

Finance Services Annual Service Plan 2017-22



2021/22 Edition

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Cabinet Member(s) and Head of Service



Councillor Jane Mudd
Leader of the Council
and Cabinet Member



Meirion Rushworth
Head of Finance Services
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This document is available in Welsh / Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg

Introduction

The Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires all public sector bodies to set Well-being objectives in their Corporate Plans. Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22 has set four Well-being objectives that supports the delivery of the One Newport Public Services Board 'Wellbeing Plan' and also Wales' Well-being Goals:

Well-being Objective 1 – To improve skills, education and employment opportunities

Well-being Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment

Well-being Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient

Well-being Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities

To support the delivery of the Well-being Objectives the Council's service areas have set a five year service plan which outlines their objectives, actions, performance measures and risks to delivering the Corporate Plan. Each of these objectives and actions also support the Well-being Act's sustainable development and five principles:

Long term		The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
Prevention		How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse, may help public bodies meet their objectives.
Integration		Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
Collaboration		Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
Involvement		The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area, which the body serves.

Newport City Council Statutory Duties

In the delivery of Council services, there are different legislative and statutory requirements for the Council to comply with. The key areas of statutory duties include but is not exhaustive:

Well-being for Future Generations Act

Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014

Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Equalities Act including Socio Economic Duty

Welsh Language Act

Data Protection Act 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2001

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Overview of Finance Services

The Finance service comprises of four teams: Accountancy; Internal Audit; Procurement/e-payments; and Revenues. Together, the teams provide a diverse mix of services and activities that support the Council's service areas; setting overall policy frameworks for the whole Council; and Revenues, as one of the biggest external customer departments dealing with all households and businesses. Examples of the areas / functions include:

- Setting policy, good practice, training, support and co-ordination to enable effective financial management and strategic planning of a net revenue budget of c£320m, supporting over 200 budget manager's/service managers, Head teachers and Members.
- Supporting the organisation develop its services and deliver key projects with financial advice and support as needed.
- Providing assurance to the Council and Schools on the effectiveness and efficiency of its governance, risk management and internal control of its financial and non-financial resources including where necessary the investigation of impropriety / theft.
- Collect c£120M of income from Council Tax, Business Rates and various sundry debts.
- Manage and support the Council's interaction with its suppliers to ensure value for money through e-ordering, payments and support services in tendering / awarding / managing contracts.
- Supporting the Head of Finance in carrying out his statutory Section 151 responsibilities.

Through the Corporate Plan and beyond, Finance Services will continue to build on delivering more 'self-service' functions both internally such as the Council's Budget Management System and Procurement and externally through the Council's Customer Relationship System and *My Account* enabling residents and businesses to make more online payments. Ensuring the Council's resources are focussed on its key priorities is increasingly important and our Finance Business Partners will support and develop strong, integrated financial planning, management and governance. The Internal Audit team is already collaborating with Monmouthshire Council through the sharing of the Chief Internal Auditor and continue to provide high level assurance service to the Council on the financial and non-financial governance, risk management and internal control.

Supporting the Council and City through the Covid Pandemic throughout the previous year has dominated our agenda and our work on supporting businesses through the making of business rates grants (£42m) and rates relief (c£18m) plus co-ordinating and claiming c£20m in other financial impacts on the Council, from

the WG Hardship Fund have been significant. As we write this, we look forward to an improving and more 'normal year' but we will have to deal with the longer lasting issues of the last 12 months plus the challenges of moving from a response to a recovery stance for services here. Specifically,

- Catching up on Council Tax and Business Rates arrears which have increased over the last 12 months.
- Catching up on State Aid assessments on the business grants administered in the previous year
- Catching up and accelerating, where possible, implementation of the Councils new financial system project
- Administering any further business support grants over the 2021/22 financial year, in particular over the first 6 months plus on-going claiming of the financial impact on the Councils finances from the WG Hardship Fund which will operate over the first 6 months of the financial year.

As we do this, we will need to work in the Council's 'new normal' arrangements and ensure staff are working in the most effective, efficient and safe manner.

