financial Loss	III	E		Last Review Date	24/02/17
		Reputation	IV			Next Milestone Date	30/09/17
		Legal Implications	IV			Next Review Date	24/02/18
		People	-			Date Closed	

Risk Ref	Risk	Impact	Impact Classification	Likelihood Classification	Reason for Assessment		
	Brief Description – Title of Risk	*See Impact Table*	*See Impact Table*	*See Likelihood Table*	*Use this box to describe how the score has been derived*		
5	Failure of Academy or Anite DIP System	Service Disruption	V			Requires Treatment	Yes/No
		Financial Loss	V	C		Last Review Date	24/02/17
		Reputation	V			Next Milestone Date	30/09/17
		Legal Implications	IV			Next Review Date	24/02/18
		People	III			Date Closed	

	A					
	B					
Likelihood	C					
	D					
	E					
	F					
		I	II	III	IV	V
				Impact		

Impact	Likelihood
V = Catastrophic	A = ≥98%
IV = Critical	B = 75% - 97%
III = Significant	C = 50% - 74%
II = Marginal	D = 25% - 49%
I = Negligible	E = 3% - 24%
	F = ≤2%

Version Control

Version No.	Date	Reason for Update / Significant Changes	Made By
1.0	17 October 2016	Draft	JG
2.0	24 February 2017	Final	JG
2.1	06/03/2017	Added Budget information	GG