AGENDA

ANGLIA REVENUES & BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP
JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE & TIME: Tuesday, 26th September, 2017 at 10.00 am
VENUE: Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford IP24 1BT

For the attention of:

Mr P.D. Claussen, Breckland Council
Mr R. Kerry, Suffolk Coastal District Council
Mr D. Ambrose Smith, East Cambridgeshire District Council
Mr S. Edwards, Forest Heath District Council
Mr I. Houlder, St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Mr C. Seaton, Fenland District Council

PART A
ITEMS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

The terms of reference of the Joint Committee stipulate that:

1. The persons eligible to be elected as Chairman shall not be the appointees of a Council whose appointee held that position in any of the three previous years.

2. The persons eligible to be elected as Vice-Chairman shall not be the appointees of a Council whose appointee held that position in the previous year.

3. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall not be appointees of the same Council.

2. APPOINTMENT OF TREASURER

To appoint a treasurer for the ensuing year.
3. **MINUTES**
   To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2017.

4. **APOLOGIES**
   To receive apologies for absence.

5. **URGENT BUSINESS**
   To note whether the Chairman proposes to accept any items of urgent business pursuant to Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

6. **DECLARATIONS**

7. **ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE**
   To consider the following reports:
   a) **Highlight Report and Balance Scorecard**
      Report by Stuart Philpot, Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP.
   b) **Finance Report**
      Report by Paul Corney, Head of ARP.

8. **JOINT COMMITTEE QUORACY**
   Report by Brendan Arnold, Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Director, Fenland District Council.

9. **ARP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**
   Report by Brendan Arnold, Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Director, Fenland District Council.

10. **WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)**
    Report by Adrian Mills, Strategic Manager (Benefits) ARP.

11. **FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)**
    To note any items.

12. **NEXT MEETING**
    To discuss future meeting arrangements and to consider the following suggested dates:
    - Thursday, 30 November 2017
    - Thursday, 14 December 2017
    - Thursday, 15 March 2018
    - Thursday, 22 March 2018
At a Meeting of the

ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday, 28 March 2017 at 10.00 am in the
Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford  IP24 1BT

PRESENT
Mr D Ambrose Smith
Mr C Seaton (Chairman)
Mr M Barnard (Vice-Chairman)
Mr S. Edwards
Mr I Houlder
Mr R Kerry
Mr S H Chapman-Allen (Substitute Member)

In Attendance
Paul Corney - Head of ARP
Christine Marshall - Executive Director Commercialisation (S151 Officer)
Adrian Mills - Strategic Manager (Benefits)
Stuart Philpot - Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP
Jo Andrews - Strategic Manager (Revenues)
Ian Smith - Principal Accountant
Julie Britton - Democratic Services Officer
Rob Bridge - Corporate Director (Fenland)
Jill Korwin - Director (Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury)
Brendan Arnold - Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Director

Opening Remarks

The Chairman announced that Rob Bridge, the Corporate Director of Fenland District Council would be leaving shortly and his replacement Brendan Arnold would be joining the Joint Committee meetings as the new Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Director in April 2017.

The Chairman thanked Rob for his contributions over the years and wished him well for the future.

Christine Marshall, the new Executive Director for Commercialisation & S151 Officer for Breckland Council was welcomed to her first meeting.

8/17 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2017 were agreed.

9/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dimoglou (Breckland Council) and Emma Grima, East Cambridgeshire District Council. Substitutes
in attendance were Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen and Ian Smith respectively.

10/17 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

11/17 DECLARATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None.

12/17 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 5)

(a) Operational Performance

A detailed overview of the Operational Performance Report up to 31 December 2016 was provided.

Benefits performance continued to be meet profiled targets and was on course to achieve year end targets except for Waveney due to Universal Credit issues. The Head of ARP stated that in comparison to the final quarter, Waveney had improved considerably and already had new processes in place which would be to the benefit of all.

DWP plans to introduce expansion of data exchange had been delayed until later in the year. ARP continued to take a lead role in influencing and shaping national procedures regarding DWP working practices for the investigation of Housing Benefit.

As far as revenue was concerned, performance continued to meet targets in all areas with the exception of Non-Domestic Rates collection for Suffolk Coastal, Breckland and Fenland District Councils. The reasons behind the drop in NNDR were due to appeals for Doctors surgeries and other changes in valuations; the Finance Team was aware and had made provision in budgets for this shortfall.

Funding had been secured from Suffolk and Norfolk and County Councils; and negotiations continued with Cambridgeshire County Council; therefore, the further recovery work for this financial year would continue.

The Enforcement Team continued to perform well having collected £4.5m since the Team started of which £3.2m had been in this financial year. The surplus amount was highlighted.

An NNDR revaluation would be taking place from 1 April 2017. All NNDR databases had been updated accordingly. The various changes that had been introduced by Government were highlighted.

Councillor Edwards asked if he could have some updated figures that he could present to his Cabinet meeting.

The Chairman passed on his thanks to the Enforcement Team as they had exceeded expectations.

360,000+ various annual bills had been sent out and the external mailing target had been met. The layout of the Council Tax bill design had been...
simplified to maximise the effectiveness of getting the correct information to the customer and as part of the preparation for channel shift every customer had the ability to sign up and view their Council Tax, Business rates, benefits payments and E-Billing via the ARP website. E-Billing and on-line accounts were already on the increase and the numbers would be brought to the next Joint Committee meeting.

(b) Balanced Scorecard

Members were provided with a detailed overview of the Balance Scorecards for each of the seven partners.

In response to a question as to whether the proposed targets had been agreed, it was noted that the targets had been set by the budget.