- The care market will need to adapt to new ways of working and that could affect service capacity and financial sustainability.
- The long-term community health and social care needs are not yet known

Finance

The Council's budget for 2021/22 was agreed at [Council](#) on 3rd March 2021. In 2021/22 Finance services base revenue budget has been set as £3,541,000. As part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning,

Finance Services has identified savings to be achieved over the next four years. The following savings have been identified in the table below and further information can be [found here](#).

Revenue savings identified	Savings (£) 2021/22	Savings (£) 2022/23	Savings (£) 2023/24	Savings (£) 2024/25
Revenues income collection section (Council Tax, National Non Domestic Rates) – Self Service developments	£24,000	£0	£0	£0
Removal of software licence budget	£28,000	£0	£0	£0
Reduction in support / management costs for budget management system	£13,000	£0	£0	£0
Generate additional income through the corporate credit care programme (pCard).	£0	£7,000	£0	£0
Increase income through additional collaborative contract work	£5,000	£0	£0	£0
Increase income through pcard programme	£3,000	£3,000	£0	£0

The revenue budget investments for Finance Services over the next four years are stated below and further information can be [found here](#).

Budget Investment areas	Investment (£) 2021/22	Investment (£) 2022/23	Investment (£) 2023/24	Investment (£) 2024/25
Council Tax & NNDR – NDR Allowance reduction in grant	£40,000	£0	£0	£0

Capital Programme

Newport Council sets an extensive capital programme to deliver key infrastructure projects / schemes. The list of Capital schemes and projects for 2020/21 can be found [here](#).

Workforce Planning

To support the delivery of the service plan it is important to have a workforce plan that focuses on the training and development of staff and to improve the resilience of teams to deliver change. Through collaboration with the Council's Human Resources team, the service area has identified the following

actions to deliver in 2021/22.

Ref	Action	Reason(s)	Outcome(s)	Responsible Officer	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Review and identify key areas of transactional processes within the Finance teams which could be automated.	Finance processes are still undertaking many manual processes taking up a lot of staff resource to complete.	Improve the efficiency of transactional processes and reduce resources.	Head of Finance (MR)	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022
2	Introduce succession planning practices and strengthen resilience in teams.	There are roles where there are issues around resilience in the Finance teams.	Develop and promote career progression and resilience across Finance teams, specifically Accountancy, Income & Collection.	Head of Finance (MR)	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022

Programmes & Projects

To support the Corporate Plan and/or meet necessary statutory duties / legislative changes, service areas undertake programmes and projects. Below is a list of ongoing major change programmes and projects

that are currently led by Finance Services.

Programme / Project Name	Brief Programme / Project Description and how it supports the Corporate Plan.	Wellbeing Objective(s) supported	Corporate Theme(s)	Anticipated Programme / Project Completion Date
Digital Transactions for Council Tax payers	To provide the means for customers to carry out routine transactions digitally. To enable citizens to access their council tax records and carry out routine transactions digitally which will improve efficiency, reduce costs and reduce unnecessary contact. It will also allow the Revenues Team to focus more on recovery of debts and not deal with low level transactional matters.	Not Applicable	Modernised Council	Quarter 1 2021/22
Council Tax & HMRC arrears project.	<p>This is a pilot and HMRC data will be used to enable the Council to improve council tax collection and reduce significantly the cases that are sent to bailiffs each year.</p> <p>We will identify those households that are in Council Tax arrears and look to signpost them to specialist support which will provide advice, guidance, and measures to help them reduce their Council Tax arrears and other household's debts. This will enable vulnerable households to better manage their finances and provide long term resilience and provide wellbeing and economic opportunities.</p>	<p>Wellbeing Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment.</p> <p>Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient</p> <p>Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities.</p>	<p>Thriving City</p> <p>Resilient Communities</p>	Quarter 4 2021/22
Upgrade to a new financial system	<p>The current financial system is on an unstable platform and consists of a number of different modular systems that feed into the ledger. It is important that a move is made to a more stable platform, preferably in the Cloud, and have a more integrated financial system.</p> <p>This should allow employees to access the systems on a remote basis more readily therefore supporting the Modernised Council and Strategic Recovery Aims linked into a more healthy and productive workforce.</p>	Not Applicable	Modernised Council	Quarter 3 2021/22

