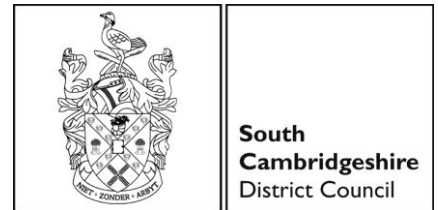


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9 January 2017

To: Councillor Simon Edwards, Portfolio Holder

Doug Cattermole
Philippa Hart
Hazel Smith
John Williams

Opposition Spokesman
Opposition Spokesman
Opposition Spokesman
Opposition Spokesman

Dear Sir / Madam

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **FINANCE AND STAFFING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING**, which will be held in **SWANSLEY ROOM A AND B - GROUND FLOOR** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **TUESDAY, 17 JANUARY 2017** at **6.00 p.m.**

Yours faithfully

Alex Colyer

Interim Chief Executive

Requests for a large print agenda must be received at least 48 hours before the meeting.

AGENDA		PAGES
PROCEDURAL ITEMS		
1. Declarations of Interest		
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting	The Portfolio Holder is asked to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2016 as a correct record.	1 - 4
3. Grants To Voluntary Sector: 6-Monthly Update Report		5 - 32
4. Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy		33 - 80
5. Revenues and Benefits Performance Report		81 - 98
6. Treasury Management Review		99 - 104
7. Work Programme		105 - 110
The Portfolio Holder will maintain, for agreement at each meeting, a Work Programme identifying all matters relevant to the Portfolio which it is believed are likely to be the subject of consideration and / or decision by the Portfolio Holder, or recommendation to, or referral by, the Portfolio Holder to Cabinet, Council, or any other constituent part of the Council. The Programme will be updated as necessary. The Portfolio Holder will be responsible for the content and accuracy of the Work Programme.		

8. Date of Next Meeting – 18 April 2017, 6pm

OUR LONG-TERM VISION

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

OUR VALUES

We will demonstrate our corporate values in all our actions. These are:

- Working Together
- Integrity
- Dynamism
- Innovation

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL

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Agenda Item 2

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on
Tuesday, 18 October 2016 at 6.00 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Simon Edwards

Councillors in attendance:

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors and Opposition spokesmen: Philippa Hart

Opposition spokesmen: John Williams

Also in attendance: Nick Wright

Officers:

Katie Brown	Revenues Manager
Alex Colyer	Interim Chief Executive
Susan Gardner Craig	Human Resources Manager
Dawn Graham	Benefits Manager
Ian Senior	Democratic Services Officer
Sally Smart	Principal Accountant Financial & Systems

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder signed, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016.

3. RURAL SETTLEMENTS LIST 2017-2018

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder considered a report reviewing the boundaries of Rural Settlements for the administration of Rural Rate Relief ("Village Shop Relief") in accordance with Section 42B of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997.

Appendix A to the report listed those designated Rural Settlements in South Cambridgeshire with a population of fewer than 3,000 people in 2017-18. All settlement boundaries were defined by parish boundaries, except those marked with an asterisk, where parishes are divided into two rural settlements as shown in the map attached as Appendix B to the report.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **approved** the Rural Settlement List for 2017-18 as attached to the report as Appendix A, and **authorised** its publication.

4. CORPORATE SERVICES - IDENTIFICATION OF SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2017-18

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder considered a report on service priorities for Corporate Services for 2017-18 as the basis for developing full business plans.

Corporate Services encompass several activities, responsibility for which is shared between the Finance and Staffing and Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holders. Councillor Nick Wright (Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holder)

attended the meeting to comment on the report, but gave effect to his decisions by a Decision Notice issued in lieu of a formal Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holder meeting.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder said that Cabinet would like to monitor the progress of existing Shared Services before proceeding further with a Shared Finance Service. He added the successful procurement and implementation of a new Financial Management System was of greater importance.

Councillor John Williams expressed concern about capacity, and the deliverability of the priorities within existing resources, particularly in the context of devolution. He said there remained issues with Shared Services, especially the Legal and ICT Shared Services, and he was worried about the turnover of Planning and New Communities staff, which was still relatively high. Councillor Philippa Hart shared these concerns.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder said that he trusted and respected the professional judgment of officers that the proposed service priorities could be delivered within existing resources.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

1. **Approved**, as the basis for the development of Corporate Services and 3C Shared Services business plans for 2017-18, the emerging priorities relevant to the Finance and Staffing Portfolio and set out in paragraph 8 of the report; and
2. **Noted** that resource requirements will be incorporated as part of the review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and development of detailed estimates.

[The Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holder signed a Decision Notice in respect of emerging priorities relevant to the Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio and set out in paragraph 8 of the report]

5. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW**

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder considered a report about the performance of the treasury management function.

The Principal Accountant (Financial and Systems) summarised the confidential information, which included several Risk Reports.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

1. **noted** the performance of the treasury management function; and
2. **approved** the increase in maximum investment to South Cambs Limited to £35 million, subject to him receiving updated information in February 2017.

6. **REVENUES QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR QUARTER 1: APRIL - JUNE 2016**

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **received and noted** a report on the current performance of the Revenues and Benefits Section.

He welcomed the continued excellent Revenues performance, but asked that future

Council Tax collection rates to compared with target figures. He found Benefits performance to be equally pleasing, and conveyed his congratulations to the staff in both teams.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **noted** the Work Programme attached to the agenda, subject subject to

- deletion of the provisional meetings in November and December 2016, and February, March and April 2017
- Business scheduled for April 2017 being deferred to a newly-scheduled Full Business meeting in May 2017.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING, AND PROPOSED SCHEDULE 2017-18

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder noted that the provisional meetings on 15 November and 13 December 2016 had been cancelled. The next Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder meeting would therefore be the Full Business meeting on Tuesday 17 January 2017, starting at 6pm.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder agreed with a proposal to better align Full Business meetings with Finance and Staffing Reporting Quarters. The Full Business Portfolio Holder meeting already scheduled for 18 April 2017 could be postponed until Tuesday 16 May 2017 (when applications to the Community Chest would be considered for the first time in the new financial year). This would be followed by Full Business meetings on

- Tuesday 22 August 2017
- Tuesday 21 November 2017
- Tuesday 20 February 2018
- Tuesday 15 May 2018

each starting at 6pm. Provisional 'Grants meetings' would be convened on the third Tuesday of June, July, September, October and December 2017, and January, March and April 2018, subject to the availability of funding.

The Meeting ended at 6.45 p.m.

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Agenda Item 3

REPORT TO: Finance and Staffing Portfolio Meeting 17 January 2017
LEAD OFFICER: Director, Health and Environmental Services

Grants To Voluntary Sector: 6-Monthly Update Report

Purpose

1. To examine the delivery of grant programmes funded by the Council during the first six months of 2016/17.
2. This not a key decision because it reviews expenditure within current budgets. It has been brought before the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder following agreement within the Grants Review of 2013.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder approves the continued provision of grant assistance to the current grant recipients supported through the Service Support Grant fund (subject to three year funding agreements) as agreed (Leader's Portfolio Holders Meetings, 16 December 2015 and 28 January 2016).
4. It is recommended the Portfolio Holder notes the delivery of all other grant programmes within the scope of this report, as currently delivered.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The closed Capital Grants programme (Appendix 1) retained financial commitment to two projects at the end of the 2015/16 financial year. Duxford Parish Council's playground refurbishment project has now reached completion, with the opening ceremony held in July 2016 and final payment made. The Hardwick Scout Group's new community building project continues to progress and approximately 50% of funds are now in place (including the grant from SCDC). The group plans to submit more applications for funding over the coming months.
6. Regarding the open programmes (Appendix 2), the majority of organisations receiving grant support have delivered the agreed outputs to time and to budget, achieving the objectives of the individual grant programmes. All recipients are being actively monitored.

Background

7. South Cambridgeshire District Council concluded its Grants Review in February 2013, a process first begun in 2011. As a result significant changes were introduced allowing a tighter focus on priorities, with grants and partnership funding arrangements simplified into six themes.
8. Reworked priorities were brought before the Leader (Leader's Portfolio Holder meeting, 24 September 2015) and a further three year programme of Service Support

Grants to community and voluntary organisations to aid delivery of the council's objectives agreed.

9. The scope of this report covers the outstanding payment from the closed Capital Grants programme, and the following grant funds:
 - (a) Supporting Parishes and Communities
 - (i) Community Chest
 - (b) Voluntary Sector – Advice and other grants
 - (i) Service Support Grants
 1. Generalist and Specialist Advice
 2. Community Transport
 3. Independent Living
 4. Support Parishes and Communities
 5. Fit to Learn
 6. Homelessness Prevention
 - (c) Housing and Independent Living
 - (i) Mortgage advice
 - (ii) Mobile Warden Scheme
 - (d) Planning and Economic Development
 - (i) Museum
 - (ii) Wildlife Enhancement
 - (e) Young people
 - (i) Young peoples partnership
 - (ii) Young peoples work
 - (iii) Elite Athlete Award Scheme
10. The Community Chest Eligibility Criteria for 2015/16 were agreed by the Leader (Leader Portfolio Holder meeting, 11 March 2015). An additional £20,000 was allocated to the Community Chest budget by Cabinet, 12 February 2015, meaning that the fund had a combined value of £79,600 when it became available to applicants on 1 April 2016.
11. Responsibility for the Community Chest, Service Support Grants and Mobile Warden Schemes (policy) has subsequently transferred to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, although funding decisions relating to the Mobile Warden Scheme and Elite Athlete Scheme are now taken by the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder. This change occurred following the Annual Council meeting held on 19 May 2016.

Considerations

12. The now closed capital grants programme retains financial commitments to one project, see Appendix 1.
13. The open grant programmes included in the Grants Review (set out in paragraph 9) are reported in detail in Appendix 2.
14. Intensified promotional effort, including by elected members and an increase in the maximum award has meant that demand for Community Chest grants grew and remained strong throughout 2015/16. The boosted Community Chest fund re-opened 1 April 2016, with the scheme advertised as being 'first come, first served' and closed to applicants following the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder meeting 20

September 2016. 63 awards were made during 2016/17 and £623 was left in the fund when it closed.

Options

15. The Portfolio Holder could approve, vary or discontinue the current grant funding arrangements for the Service Support Grant Fund (subject to three year funding agreements).
16. The Portfolio Holder can note the delivery of all other grant programmes within the scope of this report, as currently delivered.

Implications

17. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Legal

18. Arrangements are in place with grant recipients, which should be followed, if a variation or discontinuation of funding is agreed.

Consultation responses

19. None.

Effect on Strategic Aims

20. Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents: the grant programmes promote a good quality of life for all residents, assisting directly or indirectly through voluntary organisations schemes which help overcome the challenges faced by residents imposed by age, infirmity, disability, low income or rurality.

Background Papers

Leaders Portfolio Meeting, 1 Feb 2013

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=5969&Ver=4>

Leaders Portfolio Meeting, 16 December 2016

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=6680&Ver=4>

Leaders Portfolio Meeting, 28 January 2016

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=6699&Ver=4>

Finance and Staffing Portfolio Meeting, 21 June 2016

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=932&MId=6815&Ver=4>

Report Author: Gemma Barron – Sustainable Communities and Partnerships Manager
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Closed grant programmes

(a) Capital Grant programme

Applicant	Project Details	Grant Amount	Payments Made	Outstanding Amount	Current status	
		£	£	£		
Coton Village Hall	Refurbishment of Village Hall	6,400.00	6,400.00	0.00	Final payment made April 2014.	Project closed
Whaddon PC	Refurbishment of Village Hall	25,000.00	25,000.00	0.00	Final payment made May 2014.	Project closed
Cambourne Youth Partnership	Music and film-editing equipment	4,650.00	4,650.00	0.00	Final payment made Feb 2015.	Project closed
Castle Camps PC	New Changing Rooms	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Returned to balance.	Project closed
Fowlmere Recreation Ground and Village Hall	Improvements to the Village Hall	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	Signed off by BC and final instalment paid.	Project closed
Townley Memorial Hall Trust	New Multi-Use Hall	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	Final payment made. Opening ceremony September 2014.	Project closed
Great Shelford PC	New Sports Pavilion	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	Existing building demolished, new one underway.	Project closed
Sawston VC	Satellite connections at	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	Completed, installed and grant paid.	Project closed

	cinema					
Swavesey VC	Satellite connections at Swavesey Screen	1,000.00		1,000.00	Returned to balance	Project closed
Papworth Hospital Charity	Voices from the Village of Hope'	3,614.00	2,000.00	1,614.00	Project complete and no further claims - returned £1,614 to balances Jan 2015.	Project closed
Duxford Parish Council	Refurbishment of the play area	25,000.00	25,000.00	0.00	Final payment made	Project closed
St Andrews Centre, Histon	Redevelopment of the Church Halls	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Arrington Assembly Rooms	Replacement windows and loft insulation	8,800.00	8,800.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Great Shelford PC	New Sports Pavilion (Top-up)	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Weston Colville Cricket Club	Upgrade of changing rooms	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Coton Cricket Club	Practice cricket nets	5,800.00	5,800.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed

Little Shelford Sports and Recreation Trust	New Sports Pavilion	32,500.00	32,500.00	0.00	<i>(Final payment has been made April 2015.)</i>	Project closed
Cottenham Parish Council	New changing rooms on recreation ground	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Linton PC & Granta FC	Extension and improvements of pavilion	18,094.00	18,094.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
St Peter's Church, Papworth	New Community Room, kitchenette and toilet	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Whittlesford & Duxford Scout Group	New extension and rebuild of existing hut	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00	Opening ceremony 10th March 2015. Final payment made.	Project closed
Hardwick Scout Group	New Community Building	30,000.00		30,000.00	Approximately 50% of funding now raised, including funds awarded by SCDC. Committee continues to actively fundraise and will be applying for various grants over the coming months. The facility is still required.	
Hauxton Parish Council	New Village Hall -	7,500.00	7,500.00	0.00	Final payment made	Project closed

	architects fees					
Toft People's Hall Management Committee	Extension of the Village Hall	14,300.00	14,300.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
The Cade Management Committee	Extension of Eltisley Village Hall	24,600.00	24,600.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
The Kingston VH Management Committee	Refurbishment of the Village Hall	38,800.00	38,800.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Caxton Parish Council	Refurbishment of the Play Area	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
West Wickham Council	Refurbishment of the Play Area	18,600.00	18,600.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed
Harston VH Trust	Refurbishment of the Village Hall	25,000.00	25,000.00	0.00	Final payment made Sept 2014.	Project closed
Steeple Morden VH Committee	Refurbishment of the Village Hall	18,093.00	18,093.00	0.00	Final payment made	Project closed
Willingham PC	New Youth Venue at the Ploughman Hall	13,000.00	13,000.00	0.00	Grant paid Jan 2015.	Project closed
Comberton PC	Extension to the Recreation Ground	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	Grant paid Sept 2014.	Project closed
Hinxton PC	Redevelopment of	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	Final payment made.	Project closed

	Playground					
Histon and Impington PC	Purchase of Land for New Recreation Ground	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	Claim paid Sept 2014	Project closed
Cottenham Parish Council	Improvements to Skatepark	2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00	Final payment made	Project Closed
Longstowe VH & Sports Ground Committee	New village Hall and Pavilion	2,500.00	2,400.00	100.00	Returned to balance	Project Closed
Melbourn Play Parks Project	Art in the Playpark	2,120.00	0.00	2,120.00	Returned to balance	Project Closed
		£537,371	£497,537.00	£39,834.00		
			37 projects	1 project open		36 projects closed

1 project remains open, the Hardwick Scout Group's new community facility.