The targets for 2017/18 were agreed.

(c) Financial Performance

The Head of ARP informed Members that income was mainly up due to the increase of the Bailiff service (£319k higher than budget) and this was an achieved efficiency that had been reflected in the budget for future years. An additional £48k rechargeable income had been achieved, and this related to a combination of recharging for additional inserts that Councils have requested and other income from providing services.

The employee underspend was due to a combination of vacancies during the first nine months of the year, these posts had now been filled; additional savings had been made relating to pensions as some staff had opted out.

13/17 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 6)

The Strategic Manager (Benefits) provided Members with a detailed overview of the report.

Members were informed that ARP was on track to spend most of the discretionary housing payment grant funded by the DWP.

ARP was working very closely with its customers following the introduction of the new ‘Two Child Limit’ legislation, the details of which were explained.

Social rented sector rent restrictions had been delayed by 1 year to April 2019. ARP would be keeping a close watch on this matter.

The report was otherwise noted.

14/17 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Head of ARP presented the report which concerned the progress to date in respect of the Transformation Programme.

The Transformation Programme had been split into three distinct areas; reduction in avoidable contact and automation of processes (digital), commercial partnership and trading opportunities and organisational vision and development.
All of the challenges relating to ARP over the next few years in relation to organisational vision and development would require a strong and resilient work force that could flex and change with the ever changing demands. A number of elements had already been put in place that would continue to ensure that the ARP Team were skilled and had the opportunity to become multi-skilled.

The Chairman felt that the amount of income generated by the Enforcement Team was excellent.

In response to a question as to where ARP was in terms of promoting its trading arm, the Head of ARP advised that a Business Plan and business cases were being developed to bring to the Joint Committee and the Company Board.

The report was otherwise noted.

15/17 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 8)
None.

16/17 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 9)
The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 20 June at 10.00am were noted. The Chairman and Councillor Ambrose-Smith conveyed their apologies for this meeting.

17/17 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 10)
RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

18/17 RISK BASED VERIFICATION POLICY REVIEW REPORT - MARCH 2017 (AGENDA ITEM 11)
The Strategic Manager (Benefits) presented the report and the key points were highlighted. Members were being asked to approve the continuance of the Risk Based Verification Policy.

It was noted that all information was shared with the external auditors.

RESOLVED that the recommendations as listed in the report be approved.

19/17 PARTNERSHIP WORKING THROUGH SECTION 101 AGREEMENT (AGENDA ITEM 12)
The Head of ARP provided Members with a detailed overview of the report.

The recommendations were highlighted and it was

RESOLVED not to proceed with the proposal.
Benefits & Fraud

Benefits performance

Benefits performance continues to meet profiled targets and is on course to achieve year end targets. Following the introduction of automated drip fed work allocation, ongoing adjustments are being made to equalise performance for all Councils, whilst we manage performance against vacancies.

Fraud and compliance performance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team have been tasked, in accordance with the Business Case approved by Joint Committee, to identify and prevent fraud leading to an increase in Council Tax income in the following areas:

- Local Council Tax Support
- Single Person Discount
- Council Tax & Non Domestic Rates
- Tenancy fraud

Continued funding has been secured from Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to support the review of Single Person Discounts, whilst a business case has been developed for Cambridgeshire to secure funding for this year.

Furthermore, the team are working with Housing Teams and Housing Associations to tackle Right to buy and subletting abuse and is having success in this area.

The table below records the excellent work of the team, on track to exceed targets for the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of financial saving</th>
<th>2017/18 target</th>
<th>Performance 1.4.17-31.7.17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Person Discount fraud</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>188,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Council Tax Support Scheme fraud</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>85,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenancy fraud</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Council Tax and NDR)</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>639,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total financial savings</td>
<td>1,300,000</td>
<td>1,093,142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Strategic Manager (Benefits) continues to participate in a national DWP/LA Housing Benefit Steering Group to have input into shaping and influencing current and proposed operational matters. Current topics include Universal Credit plans, LA financing and data share.

Revenues
Performance continues to meet targets in all areas with the exception of Non-Domestic Rates collection for Waveney District Council and Council Tax collection for Breckland Council. The reason behind the drop in NNDR collection for Waveney District Council is a significant amount of refunds as a result in successful appeals by ratepayers against their Rateable Values, these are often back dated to 1 April 2010. Breckland Council is slightly behind Council Tax collection target but is forecast to be back on target by the end of August.

The funding secured from Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire County Councils has enabled the further recovery work to continue this financial year. Suffolk and Norfolk County Council have agreed to continue this funding and negotiations will continue with Cambridgeshire County Council. The further recovery team have collected £177,148.35 in this financial year. In addition to the monies collected by the further recovery team we also have a further £1,342,554 in secured debt by way of Charging Orders on property owned by the debtor.

The Enforcement Team continue to perform well, having collected £6.6 Million since the team started of which £1.5 Million has been in this financial year. Following a procurement exercise earlier this year we have migrated to a new Enforcement system known as One-Step solutions. This is the system used by most external agencies and should provide a more efficient system for both the office based team and the Enforcement Agents.

Single discount applications continue to be checked by the compliance team in order to prevent discounts being granted incorrectly and avoiding the issue of trying to collect amounts of Council Tax retrospectively. An annual review will also be carried out.

The annual review of Empty Homes is taking place in order to maximise the new homes bonus. The review started in May with enquiry forms being issued to all empty homes across the partnership. Where possible we work with the Housing Teams to encourage the owners of these properties to bring them back into use. We are now following up all unreturned forms with visits in order that the review is complete by the end of September in readiness for the completion of the Council Tax Base return which is used to calculate the authorities New Homes Bonus.

