

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**REPORT TO:** Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

22 August 2017

**LEAD OFFICER:** Executive Director

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### **Revenues Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 1: April – June 2017**

#### **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 (BVPs) 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 BVPs through statistical returns (e.g. revenue collection rates). For the most part, the former BVPs are considered to be valuable indicators of performance and therefore will continue to be reported to the Portfolio Holder. The BVP reference numbers have been retained as a convenient way of maintaining continuity of performance reporting.

#### **Considerations**

7. As at the end of the first quarter of 2017/18, the Council Tax collection rate was 34.5%, against a target of 30.7%. Net payments collected totalled £36.8m, compared to £35.8m in 2016/17. Details can be found in APPENDIX A..
8. Non-Domestic Rates' collection performed favourably against an end of quarter target of 31.7%, with a collection rate of 32.2% In monetary terms, the amount collected was £26.7m compared to £24.7m 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 that are 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 (£)
2015/16	Q1	4720	421	175,734,248
	Q2	4715	415	176,748,704
	Q3	4737	437	177,751,559
	Q4	4762	459	178,310,944
2016/17	Q1	4841	446	185,626,024
	Q2	4882	466	186,094,479
	Q3	4925	462	187,563,084
	Q4	4955	471	187,501,164
2017/18	Q1	4989	480	209,470,165

10. Performance in Rent collection at the end of quarter one was 94.87%, against a target of 92.8%. In terms of rent not collected, the arrears for current tenants were £375k, compared to £331k for the same period last year. The details can be found in APPENDIX C
11. Sundry Debtors had 32.7% of invoices in arrears at the end of June, compared to a target of 35.4%. In monetary terms, this equates to £1.3m in arrears from invoices totalling £4mm. One large invoice impacted negatively on performance at the end of this reporting period, which has since been resolved. APPENDIX D shows the detail.
12. The average processing time for new claims as at Q1 2017/18 is 25.57 days compared to target of 20 days. It was expected that performance would be affected by implementation of the Revenues and Benefits automation project which will be completed by the end of 2017/18. Details of Performance can be found in APPENDIX G.
13. Change of Circumstances processing times averaged to date (Quarter1) is 14.73 days for 2017/18 compared to target of 12.00 days. As already noted within the report the performance has been affected by the Revenues and Benefits automation project.
14. The days to process new claims and changes of circumstances has increased more than anticipated due the combined effect of leave over Easter holidays, staff supporting two elections and the additional staffing requirement for new automation project implementation.
15. Temporary measures are to be put in place to reduce the handling time of both New Claims and change of circumstances, we expect going forward that performance averages will be improved.
16. There have been 60 applications for support under the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) scheme and expenditure is in line with what we expect at this time of year.

Expenditure £26,387 (16%) 2017/18 (Grant £165,659)

The benefits team and homeless team have worked closely together to identify cases which are in need of a grant and this work is continuing this year to ensure that the grant payment is fully spent.

### **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

No Background Papers

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