Objectives & Actions

To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, Finance Services has set 10 Objectives to deliver in 2021/22:

- Objective 1 – Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.**
- Objective 2 – The Income Collection team will increase the options available for customers to transact digitally.**
- Objective 3 – We will support the organisation by developing good financial management practices including:**
 - 1. Robust medium term financial projections to ensure key priorities have funding and the organisation understands its financial challenge. We will support the delivery of efficiency and change plans.**
 - 2. Enabling robust financial management by budget managers through effective systems, processes and business partnering.**
- Objective 4 – To achieve earlier closedown of accounts and as minimum, meet statutory deadlines and requirements**
- Objective 5 - Implement and embed the revised operating model for strategic procurement. Seek improvements in full P2P cycle process.**
- Objective 6 - Embed principles of Fair and Local Procurement and Ethical Supply Chains into Procurement Gateway Process**
- Objective 7 - In collaboration with Her Majesty Revenues and Customs (HMRC), identify financially vulnerable households and signpost them to specialist partners to provide support, financial advice and guidance.**
- Objective 8 - Administer and deliver post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols and various Welsh Government Covid-19 related schemes including Eligible Business Rate Covid-19 Grants; and Business Rate retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme.**
- Objective 9 – Upgrade and replace the existing financial systems to a fully supported and integrated Cloud based system including the exploration for replacing the existing Revenues IT (Council Tax, NDR and benefits) systems with Cloud based infrastructure**
- Objective 10 - Implement - New Breathing Space Legislation**

Objective 1		Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.			
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Internal Audit is a statutory requirement within local government in accordance with S151 Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; the team will comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Audit work will be undertaken to assess the adequacy of the internal control environment, governance and risk management, to ensure public money is being spent appropriately and fraud / error is minimised across all service areas. This will enable the Chief Internal Auditor to provide an annual overall opinion. The Internal Audit team will be alert to any potential fraudulent activity and will report any concerns to the Chief Internal Auditor who will risk assess the situation and decide whether or not to investigate further.</p> <p>The Internal Audit team will provide assurance that controls are working well and provide advice where improvements are required to encourage stronger financial management across all service areas. To add more value, where applicable, the Internal Audit will identify potential savings during the course of their work. The Chief Internal Auditor will provide assurance to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Undertake audit work in line with the agreed Internal Audit Plan 2021/22.	As a result of Covid 19 we will work with Heads of Service to prioritise audit workload in order to provide appropriate assurance in key areas. IA will make greater use of Control Risk Self Assessments; will work with service managers to gain folder access to their specific systems to work remotely where possible and practical; will work with the Council's Intelligence Hub to develop data analytics to strengthen counter fraud work; will use assurance from third parties where possible. IA will maximise the level of assurance provided by prioritising key controls within each audit job and look to increase the number of jobs undertaken across the service areas. As always IA will maintain a reserve list of audit jobs to replace any jobs which may not be	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022

Objective 1		Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.			
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Internal Audit is a statutory requirement within local government in accordance with S151 Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; the team will comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Audit work will be undertaken to assess the adequacy of the internal control environment, governance and risk management, to ensure public money is being spent appropriately and fraud / error is minimised across all service areas. This will enable the Chief Internal Auditor to provide an annual overall opinion. The Internal Audit team will be alert to any potential fraudulent activity and will report any concerns to the Chief Internal Auditor who will risk assess the situation and decide whether or not to investigate further.</p> <p>The Internal Audit team will provide assurance that controls are working well and provide advice where improvements are required to encourage stronger financial management across all service areas. To add more value, where applicable, the Internal Audit will identify potential savings during the course of their work. The Chief Internal Auditor will provide assurance to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
		<p>possible to undertake due to Covid – 19 restrictions.</p> <p>Sufficient audit work is undertaken to provide appropriate assurance on the effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control.</p> <p>Maximise audit work and related assurance in context of on-going working patterns restrictions due to Covid</p>			
2	Review and report on how many of the agreed management actions (from previously completed audits) have been implemented within service areas to improve service delivery, controls and governance in 2021/22.	Service areas are implementing agreed management actions within the timescales agreed to improve service delivery, controls and governance. Where actions are not completed these are escalated accordingly.	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022