An NNDR revaluation came into effect from 1 April 2017 with an antecedent date of 1 April 2015. Nationally the total rateable value has increased and consequently the multiplier has reduced as the overall effect of a revaluation is neutralised. The multiplier has been confirmed at 47.9p or 46.6p for small businesses compared to the previous financial year of 49.7p and 48.4p respectively.

The following changes have also been made:-

- Small business rates relief has being extended. Ratepayers with only one property will receive 100% relief where their rateable value is up to £12,000 RV and tapered relief up to £15000 RV.
- Ratepayers who have a rateable value below £51,000 will have their bill based on the small multiplier.
- There will also be a transitional relief scheme which will cushion the impact of large rate increases. This will be a self-funding scheme and consequently and properties seeing a large reduction will have a premium applied to their account.
- Mandatory Rural rate relief has also been increased from 50% to 100%.
- Government is funding rate relief of £1500 for local newspaper offices.
- The minimum RV for charging Empty Property Rates has been increased from £2600 to £2900
- Explanatory notes which have previously been sent with the business rates bills can now be published on the internet instead.
In the budget on 8 March 2017 the Chancellor announced further help for small and rural businesses losing small business rates relief as a result of the revaluation, public houses and additional funding for a discretionary relief scheme to help businesses facing the steepest increases. Whilst the Government prescribed the details for the first two of these measures the third required a scheme to be devised and approved by each authority. All of these schemes have now been approved and work is underway to grant the relief on all eligible accounts.

One of the tasks in our Digital transformation programme is to review all correspondence. Working with the Customer Services Forum we have recently reviewed the Council Tax reminder and final notices using behaviour and nudge techniques. We will monitor how effective the new designs are in increasing collection at this stage and review the design where necessary. Attached to this report are samples of the new designs (Appendix 1, 2 and 3).

**Support**

**Digital Transformation and Self Service**

The Anglia Revenues Partnership has now successfully rolled out a new customer self-service facility primarily for the use of all Customer Services staff. From any of the seven partner sites customer service can assist customers, either face to face or over the telephone with setting up their self-serve account, including paperless billing and notifications,

Every customer from any of the ARP partner councils can set up their own self-serve account for paperless Council Tax Bills, Business Rates Bills, Benefits Notifications and landlord notifications via the ARP Website. For each sign up, the postal cost for billing to the customer will be eliminated for bills and notifications and are instead available online. An email with a link to the account sign in area is sent to each customer when bills and notifications are produced. When signed up to paperless billing and notifications, the customer can simply view the document and save electronically or print out at home if they wish.

Landlords are also able to access all payments made direct to them via this facility, with payments information available as soon as the payment file has been produced by the system giving advance notification of payment details. Landlords can also view any correspondence from Housing Benefits, electronically.

As with all online portals, details can be accessed twenty four hours a day, seven days a week and it is also anticipated the use of the online account will reduce the number of customer contacts.

A reporting mechanism measuring paperless take up has been developed and is sent out to all partners’ Customer Services on a monthly basis. This demonstrate the effectiveness of the take up at all sites. At the end of July 2017, across the Anglia Revenues Partnership, 9,549 customers were signed up to paperless Billing and paperless notifications, over 2,000 of which have signed up since March 31st 2017. Work will continue with customer services teams across the partnership to increase the take up,

**External Mailing**

The Anglia Revenues Partnership uses an external Mailing Company, Critiqom Ltd. for the printing, packaging and despatch of 93% of the outgoing mail, both daily and annual billing. This has kept the postage cost to a minimum with automation of the process from the electronic files received by Critiqom from the ARP.
Over the coming months, in preparation for the Annual Billing project for 2018-19 year, the ARP are working closely with Critiqom to move the outgoing post to Mail Mark, using state of the art barcoding technology for Royal Mail. In addition to being able to secure the lowest cost possible, using Mail Mark there is also an ability to track the progress of mail from the point it leaves the printers to the final Royal Mail sorting office before actual delivery.

Anglia Revenues Website

It is now two years since the launch of the new look, primary transactional, website and the Anglia Revenues Partnership are now in the process of refreshing the website. The ARP is currently working on a new set of web pages for Business Rates, using the findings from the University City of London Interaction Lab, who carried out User Experience Reviews of five of the most popular “user journeys” on the ARP website.

The refresh has three stages to consider:

1. Structure – to aim to have a set up for the customer, when seeking information, has a maximum a three clicks to reach the information they are looking for.
2. Language – straight forward understandable language.
3. Helpful links to further useful information, such as Government advice websites.

The Testing of the effectiveness of the website will be using volunteers to carry out specific scenarios on the current website then repeating the scenarios in the new refreshed website. They will then be asked to feedback on the effectiveness, speed and efficiency of each scenario. This will provide a measurement of the improvements achieved by the refresh.
Date of Issue: 22.08.2017

Dear Sir/Madam

It appears we have not received your monthly Council Tax instalment and you now owe £316.54.

Sometimes payments are received late. If you have paid your Council Tax and it is up to date, please ignore this reminder. It may be worth paying a little earlier in future to avoid getting another reminder.

If you haven’t paid your latest instalment, please pay £316.54 within the next 7 days using one of the methods shown over the page. If you do not pay by 01.09.2017 then a final notice will be issued and you will have to pay the rest of this year’s Council Tax in one go.

If you cannot pay what you owe please tell us straight away. There may be help or advice we can offer.

If you have any questions about your bill or this reminder, please contact us using the email address or phone number shown above. Always remember to tell us your account reference when you contact us.