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Open Grant programmes

(a) Supporting Parishes and Communities

(i) Community Chest

The grants awarded from the Community Chest during Q1-3 of 2016/17 are summarised below:

Date	Applicant	Purpose	Grant Awarded (£)
27/05/2016	Histon Methodist Church	Refurbishment Histon Methodist Church	1,500
04/04/2016	1 st Whittlesford & Duxford Scout Group	W & D Caving System	1,500
04/04/2016	Barney's After School & Holiday Club	Summer outdoor play	550
27/05/2016	Granchester Village	Tree Planting	1,500
27/05/2016	Granchester Parish	Protecting Ancient Hedgerow at Little Fen	1,500
27/05/2016	Whittlesford Pre-School Playgroup (Whitsers)	Outdoor Play Area	1,500
27/05/2016	Eddie's	Windmill Hydrotherapy Pool	900
27/05/2016	Granchester Parish Council	Path at Reading Room	1,500
27/05/2016	West Wrating Parish Council	Improvements to Playground	1,500
27/05/2016	Horningsea Parish Council	Sound system Horningsea Village Hall	1,500
27/05/2016	Oakington Parish Council	Under 16's Football Storage	1,500
27/05/2016	Arrington Assembly Rooms & Institute	Hall door replacement	1,500
27/05/2016	Balsham Church Institute Management Committee	Balsham Picture House	1,500
27/05/2016	Papworth Blasters Football Club	Replacement Goalposts	1,126
27/05/2016	Whittlesford Parish	Newton Road Open Space	1,300
27/05/2016	Little Shelford Parish Council	Repairs to pedestrian bridge	900
27/06/2016	The Histon & Impington Community Allotment	Histon Community Project	600

Appendix 2

27/06/2016	Heathfield Area Recreation Trust	Healthfield Playground	1,500
27/06/2016	All Saints Church, Teversham	Church Lawnmower	1,500
27/06/2016	Cottenham Primary School PTCA	Piano Fundraising	1,500
27/06/2016	Reboot Cambridge CIC	Pi Works	1,492
27/06/2016	Willingham Wolves	New Equipment	1,500
27/06/2016	Robinson Hall Charitable Trust	Folding Plastic Tables for Social Functions	300
27/06/2016	Hatley Parish Council	Play Area	1,500
27/06/2016	Little Wilbraham & Six Mile Bottom Parish Council	Notice Boards	1,000
27/06/2016	Horningsea Residents Association	Up-Grade of Children's Playarea	1,500
27/07/2016	Ickleton Allotment Association	Brushcutter	330
27/07/2016	Coton Allotment Association	Communal Shed for Allotments	1,500
27/07/2016	The Mordens Community First Responders Group	Set up equipment	1,000
27/07/2016	Meldreth Tennis Club	Refurbishment of Courts	1,500
27/07/2016	Meadow Primary School	Save the swimming pool	1,500
27/07/2016	The Cade Pavillion	Window Replacement	1,500
27/07/2016	City of Cambridge Brass Band	Formation of City of Cambridge Youth Brass Band	900
27/07/2016	Ickleton Parish Council, Playground Project Working Group	Playground Refurbishment	1,149
27/07/2016	Coton C of E Primary School	Swimming Pool Cover	670
27/07/2016	Hardwick Play Parks Group	Play Park Development	1,500
27/07/2016	Litlington Evergreen Over 60's Club	Catering Equipment	103.88
27/07/2016	Fen Drayton Parish Council	Picnic Benches for Playground Area	1,500
27/07/2016	Linton Heights Junior School	Mound Rejuvenation	1,500
27/07/2016	Comberton United FC	New Goals	1,500
27/07/2016	Horseheath Parochial Church Council	Restoration Church Floor	1,500

Appendix 2

25/08/2016	Fen Ditton Parish Council	Replacement Noticeboard	1,500
25/08/2016	Orwell Singers	Music Fund	350
25/08/2016	Friends of Pendragon	New seating	1,500
13/09/2016	Lettice Martin Croft Community Centre	Bingo Caller	245
25/08/2016	Coton Football Club	Provision of much needed football goals	1,500
25/08/2016	Tadlow Parish Meeting	Tennis Court Restoration	576
25/08/2016	Harston Local History Group	Harston Heritage Interpretation Board	805
25/08/2016	1 st Over St Marys Scout	Tents & Refresh Archery Equip	1,500
26/08/2016	Little Shelford Bowls	Club House rewiring	1,500
24/08/2016	Great Shelford FC	Great Shelford FC Reserves	600
26/08/2016	Friends of Shepreth Parks	Friends of Shepreth	1,500
25/08/2016	Eversdaen Recreation Ground	New Football Goals	1,131.99
26/08/2016	Comberton Gymnastics Club	Equipment Improvements	1,500
29/09/2016	Barton Parish Council	Foxcotte Bus Shelter	1,500
29/09/2016	Carers Trust, Cambridgeshire	Great Shelford Dementia Support Group	1,500
24/10/2016	Longstanton Air Training Corps	Squadron Band	1,500
29/09/2016	Balsham Parish Council	Community Orchard	1,500
03/10/2016	Chapel Orchard Community Group	Chapel Orchard	1,500
29/09/2016	Willingham Parish Council	Improving access QE2 playing field	1,500
29/09/2016	Cambourne Church	Foodbank and Library Shelving	1,500
30/06/2016	Foxtton Parish Council	Drinking Fountain	1,448
29/09/2016	Wilbrahams Memorial	Wilbrahams Memorial Hall	1,500
Budget allocated 2016/17			79,600
Total spend 2016/17			78,977

Status: The Community Chest is now closed following full allocation of funds.

(b) Voluntary Sector – Advice and other grants

(i) Service Support Grants

1. General and Specialist Advice

General Welfare Advice:

The provision of free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to South Cambridgeshire residents on their rights and responsibilities in all the following areas: debt, benefits, employment, housing, legal and relationship/family matters.

Specialist Advice:

The provision of free, independent, confidential and impartial advice and advocacy to residents who are disabled, to carers and to families with disabled children.

Grant recipients are required to facilitate access to these services where residents are unable to travel to district centres.

Grant awards were made to the following recipients for the delivery of General Welfare and Specialist Welfare Advice, as show in the table below:

Recipient		Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Total (£)
Cambridge and District CAB	General Specialist	52,000 3,250	52,000 3,250	52,000 3,250	165,750
North Herts CAB	General Specialist	16,800 1,050	16,800 1,050	16,800 1,050	53,550
Suffolk West CAB	General Specialist	5,600 350	5,600 350	5,600 350	17,850
Uttlesford CAB	General Specialist	5,600 350	5,600 350	5,600 350	17,850
Year totals		85,000	85,000	85,000	255,000

Cambridge and District CAB is the lead member of the four bureaux who together achieve 100% coverage across the district. The following report was prepared by Cambridge and District CAB on behalf of all four CAB. The other bureaux are:

North Hertfordshire CAB provides general welfare advice from its office in Royston, but also from Letchworth and Hitchin. It also operates an advice line. In addition to core activity, this grant funds a caseworker 10hrs/week dealing with welfare rights (benefit reform) and debt (largely Council Tax and rent arrears). This service operates from the Royston office in the first instance, but now also operates outreach sessions from the Melbourn Hub and at The Limes, Bassingbourn.

Uttlesford CAB is situated in Saffron Walden. It sees clients from 16 wards in South Cambridgeshire, with residents of Duxford, Sawston, Linton, Balsham and Whittlesford in particular opting to access services from this bureau. In addition to advise on Debt, Employment, Housing, Legal, Immigration and Family/Relationship issues, they deliver specialist advice on disability benefit. They have introduced services which cater for deaf clients, a specialism which South Cambs residents will be able to access by virtue of our core funding.

Suffolk West CAB provides access for South Cambridgeshire's residents via their Haverhill bureau. The phone network between the West Suffolk CAB offices has been upgraded, thus improving the remote access to their advice services. This bureau also provides training, including to school and college students, to assist financial capability and thereby enable better money management and avoidance of unmanageable debts in future.

Summary of Activity in South Cambridgeshire undertaken by the four bureaux during 2016/17 during the first two quarters:

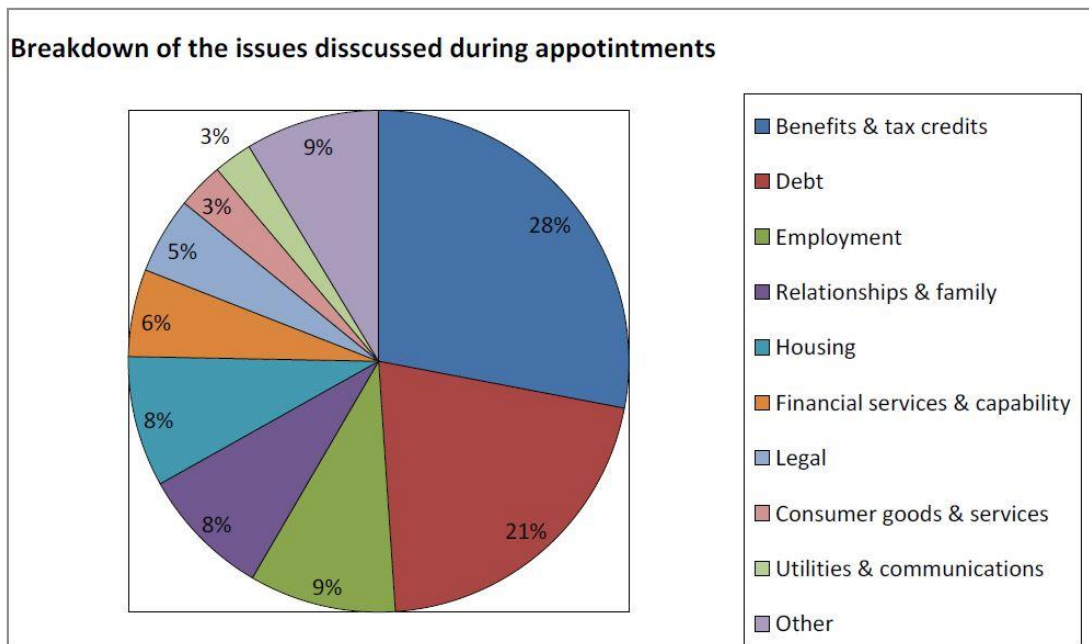
The following data relates to the sum of combined activity across the four bureaux serving the district.

Client numbers and activity: 1,836 clients were seen, representing 4,725 advice issues.

Contacts	
Information	1,303
Advice	863
Advice and limited action	234
Advice and referral	51
General Casework	133
Specialist Casework	2,194
Grand Total	4,725

The level of specialist work has increased and probably reflects the recent changes in benefits and more complex enquiries. There has been a considerable increase in benefit appeal and representation work.

The pie chart overleaf shows a breakdown of the issues discussed during appointments over the first six months, by advice type.



Outreach: Across the range of remote and self help advice resources throughout the district, 4,857 used the five touch screen kiosks in the first half of the year, viewing 29,311 pages. Units are located in Cambourne Church, South Cambs District Council, Melbourn, Gamlingay and Sawston.

CAB launched a new website in May 2016 and it has been visited 6,858 times.

326 enquiries sent via e-mail have been answered and 1,042 enquiries dealt with through their Adviceline.

Value for Money: The benefit to the district is disproportionate to the level of funding attributable to the district, i.e. South Cambridgeshire clients represent 34% of their total work, but South Cambs funding represents only 7% of their income, with new clients from South Cambridgeshire representing an increasing proportion of their workload.

The intervention provided by the CAB results in a considerable collective financial benefit to the district, totalling a financial gain of £1,725,213 in the first six months, see table 3, overleaf.

The CAB advise on debt totalling £1,909,135 and resulted in £797,675 of debt being written off in the first six months, see below.

The debt categories most frequently advised on were

- Credit Cards
- Unsecured Loans
- Benefit Overpayments (up by +£147,407 over the same period last year)
- Mortgage Arrears

Table 1: Debts written off through CAB assistance, Q1-2, 2016/17

Financial Outcome Category	Outcome	Total £ amount recorded
Debts written off	Bankruptcy	£210,800
	Debt write off - other	£35,333
	DRO - debt relief order	£551,542
	Total	£797,675

Table 2: Financial outcome of CAB interventions, Q1-2, 16/17

Financial Outcome Category	No of Unique Clients	Number of Outcomes	Total £ amount recorded
Debts written off	66	68	£797,675
Income gain	300	495	£1,051,911
Income loss	1	1	£373
Re-imburements, services, loans	25	33	£18,140
Repayments rescheduled	9	17	£41,036
Total	356	614	£1,909,135
+£425,950 over the same period last year			

Table 3: Benefits

AIC Part 2	Outcome	Total £ amount recorded
02 Income Support	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£24,253
	Total	£24,253
03 Pension Credit	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£50,412
	Other (financial)	£2,800
	Total	£53,212
Up +£16k over the same period last year		
07 Housing Benefit	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£179,685
	Benefit / tax credit gain - award or increase following revision or appeal	£11,290
	Benefit / tax credit gain - Money put back into payment	£1,437
	Other (financial)	£3,032
	Total	£195,445
Up +£24k over same period last year		
08 Child Benefit	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£11,466
	Benefit / tax credit gain - Money put back into payment	£1,789
	Total	£13,255

10 Working & Child Tax Credits	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£79,794
	Benefit / tax credit gain - award or increase following revision or appeal	£16,508
	Total	£96,302
11 Jobseekers Allowance	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£19,427
	Benefit / tax credit gain - Money put back into payment	£3,801
	Total	£23,228
13 State Retirement Pension	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£6,084
	Total	£6,084
15 Disability Living Allowance	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£21,128
	Benefit / tax credit gain - Money put back into payment	£1,134
	Total	£22,261
17 Attendance Allowance	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£46,057
	Total	£46,057
18 Carers Allowance	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£14,919
	Benefit / tax credit gain - award or increase following revision or appeal	£5,320
	Total	£20,239
19 Employment Support Allowance	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£280,832
	Benefit / tax credit gain - award or increase following revision or appeal	£92,230
	Benefit / tax credit gain - Money put back into payment	£45,911
	Total	£418,974
21 Personal independence payment	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£649,054
	Benefit / tax credit gain - award or increase following revision or appeal	£96,958
	Benefit / tax credit gain - Money put back into payment	£23,914
	Total Up+£40k over same period last year	£769,926
22 Localised social welfare	Other (financial)	£75
	Total	£75
23 Council tax reduction	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£30,373
	Benefit / tax credit gain - award or increase following revision or appeal	£1,164
	Other (financial)	£345
	Total	£31,882
27 Passported benefits	Other (financial)	£458
	Total	£458
99 Other benefits issues	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	£3,475
	Other (financial)	£88
	Total	£3,563
Total		£1,725,213

Advice delivered to clients was monitored by gender, age and ethnic origin, see tables 4,5,6 overleaf.

Advice was provided to 1,836 clients living with a arrange of disabilities, see table 7 for details.

Status: Delivery is in accordance with the requirements of the Service Level Agreement and continues to offer good value for money

Gender	Clients	%
Female	988	60%
Male	664	40%
Trans	1	0%
Trans - Female		0%
Trans - Male		0%
Unknown\Not Recorded	183	
Total	1836	100%

Table 4: Advice recipients by gender

Age Profile	Clients	%
0 – 16	0	0%
17 – 24	79	5%
25 – 34	285	18%
35 – 49	541	34%
50 – 64	448	28%
65 – 74	176	11%
75 – 84	63	4%
85 +	16	1%
Not recorded	228	

Table 5: Advice recipients by age

Ethnic Origin	Clients	%
BAME	150	10%
White	1,390	90%
Not Recorded\Unknown	296	
Total	1836	100%

Table 6: Advice recipients by ethnic origin

Type of Disability	Clients	%
Cognitive Impairment	2	0%
Deaf	1	0%
Hearing Impairment	12	3%
Learning Difficulty	16	3%
Mental Health	119	25%
Physical Impairment (non-sensory)	64	14%
Visual Impairment	10	2%
Long-Term Health Condition	191	40%
Multiple Impairments	27	6%
Other Disability or Type Not Given	31	7%
Not recorded/not applicable	1363	
Total	1836	100%

Table 7: Advice recipients by type of disability

2. Community Transport

Community Transport Theme (formerly reporting to Planning Policy and Localism Portfolio Holder, now reporting to the Strategic Planning Portfolio Holder)
The fund was open to applications from operators of community transport schemes and parish councils delivering or planning to deliver transport services within South Cambridgeshire and for South Cambridgeshire Residents.

The allocation of Service Support Grants awarded under the Community Transport theme is shown in the table below:

	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Total (£)
3 Counties Transport (in association with The Voluntary Network)	3,835	3,835	3,835	11,505
Royston and District Community Transport	3,165	3,165	3,165	9,495
Care Network	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000
Year totals	15,000	15,000	15,000	45,000

3 Counties Transport

531 trips have been carried out during the first two quarters of the year. While dial-a-ride and group hire figures are up, community car scheme ridership is about the same. Villages served include: Balsham, Castle Camps, Cardinals Green, Hildersham, Horseheath, Linton, Shudy Camps & West Wrating.

Volunteer drivers are proving very hard to come by in South Cambridgeshire, despite advertising in various magazines.

The group also hire buses to 17 affiliated Cambridgeshire groups.

Royston and District Community Transport

Royston and District Community Transport has consistently delivered a valued service for South Cambs residents. They have provided low cost door-to-door transport through their scheme, which is open to anyone who cannot use public transport for reasons of age, impaired mobility or social exclusion owing to the lack of a public transport option. This has been achieved, in part, by voluntary effort of forty-eight volunteer drivers operating in the district. The grant awarded covered core funding support.

Key achievements in Q1 and Q2 in line with the schedule of grant:

2,448 journeys, 415 users in South Cambs, of which approximately 55% are regular users covering 57 parishes.

6 presentations were given to promote the service, press coverage and poster placement during the period.

Care Network

This organisation was awarded grant to support ongoing work of establishing and supporting community car schemes, a vital component of the Community Transport offer across the district. It is worth noting that collectively car scheme services carried out 15,915 journeys throughout 2105/16 and covered 236,794.23 miles between them.

In this reporting period, three Community Car Scheme training sessions have taken place with 31 attendees. They have also supported Community Care Schemes with the change to electronic reporting to the County Council and have helped to establish a new joint car scheme covering Histon & Impington and Girton.

Status: Grant funded activities are on track for 16/17.

3. Independent Living

Independent Living theme (reporting to the Health and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder)

This fund was open to organisations for the delivery of services that allow residents to maintain their independence; reduce rural isolation; tackle loneliness, depression and isolation; offer support to carers.