Objective 1		Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.			
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Internal Audit is a statutory requirement within local government in accordance with S151 Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; the team will comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Audit work will be undertaken to assess the adequacy of the internal control environment, governance and risk management, to ensure public money is being spent appropriately and fraud / error is minimised across all service areas. This will enable the Chief Internal Auditor to provide an annual overall opinion. The Internal Audit team will be alert to any potential fraudulent activity and will report any concerns to the Chief Internal Auditor who will risk assess the situation and decide whether or not to investigate further.</p> <p>The Internal Audit team will provide assurance that controls are working well and provide advice where improvements are required to encourage stronger financial management across all service areas. To add more value, where applicable, the Internal Audit will identify potential savings during the course of their work. The Chief Internal Auditor will provide assurance to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
3	Submit data returns to NFI for data matching. Co-ordination of the review of returned data matches from NFI. Respond and then investigate allegations of fraud / corruption.	Liaise with other organisations where appropriate. Identification of Fraud and appropriate action taken. Report results of exercise to Head of Finance, CMT and Audit Committee	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st October 2020	31 st March 2022
4	Include the training on the corporate training programme Provide a link on NCC intranet to digital training package	Raise awareness of the Council's Anti-fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy. Members and Officers are aware of their role and responsibilities to report any incidents where fraud and corruption occur in the Council.	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2022

Objective 2		The Income Collection team will increase the options available for customers to transact digitally.			
Objective Outcome(s)		To provide the means for customers to carry out routine transactions digitally. To enable citizens to access their council tax records and carry out routine transactions digitally which will improve efficiency, reduce costs and reduce unnecessary contact. It will also allow the Revenues Team to focus more on recovery of debts and not deal with low level transactional matters.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Project plan and delivery of the project.	<p>We will have delivered a system that will enable residents and businesses to transact digitally and to have a self-service functionality.</p> <p>The outcomes of this work will improve the efficiency revenue transactions and provide greater options for users to monitor and pay their bills.</p>	Income Collection Manager	1 st December 2019	30 th June 2021
2	The facility to transact digitally has been installed and tested and is working. The next step involves imbedding the facility into the Newport City Council website as part of 'my council services' to offer a seamless experience for the customer.	Integration of self-service system functionality into the Council's web service software partner into the main council website	Income Collection Manager	1 st March 2020	30 th June 2021
3	<p>Publicity campaign to inform residents of online services and encourage uptake.</p> <p>Following an initial soft launch of the online services a coordinated campaign will be run. This will include promotion on social media, council website and flyers included with council</p>	Raise awareness of the online services and encourage/maximise residents to transact digitally for routine council tax transactions.	Income Collection Manager	01 April 2021	30 th June 2021

Objective 2		The Income Collection team will increase the options available for customers to transact digitally.			
Objective Outcome(s)		To provide the means for customers to carry out routine transactions digitally. To enable citizens to access their council tax records and carry out routine transactions digitally which will improve efficiency, reduce costs and reduce unnecessary contact. It will also allow the Revenues Team to focus more on recovery of debts and not deal with low level transactional matters.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
	tax correspondence such as bills etc.				
4	Review of working practices and staffing requirements around routine transactions	Maximise the impact of self-service capability on effectiveness and efficiency of revenues team	Income and Collection Manager	1 st October 2021	31 st March 2022
5	Further expansion of online self-service provision	Maximise potential and impact of self-service to both tax payers and revenues team.	Income and Collection Manager	1 st October 2021	31 st March 2022