Payment summary 2017/2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instalment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Amount Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£108.54</td>
<td>01.04.2017</td>
<td>£108.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£104.00</td>
<td>01.05.2017</td>
<td>£104.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£104.00</td>
<td>01.06.2017</td>
<td>£104.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the overdue amount above, you also have an amount of £25.30 due on 19.08.2017.

More than 90% of residents pay their Council Tax on time.
Ways to pay your Council Tax

Whichever way you choose to pay us you must tell us your council tax account reference shown on the front of this bill.

More than 70% of people pay their council tax bills by Direct Debit. It is the cheapest and most secure method of making regular payments and the Direct Debit Guarantee protects you in the rare event that there is an error in the payment of your direct debit. Sign up now at www.angliarevenues.gov.uk or call us on 01842 756 567.

We accept debit and credit card payments 365 days of the year. Go to www.angliarevenues.gov.uk/online to pay online anytime, any day; or call 01284 757000 to pay using our 24 hour automated phone payment line. You will need your account reference from the front of this bill and your credit/debit card. There is a small extra charge for credit cards. Sign up now at www.angliarevenues.gov.uk or call us on 01842 756 567.

Internet and telephone banking
If you choose this method to pay you must:
- Tell your bank to make the payment at least 7 days earlier than the due date
- Give your council tax account reference as the payment reference
- Pay St Edmundsbury Borough Council, sort code 30-91-49, Account number 02699783

You can pay by cash at a Paypoint or your local post office. Please use the barcode on the front of this bill to make the payment. Please DO NOT use old payment cards as these are no longer accepted.

If you are thinking of paying by cheque please consider paying by debit card instead. If you do send a cheque, make sure to write your name and address and Council Tax account reference on the back.

Are you behind with your council tax payments?
Help with managing debt is available at the Money Advice Service moneyadviceservice.org.uk or at your local Citizens Advice office citizensadvice.org.uk

Moving home? Change of circumstances? Let us know.
Moving home and people moving into or out of your home are likely to affect your council tax bill and you need to tell us as soon as you can at www.angliarevenues.gov.uk or by telephone 01842 756 567.

What is paperless billing?
Paperless billing lets you manage your Council Tax bills online and cuts down on the paper we send you. Sign up today at www.angliarevenues.gov.uk.

Data Protection and Data Sharing
Your personal data is important to us and we promise to process your personal information for legitimate Council purposes only, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means that we may provide Council Tax data to bodies responsible for auditing and administering public funds for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud. We may also use your data for purposes of electoral registration but this does not mean you will be automatically registered to vote. For more information about how we use your data go to www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk or telephone 01284 763233.

Sent to you by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 1BT
Dear Sir/Madam

It appears this is the second time we have not received your monthly Council Tax payment on time and you now owe £92.00.

Sometimes payments are received late. If you have paid your Council Tax and it is up to date, please ignore this reminder. However, if your payment is late for a third time, we will not send you another reminder and you will not be allowed to continue paying by instalments.

If you have not paid your latest installment, **please pay £92.00 within the next 7 days using one of the methods shown over the page.** If you do not pay by 03.09.2017 then a final notice will be issued and you will have to pay the rest of this year's Council Tax in one go.

If you cannot pay what you owe please tell us straight away. There may be help or advice we can offer.

If you have any questions about your bill or this reminder, please contact us using the email address or phone number shown above. Always remember to tell us your account reference when you contact us.

Payment Summary 2017/2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instalment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Amount Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£46.00</td>
<td>01.07.2017</td>
<td>£46.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£46.00</td>
<td>01.08.2017</td>
<td>£46.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Ways to pay your Council Tax

Whichever way you choose to pay us you must tell us your council tax account reference shown on the front of this bill.

## More than 70% of people pay their council tax bills by Direct Debit.

It is the cheapest and most secure method of making regular payments and the Direct Debit Guarantee protects you in the rare event that there is an error in the payment of your direct debit. Sign up now at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk) or call us on 01842 756 567.

We accept debit and credit card payments 365 days of the year.

Go to [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk) to pay online anytime, any day; or call 01284 757000 to pay using our 24 hour automated phone payment line. You will need your account reference from the front of this bill and your credit/debit card.

There is a small extra charge for credit cards.

Calls are charged at UK National & Local rates.

## Internet and telephone banking

If you choose this method to pay you must:

- Tell your bank to make the payment at least 7 days earlier than the due date.
- Give your council tax account reference as the payment reference.
- Pay St Edmundsbury Borough Council, sort code 30-91-49, Account number 02699783.

You can pay by cash at a Paypoint or your local post office.

Please use the barcode on the front of this bill to make the payment.

Please DO NOT use old payment cards as these are no longer accepted.

If you are thinking of paying by cheque please consider paying by debit card instead.

If you do send a cheque, make sure to write your name and address and Council Tax account reference on the back.

## Are you behind with your council tax payments?

Help with managing debt is available at the Money Advice Service [moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://moneyadviceservice.org.uk) or at your local Citizens Advice office [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk).

Moving home? Change of circumstances? Let us know.

Moving home and people moving into or out of your home are likely to affect your council tax bill and you need to tell us as soon as you can at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01842 756 567.

## What is paperless billing?

Paperless billing lets you manage your Council Tax bills online and cuts down on the paper we send you. Sign up today at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk).

## Data Protection and Data Sharing

Your personal data is important to us and we promise to process your personal information for legitimate Council purposes only, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means that we may provide Council Tax data to bodies responsible for auditing and administering public funds for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud. We may also use your data for purposes of electoral registration but this does not mean you will be automatically registered to vote. For more information about how we use your data go to [www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk](http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk) or telephone 01284 763233.