- Support the set up and continuation of good neighbour and befriending schemes (excluding Mobile Warden Schemes and Community Transport Schemes).
- Offer advice, information and support to those who would otherwise be unable to live independent lives;
- Support carers; and/or
- Tackle loneliness, dementia and depression.

The allocation of Service Support Grants awarded under the Independent Living them are shown in the table below:

	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Total (£)
Arts and Minds	2,500	2,500	2,500	7,500
Care Network	6,500	6,500	6,500	18,500
Cope	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
DISH	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
Totals	16,000	16,000	16,000	48,000

Arts and Minds - offer people living with mental health problems and their carers, opportunities for participation in, and experience of, high quality arts and culture, in order to maintain mental health and support recovery when they become ill in Cambridgeshire.

Funding agreed: FY1 £2,500, FY2 £2,500, FY3 £2,500

During the first half of the year, Arts and Minds ran three series of Arts on Prescription for Adults in Cambridgeshire with a fourth beginning on 15 September. The sessions were held in Cambridge, Cambourne and Huntingdon. They have also run a second pilot series for young people at Cambourne Village College, 12 people attended.

Care Network - through the development of community and voluntary groups it helps to establish and support, it aims to allow older and vulnerable adults to stay independent and live fuller lives.

Funding agreed: FY 1 £6,500 FY2 £6,500, FY3 £6,500

They are currently supporting 23 social groups and schemes, such as singing groups to Good Neighbour Schemes. They have also helped four communities set up new groups: Cambourne Health and Wellbeing Club, Toft Walk to Remember Group, Swavesey Health and Wellbeing Club & Farming Memories. They attend the Local Health Partnership and the sub-group set up to support people with mental health challenges.

COPE - promote the interests of people aged 50 or over, through signposting, consultation, co-ordinating and advocacy, with the aim to reduce social exclusion, challenge ageism, promote active ageing, reduce isolation and demonstrate what older people can do in Cambridgeshire.

Funding agreed FY1 £4,000, FY2 £4,000, FY3 £4,000

Key achievements in line with the schedule of grant:

During the first half of the year COPE has continued to develop its bi-monthly newsletter, whilst also reducing costs, and has introduced a letters section as well as regular surveys to encourage two-way communication and better understand the needs of their members. The newsletter is mainly distributed via post (as requested by members) and delivered to relevant local venues. Committee members have attended various local partnership meetings to advocate on behalf of its members and also better understand the needs of older people. Monthly outings (approx..

50% South Cambs residents) have taken place to Kew gardens, Duxford IWM and the Waterbeach waste recycling facility, for example. New people regularly attend the outings and local lectures. Total membership remains at approximately 3,000.

DISH - provide advice, information and advocacy services to people with disabilities, carers and families with disabled children in South Cambridgeshire, specifically to make home visits in order to complete assessments and applications, hold office based interviews and provide over the phone advice; to prepare appeals and provide representation.

Funding agreed FY1 £3,000, FY2 £3,000, FY3 £3,000

Between April and September DISH carried out 12 home visits and a total of 32 clients were seen at the DISH offices on 182 occasions by three advisors. In addition to this, they supported a further 30 clients on the telephone (107 contacts). Residents have also been supported with appeals (3 clients) and claiming benefits, which total the equivalent of £16,003 annually.

Status: Grant funded activities are on track for 16/17.

4. Support for Parishes and Communities

Support for Parishes and Communities theme (reporting to the Staffing and Finance Portfolio Holder)

This fund was open to applications from organisations providing support to local community groups and charitable bodies who themselves wish to provide services for South Cambridgeshire residents to deliver:

- The provision of services and support to enable effective, sustainable and legal operation in the provision of services and activities for South Cambridgeshire residents, including Practical assistance and support including fundraising and training
- General support on governance, management and employment
- The representation of the voluntary sector at a strategic level, facilitating third sector involvement in shaping the delivery of public services
- The facilitation of consultation and communication, including providing an effective liaison function between the District Council and the voluntary, community, charitable and social enterprise sector in South Cambridgeshire and assist in capacity building of the voluntary sector.

Cambridge CVS was the sole recipient of funding under the Support for Parish and Communities Service Support Grant theme.

Funding agreed: FY1 £10,000, FY2 £10,000, FY3 £10,000

CCVS has delivered 120 support sessions to 56 different organisations in South Cambs and 22 finance and fundraising sessions. Outreach surgeries have been held in Cambourne and Gamlingay, although there was no take up for the Gamlingay session despite publicity through the usual CCVS methods. In the first half of the year CCVS sent out six editions of the monthly newsletter and numerous bulletins to members, CEO group, Councillors and parish clerks.

Status: CCVS continues to provide the representation and support functions it is grant aided to do in accordance with our grant agreement.

5. Fit to Learn

Fit to Learn supports the delivery of services that help pre-school children develop strength, co-ordination, language and communication skills and good mental health.

Activities supported under the Fit to Learn theme of the Service Support Grants:

	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)	Total (£)
Home-Start	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
Cambourne Church	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
Totals	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000

Home-Start

Funding agreed: FY1 £4,000, FY2 £4,000, FY3 £4,000

The Big Hopes Big Futures programme was a little late in starting, partly due to the agreement being signed later than planned which meant finances were not in place for the training. Everything is now in place so that once eligible families have been identified the programme visits can take place.

Cambourne Church

Funding agreed: FY1 £4,000, FY2 £4,000, FY3 £4,000

A monitoring meeting has taken place with the Children's Centre (Cambourne Church partner) and grant on course.

Status: All grant recipients under this theme are delivering planned activities to time and to budget.

6. Homelessness Prevention

Grant support for organisations working for Homelessness Prevention was incorporated within the Service Support Grant Scheme (coordinating the administration of these schemes reduced the staff resource required for administration).

Activities supported under the Housing theme of the Service Support Grants:

Organisation	Allocation 16/17 (£)	Payment 16/17 (£)
Cambridge Cyrenians	1,712	1,712
Cambridge Re-Use (previously known as SOFA)	1,471	1,471
Cambridge Women's Aid	7,528	7,528
Total	10,711	10,711

Cambridge Cyrenians

The grant is contributing to the maintenance and upgrade of computers & IT support provided to service users. Cambridge Cyrenians provides a PC and internet access for residents in each of the 11 properties. The ability to access the internet is becoming increasingly important, not just for bidding on Home-Link, but because most residents are job hunting on-line as the expectations of the DWP is increasing. In the six months to 30 September Cambridge Cyrenians accommodated six new residents with a connection to South Cambridgeshire.

The number of women being referred to accommodation over the last two years has increased considerably. Historically under 5% of residents have been women but this has now increased to 20%. (Total number of bed spaces 68.)

In July 2015 Cambridge Cyrenians opened its first women only accommodation; a five bed house in central Cambridge. One of the six new residents to accommodate with a South Cambs connection is female.

Cambridge Re-Use provides low cost household goods to low income families in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

During the first half of the 2016/2017 Financial Year (April to September) a total of 107 people living in the SCDC area accessed the service. This compares with a total of 110 people who accessed the service during the first half of the 2015/2016 Financial Year.

Cambridge Re-Use continue to put the grant funding towards the cost of running a furniture van which is used both for collecting donations of household goods and for delivering purchases to customers' homes.

Cambridge Women's Aid (CWA)

CWA offers (mainly) women one-to-one support and access to group support sessions. CWA also provides women with weekly activities to encourage them to come together and offer each other peer support. Support is provided by two full time workers during normal office hours. In addition, Service users can access support in an emergency 24 hours a day, 365 days a year thanks to the CWA on call worker who is available outside of normal working hours.

From 1/4/16 to 30/9/16 CWA supported 322 people from the following areas:

City = 119
South Cambs = 73
East Cambs = 26
Fenland = 6
Hunts = 4
Out of county = 80
Did not disclose = 14

A further 383 people were offered support due to their involvement with the police but they declined CWA help. 124 of these people were South Cambs residents.

Status: All grant recipients under this theme are delivering planned activities to time and to budget.

(c) Housing and Independent Living

(i) Mortgage Advice (Homelessness prevention)

The fund available for specific money advice to prevent homelessness (£8,520) allows Cambridge and District CAB to deliver a weekly advice session at South Cambridgeshire Hall. Reporting has been combined with the report on Service Support Fund grant aided activity.

(ii) Mobile Warden Scheme

Funding as been allocated to support mobile warden schemes in 2016/17 as detailed in the table below:

Mobile Warden Scheme	Allocations 2016/17
Milton Community Care Scheme	£1,900
Mordens & Litlington Mobile Warden Scheme	£1,900
Cottenham Mobile Warden Scheme	£1,000
Harston & District Community Warden Scheme	£800
Great Shelford Mobile Warden Scheme	£1,300
Haslingfield Community Warden Scheme	£250
Melbourn Mobile Warden Scheme	£2,100
Histon & Impington (Age UK Scheme)	£1,640
Teversham (Age UK Scheme)	£1,640
Linton	£2,440
Small Villages (Age UK Scheme)	£3,040
Swavesey (Age UK Scheme)	£1,240
Total	£19,250

(d) Planning and Economic Development

(i) Farmland Museum

In October 2013 a further two year funding agreement was signed, awarding £12,650 for 2014/15 and £8,500 in 2015/16. The first tranche of the 2015/16 grant of £4250 was paid in April 2015 and the second tranche was paid in October 2015.

A commitment has been made by the Portfolio Holder to continue funding the museum at the current level (£8,500) for the next year (2016-17) in two tranches, as before. The museum makes a valued contribution to the local community and is important for the sense of 'place' it creates. This is considered vital with the forthcoming growth in the Waterbeach area.

The museum continues to offer volunteer opportunities to local people. In 2016 they had 22 people actively volunteering on a weekly/monthly basis, an additional 81 people volunteered their time at events. They hope to increase the number of

volunteers during 2017 but realise the location is difficult for many people to get to if they don't have their own transport.

The museum continued to offer its Local Residents' Season Ticket offer to people living in Waterbeach, Landbeach, Milton, Histon, Chittering and Cottenham. The uptake was slightly lower than in the previous two years. The intention is in 2017 to do another high profile marketing campaign. Despite the slight drop in take up they again saw an increase in repeat family visits; parents see the site as safe and educational.

Although visitor numbers remained constant in 2016 visits by local schools dropped. The Education Officer continued to go out to schools with handling objects and also provided Loan Boxes for teachers to run their own classroom sessions. A new information leaflet was sent out to all local schools in Cambridgeshire. A new education website is currently being designed in-house and will go live by February half-term. Publicity about all events is sent to local schools who add it to parents' newsletters.

Events during 2016 included a Craft Fair, a 1940s weekend, a Farming and Countryside Life day, a Tudor weekend during the August bank holiday. There was a Children's Archaeology Day in July and every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon during the school holidays.

The museum's trustees and museum manager continue to plan in preparation for the new housing developments planned for the area – looking at facilities, resources, interpretation of the objects and buildings (sense of place and local heritage), site security etc.; and how the museum will be able to offer volunteering opportunities to people moving to the area as well as marketing the site as a desirable local destination. Marketing material was given to one local developer for their open days in the autumn of 2016.

Status: On track.

(ii) Wildlife Enhancement

Discretionary awards and necessary purchases for council-led projects have been made from this fund to the following projects in Q1 and Q2:

Type	Item	Amount (£)
Flower patches	Flower patches ground preparation	850.00
Flower patches	Madingley Mulch products	141.33
Parklife	Sundries, gazebo and event support for Wild South Cambs area	810.05
Flower Patches	Wildflower seed	402.00
Total		2,203.38

Status: This fund continues to meet identified needs for wildlife enhancements measures.

(e) Young People

(i) Young people's partnership

£10,000 was allocated to the Children & Young People's Area Partnership in 2016/17 to support the delivery of SCDC children, young people and families priorities.

(ii) Young people's work

No separate allocation is made to fund young people's work. It was agreed at the Leader's Portfolio Meeting on 16 January 2014 that the Youth Council be permitted to consider all applications for projects targeting young people aged 0-17 years old and to make recommendations to the Leader.

(iii) Elite Athletes grant

Applications to this fund were considered once during 2016/17. In total £12,000 was awarded to 23 athletes and para athletes. The application window was from May to the end of July 2016 and the following awards were made:

Recipient - Sport	Award (£)
Hayley Simmonds - Cycling	1,600
Sophie Lankford - Cycling	1,000
Harley Pell - Cycling	250
Ben Cutmore - Diving	1,000
Nicola Taylor – Equestrian Dressage	200
Daniel Summerfield- Fencing	500
Gareth Furlong - Hockey	750
Rhodri Furlong - Hockey	1,000
Olivia Morgan - Rowing	250
Freya Sutcliffe - Rowing	200
Rebecca Burton - Swimming	350
Anna Loughlan - Tennis	1,000
Evie Joseph - Trampolining	500
Gabriel Strydom-Green - Trampolining	250
Sophie Pedder - Triathlon	250
Georgina Bullen - Goalball	500
Camille Holland - Powerlifting	800
Shannon Flockhart - Athletics	250
Ashley Brown - Athletics	250
Total	12,000

Agenda Item 4



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Report To: Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder
Lead Officer: Interim Chief Executive

17 January 2017

Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy

Purpose

1. To request that the Portfolio Holder formally adopt a revised policy for the granting of Discretionary Rate Relief to Business properties.
2. This is a key decision because it is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority, and it was first published in the November 2016 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Council formally adopt the “Discretionary Business Rate Relief Policy” as shown in Appendix A

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The adoption of a formal policy will ensure that billing and collection is carried out in accordance with the law and government requirements. It will benefit and support businesses who meet the criteria, whilst minimising the risk of legal challenge.

Background

5. The existing policy was adopted in October 2014 for the relevant reliefs at that time.
6. With effect from April 2016, the Council has three sites that fall within the Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone, which are operated in partnership with the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership and the Department for Communities and Local Government.
7. Changes to Mandatory Rural Rate Relief were introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Autumn Statement in November 2016, which will reduce some of the requirement for Discretionary Rural Rate Relief. However, until the relevant legislation comes into force, it is expected that Local Authorities utilise local discount powers under section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 to grant relief to eligible ratepayers
8. A new relief for Local Newspapers will also be introduced from April 2017.
9. Discounts for shops, pubs and restaurants, known as Retail Relief, is no longer applicable.

Considerations

10. The Council recognises the important role Discretionary Relief can play in the economic regeneration of the district.
11. The current policy requires amendments to cater for the Enterprise Zone sites, along with announcements that were made in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. For comparative purposes the current policy is shown at Appendix B.
12. Within the new policy, changes to the following reliefs have been made:
 - Section 44A Relief – Partly Empty Properties. A line has been added to confirm that as all applications will be subject to an inspection visit, retrospective applications are unable to be considered
 - Rural Rate Relief – Discretionary. Amendments have been made to reflect the increased limit for mandatory relief from 50% to 100%, and to show that discretionary relief is able to be considered on properties where the Rateable Value exceeds £12,500 but is less than £16,500 and the "rural" criteria has been met.
 - Discounts for Shops, Pubs and Restaurants – Retail Relief. This section has been removed from the policy
 - Re-Occupation Relief. This section has been removed from the policy
 - Section 69 / Section 47 – Local Discretion. A paragraph has been added to reflect that from time to time these local powers may be used to implement a new national relief prior to the relevant legislation being passed.
 - Enterprise Zone Relief. A new relief has been added to reflect the Council's three Enterprise Zone sites.
 - Local Newspapers' Relief. A section has been added to accommodate this new relief that will be introduced from April 2017.

Some amendments have also been made to the introduction of the policy to reflect the changes above.

Options

13. Adopting the policy will provide additional support the business in the District, and ensure that the Council is meeting government requirements

Implications

14. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

15. The changes introduced within this policy around Enterprise Zones, Rural Rate Relief and Local Newspapers will all be funded by central government, with the income from Business Rates on Enterprise Zones being shared on a percentage basis with the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership. There have been no changes to the limits that were already set out within the policy.

Legal

16. The award of rate relief is beneficial to local businesses and the adoption of a formal policy reduces the risk of legal challenge.

Equality and Diversity

17. We ensure that revenue billing and collection are delivered in a fair and consistent manner to all members of the community.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

18. None.

Effect on Strategic Aims

Aim 1 – Connected Communities

19. Discretionary Rate Relief supports local businesses to continue to operate and provide employment within communities across the district.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Report Author: Katie Brown- Revenues Manager
Telephone: (01954) 713335

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Appendix A

Revenues Services

Discretionary Business Rate Relief Policy

January 2017

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1. Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of business to the local economy and understands the challenges that businesses face. The Council wants to provide support to businesses within the area where it is reasonable to do so. We also recognise the contribution that is made to the community by voluntary, charitable and non-profit-making organisations.

The Council has discretionary powers to award relief from payment of Non-Domestic Rates in a range of circumstances: -

- Properties partly occupied for a temporary period. Awarded under Section 44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- Properties occupied by charities and other not-for-profit organisations. Awarded under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988
- Properties occupied and located in rural settlements. Awarded under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988
- Ratepayers that would otherwise suffer hardship. Awarded under section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- In exercise of the Council's general power to award discretionary rate relief. Awards under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011.