Objective 3		We will support the organisation by developing good financial management practices including: 1. Robust medium term financial projections to ensure key priorities have funding and the organisation understands its financial challenge. We will support the delivery of efficiency and change plans. 2. Enabling robust financial management by budget managers through effective systems, processes and business partnering.			
Objective Outcome(s)		The Council requires a robust medium term view of its financial position to ensure priorities can be delivered and that appropriate plans are developed to achieve balanced budget over the medium-term which are robust. This can be supported with effective and easy to use financial systems and processes.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Review the centralised accountancy assistant's team structure to allow for greater exposure to Finance Business Partners for development and succession planning and improve resilience and processes. Implement any conclusions from review	Review accountancy structure to allow for development and succession planning	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2021	30 th September 2021
2	Continued improvement of transactional processes undertaken by the Centralised Accountancy Team.	Further standardised and automated processes by the centralised accountancy team including linking the manpower with the new HR system.	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	31 st December 2022
3	Bring schools finance systems in line with the Council finance systems including BMS.	This will allow for more efficient working practices and avoid duplication of work carried out by schools business managers and accountancy's schools finance team.	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	31 st July 2020
4	Upgrade the financial system which includes the integration of other systems, including the main ledger, procurement, debtors and asset register.	- A financial system on a more sustainable platform, preferably on the Cloud - Greater efficiency of working practices due to less down time and speed of processing - Far greater level of support and business continuity	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	31 st December 2022

Objective 3		We will support the organisation by developing good financial management practices including:			
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Robust medium term financial projections to ensure key priorities have funding and the organisation understands its financial challenge. We will support the delivery of efficiency and change plans. 2. Enabling robust financial management by budget managers through effective systems, processes and business partnering. 			
Objective Outcome(s)		The Council requires a robust medium term view of its financial position to ensure priorities can be delivered and that appropriate plans are developed to achieve balanced budget over the medium-term which are robust. This can be supported with effective and easy to use financial systems and processes.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
		- Ability to access systems on multiple platforms such as mobile phones and tablets i.e. to authorise orders on the go.			

Objective 4		To achieve earlier closedown of accounts and as minimum, meet statutory deadlines and requirements			
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>For accounts year ending 31st March 2021 the financial accounts of the Authority will need to be audited and published 2 months earlier than the current deadline. This is a significant challenge for the accountancy department. Timescales as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For accounts year ending 31st March 2019 and 31st March 2020 the draft accounts deadline will move from 30th June 2019/20 to 15th June 2019 and the final accounts deadline from 30th September to 15th September. <p>For accounts year ending 31st March 2021 the draft accounts deadline will be 31st May 2021 and the final accounts deadline will be 31st July 2021.</p>			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Update of closing timetable to reflect the critical deadlines to be achieved in 2021/22	Clear timetable and deadlines to follow to achieve earlier closedown. Allow time for quality assurance to take place at the draft stage.	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2019	30 th July 2021
2	Work with Audit Wales to agree which tasks can be undertaken and audited earlier in the year,	Early assessment of notes by Audit Wales will save time on auditing the draft Statement of Accounts during the main audit period and reduce number of amendments required between draft and final accounts.	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2019	30 th Sept 2021
3	Attend CMT to get buy-in from service areas for earlier deadlines and emphasise importance of robust closedown processes within service areas.	Heads of Service communicate to service managers the importance of meeting closedown deadlines. More robust closedown processes by service areas leading to less audit queries and amendments	Head of Service	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022
4	Ongoing challenge of existing processes and timetables. Requires 'buy-in' from senior management and service areas. Timetable updated with processes completed in shorter timescales with some year-end tasks being completed in year.	Enable Service areas and senior management to become more efficient and effective in their monthly forecasting. This will also enable the Finance teams to provide more specialist support, advice and guidance to the high risk areas of the Council throughout the year.	Assistant head of Finance	1 st April 2019	31 st June 2021