Sent to you by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council

Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 1BT
Dear Sir/Madam

It appears we have not received your monthly Council Tax payment on time and you now owe £1112.00.

Sometimes payments are received late. If you have paid your Council Tax and there is nothing left to pay for the year, please ignore this reminder.

If you have not yet paid all your Council Tax, please pay £1112.00 within the next 7 days using one of the methods shown over the page. If you do not pay by 03.09.2017, we will send you a court summons and you will have to pay £75.00 in costs as well.

If you cannot pay what you owe you need to tell us immediately. You may also want to seek advice from organisations like Citizens Advice or the Money Advice Service.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact us using the email address or call us on the phone number shown above. Always remember to tell us your account reference when you contact us.
### Ways to pay your Council Tax

Whichever way you choose to pay us you must tell us your council tax account reference shown on the front of this bill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>More than 70% of people pay their council tax bills by Direct Debit.</strong></td>
<td>It is the cheapest and most secure method of making regular payments and the Direct Debit Guarantee protects you in the rare event that there is an error in the payment of your direct debit. Sign up now at <a href="http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk">www.angliarevenues.gov.uk</a> or call us on 01842 756 567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We accept debit and credit card payments 365 days of the year</td>
<td>Go to <a href="http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk">www.angliarevenues.gov.uk</a>/online to pay online anytime, any day; or call 01284 757000 to pay using our 24 hour automated phone payment line. You will need your account reference from the front of this bill and your credit/debit card. There is a small extra charge for credit cards. Calls are charged at UK National &amp; Local rates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Internet and telephone banking | If you choose this method to pay you must:  
- Tell your bank to make the payment at least 7 days earlier than the due date  
- Give your council tax account reference as the payment reference  
- Pay St Edmundsbury Borough Council, sort code 30-91-49, Account number 02699783 |
| You can pay by cash at a Paypoint or your local post office | Please use the barcode on the front of this bill to make the payment. Please DO NOT use old payment cards as these are no longer accepted. |
| If you are thinking of paying by cheque please consider paying by debit card instead. | If you do send a cheque, make sure to write your name and address and Council Tax account reference on the back. |
| Are you behind with your council tax payments? | Help with managing debt is available at the Money Advice Service [moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://moneyadviceservice.org.uk) or at your local Citizens Advice office [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk) |
| Moving home? Change of circumstances? Let us know. | Moving home and people moving into or out of your home are likely to affect your council tax bill and you need to tell us as soon as you can at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk) or by telephoning 01842 756 567 |
| What is paperless billing? | Paperless billing lets you manage your Council Tax bills online and cuts down on the paper we send you. Sign up today at [www.angliarevenues.gov.uk](http://www.angliarevenues.gov.uk) |

### Data Protection and Data Sharing

Your personal data is important to us and we promise to process your personal information for legitimate Council purposes only, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. This means that we may provide Council Tax data to bodies responsible for auditing and administering public funds for the purpose of preventing and detecting fraud. We may also use your data for purposes of electoral registration but this does not mean you will be automatically registered to vote. For more information about how we use your data go to [www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk](http://www.stedmundsbury.gov.uk) or telephone 01284 763233.

Sent to you by Anglia Revenues Partnership on behalf of St Edmundsbury Borough Council  
Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 1BT
## Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee
### Forecast Full Year Financial Performance as at 31st August 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approved Budget 2017/18</th>
<th>Forecast Actuals 2017/18</th>
<th>Forecast Variance Over/(Under)</th>
<th>Variance %</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee Related Costs</td>
<td>£8,083,838</td>
<td>£8,185,204</td>
<td>£101,366</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premises Related Costs</td>
<td>£268,645</td>
<td>£281,268</td>
<td>£12,623</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport Related Costs</td>
<td>£129,513</td>
<td>£129,588</td>
<td>£75</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies &amp; Services</td>
<td>£1,629,634</td>
<td>£1,608,158</td>
<td>(21,476)</td>
<td>(1.32)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
<td>£620,675</td>
<td>£618,684</td>
<td>(1,991)</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>(1,520,841)</td>
<td>(1,556,553)</td>
<td>(35,712)</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL PARTNERSHIP COSTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>£9,211,464</strong></td>
<td><strong>£9,266,349</strong></td>
<td><strong>£54,885</strong></td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Variance Notes

1. The employee over spend is due to the remaining efficiency target of £91,128 which is expected to be achieved in year by income generation.
2. This variance relates to above budget rate costs to date due to increase in rateable values and is expected to be a true variance at the end of the year.
3. Supplies & Services are lower than budget due to postage costs reducing due to use of external mailer.
4. Income is up due to shared costs for officer with Havebury Housing.
5. Of the original efficiency target of £531,824, £91,128 is still to be achieved.
### Transformation funding - committed expenditure as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approved Budget 2017/18</th>
<th>Forecast Actuals 2017/18</th>
<th>Forecast Variance Over/(Under)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>7,575</td>
<td>7,575</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitel Join Up</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDMS</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational - Develop agile organisation</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial - Accredited trainer</td>
<td>5,409</td>
<td>5,409</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital - RTI staff</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robotics</td>
<td>36,485</td>
<td>36,485</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>151,469</strong></td>
<td><strong>151,469</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unallocated</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>76,988</td>
<td>76,988</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>228,457</strong></td>
<td><strong>228,457</strong></td>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The committed transformation funding is £151,469 as at 30th June 2017. It is expected that the budget will be spent by the end of the year. If all of the identified expenditure goes through in 2017/18 there will be £76,988 remaining for future projects, however, it is likely that this will be spent on projects this year.