This policy provides guidance for Council Officers and ratepayers on the application of Discretionary Rate Relief. The following reliefs are covered in this policy:

- Section 44A relief – discretionary relief for partly empty properties
- Hardship relief
- Charitable rate relief (Top-up relief)
- Rate relief for not-for-profit organisations
- Relief for Community Amateur Sports Clubs
- Relief for rural businesses
- New build empty properties
- Section 69 / Section 47
- Enterprise Zone Relief
- Local Newspapers' Relief

Each application for relief will be considered on its own merits. Due consideration will be given to the guidance within this policy and to national legislation. In determining an award consideration will also be given to the interests of the council taxpayers of the District.

We would expect, as a matter of course, that all other options would have been considered before an application for discretionary rate relief is submitted. Awards will only be made where the benefits to the taxpayers outweigh the financial implication of the award.

Format of applications

Applications for relief must be made on the Council's application form. Applications should be submitted with the supporting information that is requested. Any applications submitted without the supporting information will be assessed solely on the information

that is available at the time of the decision. Ratepayers requiring help or advice should call the Business Rates team on 01954 713112 or 01954 713409.

Payment of Instalments

Ratepayers must continue to pay any amount of rates that falls due whilst their application is pending. In the event that payments are not received as due, the Council will continue with its normal recovery procedures to secure payment.

Effective date of relief

It is the Council's policy that discretionary relief will only be awarded from the date of the application, or in the case of hardship, the point at which the hardship occurred. Only in the most exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to awarding relief for a retrospective period. Consideration may be given where the ratepayer can establish a solid reason for not submitting their application at an earlier date.

Relief will not be awarded if the Council is not satisfied that the circumstances as declared in the application have occurred.

State Aid

All amounts of relief awarded are subject to the State Aid *De Minimis* as defined by European legislation. The maximum *De Minimis* funding any single recipient can receive is €200,000 over a 3 year fiscal period, the Sterling equivalent is calculated using the European Commission Exchange Rate.

Costs of Relief

Prior to April 2013, Central Government paid 75% of the cost of discretionary relief, and the remaining 25% was funded by South Cambridgeshire District Council, apart from charitable top-up where SCDC contributed 75%.

Following the introduction of Business Rates Retention, the cost of awarding discretionary relief is apportioned as follows:

- 50% funded by Central Government
- 40% funded by the District Council
- 9% funded by County Council
- 1% funded by the Fire Service

The Council will be reimbursed for the cost of awarding New Build Empty Property Relief, Enterprise Zone Relief and Local Newspapers' Relief by central government. Where discretionary relief is given under section 69 of the Localism Act 2011, the full cost will fall to the local authority.

Decisions

Decisions regarding rate relief will be communicated to the ratepayer in writing. If the decision is a refusal of the relief, reasons for the refusal will be provided in the letter.

Period of award

All awards will expire at the end of the financial year if the award has not ended at an earlier date or at the anniversary of the granting of the relief. The Council will look to contact recipients for confirmation of entitlement and potential renewal of relief with the exception of Hardship and Section 44a Relief.

2. Section 44A relief - Discretionary relief for partly empty properties

Occupation of part of a property is occupation of the whole in rating law. There may be occasions where a property is only partly occupied for a short period of time. This may be due to a business moving in or relocating to a new property within the District. In certain circumstances, the Council may use its discretion to award a part empty relief; also known as Section 44A (s.44A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988).

In these circumstances the Council may request that the Valuation Officer apportion the rateable value of the property between the occupied and unoccupied elements.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Section 44A relief may be applicable in the following circumstances:

- Where the occupied and unoccupied parts of the property can be easily segregated
- Where there are short term practical or financial difficulties in occupying. Phased vacations may be considered when moving within the SCDC district
- Where the business is relocating machinery
- Where Fire/Flood has rendered a part of the assessment unoccupied for a short period

In all of the above cases, the period of part occupation must be for a temporary period only, and relief will not be awarded where it appears to the Council that the reason that part of the property is empty, is for the purpose of applying for partial empty rate relief.

Rate relief will not be awarded where the partial occupation is due to the normal day to day operation of the business i.e. a warehouse which has recently despatched a large order and has limited stock. Nor will Relief normally be considered where the property is due for demolition.

All applications will be subject to an inspection visit, therefore retrospective applications will not be considered.

For the purposes of this policy a period of up to 12 months will be considered to be temporary. Periods which exceed this time period will be treated as a permanent change and will not attract an award of section 44A. A period of less than 6 weeks will not be considered for Section 44A purposes except in exceptional circumstances.

Where the Valuation Officer may be able to split the assessment any application for discretionary relief will not be considered until the Valuation Officer's decision is known.

How will a decision be made?

Prior to an award being made, a visit to the premises will be made by a Council Officer to establish the exact area of the property that is empty. The application must be supported

by a plan of the property which clearly marks the boundary of the empty and occupied parts. This plan will be given to the Valuation Officer to apportion the rateable value.

Further visits may be made to the property throughout the award to establish that the property is still partly empty.

Further applications for part empty relief may be considered in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a change to the area of the property that is unoccupied
- Where the financial year comes to an end. Part empty property relief will end if one of the following circumstances applies:
 - The end of the financial year
 - The end of the award
 - Where part or all of the unoccupied parts become occupied
 - Where the whole of the property becomes unoccupied
 - Where liability for the property changes

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be dependant on the size of the empty space in the property based on the rateable value.

Period of award

An award will apply for a 6 month period for industrial premises and 3 months for non industrial properties, unless it is ended by the changes in circumstance as listed above.

3. **Hardship relief**

Hardship relief may be awarded where the business is suffering from unexpected hardship which is outside of normal risks associated with the business. Reduction or remission of business rates on the grounds of hardship will only be awarded in exceptional circumstances.

Hardship relief is granted at the discretion of the Council which can reduce or remit the amount of business rates due, provided it is satisfied that:

- The ratepayer would sustain hardship if it did not do so; and
- It is reasonable for the Council to do so, having regard to the interests of its tax payers.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

The test of hardship need not be confined strictly to financial hardship; all relevant factors affecting the ability of a business to meet its liability for rates will be taken into account. The following factors will also be considered:

- The interests of council tax payers in the area. For example, where the employment prospects in the area would be severely worsened by a company going out of business, or the amenities of an area might be reduced. Where the granting of relief would have an adverse effect on the financial interest of the taxpayers, the case for reduction or remission may still, on balance, outweigh the cost to the taxpayers
- Whether the business provides goods and services which are of great benefit to the district or the neighbourhood in which it is located, such as the business taking on apprentices or trainees, or providing guaranteed interviews to young people of the District
- The ratepayer must provide evidence of hardship e.g. a severe loss in trade, a marked decline in trade compared to corresponding periods in previous years.
- The business must be viable for the foreseeable future i.e. a period of 3 years.

Hardship Relief would not be considered in the following circumstances:

- Where the business is profitable, or where the business has experienced a minor loss in trade in comparison to the annual turnover of the business
- Where the drawings/remuneration of the Director(s) or proprietor are above a "reasonable" amount.
- Where the business is new and hardship relief is being requested to fund the initial progression of the business

- Where the property is empty
- Where a similar facility is already being provided within the same locality or within a reasonable distance

Prior to the award being made, the business is expected to have taken all appropriate action to mitigate or alleviate their hardship. This would include, but is not limited to taking professional business advice, reviewing pricing structures, re-negotiating with creditors, including the landlord regarding rent (where appropriate), and ensuring that a business plan is in place to address the hardship.

Full details of action taken to date should be included with any application. No award shall be given where it appears to the Council that the ratepayer has failed to take appropriate steps or anticipate circumstances that could lead into financial difficulties and hardship.

How will a decision be made?

An application for relief must be made by completing the Council's hardship rate relief application form. Applications must detail the following:

- An outline of the reasons why relief should be given, including full details of action taken to date to alleviate any issues leading to hardship
- The impact on the business of not awarding relief
- The amount of expenditure attributable to rates
- A suggestion of the amount of rate relief that is being claimed
- Copies of the last 3 years financial accounts to be submitted with the application.

Amount of Award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis and may in this case be up to 100% of the rates payable, but will be limited to a maximum of £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of Award

Awards will only be granted for short periods of time, usually up to a maximum of 6 months.

4. **Discretionary relief for charitable organisations (Top up relief).**

Where the organisation is a registered charity, 80% mandatory relief must be awarded to the organisation when the property is occupied. The Council may consider awarding up to an additional 20% in discretionary top up relief.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

The property must be wholly or mainly used for the organisation's charitable purposes, and the organisation must benefit the local residents of the District by the services or facilities that it provides.

Applications will be considered favourably where:

- The organisation has a demonstrable or measureable impact of a beneficial nature on the local community which it serves. Consideration will be given to how many residents of the District benefit from the charitable work of the organisation, how accessible the organisation is to members of the community throughout the District, and the extent to which the service is used by the community.
- Training or education is provided by the organisation to residents or members of the organisation for the purposes of that organisation.

Relief will generally not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties which support overseas organisations and out of area organisations.
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments

How will a decision be made?

The organisation will be expected to provide the following in support of their application:

- A copy of the articles of association / memorandum which clearly state the objects of the organisation; and
- A copy of the last 3 years certified financial accounts. The financial position of the organisation may be taken into account.

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis. It will however be limited to a maximum of £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

Any award will last a maximum of 1 year.

5. Discretionary relief for non profit organisations

A not-for-profit organisation is one that is not established or conducted for profit, whose objectives are charitable, but the organisation is not registered as a charity.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Applications will be considered favourably where:

- The organisation has a demonstrable or measureable impact of a beneficial nature on the local community which it serves.
- The organisation is accessible to members of the community throughout the district. The extent to which the service is used by the community will also be considered.
- Facilities are provided which would not otherwise be available to the local community
- Training or education is provided by the organisation to residents or members of the organisation for the purposes of the organisation.

Relief will generally not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties which support overseas and out of area organisations
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments

How will a decision be made?

The organisation will be expected to provide the following in support of their application:

- A copy of the articles of association / memorandum which clearly state the objects of the organisation; and
- A copy of the last 3 years certified financial accounts. The financial position of the organisation may be taken into account. The income of the business will be considered, and the proportion of business rates on total expenditure.
- Where the premises includes a bar and the sale of drink or food is conducted in the Club, the percentage of takings attributable to this in the overall income of the Club

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis and may in this case be up to 100% of the rates payable, but will be limited to a maximum of £20,000 unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

Any award will last up to a maximum of 1 year.

6. Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC's)

CASC's are entitled to 80% mandatory relief. The Council has discretion to consider awarding up to an additional 20% in discretionary top up relief.

Where an amateur sports club is neither a registered charity, nor a CASC, the organisation will be encouraged by the Council to submit an application to either HMRC for CASC status or to the Charity Commission for charitable status, although the absence of these either status will not automatically prevent an application from being considered.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

In considering applications from CASCs, Consideration will be given as follows:

- **Membership** – Is membership open to all sections of the community within the District? Membership fees must not be at a level where they exclude the general community. Membership of the organisation should be mainly resident in the District.
- **Education** – the organisation will provide training, education or learning to its members. The organisation will be treated favorably where the training delivered supports and reduces the Council's need to do so.
- **Direct benefit to local residents** – the organisation should directly benefit the needs of the local residents of the District. The organisation must show how it benefits the residents of the District. Examples could include the creation of job opportunities within the area.
- **Provision of facilities** – does the organisation provide facilities which would not otherwise be available to the local community?

.How will a decision be made?

Information will need to be provided which details the financial circumstances of the club. This will include:

- Financial accounts for the last 3 years; and
- Where the premises includes a bar and the sale of drink or food is conducted in the Club, the percentage of takings attributable to this in the overall income of the Club
- Details of all funding streams which the club has received or is due to receive.

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis. The award will be up to a maximum of 20% of the total business rates payable and will be limited to a total of £20,000.

Period of award

Any award will last for up to a maximum of 1 year.

7. **Rural rate relief (discretionary)**

Mandatory Rural Rate Relief is awarded to properties within a defined rural settlement which has a population of less than 3000. The Council's rural settlement list is published in December each year and can be viewed on the Council's website at www.scams.gov.uk. The rateable value (RV) of a qualifying property will be:

- For the sole food shop, general store or post office in a settlement, the RV will not exceed £8,500
- For the sole petrol filling station or pub in a settlement, the RV will not exceed £12,500.

Prior to April 2017, the mandatory award of Rural Rate Relief was 50%. From 1st April 2017, this has been increased to 100%.

Where a property meets either of the above criteria but the rateable value exceeds the set limits but is still below £16,500 the Council has discretion to award further relief.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where:

- The RV of the property is below the limits as outlined above
- The property is used for the benefit of the local community
- The award of the relief is in the interests of the Council's taxpayers.

The following will be taken into consideration when deciding whether discretionary relief should be awarded:

- Whether the business employs a significant number of staff who are resident in the local community in which the business is located
- Whether there are any other suppliers of the service concerned which are easily accessible to residents within the rural settlement.

How will a decision be made?

The Council will give consideration to the financial viability of the business concerned, thereby having regard to the interests of the council tax payers in general. Ratepayers may be asked to provide their latest trading accounts or equivalent along with evidence as to the proportion of expenditure attributed to rates.

This will be balanced by the detrimental effect on the rural community should the business have to cease trading either as a direct or indirect result of not awarding relief.

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis and will be limited to a maximum of £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

An award will be made for a maximum period of 1 year.

8. **New build empty property relief**

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

- All newly built commercial property is completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. These properties will be exempt from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aids limits.

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be all unoccupied business properties which are wholly or mainly comprised of qualifying new structures.

How will a decision be made?

All applications will be considered on an individual basis. Each application must be made in writing.

Amount of award

An award of 100% will be made.

Period of award

The award will be made for properties completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. It will apply for the first 18 months following completion.

9. **Section 69/Section 47**

Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 amends section 47 of the 1988 Act to allow Local Authorities the discretion to award rate relief to all types of business.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

As this relief is fully funded by the local authority, applications will only be considered favourable where the Council is satisfied that an award will result in real benefits for local residents and has the potential to generate further investments and jobs.

From time to time it may be necessary to use these local powers to meet Government requirements prior to relevant legislation being passed. In such instances, restrictions on the amount of award may not apply, as these may be funded by a Central Government grant.

How will a decision be made?

Application must fully detail the benefits to Council taxpayers that will be delivered should the relief be awarded. Due consideration will be given to any previous awards given, the benefit to local taxpayers, the cost to the Council as well as the probability of attracting new businesses, investments and jobs should the award be given.

Amount of award

The amount of award will be determined on an individual basis, but the total amount of relief awarded will not exceed £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

When granted, the relief will apply to the current financial year only.

10 Enterprise Zone Relief

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

This relief is available to businesses that locate within the Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone sites between April 2016 and March 2021. These sites are operated in partnership with the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP) and the Department for Communities and Local Government. The Enterprise Zone sites within South Cambridgeshire District Council are at based within Cambridge Research Park, Waterbeach and in Cambourne Business Park, with a further site at Northstowe. Maps detailing the designated Enterprise Zone areas can be found in Appendix A.

The discount is applied after any other reliefs have been deducted. Business can receive the discount on more than one property provided that both properties are situated within a designated area. Applications for empty premises may be considered on individual merit.

How will a decision be made?

Any business intending to relocate to one of the designated Enterprise Zones from within the South Cambridgeshire District must first have satisfied the displacement criteria, demonstrating the additional business growth that will be achieved by relocating to the zone. Where no significant growth in either jobs or annual turnover can be demonstrated, an application for Enterprise Zone relief may be declined.

Consideration may also be given where there are existing constraints on the business operation at the current site, or, where there is a desire to relocate outside of the GCGP area, the potential job losses resulting from such a move would also be taken account of.

Should you wish to discuss moving onto one of the Cambridge Compass sites, contact details are as follows:

Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership:

www.gcgp.co.uk

info@gcgp.co.uk

01480 277180

South Cambridgeshire District Council:

www.scambs.gov.uk

nndr@scambs.gov.uk

01954 713409

Applications for Enterprise Zone relief must be submitted in writing by the rateable occupier, using the Council's application form. The board will be required to confirm that the criteria as above has been met before any decision on relief will be considered.

Each application must be signed by the appropriate person representing the enterprise and any enterprises linked to it, setting out the amount of state aid, including but not limited to discretionary rate relief, which the enterprise has received within the previous three years across England and Wales.

Amount of award

100% discount up to a limit of £55,000 per year and a maximum of £275,000 over a five year period. The maximum De Minimis funding any single recipient can receive is €200,000 over a 3 year fiscal period. The sterling equivalent is calculated using the Commission Exchange rate applicable on the date of the offer of the De Minimis funding.

Period of award

When granted, the relief will apply to the current financial year, and up to a maximum of 5 years, subject to an annual review.

11. Local Newspapers' Relief

The following discretionary discount will only be available for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 financial years only as per national government legislation

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

This relief is available for office space occupied by local newspapers up to a maximum of one discount per hereditament, per title.

The premises must be occupied by a local newspaper and wholly or mainly used as office premises for journalists and reporters.