Objective 5		Implement and embed the revised operating model for strategic procurement. Seek improvements in full P2P cycle process.			
Objective Outcome(s)		Implement and embed the revised operating model for Strategic Procurement. Taking account of the resource levels within the function, to identify key outcomes and work-streams which need to be completed to ensure the Council is compliant with the Public Contract Regulations, WG policy that adds value, delivers financial/non-financial benefits wherever possible for the Council. Further improve the payment of manual invoices by seeking alternative payment methodologies to enhance the process– through procurement card solutions and any other viable payment options.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Not Applicable			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	To develop and embed new electronic Gateway Forms into procurement process for greater self-service and automation	Easier, more automated Gateway Process	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2021	30 th September 2021

Objective 6		Embed principles of Fair and Local Procurement and Ethical Supply Chains into Procurement Gateway Process			
Objective Outcome(s)		Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales have set out numerous ways to improve public procurement in order to contribute to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, in particular around ethical employment in supply chains, and using procurement to promote inclusive growth. This is in support of two key goals being A Prosperous Wales and A Globally Responsible Wales. Additionally, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic new requirements from Welsh Government also require the Council to ensure that its key ‘at risk’ suppliers are supported where appropriate both financially and operationally in the local and regional economy. This will also support any additional impacts from Brexit Trade negotiations.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Well Being Objectives 1, 2 & 3			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City, Resilient Communities, Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	To adopt the Welsh TOM’s (themes, opportunities, measurements) around Social Value into procurement processes	The Welsh TOM’s will be embedded into NCC procurement process as part of NCC’s overall Social Value Agenda	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022
2	To monitor any new Procurement Policy Notes	At risk suppliers are financially supported in line with Government advice	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2021	31 st October 2021

Objective 6		Embed principles of Fair and Local Procurement and Ethical Supply Chains into Procurement Gateway Process			
Objective Outcome(s)		Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales have set out numerous ways to improve public procurement in order to contribute to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, in particular around ethical employment in supply chains, and using procurement to promote inclusive growth. This is in support of two key goals being A Prosperous Wales and A Globally Responsible Wales. Additionally, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic new requirements from Welsh Government also require the Council to ensure that its key 'at risk' suppliers are supported where appropriate both financially and operationally in the local and regional economy. This will also support any additional impacts from Brexit Trade negotiations.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Well Being Objectives 1, 2 & 3			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City, Resilient Communities, Modernised Council			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
	(PPN's) in relation to Supplier Support for 'at risk' suppliers				

Objective 7		In collaboration with Her Majesty Revenues and Customs (HMRC), identify financially vulnerable households and signpost them to specialist partners to provide support, financial advice and guidance.			
Objective Outcome(s)		We will identify those households that are in Council Tax arrears and look to signpost them to specialist support which will provide advice, guidance, and measures to help them reduce their Council Tax arrears and other household's debts. This will enable vulnerable households to better manage their finances and provide long term resilience and provide wellbeing and economic opportunities.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Well Being Objectives 2, 3 and 4			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Resilient Communities			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Collate Data for submission to HMRC.	Comprehensive data collection and cleansing exercise to be undertaken.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st April 2021	31 st October 2021
2	Submit data to HMRC	Data submitted in the correct format	Income & Collection Manager	30 th April 2021	31 st October 2021
3	Data returned from HMRC with updated information.	Financially vulnerable households identified and offered support via specialist partners.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st November 2021	31 st March 2023

Objective 7		In collaboration with Her Majesty Revenues and Customs (HMRC), identify financially vulnerable households and signpost them to specialist partners to provide support, financial advice and guidance.			
Objective Outcome(s)		We will identify those households that are in Council Tax arrears and look to signpost them to specialist support which will provide advice, guidance, and measures to help them reduce their Council Tax arrears and other household's debts. This will enable vulnerable households to better manage their finances and provide long term resilience and provide wellbeing and economic opportunities.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Well Being Objectives 2, 3 and 4			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Resilient Communities			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
		Households with debt offered pathway to resolve and support to maintain payments.			