The Robotics Project is funded from new burdens circular S7 and the value shown in the above table is the amount required from the Transformation Reserve.

### Efficiency Target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Efficiency Target</th>
<th>Approved Budget 2017/18</th>
<th>Approved Budget 2018/19</th>
<th>Approved Budget 2019/20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target</strong></td>
<td>(531,824)</td>
<td>(1,017,397)</td>
<td>(1,017,397)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Efficiencies made:**

- **Postage costs**
  - 20,960
  - 19,250
  - 15,670
- **County Council Fraud funding (Income)**
  - 105,000
  - 105,000
  - 105,000
- **Enforcement Service**
  - 234,736
  - 215,693
  - 202,642
- **Consultancy work for Norwich City Council**
  - 80,000
  - 80,000
  - 80,000

**Total Efficiencies made to date**

- 440,696
- 419,943
- 403,312

**Total Efficiency Target to achieve**

- (91,128)
- (597,454)
- (614,085)

The above table shows the actual Efficiencies identified to date against the original annual budget targets.
ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

Report of The Operational Improvement Board
To: ARP Joint Committee, 26th September 2017
Subject: Joint Committee Quoracy
Purpose: To recommend changes to the number of members required at Joint Committee to achieve a quorate meeting

Recommendation(s):

- That the number of members required for Joint Committee meetings to be quorate is reduced to five out of the seven members

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 ARP started its operation as a Joint Committee of two authorities, Breckland and Forest Heath district councils. This was in 2003. The Joint Committee was established with two members from each council, making a total committee of four. Each council had two substitutes.

1.1.2 In 2007 East Cambridgeshire District council joined ARP, initially through a contracting arrangement, but subsequently as full members of the Joint Committee. This took the committee to three authorities with six members.

1.1.3 In 2011 St Edmundsbury Borough council joined ARP as a full member, followed by Fenland, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney district councils in 2014. This took the total membership to seven authorities, represented by 14 members.

1.1.4 At the ARP Joint Committee on 13 March 2014, members tasked the Operational Improvement Board to look at the implications of the partnership expanding in terms of the size of the Joint Committee. A report was taken to 30 June 2014 Joint Committee (agenda item 11) setting out the options, which were:

i. Move to a single member per authority immediately

ii. Move to a single member per authority if and when Waveney and Suffolk Coastal become full members

iii. Do nothing and continue with two members per authority.

1.1.5 At the meeting, discussion centred around whether it was the right time to change the number of members on the Joint Committee, in light of the imminent joining of the partnership by Suffolk Coastal and Waveney, and also the unresolved issue of the future structure of ARP (which was part of the wider strategic review work). It was agreed to continue with two members per authority until the decision on the review of ARP had been made.

1.1.6 At its meeting on 19 March 2015 (agenda item 14) the committee agreed that it would continue operating under the existing Joint Committee model and that the partnership would be closed to any new full partners for the time being, but would look to trading possibilities, and using the partnership’s strong reputation to secure future business
opportunities to the benefit of the existing seven partners, using a ‘reinvigorated’ Anglia Revenues Partnership trading company.

1.1.7 It was recognised that the Joint Committee had worked very effectively since the inception of ARP. However, as the partnership expanded, both in terms of membership and activities, and in light of the potentially significant changes relating to the implementation of Universal Credit, it was understood that the committee will need to become more nimble, be able to meet at shorter notice, and be able to respond more quickly to events. Latterly if a joint committee meeting had to be rearranged it had proved extremely difficult to get a date which was suitable for everyone.

1.1.8 There was significant evidence that a board of ten or more creates coordination and communication issues which had a negative effect on performance. The Joint Committee itself realised that we had passed the optimum number of members and asked officers to review the position for a second time.

1.1.9 At its meeting on the 17th September 2015 the Joint Committee agree to move to a single member representing each Council on the Joint Committee. It was also agreed that two substitutes would also be nominated by each Council.

2.0 Joint Committee current and possible arrangements

2.1 Current arrangements.

2.1.1 The recommendation agreed by the Joint Committee on the 26th September 2015 was as follows:

“RECOMMEND to the seven Councils that the Joint Committee moved to a single member and Two Substitutes per authority, with the option for one of the substitutes to attend and take part in debate (but not vote).”

2.1.2 Meetings have been held with one member per Authority from December 2015 and initially the arrangement work extremely well however, more recently, on two occasions, meetings have had to be cancelled because a member and nominated substitutes were unable to attend.

2.1.3 The Joint Committee meetings arranged for December 2016 was rearranged and the June 2017 meeting was cancelled with members receiving very little notice that the Committee could not proceed because it would not be quorate.

2.2 Future arrangements

2.2.1 The Operational Improvement Board have discussed the need to avoid cancelling ARP Joint Committees and felt that it would be useful to consider how we can ensure that future meetings are quorate.

2.2.2 There are very many circumstances that can lead to members being unable to attend meetings and where these circumstances arise with little or no warning substitutes may also be unable to attend.

2.2.3 Where there are critical decisions or opportunities that require Joint Committee approval, there may be detrimental consequences if the meetings are delayed or cancelled.

2.3 Options

2.3.1 The Joint Committee could continue with the current arrangement where there may be delays in decision making that may lead to opportunities being lost.

2.3.2 Substitutes could be asked to keep the Joint Committee dates in their calendars so that they will be available even at short notice.
2.3.3 Members could agree to reduce the number of members from Councils needed for a Joint Committee to be quorate

3.0 Reasons for recommendations

4.1 Where opportunities arise or critical decisions must be made in respect of service provision, the ARP could need to make decisions quickly

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Risk

5.1.1 If the decision making process is not certain then, income could be lost or, service delivery could reduce for customers.