The relief is not available for magazines.

How will a decision be made?

Each application will be considered on its own merits following receipt of a written application form.

Where any other types of relief are applicable to the property, these will be applied first. The relief will be applied against the net bill.

Amount of award

The sum of £1,500 relief is limited to a maximum of one discount:

- Per newspaper title

AND

- Per hereditament

The relief is subject to the State Aid De Minimis levels

Period of award

An award will be made for 2017/18 and 2017/18 only as per national government guidance.

Review of Decisions

All unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter detailing the reasons why their application has not been successful. If the ratepayer is dissatisfied with this decision, they can request a review of the decision by writing to:

The Business Rates Team
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

A request for a review must be received within 6 weeks of the date of the decision regarding the award or refusal of a discretionary relief. The request should detail the reasons why a review is considered necessary and provide any additional supporting information which may assist the decision maker in support of the request.

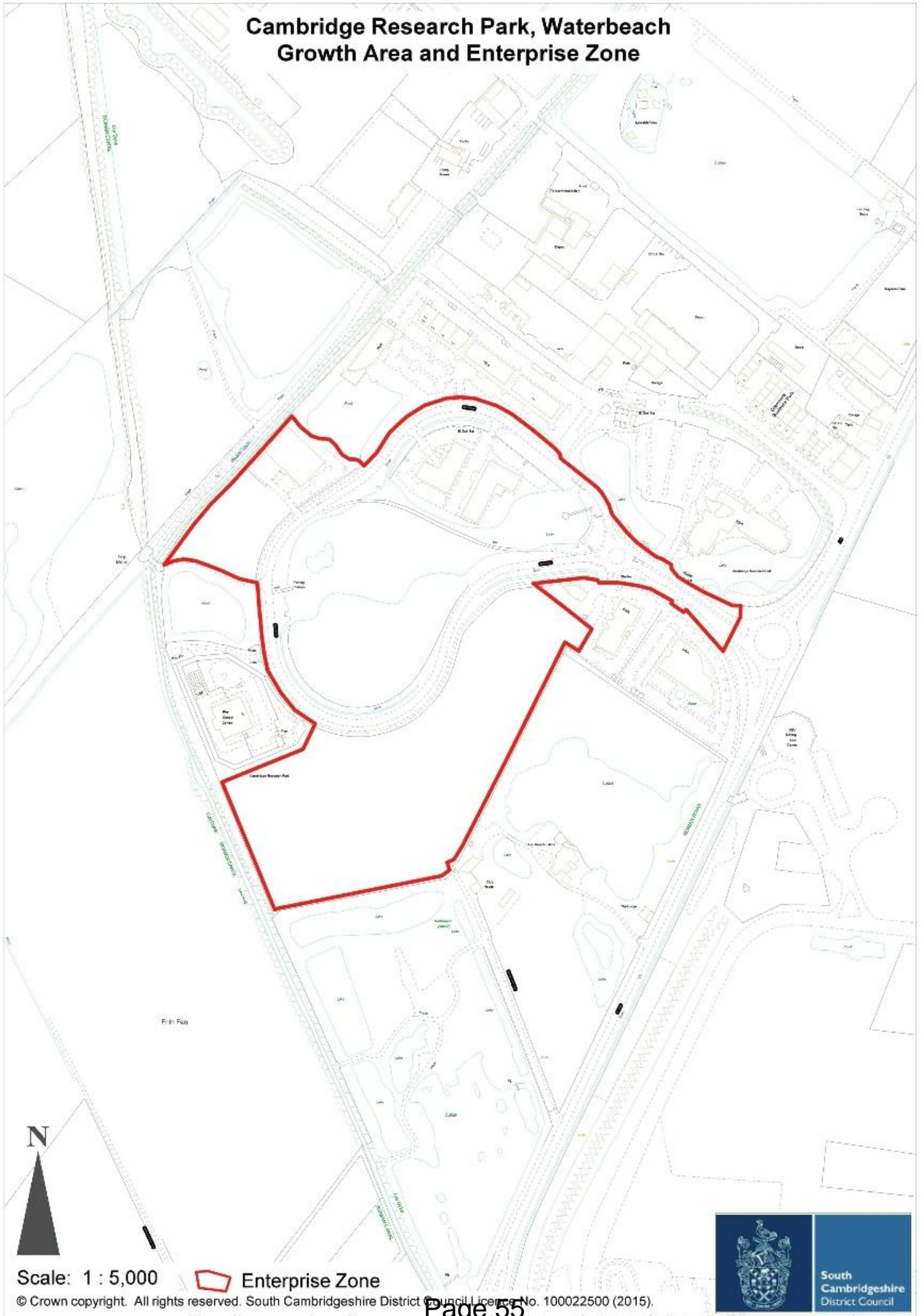
Reviews will be dealt with by the Revenues Manager and the decision following the review will be notified in writing.

Where the taxpayer remains dissatisfied with the decision there is an appeal route by way of judicial review.


Business rates remain payable as demanded pending the decision on any application, review or appeal.

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Cambridge Research Park, Waterbeach Growth Area and Enterprise Zone



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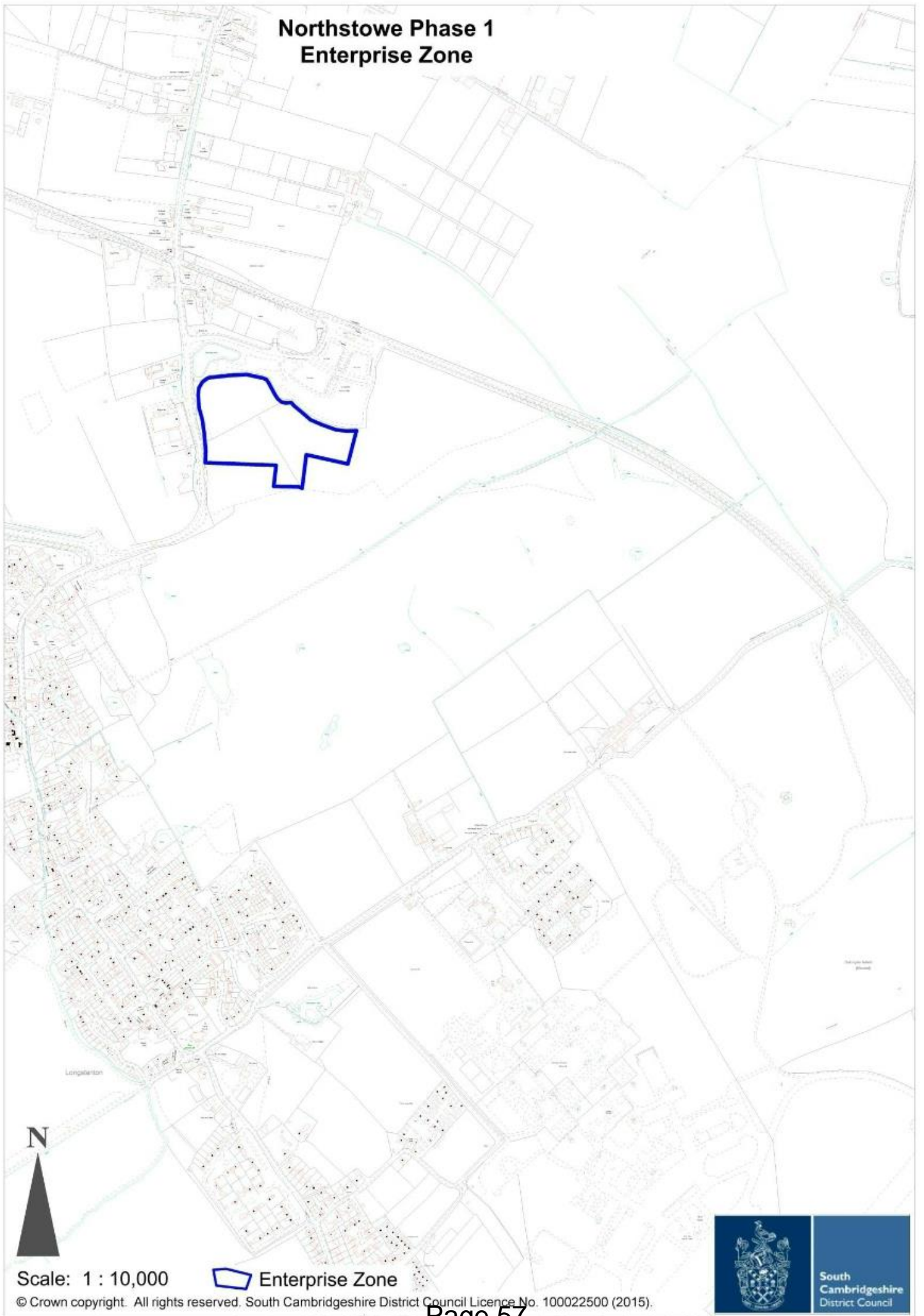
 Enterprise Zone

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Northstowe Phase 1 Enterprise Zone



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 Enterprise Zone

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Appendix B

Revenues Services

Discretionary Business Rate Relief Policy 2014

October 2014

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1. Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of business to the local economy and understands the challenges that businesses face. The Council wants to provide support to businesses within the area where it is reasonable to do so. We also recognise the contribution that is made to the community by voluntary, charitable and non-profit-making organisations.

The Council has discretionary powers to award relief from payment of Non-Domestic Rates in a range of circumstances:-

- Properties partly occupied for a temporary period. Awarded under Section 44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- Properties occupied by charities and other not-for-profit organisations. Awarded under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988
- Properties occupied and located in rural settlements. Awarded under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988
- Ratepayers that would otherwise suffer hardship. Awarded under section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- In exercise of the Council's general power to award discretionary rate relief. Awards under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011.

This policy provides guidance for Council Officers and ratepayers on the application of Discretionary Rate Relief. The following reliefs are covered in this policy:

- Section 44A relief – discretionary relief for partly empty properties
- Hardship relief
- Charitable rate relief (Top-up relief)
- Rate relief for not-for-profit organisations
- Relief for Community Amateur Sports Clubs
- Relief for rural businesses
- Discounts for shops, pubs and restaurants (Retail Relief)
- Re-occupation relief
- New build empty properties
- Section 69 / Section 47

Each application for relief will be considered on its own merits. Due consideration will be given to the guidance within this policy and to national legislation. In determining an award consideration will also be given to the interests of the council taxpayers of the District.

We would expect, as a matter of course, that all other options would have been considered before an application for discretionary rate relief is submitted. Awards will only be made where the benefits to the taxpayers outweigh the financial implication of the award.

Format of applications

Applications for relief must be made on the Council's application form. Applications should be submitted with the supporting information that is requested. Applications submitted without the supporting information will be assessed solely on the information that is available at the time of the decision. Ratepayers requiring help or advice should call the Business Rates team on 01954 713112 or 01954 713409.

Payment of Instalments

Ratepayers must continue to pay any amount of rates that falls due whilst their application is pending. In the event that payments are not received as due, the Council will continue with its normal recovery procedures to secure payment.

Effective date of relief

It is the Council's policy that discretionary relief will only be awarded from the date of the application, or in the case of hardship, the point at which the hardship occurred. Only in the most exceptional circumstances will consideration be given to awarding relief for a retrospective period. Consideration may be given where the ratepayer can establish a solid reason for not submitting their application at an earlier date.

Relief will not be awarded if the Council is not satisfied that the circumstances as declared in the application have occurred.

State Aid

All amounts of relief awarded are subject to the state aid limits as defined by European legislation. Relief will not exceed €200,000 in any 3 year period. Each application must be accompanied by a statement signed by the appropriate person representing the business setting out the amount of state aid, including but not limited to discretionary rate relief, which the ratepayer has received within the previous three years across England and Wales.

Costs of Relief

Prior to April 2013, Central Government paid 75% of the cost of discretionary relief, and the remaining 25% was funded by South Cambridgeshire District Council, apart from charitable top-up where SCDC contributed 75%.

Following the introduction of Business Rates Retention, the cost of awarding discretionary relief is apportioned as follows:

- 50% funded by Central Government
- 40% funded by the District Council
- 9% funded by County Council
- 1% funded by the Fire Service

The Council will be reimbursed for the cost of awarding Retail Relief (8), Re-occupation relief (9) and New Build Empty Property Relief (10) by central government.

Where discretionary relief is given under section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 (11), the full cost will fall to the local authority.

Decisions

Decisions regarding rate relief will be communicated to the ratepayer in writing. If the decision is a refusal of the relief, reasons for the refusal will be provided in the letter.

Period of award

All awards will expire at the end of the financial year if the award has not ended at an earlier date or at the anniversary of the granting of the relief except in the case of Retail Relief which can be granted for 2014/15 and for 2015/16 without further application. The Council will look to contact recipients for confirmation of entitlement and potential renewal of relief with the exception of Hardship and Section 44a Relief.

2. Section 44A relief - Discretionary relief for partly empty properties

Occupation of part of a property is occupation of the whole in rating law. There may be occasions where a property is only partly occupied for a short period of time. This may be due to a business moving in or relocating to a new property within the District. In certain circumstances, the Council may use its discretion to award a part empty relief; also known as Section 44A (s.44A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988).

In these circumstances the Council may request that the Valuation Officer apportion the rateable value of the property between the occupied and unoccupied elements.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Section 44A relief may be applicable in the following circumstances:

- Where the occupied and unoccupied parts of the property can be easily segregated
- Where there are short term practical or financial difficulties in occupying. Phased vacations may be considered when moving within the SCDC district
- Where the business is relocating machinery
- Where Fire/Flood has rendered a part of the assessment unoccupied for a short period

In all of the above cases, the period of part occupation must be for a temporary period only, and relief will not be awarded where it appears to the Council that the reason that part of the property is empty is for the purpose of applying for partial empty rate relief

Rate relief will not be awarded where the partial occupation is due to the normal day to day operation of the business i.e. a warehouse which has recently despatched a large order and has limited stock. Nor will Relief normally be considered where the property is due for demolition.

For the purposes of this policy a period of up to 12 months will be considered to be temporary. Periods which exceed this time period will be treated as a permanent change and will not attract an award of section 44A. A period of less than 6 weeks will not be considered for Section 44A purposes except in exceptional circumstances.

Where the Valuation Officer may be able to split the assessment any application for discretionary relief will not be considered until the Valuation Officer's decision is known.

How will a decision be made?

Prior to an award being made, a visit to the premises will be made by a Council Officer to establish the exact area of the property that is empty. The application must be supported by a plan of the property which clearly marks the boundary of the empty and occupied parts. This plan will be given to the Valuation Officer to apportion the rateable value.

Further visits may be made to the property throughout the award to establish that the property is still partly empty.

Further applications for part empty relief may be considered in the following circumstances:

- *Where there is a change to the area of the property that is unoccupied*
- *Where the financial year comes to an end. Part empty property relief will end if one of the following circumstances applies:*
 - *The end of the financial year*
 - *The end of the award*
 - *Where part or all of the unoccupied parts become occupied*
 - *Where the whole of the property becomes unoccupied*
 - *Where liability for the property changes*

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be dependant on the size of the empty space in the property based on the rateable value.

Period of award

An award will apply for a 6 month period for industrial premises and 3 months for non industrial properties, unless it is ended by the changes in circumstance as listed above.

3. **Hardship relief**

Hardship relief may be awarded where the business is suffering from unexpected hardship which is outside of normal risks associated with the business. Reduction or remission of business rates on the grounds of hardship will only be awarded in exceptional circumstances.

Hardship relief is granted at the discretion of the Council which can reduce or remit the amount of business rates due, provided it is satisfied that:

- The ratepayer would sustain hardship if it did not do so; and
- It is reasonable for the Council to do so, having regard to the interests of its tax payers.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

The test of hardship need not be confined strictly to financial hardship; all relevant factors affecting the ability of a business to meet its liability for rates will be taken into account. The following factors will also be considered:

- The interests of council tax payers in the area. For example, where the employment prospects in the area would be severely worsened by a company going out of business, or the amenities of an area might be reduced. Where the granting of relief would have an adverse effect on the financial interest of the taxpayers, the case for reduction or remission may still, on balance, outweigh the cost to the taxpayers
- Whether the business provides goods and services which are of great benefit to the district or the neighbourhood in which it is located, such as the business taking on apprentices or trainees, or providing guaranteed interviews to young people of the District
- The ratepayer must provide evidence of hardship e.g. a severe loss in trade, a marked decline in trade compared to corresponding periods in previous years.
- The business must be viable for the foreseeable future i.e. a period of 3 years.

Hardship Relief would not be considered in the following circumstances:

- Where the business is profitable, or where the business has experienced a minor loss in trade in comparison to the annual turnover of the business
- Where the drawings/remuneration of the Director(s) or proprietor are above a "reasonable" amount.
- Where the business is new and hardship relief is being requested to fund the initial progression of the business

- Where the property is empty
- *Where a similar facility is already being provided within the same locality or within a reasonable distance*

Prior to the award being made, the business is expected to have taken all appropriate action to mitigate or alleviate their hardship. This would include, but is not limited to taking professional business advice, reviewing pricing structures, re-negotiating with creditors, including the landlord regarding rent (where appropriate), and ensuring that a business plan is in place to address the hardship.