Objective 8		Administer and deliver post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols and various Welsh Government Covid-19 related schemes including Eligible Business Rate Covid-19 Grants; Business Rate retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme.			
Objective Outcome(s)		Businesses that have been impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions are supported through the administration and delivery post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols, Covid-19 grants; and Business Rate retail, leisure and hospitality relief scheme.			
		This will provide short term relief and contribute towards the long-term sustainability of businesses / economy.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		To promote economic growth and regeneration and To build cohesive & sustainable communities			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Distribute further business grants	Distribute any further covid-19 business rate grants to eligible businesses in line with the criteria set out by Welsh Government	Income & Collection Manager	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022
2	Implement and Administer the Business Rate Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme 2021-20	Once details of the 2021-22 scheme are known seek approval from Council to adopt the scheme and ensure that qualifying businesses are identified and the rate relief applied to the individual rate accounts.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st April 2021	30 th April 2021

Objective 8		Administer and deliver post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols and various Welsh Government Covid-19 related schemes including Eligible Business Rate Covid-19 Grants; Business Rate retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme.			
Objective Outcome(s)		Businesses that have been impacted by the Covid-19 restrictions are supported through the administration and delivery post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols, Covid-19 grants; and Business Rate retail, leisure and hospitality relief scheme. This will provide short term relief and contribute towards the long-term sustainability of businesses / economy.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		To promote economic growth and regeneration and To build cohesive & sustainable communities			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
3	Work with partner agencies and 3 rd sector to provide advice and assistance to those with debts and financial problems.	Hold regular liaison meetings with partner organisations such as CAB to establish a joined-up approach to assisting those with arrears to find a sympathetic and sustainable way collect the debt.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st September 2020	1 st March 2022
4	Submit business case and recruit additional staff to work in a post covid debt recovery team. The team will be part of the Recovery Team and will work with customers with arrears and experiencing payment difficulties to recover the outstanding council tax due to the Council.	Catch up on debt recovery work	Income & Collection manager Team Leader - recovery	01 April 2021	31 st March 2023

Objective 9		Upgrade and replace the existing financial systems to a fully supported and integrated Cloud based system including the exploration for replacing the existing Revenues IT(Council Tax, NDR and benefits) systems with Cloud based infrastructure			
Objective Outcome(s)		To provide a more efficient, integrated and Cloud based supported system, which will replace outdated and unstable current system. Would be good to develop this further and explore options for the cloud based provision to include council tax, NDR and benefits solutions which wouldn't be included in the upgrade of the financial system.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		To promote economic growth and regeneration and to build cohesive & sustainable communities			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Explore the options for ICT provision of Revenues & Benefits system, to include a managed cloud based service.	Establish whether a managed cloud based ICT solution could provide a more robust platform and cost effective solution to deliver council tax, benefits and NNDR services.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st April 2021	31 st March 2022
2	Complete PQQ tender documents to allow for invitation to tender of potential suppliers to deliver new financial system	Tender specification complete for initial PQQ to evaluate potential suppliers	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2021	30 th April 2021
3	Issue and evaluate PQQ submissions for new financial system	Choose preferred suppliers to take to next stage	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2021	30 th June 2021
4	Evaluate preferred suppliers through ITT and award contract to preferred provider	Preferred provided chosen to deliver the new financial system	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st June 2021	31 st August 2021
5	Bring together an implementation team to deliver the project	Identify appropriate officers required to deliver the project Develop job descriptions and finalise with HR Appoint project implementation team and any back filling required Appoint external project manager to support the project	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2021	30 th June 2021
6	Undertake the implementation of the project and complete for 'Go Live'	A new fully integrated system ready for 'Go Live' prior to closing period	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st August 2021	31 st October 2022