5.1.2 If the number of members needed for Joint Committee to be quorate is reduced then decisions may be made against the wishes of members not present.

5.2 Financial

5.2.1 If the decision making process is not quick enough then we could see loss of income or, penalties in respect of statutory requirements.

5.3 Legal

If members approve the recommendation then each council would separately have to approve the change to the Anglia Revenues Partnership agreement.

5.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Background papers:- None

Lead Contact Officer
Name/Post: Brendan Arnold – Chief Finance Officer and Corporate Director (Fenland)
Email: BrendanArnold@fenland.gov.uk
Report of ARP Operational Improvement Board

To: ARP Joint Committee, 26th September 2017

Subject: Strategic Priorities

Purpose: To recommend an update to the ARP strategic priorities

Recommendation(s):

- That the Joint Committee approve the Strategic Priorities of ARP detailed in Appendix 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Joint Committee commissioned a strategic review of ARP in 2012. That review addressed a number of questions in regard to structure and support and agreed the following key success factors for the partnership moving forward:
- Reduced net cost
- Resilience and Stability
- Flexibility
- High Quality Service.

1.1.2 Since then, the public sector landscape has seen significant change and the Operational Improvement Board (OIB) has progressed the action agreed under the Transformation Programme to review the Vision for ARP. This paper sets out refreshed and expanded strategic priorities for the partnership, building on the work done in 2012/3.

2.0 Matters of interest

2.1 ARP’s context has changed significantly since it was formed as a partnership of 7 local authorities. The new issues it and partner authorities are dealing with include:
- Changes in how local government is financed (business rates retention, New Homes Bonus, localisation of council tax support)
- Welfare reform changes, including Housing Benefit and Universal Credit
- New Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
- Suffolk system-wide working (Transformation Challenge Award)
- Health and social care integration (including the role of prevention)
- Importance of data and intelligence (e.g. forecasting economic growth to inform financial forecasting)
- One Public Estate
- Administrative funding pressures

2.2 The advent of business rates retention makes the maximising of business rates revenue even more important. The changes to the benefits system could mean that more people face financial hardship, particularly seen through increased levels of homelessness that in turn create demand on Council services. This paper proposes updated strategic principles for ARP, reflecting much of the work that ARP is already undertaking.
2.3 As part of the Transformation Programme, OIB members have reviewed and refreshed the Vision, (Appendix One). OIB believe these statements capture the key issues and opportunities for ARP moving forward and provide a clear framework for activity in the future. They also create a clear direction for the activities of ARP Trading Ltd.

3.0 Options

3.1 To agree the new strategic priorities at Appendix 1

3.2 To change the priorities at Appendix 1

3.3 To do nothing

4.0 Reasons for recommendations

4.1 The priorities at Appendix 1 provide the future strategic direction and focus of the ARP which provides a platform for the delivery of services and efficiencies.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Risk

That the future direction of the ARP lacks clarity and opportunities are not taken

5.2 Financial

None

5.3 Legal

None

5.4 Equality and Diversity

Not applicable.

Background papers: - None

Lead Contact Officer
Name/Post: Jill Korwin – Director West Suffolk District Councils
Email: jill.korwin@westsuffolk.gov.uk
1. **ARP’s core purpose**

At the heart of ARP’s role is the maximising of council tax and business rates income streams on behalf of partner councils.

**This means that ARP needs to**
- a) Understand and communicate the wider impact of revenues and benefits changes and proposals on businesses and families and communities;
- b) Proactively use data and intelligence to:
  - I. **Further improve collection rates** (by collating behavioural information; modelling impact of develop and schemes);
  - II. **Grow councils’ tax bases** (by making best use of all data sources available to identify properties that are not yet paying business rates/change of uses);
  - III. **Inform and support Council’s investment decisions**;
- c) **Explore the most effective way to provide analysis** – what is best delivered by ARP and what is best handed over to individual Councils;
- d) **Keep abreast of innovation** across the country that could be beneficial to ARP Partners, our businesses and families and communities; and
- e) **Provide best advice to businesses on business rates** to facilitate their growth, working with economic development teams.

2. **ARP’s relationships**

**ARP acts as a trusted adviser on Council Tax, Business Rates and benefits issues for partner councils** (having regard to its core purpose).

**This means that ARP needs to be proactive in offering policy, analytical and forecasting advice, over and above standard reports.** This should include key local taxation and benefit related issues (e.g. Budgets, Autumn Statements, legislative changes, policy changes, scheme review dates, reliefs) and the production of a forward plan of such changes and reviews. It is important that such advice is provided in the context of revenues and benefits being a tool in the families and communities; economic growth; and council self-sufficiency piece. ARP should also be sensitive to local requirements, and specific democratic timetables. This insight could be used by councils to inform decision-making and policy development.

To support this, **ARP will continue to maximise its national influence**, making the most of lobbying opportunities with central government.
3. **ARP’s standard of service to partner Councils and operating costs**

ARP’s prime focus is a level of service to its Councils that means partner Councils are high performing in regard to revenue. ARP ensures its operating costs are kept within budget and uses opportunities to earn income to balance ARP’s budget and deliver a return to partner Councils.

**This means that:**

a) **ARP works with OIB to develop its performance dashboard** to show what it delivers for partners; and  
b) **ARP is clear as to the level of income it requires to balance its budget in the next 5 years** and takes opportunities to earn income, developing existing services where the core performance of ARP is not impacted.

4. **ARP’s customer service standards of service**

ARP’s business and resident customers should experience a good level of service in accordance with agreed service standards.