Full details of action taken to date should be included with any application. No award shall be given where it appears to the Council that the ratepayer has failed to take appropriate steps or anticipate circumstances that could lead into financial difficulties and hardship.

How will a decision be made?

An application for relief must be made by completing the Council's hardship rate relief application form. Applications must detail the following:

- An outline of the reasons why relief should be given, including full details of action taken to date to alleviate any issues leading to hardship
- The impact on the business of not awarding relief
- The amount of expenditure attributable to rates
- A suggestion of the amount of rate relief that is being claimed
- Copies of the last 3 years financial accounts to be submitted with the application.

Amount of Award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis and may in this case be up to 100% of the rates payable, but will be limited to a maximum of £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of Award

Awards will only be granted for short periods of time, usually up to a maximum of 6 months.

4. **Discretionary relief for charitable organisations (Top up relief).**

Where the organisation is a registered charity, 80% mandatory relief must be awarded to the organisation when the property is occupied. The Council may consider awarding up to an additional 20% in discretionary top up relief.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

The property must be wholly or mainly used for the organisation's charitable purposes, and the organisation must benefit the local residents of the District by the services or facilities that it provides.

Applications will be considered favourably where:

- The organisation has a demonstrable or measureable impact of a beneficial nature on the local community which it serves. Consideration will be given to how many residents of the District benefit from the charitable work of the organisation, how accessible the organisation is to members of the community throughout the District, and the extent to which the service is used by the community.
- Training or education is provided by the organisation to residents or members of the organisation for the purposes of that organisation.

Relief will generally not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties which support overseas organisations and out of area organisations.
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments

How will a decision be made?

The organisation will be expected to provide the following in support of their application:

- A copy of the articles of association / memorandum which clearly state the objects of the organisation; and
- A copy of the last 3 years certified financial accounts. The financial position of the organisation may be taken into account.

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis. It will however be limited to a maximum of £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

Any award will last a maximum of 1 year.

5. Discretionary relief for non profit organisations

A not-for-profit organisation is one that is not established or conducted for profit, whose objectives are charitable, but the organisation is not registered as a charity.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Applications will be considered favourably where:

- The organisation has a demonstrable or measureable impact of a beneficial nature on the local community which it serves.
- The organisation is accessible to members of the community throughout the district. The extent to which the service is used by the community will also be considered.
- Facilities are provided which would not otherwise be available to the local community
- Training or education is provided by the organisation to residents or members of the organisation for the purposes of the organisation.

Relief will generally not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- Properties which support overseas and out of area organisations
- Housing Associations
- Schools and other educational establishments

How will a decision be made?

The organisation will be expected to provide the following in support of their application:

- A copy of the articles of association / memorandum which clearly state the objects of the organisation; and
- A copy of the last 3 years certified financial accounts. The financial position of the organisation may be taken into account. The income of the business will be considered, and the proportion of business rates on total expenditure.
- Where the premises includes a bar and the sale of drink or food is conducted in the Club, the percentage of takings attributable to this in the overall income of the Club

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis and may in this case be up to 100% of the rates payable, but will be limited to a maximum of £20,000 unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

Any award will last up to a maximum of 1 year.

6. Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC's)

CASC's are entitled to 80% mandatory relief. The Council has discretion to consider awarding up to an additional 20% in discretionary top up relief.

Where an amateur sports club is neither a registered charity, nor a CASC, the organisation will be encouraged by the Council to submit an application to either HMRC for CASC status or to the Charity Commission for charitable status, although the absence of these either status will not automatically prevent an application from being considered.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

In considering applications from CASCs, Consideration will be given as follows:

- **Membership** – Is membership open to all sections of the community within the District? Membership fees must not be at a level where they exclude the general community. Membership of the organisation should be mainly resident in the District.
- **Education** – the organisation will provide training, education or learning to its members. The organisation will be treated favorably where the training delivered supports and reduces the Council's need to do so.
- **Direct benefit to local residents** – the organisation should directly benefit the needs of the local residents of the District. The organisation must show how it benefits the residents of the District. Examples could include the creation of job opportunities within the area.
- **Provision of facilities** – does the organisation provide facilities which would not otherwise be available to the local community?

.How will a decision be made?

Information will need to be provided which details the financial circumstances of the club. This will include:

- Financial accounts for the last 3 years; and
- Where the premises includes a bar and the sale of drink or food is conducted in the Club, the percentage of takings attributable to this in the overall income of the Club
- Details of all funding streams which the club has received or is due to receive.

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis. The award will be up to a maximum of 20% of the total business rates payable and will be limited to a total of £20,000.

Period of award

Any award will last for up to a maximum of 1 year.

7. Rural rate relief (discretionary top up)

Mandatory rural rate relief at a rate of 50% is awarded to properties within a defined rural settlement which has a population of less than 3000. The Council's rural settlement list can be viewed on the Council's website at www.scambbs.gov.uk . This list is published by the Council at the end of December each year. The rateable value (RV) of a qualifying property will be:

- For the sole food shop, general store or post office in a settlement, the RV will not exceed £8,500
- For the sole petrol filling station or pub in a settlement, the RV will not exceed £12,500.

Businesses are invited to apply for discretionary relief of up to a further 50%, where a property meets either of the above criteria and the rateable value exceeds the set limits but is below £16,500 the Council has discretion to award relief between 0% and 100%

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where:

- The RV of the property is below the limits as outlined above
- The property is used for the benefit of the local community
- The award of the relief is in the interests of the Council's taxpayers.

The following will be taken into consideration when deciding whether discretionary relief should be awarded:

- Whether the business employs a significant number of staff who are resident in the local community in which the business is located
- Whether there are any other suppliers of the service concerned which are easily accessible to residents within the rural settlement.

How will a decision be made?

The Council will give consideration to the financial viability of the business concerned, thereby having regard to the interests of the council tax payers in general. Ratepayers may be asked to provide their latest trading accounts or equivalent along with evidence as to the proportion of expenditure attributed to rates.

This will be balanced by the detrimental effect on the rural community should the business have to cease trading either as a direct or indirect result of not awarding relief.

Amount of award

The amount of relief awarded will be determined on a case by case basis and may be up to 50% in this case but will be limited to a maximum of £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

An award will be made for a maximum period of 1 year.

8. Discount for shops, pubs and restaurants (Retail Relief)

The following discretionary discount will only be available for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years only as per national government legislation

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

The property has a rateable value of £50,000 or less and must be wholly or mainly used for the purpose of a shop, restaurant, cafe or drinking establishment / pub.

Examples of properties which would qualify:

- Shops (such as florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licence, chemist, newsagent, hardware store, supermarkets etc.)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops (such as carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
- Car / caravan show rooms, or second hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations
- Garden centres
- Art galleries
- Hair and beauty salons (such as hair dressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops)
- Show repairs or key cutting shops
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices
- Dry cleaners or laundrettes
- Domestic repair services (such as TV or computers repair)
- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- DVD / video rental
- Tool hire or car hire
- Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Coffee shops
- Pubs or bars

The following examples would not qualify for the relief:

- Financial services (such as banks, building societies, cash points, bureau de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers)
- Other services (such as estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)

- Medical services (such as vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (such as solicitors, accountants, insurance agents / financial advisors, tutors)
- Post office sorting office
- A property which is not readily accessible to the visiting members of the public.

The above list is not exhaustive. Any properties which are used for other purposes will be considered on an individual basis by the Council.

How will a decision be made?

Each application will be considered on its own merits following receipt of a written application form.

Where any other types of relief are applicable to the property, these will be applied first. The relief will be applied against the net bill.

Amount of award

A maximum of £1000 will be awarded per property for each of the relevant financial years if the property is used for the purpose of a shop, restaurant or pub for the whole financial year.

Period of award

An award will be made for 2014/15 and 2015/16 only as per national government guidance.

9. Re-occupation relief

This is new legislation effective from the 1st April 2014 only and is for a maximum period of 18 months from the date of occupation between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2016.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

This relief applies to re-occupation of property on or after the 1st April 2014 only.

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

- The property has been unoccupied for a period of at least 12 months.
- The property when previously in use was used wholly or mainly for retail purposes.

And the property becomes occupied.

How will a decision be made?

Each application will be considered on its own merits. Applications must be made in writing. The Council must be satisfied that the property has been empty for over 12 months.

Amount of award

The amount awarded will be 50%.

Period of award

An award will be made for up to a maximum period of 18 months. However this will only apply for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years as per Government legislation

10. New build empty property relief

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

Discretionary relief will be considered where;

- All newly built commercial property is completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. These properties will be exempt from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aids limits.

Properties that will benefit from the relief will be all unoccupied business properties which are wholly or mainly comprised of qualifying new structures.

How will a decision be made?

All applications will be considered on an individual basis. Each application must be made in writing.

Amount of award

An award of 100% will be made.

Period of award

The award will be made for properties completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. It will apply for the first 18 months following completion.

11. Section 69/Section 47

Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 amends the 1988 Act to allow Local Authorities the discretion to award rate relief to all types of business.

In what circumstances might relief be awarded?

As this relief is fully funded by the local authority, applications will only be considered favourable where the Council is satisfied that an award will result in real benefits for local residents and has the potential to generate further investments and jobs

How will a decision be made?

Application must fully detail the benefits to Council taxpayers that will be delivered should the relief be awarded. Due consideration will be given to any previous awards given, the benefit to local taxpayers, the cost to the Council as well as the probability of attracting new businesses, investments and jobs should the award be given.

Amount of award

The amount of award will be determined on an individual basis, but the total amount of relief awarded will not exceed £20,000, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Period of award

When granted, the relief will apply to the current financial year only.

12. Review of Decisions

All unsuccessful applicants will receive a letter detailing the reasons why their application has not been successful. If the ratepayer is dissatisfied with this decision they can request a review of the decision by writing to:

The Business Rates Team
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB23 6EA

A request for a review must be received within 6 weeks of the date of the decision regarding the award or refusal of a discretionary relief. The request should detail the reasons why a review is considered necessary and provide any additional supporting information which may assist the decision maker in support of the request.

Reviews will be dealt with by the Revenues Manager and the decision following the review will be notified in writing.

Where the taxpayer remains dissatisfied with the decision there is an appeal route by way of judicial review.

Business rates remain payable as demanded pending the decision on any application, review or appeal.

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Agenda Item 5

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

17 January 2017

LEAD OFFICER: Interim Chief Executive

Revenues Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 1: July - September 2016

Purpose

1. To review and report on the current performance of the Revenues & Benefits Section using statistical information and further explanation where required.
2. This is not a key decision, however, the Revenues and Benefits teams report quarterly on their performance.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder note the current performance information for the Revenues and Benefits Team provided in this report.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The Revenues and Benefits teams strive to deliver a high standard of performance. Balancing a number of different functions, the teams consistently demonstrate their commitment to meeting residents' expectations and providing value for money service.

Background

5. With the abolition of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and introduction of National Indicators (NIs) there is a significant change to the requirement for the Council to report on the performance of the Revenues and Benefits service.
6. The Council will, however, continue to be required to report on many former Revenues Services BVPIs through statistical returns (e.g. revenue collection rates). For the most part, the former BVPIs are considered to be valuable indicators of performance and therefore will continue to be reported to the Portfolio Holder. The BVPI reference numbers have been retained as a convenient way of maintaining continuity of performance reporting.

Considerations

7. As at the end of the second quarter of 2016/17, the Council Tax collection rate was 61.9%, against a target of 59.8% The net payments collected totalled £64.4m, compared to £62.4m in 2015/16. Details can be found in APPENDIX A..
8. Non-Domestic Rates' collection performed favourably against an end of quarter target of 59.8%, with a collection rate of 60.3% In monetary terms, the amount collected was £46.7m compared to £43.5m for the same period last year. Details can be found in APPENDIX B.

9. I am also reporting quarterly on the numbers of business properties, those not in use, and the total Rateable Value within South Cambridgeshire. Appendix E contains a visual representation of these figures showing the trends, and a breakdown by property type is shown in Appendix F.

Year	Period	Total Rateable Properties	Total Unoccupied Properties	Total RV (£)
2013/14	Q1	4453	547	174,655,404
	Q2	4525	530	174,331,290
	Q3	4560	490	174,45,8360
	Q4	4566	472	174,141,793
2014/15	Q1	4586	459	173,544,088
	Q2	4635	459	174,291,013
	Q3	4661	482	174,576,048
	Q4	4682	453	175,043,343
2015/16	Q1	4720	421	175,734,248
	Q2	4715	415	176,748,704
	Q3	4740	437	177,751,559
	Q4	4762	459	178,310,944
2016/17	Q1	4841	466	185,626,024
	Q2	4882	462	186,094,479

10. Performance in Rent collection at the end of the second quarter was 97.56%, against a target of 97.1%. In terms of rent not collected, the arrears for current tenants were £349k, compared to £293k for the same period last year. The details can be found in APPENDIX C
11. Sundry Debtors had 14.3% of invoices in arrears at the end of the quarter two, compared to a target of 31.1%. In monetary terms, this equates to £1.6m in arrears from invoices totalling £6.3m. APPENDIX D shows the detail.
12. The electronic forms for Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Support (CTS) has continued to have a positive effect on processing times for new claims and changes to benefit.
13. The average processing time for new claims as at Q2 2016/17 is 11.33 days compared to target of 20 days. The performance has improved compared to previous year performance, full details can be found in APPENDIX G.
14. Change of Circumstances processing times averaged to date (Quarter2) is 9.86 days for 2016/17 compared to target of 12.00 days. The performance has been improving and average processing times for 2016/17 are significantly lower than 2015/16.
15. The performance of overpayments recovery is no longer being reported as a key performance indicator however this is still being monitored as an internal performance indicator

Quarter 2

2015/16 Total recovered overpaid housing benefit = £567,389

2016/17 Total recovered overpaid housing benefit = £735,052

16. There have been 127 applications for support under the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) scheme, and 75 residents have received DHP awards. This number includes 3 residents for whom removal costs were paid.

Expenditure £50,916 (35.79%) 2016/17 (Grant £142,256)

A budget of £80,000 has been ring-fenced to allow those affected by reduced amount of the benefit cap to be prioritised for DHP payments for 2016/17.

The benefits team and housing advice/homeless team are working together to look at options for those effected residents on an individual basis who will receive a reduction due to the benefit cap amount of £20,000 per year for couples and those with children, and £13,400 for those who are single without children.

Implications

17. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

18. Targets relate to revenue collection and will ensure that the Council's budgeted income is received.

Legal

19. The Council has a legal duty to deliver the service in accordance with Billing, Enforcement and Benefit legislation

Risk Management

20. Failure to maintain high collection rates could have an adverse effect on the Council's budget requirements.

Equality and Diversity

21. We ensure that revenue collection and benefits administration are delivered in a fair and consistent manner to all members of the community. Partial EQIA's have been carried out on our Billing & Collection policy, Benefit Administration

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

22. None

Effect on Corporate Objectives

Objective B – Homes for our future

Secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities

Background Papers

Where the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

No Background Papers

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Council Tax Collection

Current Year Collection Analysis - £ 000s BVPI 9

	Year Start	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Target
Gross Charge	112,399	112,476	112,557	112,637	112,703	112,781	112,889	112,959	113,018	0	0	0	0	
Reductions	-8,796	-8,830	-8,846	-8,833	-8,827	-8,828	-8,847	-8,884	-8,912	0	0	0	0	
Net Amount Collectable	103,603	103,646	103,712	103,804	103,877	103,953	104,042	104,075	104,106	0	0	0	0	
Council Tax Benefit	0	-5,910	-5,897	-5,855	-5,858	-5,878	-5,849	-5,797	-5,781	-5,781	-5,781	-5,781	-5,781	
Gross Payments	-1,367	-10,760	-20,489	-30,058	-39,638	-49,227	-58,796	-68,429	-77,963	-77,953	-77,953	-77,953	-77,953	
Refunds	8	21	54	97	136	217	301	396	509	509	509	509	517	
Accounts in credit	0	-32	-39	-38	-61	-78	-98	-89	-105	0	0	0	0	
Net payments to date	-1,359	-16,681	-26,371	-35,854	-45,421	-54,966	-64,442	-73,919	-83,340	-83,226	-83,226	-83,226	-83,217	
Net payments in month	-1,359	-15,322	-9,690	-9,483	-9,567	-9,544	-9,477	-9,477	-9,421	115	0	0	8	
Write offs		-1	-1	-1	-3	-7	-9	-9	-11					
Outstanding balance	102,244	86,964	77,340	67,949	58,452	48,981	39,591	30,147	20,755	-83,226	-83,226	-83,226	-83,217	
Collection Rate (BVPI9)	1.3%	16.1%	25.4%	34.5%	43.7%	52.9%	61.9%	71.0%	80.1%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	99.1%
Collection Rate Last Year 15/16	1.4%	16.3%	25.6%	34.6%	43.6%	52.6%	61.8%	70.9%	79.9%	88.9%	97.8%	99.0%	99.44%	
Collection Rate 14/15	1.3%	16.5%	25.6%	34.7%	43.7%	52.6%	61.7%	70.8%	79.6%	88.6%	97.5%	98.5%	99.25%	
Collection Rate 13/14	1.0%	11.1%	20.8%	30.5%	40.3%	49.9%	59.5%	69.1%	78.7%	88.1%	97.5%	98.7%	99.1%	
Collection Rate 12/13	1.5%	11.1%	21.1%	30.8%	40.5%	50.0%	59.7%	69.3%	78.9%	88.5%	98.0%	99.2%	99.3%	
Comparison to last year	-0.1%	-0.2%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
% Collected in Month Last Year	1.3%	9.6%	9.8%	9.7%	9.7%	9.5%	9.6%	9.7%	9.4%	9.6%	9.5%	1.1%	0.8%	
% Collected in Month	1.3%	14.8%	9.3%	9.1%	9.2%	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	9.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	