Objective 10		Implement - New Breathing Space Legislation			
Objective Outcome(s)		To implement the breathing space legislation to provide those with debt issues time to seek remedies and sustainable payment options.			
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		Well Being Objectives 2, 3 and 4			
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities			
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Work with other departments to establish where debt information is held, draw up an implementation timetable and identify key staff.	Identify key staff and draw up implementation timetable.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st April 2021	4 th May 2021
2	Devise on-line training course for staff and members to raise awareness of the Breathing Space initiative.	All members and front line staff receive training.	Income & Collection Manager Senior Revenue Officer – Courts and Tribunals	1 st May 2021	31 st May 2021
3	Review impact of Breathing Space requests on workload and staff resources.	Report to Head of Finance on impact of introduction of Breathing Space.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st September 2021	31 st December 2022
4	Work with partner agencies and 3 rd sector to provide advice and assistance to those with debts and financial problems.	Hold regular liaison meetings with partner organisations such as CAB to establish a joined-up approach to assisting those with arrears to find a sympathetic and sustainable way collect the debt.	Income & Collection Manager	1 st September 2020	31 st March 2022

Performance Measures

Performance Measure (National / Local / Management Information)	2021/22 Target	2020/21 Actual Performance	2019/20 Actual Performance	2018/19 Actual Performance
National Percentage Non Domestic Rates Collected	96.5%	94.4%	97.59%	97.07%
National Percentage Council Tax Collection	96.5%	95.4%	96.4%	96.64%
Local Percentage total Council Tax Collected as a percentage of annual budgeted amount.	100%	101%	102.66%	101.35%
Local Increase Council Tax accounts paid by Direct Debit	63%	62.4%	60.87%	60.03%
Local % of Council Tax and NNDR transactions (payments & basic administration tasks) completed online.	10%	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Management Information Percentage of Council Tax arrears collected	30%	25.4%	35.3%	100%
Management Information Percentage of NNDR arrears collected	30%	22.8%	24.35%	52.42%
Local Percentage of Internal Audit Plan completed	85%	78%	76%	83%
Local Percentage agreed management actions - implemented within 6 months of receipt of final Internal Audit Report.	90%	71%	86%	87.5%
Management Information Number of days to issue a draft report	10 days	8 days	5 days	11 Days
Management Information Number of days to issue a final report	5 days	3 days	2 days	3 Days
Local Percentage Payment of Invoices within timescales	90%	91.9%	92.46%	88.88%
Local Total value of spend through the procurement card	£4.8M	£5,285,000	£6,307,000	Not Available

Risk Management

Risk Name	Risk Owner	Corporate Risk or Service Risk
<p>Balancing the Council's Medium-Term Budget</p> <p>To meet the Council's requirement of reducing the gap between Council spend and budget allocation over the next 3-5 years.</p>	Head of Finance	Corporate Risk
<p>In Year Financial Management</p> <p>In year financial management of budgets and risk profiling of service areas / activities that are forecasting end of year overspends.</p>	Head of Finance	Corporate Risk
<p>ICT – Self Service within C Tax / NNDR area</p> <p>Self-service within C/Tax and NNDR area does not develop because of lack of ICT capacity</p>	Income & Collection Manager	Service Risk
<p>Post Covid-19 Income Reduction</p> <p>Collection of Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts has been adversely affected by the covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown. There is a risk that the resumption of normal debt recovery will come too late in the year to ensure that the usual income collection is achieved in 2020-21.</p>	Income & Collection Manager	Service Risk
<p>Internal Audit to provide sufficient assurance to management</p> <p>Due to the Covid 19 pandemic and potential future lock downs, the Council's Chief Internal Auditor may not be able to provide the same level of assurance as in previous years where service areas are continuing to be impacted by Covid 19.</p>	Chief Internal Auditor	Service Risk
<p>(New) Financial System Implementation</p> <p>Inherent risk in continuing to use an out-of-date system platform without resilient support to facilitate the Council's business/financial processes (corporate risk) Implementation team structure not yet endorsed corporately; funding not yet substantiated to afford the annual cost of revised arrangement (service risks)</p>	Head of Finance	Service Risk