**This means that:**

a) **ARP works with OIB to develop its performance dashboard** in respect of customer metrics; and  
b) **ARP continues to develop its digital offer** to improve customer experience and service.

5. **ARP’s commercial positioning**

ARP continues to expand its commercial operations through a controlled risk assured and risk assessed approach. Options for delivery include extending the partnership, trading agreements or the provision of specialist services through delegated agreements as well as delivering services through ARP Trading Ltd.

**This means that:**

a) **ARP continues to promote its specialist services** (enforcement agency; revenues and benefits consultancy and management support) to other local authorities where this provides a positive benefit to partner authorities;  
b) **ARP develops its existing offer** and produces clear business cases for new opportunities; and  
c) **ARP should not lose focus on its core business** and commercial opportunities should serve to increase ARP’s resilience.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Welfare Reform was introduced by the previous Government as part of wider fiscal measures to reduce deficits, intended to encourage work whilst reducing increasing welfare expenditure.

2.0 Matters of interest

2.1 Universal Credit

2.1.1 All Councils have been live with new claims from single unemployed customers since April 2016.

2.1.2 In respect of Universal Credit for these customers the numbers affected continues to be lower than those forecast, whilst Council’s receive funding to provide services in partnership with the DWP.

2.1.3 Since May 2016 the DWP embarked upon a programme to expand Universal Credit in a controlled manner to the full, digital, Universal Credit service. Amongst the partner Councils, only Waveney has been live with the full service since May 2016.

2.1.4 On 16 November 2016 the DWP announced the roll out schedule for all Jobcentres and Councils for the period April 2017 to September 2018. The full Universal Credit service will be open to all new claims from all working age claimant groups. This will also include customers currently receiving existing Benefits or Tax Credits who have a change of circumstances that triggers a new claim to Universal Credit. The following table states the DWP’s current planning assumptions for ARP Councils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council</th>
<th>Roll out</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Edmundsbury</td>
<td>October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waveney (Beccles)</td>
<td>October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breckland</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Cambridgeshire</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenland</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk Coastal</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest Heath</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation(s):

- That the report is noted
2.1.5 Waveney has not been alone in experiencing difficulties with the Full Service; customer assistance taking longer than predicted, IT problems, delays awarding payments and alternative payment arrangements to landlords are causing issues with rent collection for landlords.

2.1.6 These matters have been raised locally and through the UC/LA Steering group I have brought these issues to the attention of the UC Programme; furthermore representations have been made to the DWP Secretary of State leading to a meeting earlier this year between the Waveney Leader, local MP and myself with the UC Minister at Lowestoft Jobcentre.

2.1.7 ARP is working with Customer Services, Housing Options teams, DWP and stakeholders to plan for the roll out timetable; partnership working is at an advanced stage for St Edmundsbury’s UC expansion October 2017.

2.1.8 The programme to migrate existing Housing Benefit (and other DWP Benefit and Tax Credits) cases, has been delayed by twelve months and so will now commence in July 2019, with a corresponding delayed completion date of March 2022.

2.1.9 DWP have also reviewed the position for Pensioners, stating this will reviewed during the next Parliament and will not start until after March 2022, and only when all Working Age cases have migrated to Universal Credit.

2.2 Discretionary Housing Payment

2.2.1 Spend continues to be within DWP grant and is forecast to be closer to, but within the grant. The main area of expenditure continues to be to assist customers with rent shortfalls, in particular due to restrictions on Housing Benefit rent levels. The scheme is promoted through our stakeholder contacts.

2.2.2 Discretionary Housing Payment grant is funded by DWP, designed to help customers remain in their homes or to move to affordable and sustainable accommodation.

2.3 Benefit Cap

2.3.1 DWP introduced the reduced Benefit Cap on the 7th November 2016; the maximum family income before the Benefit Cap applies reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 (£13,400 for single adults with no children).

2.3.2 The Benefit Service continues to work with colleagues in Customer Service and Housing Options teams to seek to avoid homelessness and the cost of temporary housing.

2.3.3 DWP have provided New Burdens funding to assist Councils with extra administrative costs and have increased Discretionary Housing Payment grants to help customers with the reduction – it should be noted the increase does not cover all the reductions.

2.4 Two Child Limit

2.4.1 From April 2017 the DWP have introduced legislation to restrict new claims from families with a third child to the two child rate; there are exceptions, for example multiple births.

2.4.2 New claims for Universal Credit where an applicant has more than two children will be redirected to legacy Benefits i.e. Housing Benefit.
2.5 **Social rented sector rent restrictions**

2.5.1 Local Housing Allowance- (LHA) rates in social housing – the implementation of a Cap on Housing Benefit and LHA rates in the social rented sector has been delayed by 1 year, to April 2019.

2.5.2 The cap will apply to all supported housing tenancies from April 2019, with Government providing additional funding to Local Authorities, so that they can meet the additional costs of supported housing in their area.

2.5.3 For general needs, the cap will now apply from April 2019 for all tenants on Universal Credit, and to Housing Benefit tenants whose tenancies began or were renewed since April 2016. For information, LHA rates determine the level of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit for private sector rents.

3.0 **Options**

3.1 The report is for information purposes

4.0 **Reasons for recommendations**

4.1 The report is for information only

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 **Risk**

The report is for information only

5.2 **Financial**

The report is for information only

5.3 **Legal**

The report is for information only

5.4 **Equality and Diversity**

Not applicable.

Background papers: - None

**Lead Contact Officer**
Name/Post: Adrian Mills – Strategic Manager (Benefits)
Email: Adrian.mills@angliarevenues.gov.uk