Previous Years' Arrears Collection Analysis £ 000's

Arrears b/f at 1/4/16	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186	1,186
Net Payments Received	-	99	168	224	268	305	344	363	374	374	374	374	374	374
Written Off	-	26	39	39	47	60	84	98	109	-	-	-	-	-
Other adjustments	-	51	42	35	50	50	47	63	57	813	813	813	813	813
Balance outstanding	1,186	1,010	937	889	822	771	712	663	646	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of arrears paid	0.0%	8.3%	14.2%	18.8%	22.6%	25.7%	29.0%	30.6%	31.5%	31.5%	31.5%	31.5%	31.5%	31.5%
Percentage of arrears paid 2015/16	0.0%	8.6%	15.1%	18.8%	21.7%	25.4%	29.1%	31.8%	34.2%	35.6%	37.2%	39.0%	40.8%	
percentage of arrears paid 2014/15	0.0%	14.0%	18.9%	22.2%	25.6%	29.6%	33.2%	36.7%	39.4%	41.1%	40.8%	40.7%	43.8%	
percentage of arrears paid 2013/14	0.0%	10.6%	16.2%	19.8%	23.1%	26.7%	30.0%	32.5%	35.0%	35.9%	37.9%	38.3%	41.0%	

Costs (all years)														
Costs Paid 2016/17	-	7	26	44	61	77	93	107	120	120	120	120	120	120
Costs Paid 2015/16	-	10	26	44	60	78	96	113	130	143	154	167	180	
Costs Paid 2014/15	-	8	13	29	49	68	87	108	123	137	150	162	175	
Costs Paid 2013/14	-	6	20	37	54	73	88	102	114	127	139	150	158	

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APPENDIX B

Non-Domestic Rates Collection

INPUT WRITE OFFS/INTEREST MONTHLY

Current Year Collection Analysis - £ 000s BVPI 10

	Year Start	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Gross Charge	86,839	88,352	89,666	90,094	90,302	90,392	90,304	90,402	90,751	0	0	0	0
Mandatory Relief	-9,337	-9,519	-9,578	-9,600	-9,615	-9,607	-9,600	-9,593	-9,587	0	0	0	0
Discretionary Relief	-317	-315	-315	-318	-307	-431	-429	-424	-422	0	0	0	0
Small Business Relief	-2,671	-2,673	-2,686	-2,689	-2,706	-2,719	-2,744	-2,747	-2,759	0	0	0	0
TR Discretionary Relief	-17	-17	-17	-17	-16	-16	-16	-16	-16	0	0	0	0
Retail Relief	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Amount Collectable	74,496	75,829	77,071	77,470	77,658	77,619	77,516	77,622	77,967	0	0	0	0
Gross Payments	-311	-9,957	-17,218	-24,972	-31,898	-40,105	-47,448	-55,034	-62,163	-62,163	-62,163	-62,163	-62,163
Refunds	0	22	137	260	371	426	527	638	1,087	1,087	1,087	1,087	1,087
Credits on accounts	0	450	407	28	13	123	149	210	101	0	0	0	0
Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Payments	-311	-9,484	-16,673	-24,685	-31,515	-39,557	-46,773	-54,185	-60,974	-61,076	-61,076	-61,076	-61,076
Paid in month	-311	-9,173	-7,189	-8,012	-6,830	-8,042	-7,216	-7,412	-6,789	-101	0	0	0
Write offs	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	4	0	0	0	0
Interest paid	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outstanding balance	74,186	66,345	60,398	52,785	46,144	38,063	30,744	23,442	16,996	-61,076	-61,076	-61,076	-61,076
Collection Rate (BVPI10)	0.4%	12.5%	21.6%	31.9%	40.6%	51.0%	60.3%	69.8%	78.2%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Collection Rate 2015/16	1.1%	13.0%	22.7%	31.7%	41.0%	50.2%	59.8%	68.7%	77.9%	86.4%	95.5%	98.4%	99.4%
Collection Rate 2014/15	0.5%	12.6%	23.1%	32.5%	41.1%	50.6%	59.3%	69.4%	78.3%	87.1%	96.3%	97.6%	99.4%
Collection Rate 2013/14	0.4%	12.6%	22.6%	33.3%	42.8%	52.4%	62.0%	71.2%	81.5%	91.1%	98.4%	98.3%	98.7%
Collection Rate 2012/13	5.4%	13.2%	23.3%	33.1%	42.7%	52.2%	61.2%	70.7%	80.3%	89.6%	96.6%	97.4%	99.5%
Collection Rate 2011/12	1.3%	12.6%	23.5%	32.6%	41.9%	50.6%	61.2%	70.9%	80.1%	90.0%	98.2%	98.5%	99.5%
Collection Rate 2010/11	-0.1%	14.1%	23.7%	32.9%	42.4%	51.8%	61.9%	70.7%	81.0%	90.4%	98.5%	99.0%	99.6%
Difference	0.0%	-0.1%	-1.4%	-0.7%	-0.5%	0.3%	1.1%	0.4%	0.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Collected in month	0.4%	12.1%	9.1%	10.2%	8.7%	10.4%	9.4%	9.5%	8.4%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Collected in month last year	0.5%	12.1%	10.5%	9.5%	8.5%	9.6%	8.6%	10.1%	8.9%	8.8%	9.2%	1.3%	1.8%

Previous Years' Arrears Collection Analysis £ 000's

	Year Start	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
Arrears b/f at 1/4/16		574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74	574.74
Net Payments Rcd Year to Date		- 226.64	- 862.01	- 2,120.05	- 2,204.27	- 3,784.59	- 3,951.97	- 4,098.13	- 4,175.52	- 4,175.52	- 4,175.52	- 4,175.52	- 4,175.52
Write offs		-	- 16.96	- 11.80	- 11.80	- 2.25	- 2.25	- 14.49	- 9.83	-	-	-	-
Other adjustments	574.74	3,665.01	3,387.15	3,790.82	3,613.06	3,850.87	3,894.02	3,901.27	3,930.28	3,600.78	3,600.78	3,600.78	3,600.78
Current (prev yr) arrears	574.74	4,013.11	3,082.91	2,233.71	1,971.72	638.78	514.55	363.39	319.67	-	-	-	-

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APPENDIX C

Rent Collection

Current Tenants Collection Analysis - £ 000s												
BVPI 66a												
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Week Number	4	8	13	17	22	26	31	35	39	43	48	52
Rent charged to date	2,155	4,311	7,017	9,276	11,972	14,009	16,776	18,943	0	0	0	0
Estimated annual rent	28,019	28,019	28,068	28,374	28,299	28,018	28,141	28,144	0	0	0	0
Arrears brought forward	306	306	306	306	306	306	306	306	306	306	306	306
Rent Collectable	28,325	28,325	28,374	28,680	28,605	28,324	28,447	28,450	306	306	306	306
Current tenant arrears	357	353	331	338	330	349	299	326	-	-	-	-
Actual Collection Rate (BVPI66a)	85.48%	92.35%	95.48%	96.47%	97.31%	97.56%	98.25%	98.31%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Projected Collection Rate (BVPI66a)	98.74%	98.75%	98.83%	98.82%	98.85%	98.77%	98.95%	98.86%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Last Year Actual Collection	86.06%	92.72%	95.83%	96.50%	97.56%	97.98%	98.07%	98.54%	98.35%	98.46%	98.83%	98.93%
Last Year Projected Collection Rate	98.78%	98.81%	98.92%	98.83%	98.95%	98.98%	98.88%	99.02%	98.76%	98.72%	98.94%	98.93%
Difference Actual	-0.6%	-0.4%	-0.4%	0.0%	-0.3%	-0.4%	0.2%	-0.2%	1.7%	1.5%	1.2%	1.1%
Difference Projected	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.2%	0.1%	-0.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.1%	1.1%

Former Tenant Arrears Collection Analysis												
FTA's at 1/4/13	27	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	-	-	-	-
FTA's arising since 1/4/13	120	35	49	59	70	83	93	97	-	-	-	-
Written off	-5,288	-7	-7	-11	-16	-16	-28	-28	0	0	0	0
Payments	-23	-3	-42	48	-56	-62	-72	-76	0	0	0	0
Current FTA's	91	94	92	94	91	97	85	85	0	0	0	0

Tenants Owing More Than Seven Weeks Rent												
BVPI 66b												
Total Number of Tenancies(*) (excluding garages)	5,308	5,311	5,319	5,320	5,326	5,319	5,315	5,311				
Total Number > 7 Weeks Arrears (*)	115	121	116	122	108	111	102	103				
% > 7 Weeks in Arrears	2.17%	2.28%	2.18%	2.29%	2.03%	2.09%	1.92%	1.94%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Tenants Receiving a Notice Seeking Possession												
BVPI 66c												
Total Number of Tenancies in Arrears (*)	1,546	1,443	1,201	1,450	1,197	1,542	1,044	1,113				
NOSPs Issued in Month	31	24	28	16	24	33	44	42				
Total Number of NOSP Served (**)	31	55	83	99	123	156	200	242	242	242	242	242
% of Tenants Receiving NOSP (#)	2.01%	3.81%	6.91%	6.83%	10.28%	10.12%	19.16%	21.74%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

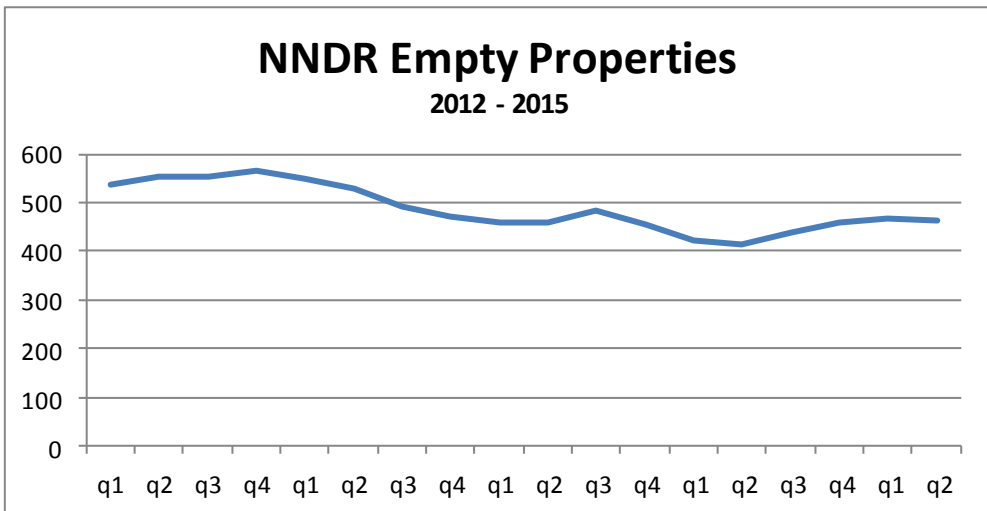
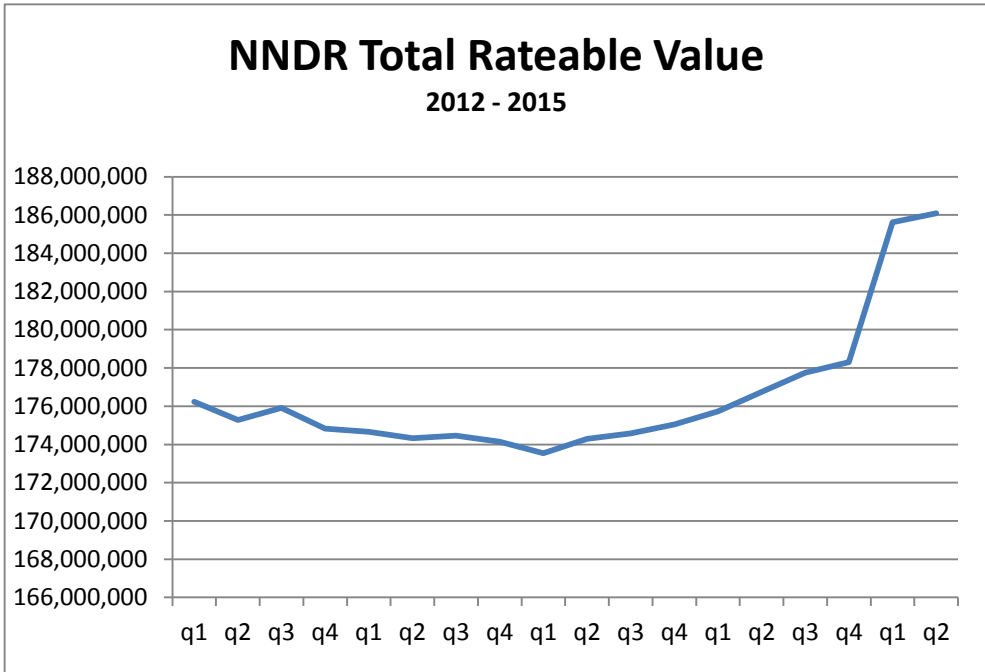
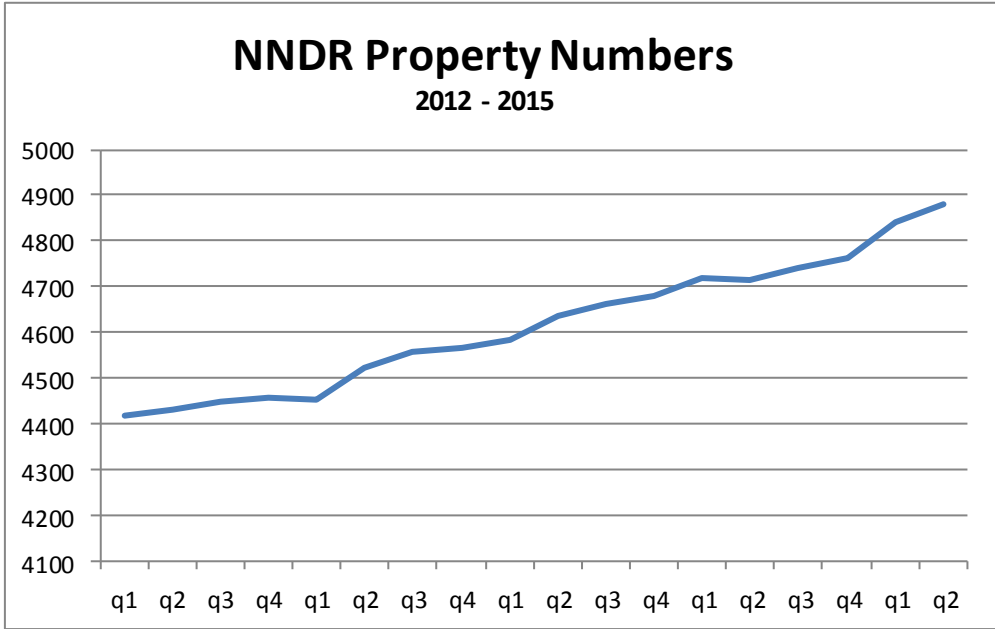
Tenants Evicted												
BVPI 66d												
Total Number of Tenancies (*)	5,308	5,311	5,319	5,320	5,326	5,319	5,315	5,316	0	0	0	0
Evictions in Month	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0				
Total Number of Evictions (**)	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
% of Tenants Evicted	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

* Figures are as at reported date
** Figures are year to date cummulatives

See word document for details of how figures have been calculated.

Sundry Debt Collection														
Sundry Debt Collection (Cumulative Figures)														
	Year Start	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Target
Balance brought forward	951,339	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	
Invoices raised		2,580,413	3,103,785	3,542,448	4,067,520	4,301,730	5,212,141	5,383,206	6,186,098					
Total Invoiced		3,670,687	4,194,059	4,632,722	5,157,794	5,392,004	6,302,415	6,473,480	7,276,372	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	1,090,274	
Balance outstanding	951,339	1,273,029	1,727,205	1,583,868	1,737,251	1,202,585	1,634,434	1,205,452	1,514,118	0	0	0	0	
Arrears outstanding	210,650	764,871	1,249,656	1,238,857	1,309,271	1,115,981	901,701	1,155,785	765,544	-	-	-	-	
Percentage paid	0.0%	65.3%	58.8%	65.8%	66.3%	77.7%	74.1%	81.4%	79.2%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
Percentage outstanding	100.0%	34.7%	41.2%	34.2%	33.7%	22.3%	25.9%	18.6%	20.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Percentage in arrears	100.0%	20.8%	29.8%	26.7%	25.4%	20.7%	14.3%	17.9%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Aged Debt Analysis														
Current month	740,689	1,760,640	477,549	345,011	427,980	86,604	732,733	49,667	748,574					
> 1 month overdue	30,372	611,065	688,452	262,075	317,867	198,553	70,463	374,375	19,696					
> 2 months overdue	48,803	7,476	422,964	449,609	78,193	28,305	7,290	6,566	22,711					
> 3 months overdue	131,475	146,330	138,240	527,173	913,211	889,123	823,948	774,844	723,137					-
Total Arrears	210,650	764,871	1,249,656	1,238,857	1,309,271	1,115,981	901,701	1,155,785	765,544	-	-	-	-	
Total Outstanding	951,339	2,525,511	1,727,205	1,583,868	1,737,251	1,202,585	1,634,434	1,205,452	1,514,118	-	-	-	-	
Aged Debt Analysis as % of Total Charge														
Current month	3.0%	48.0%	11.4%	7.4%	8.3%	1.6%	11.6%	0.8%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
> 1 month overdue	0.5%	16.6%	16.4%	5.7%	6.2%	3.7%	1.1%	5.8%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
> 2 months overdue	0.1%	0.2%	10.1%	9.7%	1.5%	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
> 3 months overdue	2.1%	4.0%	3.3%	11.4%	17.7%	16.5%	13.1%	12.0%	9.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Total Arrears	2.7%	20.8%	29.8%	26.7%	25.4%	20.7%	14.3%	17.9%	10.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Total	5.7%	68.8%	41.2%	34.2%	33.7%	22.3%	25.9%	18.6%	20.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	SF758
Arrears 2010/11	%	11.8%	29.8%	25.6%	15.6%	17.0%	13.4%	13.7%	13.9%	7.6%	5.2%	7.3%	3.5%	
Arrears 2011/12	3.5%	13.5%	35.4%	25.1%	18.7%	14.5%	18.8%	10.7%	9.0%	8.2%	6.4%	4.4%	3.1%	
Arrears 2012/13	3.1%	6.7%	30.4%	17.3%	11.8%	9.7%	9.2%	9.6%	7.5%	7.1%	4.4%	4.0%	2.7%	
Arrears 2013/14	18.1%	36.6%	17.1%	49.4%	12.4%	10.4%	9.1%	7.5%	8.9%	5.2%	5.3%	3.4%		
Arrears 2014/15	17.5%	25.9%	17.7%	37.2%	11.6%	10.4%	9.4%	8.4%	6.2%	5.7%	4.4%	2.6%		
Arrears 2015/16	23.8%	43.5%	12.5%	9.9%	13.7%	8.4%	6.5%	5.6%	6.0%	6.1%	5.7%	2.5%		

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APPENDIX F

Property Description	Year 2014/15				Year 2015/16				Year 2016/17			
	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4	QTR 1	QTR 2	QTR 3	QTR 4
Caravan & Pitch Premises	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3		
Petrol Filling Station & Premises	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Vehicle Repair Workshop & Premises	4	4	6	2	2	4	4	4	5	4		
Garage & Premises	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Car Showroom & Premises & Workshop	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Road Haulage Depot & Premises	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Guest House & Premises	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0		
Public House & Premises	11	11	12	8	8	7	8	9	11	14		
Club and Premises	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Outdoor Market & Premises	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Offices & Premises	184	197	198	192	173	164	169	181	196	196		
Car Park & Premises	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Resturant & Premises	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	4	1	3		
Shop & Premises	12	9	14	10	7	7	13	15	16	15		
Bank & Premises	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2		
Betting Shop & Premises	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Hairdressing Salon	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4		
Kiosk & Premises	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Post Office & Premises	2	3	4	1	2	1	2	2	2	2		
Showroom & Premises	3	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	2	2		
Retail Warehouse & Premises	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Warehouse & Premises	28	26	31	37	29	27	29	29	29	26		
Land used for storage & Premises	24	23	22	23	24	22	22	23	24	26		
Store & Premises	56	57	55	47	50	54	56	58	59	59		
Warehouse & Premises & Office	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0		
Industrial	6	7	7	6	6	6	9	12	9	8		
School & premises	4	5	5	4	3	3	1	2	1	1		
Factory & Premises	8	9	8	5	6	6	8	9	8	7		
Workshop & Premises	70	62	70	70	62	64	62	59	53	49		
Business Unit & Premises	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	0		
Clubhouse & Premises	2	2	0	2	3	3	4	3	3	3		
Hall & Premises	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1		
Sports Ground & premises	3	4	4	3	2	3	2	3	0	0		
Swimming Pool & Premises	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Leisure	7	5	9	6	5	5	6	6	7	6		
Surgery & Premises	1	1	2	1	1	3	3	3	4	4		
Police Station & Premises	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1		
Communication Station & premises	16	14	14	15	15	15	16	16	16	16		
Crown Property	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2		
Miscellaneous	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1		
Total	459	459	482	453	421	415	437	459	466	461	0	0
Total Properties	4,586	4635	4661	4682	4,720	4715	4740	4762	4,841	4882		
Total RV	173,544,088	174,291,013	174576048	175043343	175,734,248	176,748,704	177751559	178310944	185,626,024	186,094,479		

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Housing Benefit Performance Information

APPENDIX G

Year	Performance Indicator	Annual Target	Apr Monthly	May Monthly	Jun Monthly	Jul Monthly	Aug Monthly	Sep Monthly	Oct Monthly	Nov Monthly	Dec Monthly	Jan Monthly	Feb Monthly	Mar Monthly	To Date
2015/16	New Claim Processing	20 days	31	24	15	18	22	20	19	14	14	19	9	12	19.65
2016/17	New Claim Processing	20 days	9	8	15	17	13	7	12	11					11.35
2015/16	No of Claims	20 days	271	309	318	216	208	319	258	329	204	279	269	294	3,274
2016/17	No of Claims	20 days	264	184	237	209	255	291	208						1,648
					Quarter 1 to date			Quarter 2 to date			Quarter 3 to date			Quarter 4 to date	
2015/16	New Claim Processing	20 days			22.93			21.59			19.65			18.08	
2016/17	New Claim Processing	20 days			10.81			11.33							
2015/16	Change of Circumstances	12 days	18.00	19.00	16.00	18.00	17.00	18.00	17.00	12.00	11.00	11.00	7.00	7.00	14.63
2016/17	Change of Circumstances	12 days	9.00	10.00	10.00	11.00	12.00	8.00	9.00	10.00					9.77
2015/16	No of Changes	12 days	1,431	1,761	2,115	1,969	1,979	1,702	1,782	2,195	1,590	2,064	2,307	1,953	22,848
2016/17	No Of Changes	12 days	1,823	2,336	2,180	1,353	1,376	1,913	1,852	1,853					14,686
					Quarter 1 to date			Quarter 2 to date			Quarter 3 to date			Quarter 4 to date	
2015/16	Change of Circumstances	12 days			17.53			17.59			16.15			14.25	
2016/17	Change of Circumstances	12 days			9.71			9.86							
2015/16	Caseload		6899	6903	6888	6844	6817	6805	6791	6783	6739	6743	6745	6751	
2016/17	Caseload		6719	6694	6654	6646	6662	6614	6564	6561					
Overpayment Recovery															
2015/16	Total Overpayments collected £		£ 76,622	£ 81,549	£ 108,728	£ 91,847	£ 119,087	£ 89,556	£ 113,876	£ 66,737	£ 181,791	£ 118,097	£ 167,562	£ 221,791	£ 1,437,243
2016/17	Total Overpayments collected £		£ 123,494	£ 182,440	£ 90,118	£ 114,533	£ 114,412	£ 110,055	£ 98,196	£ 97,289					£ 930,537
					Quarter 1 to date			Quarter 2 to date			Quarter 3 to date			Quarter 4 to date	
2015/16	Total Overpayments collected £				£ 266,899			£567,389			£ 929,793			£1,437,243	
2016/17	Total Overpayments collected £				£ 396,052			£735,052			£ 930,537				

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Agenda Item 6



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Report To: Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder
Lead Officer: Interim Chief Executive / Head of Finance

17 January 2017

Treasury Management Review

Purpose

1. To report on the performance of the treasury management function.
2. This is not a key decision but reporting to the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder on performance is a requirement of the Borrowing and Investment Strategy.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder:
 - note the performance of the treasury management function

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The performance of the treasury management function should be reviewed regularly to ensure reasonable returns are achieved commensurate with risk. This is achieved through regular monitoring by the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder and by being a member of a benchmarking group.
5. The Borrowing and Investment Strategy should be reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the authority.

Background

6. The Borrowing and Investment Strategy approved by Council on 25 February 2016 delegates responsibility for the implementation and regular monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder.

Considerations

7. Current Performance

Investments of £96.52 million were held by the Council at 31 December, and included £87.21 million held in fixed rate investments. Detail of the investment counterparties is included as **Appendix A**. Investments with Ermine Street Housing account for £23.2million or 24% of the Council's current investments; this is in accordance with the Ermine Street Business Plan and the Council's agreement of £107million investment over a 5 year period, as agreed by Cabinet, at the meeting of 12th November 2014. This has had the effect of providing a good return on investments, supporting general fund expenditure at a time when market rates and returns are at historic lows.

8. The forecast for the investment balance at 31 March 2017 is approximately £60million. The level of investments held will reduce during February and March as

maturing investments are used to cover precept and supplier payments and, council tax and business rates refunds.

9. The average return on new investments excluding Ermine Street Housing since 1 April 2016 is 0.69% compared with 0.86% for the same period in 2015-16. Investments with Ermine Street Housing average 3.59%. The reduction in average return is due to the change in Bank of England Base Rate on 4th August. Market expectations are for the base rate to remain at 0.25% for 18 months and to reach 1% by December 2021. The general economic outlook is volatile with Brexit causing uncertainty and the current Government focus shifting to support growth rather than tackling inflation. Latest figures show the UK had the greatest growth in 2016 at 2.2%, more than the six leading nations including the US, Germany and Japan. However, the Bank of England forecasts a slowdown is likely with a rate of growth at 1.4% in 2017. (Source: The Times 06.01.17)
10. Net investment interest for the year was included in the Council budget estimates as £511,400, with an estimated £109,642 payable to the Housing Revenue Account. An additional £432,400 interest is expected in the year due to higher balance levels and longer periods of investment, predominantly with South Cambs Limited. The original estimate included the expectation that the Council would borrow to on-lend to the company however, cash flow balances have enabled the council to continue with investments without a need to borrow thereby increasing interest without debt payments. Should the position change in the current financial year and the Council borrows funds to on-lend to the company then the net interest received will be less than that currently expected.
11. Historically the HRA has been entitled to recover interest from the General Fund in respect of the HRA working balance and major repairs reserve balances held for future use, the interest on housing capital balances (right to buy, shared ownership, land and other dwellings) being credited to the General Fund. The Introduction of self-financing for the HRA and the retention of right to buy receipts for re-investment in affordable housing has prompted a change in legislation for this area. The amending determination (Limits on Indebtedness Determination 2012 – Amending Determination 2013) requires that local authorities credit their HRA with interest earned on all unapplied capital receipts. This will result in an increase in interest earned by the HRA but a corresponding reduction in interest earned by the General Fund, the movement on capital balances will be monitored.
12. In March 2012, following the introduction of the Housing Revenue Account Self Financing regime, the Council acquired debt of £205 million. The full sum was borrowed from the Public Works Loans Board at an average fixed rate of 3.5% as 41 individual loans with maturity dates between 2037 and 2057; no other external borrowing has been undertaken.
13. As part of the Investment and Borrowing Strategy the Council is required to ensure that the proportion of investments do not exceed the agreed levels, the current levels are as follows:

Group of Organisations	Maximum Investment £m	Maximum Proportion %	Current Proportion %
UK Debt Management Office	unlimited	100%	0%
Money Market Funds	10	30%	7%
UK Local authorities (excluding Parish Councils)	10	75%	7%
UK Banks	10	60%	32%
South Cambs Ltd (Ermine St)	35	60%	24%
Subsidiaries of UK Banks	3.0	10%	0%
Other Banks & Financial Institutions	5	20%	2%
Building Societies	10/5.0/3.0	100%	28%

14. The current counterparty investment limit for Ermine Street Housing is £35m. This has enabled the Council to receive higher levels of interest than are currently available from other approved parties, with minimal risk being a wholly owned subsidiary of the Council and investments being matched by the property acquisitions of the company.
15. **Treasury Risk Management**
- The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. The monitoring report for the period ended 31 March 2017 will be presented at the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holders meeting 18 May 2017.
16. Risk is being managed by spreading investments across available counterparties with the current average period for all fixed term deposits being 19 months, money markets being utilised for short term cash needs. The yield curve remains relatively flat with rates ranging from 0.20% to 0.75% for periods up to one year, to 1.6% for 5 years, this compares to the average current return on investments (existing and new) being 0.69% (excluding Ermine Street Housing investments).
17. Any uplift in rates above that already included in the Council's estimates would provide additional interest to support the provision of services.
18. Options for the investment of surplus funds will be limited in the future as it may be more beneficial to use such funds to support internal borrowing for the General Fund capital programme or to reduce, marginally and temporarily, the £205 million debt arising from Housing Revenue Account Reform.

Implications

19. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

20. The interest received on investments is directly affected by changes in market interest and by the limitations of available counterparties.

Risk Management

21. The proposed European Commission changes to money market funds do not, at this time, affect the Councils Borrowing and Investment Strategy or the Councils use of money market funds.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

22. Consultation was not deemed necessary in this case.

Effect on Strategic Aims

23. This report has no direct implications for any of the Strategic Aims but any increase in interest received (commensurate with risk) may reduce the need for cuts in individual services and assist in the achievement of actions to support those aims.

Background Papers

Treasury Management working papers (confidential)

The Limits on Indebtedness Determination 2013

Limits on Indebtedness Determination 2012 – Amending Determination 2013

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Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder – Work Plan 2016-17

Date of meeting	Reports to be signed off and sent to Democratic Services by 5.00pm on	Title of Report	Key or Non-Key?	Reason Key Specify no(s) listed below	Purpose of Report, ie For Recommendation / Decision / Monitoring	Lead Officer / Report Author	Date added to Corporate Forward Plan (contact: Victoria Wallace) *
18 April 2017 provisional	Wednesday 5 April 2017 (because of Easter)	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
16 May 2017	Friday 5 May 2017	Write offs	Key	1	Decision	Katie Brown	
	Friday 5 May 2017	Organisational Development Strategy refresh	Non-key		Decision	Susan Gardner-Craig	
	Friday 5 May 2017	Treasury Management quarterly review	Non-key		Monitoring	Sally Smart	

	Friday 5 May 2017	Revenues and Benefits Quarterly Performance Report	Non-key		Monitoring	Katie Brown / Dawn Graham	
	Friday 5 May 2017	Pay and Reward Review	Key	1	Decision	Susan Gardner-Craig	
	Friday 5 May 2017	Quarterly Reports on Sickness and Leavers	Non-key		Monitoring	Susan Gardner-Craig	
	Friday 5 May 2017	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
20 June 2016 (provisional)	Friday 9 June	Grants (including review of Elite Athletes Scheme)	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
18 July 2016 Provisional	Friday 7 July	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
15 August 2016	Friday 4 August	Write offs	Key	1	Decision	Katie Brown	

	Friday 4 August	Treasury Management quarterly review	Non-key		Monitoring	Sally Smart	
	Friday 4 August	Localised Council Tax Support Scheme	Non-key		Recn to Council in Jan 2018 or decn to consult and refer to Cabinet in Sep / Nov 2017 to rec to Council	Dawn Graham	
	Friday 4 August	Quarterly Reports on Sickness and Leavers	Non-key		Monitoring	Susan Gardner-Craig	
	Friday 4 August	Revenues and Benefits Quarterly Performance Report	Non-key		Monitoring	Katie Brown / Dawn Graham	
	Friday 4 August	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
19 September 2017 provisional	Friday 8 September	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
17 October 2017 Provisional	Friday 6 October	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	

21 November 2017	Friday 10 November	Treasury Management quarterly review	Non-key		Monitoring	Sally Smart	
	Friday 10 November	Revenues and Benefits Quarterly Performance Report	Non-key		Monitoring	Katie Brown / Dawn Graham	
	Friday 10 November	Quarterly Reports on Sickness and Leavers	Non-key		Susan Gardner-Craig		
	Friday 10 November	Write offs	Key	1	Decision	Katie Brown	
	Friday 10 November	Grants	Non-key		Decision	Gemma Barron	
	Friday 10 November	Organisational Development Strategy Refresh	Non-key		Decision	Susan Gardner-Craig	
19 December 2017 Provisional	Friday 8 December	Grants	Non-key		Monitoring	Gemma Barron	

Key Decisions

1. it is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates, or
2. it is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of the District comprising two or more wards.
In determining the meaning of 'significant' for the purposes of the above, the Council must have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the 2000 Act (guidance)).
 - Key decisions can only be made after they have been on the Corporate Forward Plan for at least 28 clear calendar days not including the day on which they first appear on the Forward Plan or the day on which the decision is to be made.

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