

OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER

March 2016



Finance & Resources - David Skinner

CE_F01 Lack of resources to be able to spend the appropriate time analysing the Councils 3rd party expenditure

Category: Financial	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Harden	Tolerance: Treating
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Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	4 Severe	12 Red	1 Very Unlikely	4 Severe	4 Green

Consequences	Current Controls	Assurance
<p>The procurement service will remain reactive in its approach and will have limited ability to focus on those areas of procurement which account for the majority of the Council's 3rd party expenditure.</p> <p>It will also expose the Council to potential breaches of the Public Contracts Regulations due to the failure to aggregate the value of contracts for the same supplies or services.</p> <p>There will be an increased likelihood that the Council will incur expenditure that is not under contract. It will reduce the Council's ability to achieve savings through procurement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spikes Cavell spend analysis undertaken - Realignment of the Service will increase resource capacity -Stradia procurement consultants have been appointed to provide additional support for the procurement of the Total Asset Mangement Contract, the afo 	<p>The commissioning of Stradia and V4 services has released a DBC officer to analyse third party expenditure. It has also enabled the third party expenditure to be 'pro-classed' in Agresso which will allow the spend to be analysed in real time. This has effectively removed the risk.</p>

Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

Based on the assurance and the low level of risk following the implementation of the controls sets out I propose that this risk be reviewed in 2016/17.

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CE_F02 Lack of resources to be able to design and implement a Category Management approach to the Councils 3rd party expenditure

Category: Financial	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Harden	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
4 Very Likely	3 High	12 Red	1 Very Unlikely	3 High	3 Green
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
The consequences are the same as for CE_F01 above.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Realignment of Service will increase the resource capacity. - The appointment of Stradia procurement consultants to provide additional support for the major procurement contracts has increased the capacity of the in house team to deliver category mana 		<p>The use of V4 Services has enabled the Council to design and implement a category management approach.</p> <p>Once the toolkit is introduced and used consistently category management will have become embedded within the Council.</p>	
Sign Off and Comments					
Sign Off Complete					
Based on the assurance and the low level of risk following the implementation of the controls sets out I propose that this risk be reviewed in 2016/17.					

CE_R08 The CSGC contractor focuses attention on meeting speed of response targets and not quality of service

Category: Reputational	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Harden	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
2 Unlikely	3 High	6 Amber	3 Likely	3 High	9 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	

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Calls are not resolved at first point of contact. Insufficient time is dedicated to callers to ensure that call has been fully resolved in a satisfactory manner. Reputational damage to the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Six monthly customer satisfaction survey - Quarterly quality assessment by Group Managers - Monthly meetings with back officers to assess service delivery and monthly operational Board meetings to escalate issues. - monitoring of complaints and perfo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly performance reports - Minutes of Operational Board meetings - Quarterly Partnership Board meetings <p>All of the above provide assurances that the CSGC contractor maintains focus on achieving the response targets and quality of service.</p>
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Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

Based on the assurance and the low level of risk following the implementation of the controls sets out I propose that this risk be reviewed in 2016/17.

CE_R09 During the transformation of the CSCG there is a high level of requirement for DBC staff resource

Category: Financial	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Harden	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
4 Very Likely	3 High	12 Red	3 Likely	3 High	9 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
The Customer Relationship Management and Channel Shift projects cannot be implemented in the timescales resulting in reduced value from the contract or increased resource impact on DBC to maintain the pace.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Dacorum project set up with involvement from Northgate to support work to implement channel shift and development of customer insight. - CRM project board overseeing delivery of CRM. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Terms of Reference of Digital Dacorum. - Digital Dacorum project streams include channel shift and web functionality and development, digital inclusion - Project plan for CRM implemented. 	

Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

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Based on the assurance and the low level of risk following the implementation of the controls sets out I propose that this risk be reviewed in 2016/17.

CE_R10 The introduction of inform 360 and automated self-service options via telephone reduces access and/or satisfaction with contact

Category: Reputational	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Harden	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	4 Severe	12 Red	3 Likely	3 High	9 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
Increase in customer dissatisfaction with the Council. Potential reduction in contact with customers and missed opportunities for citizen insight		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly meetings and quarterly audits with GMs to assess quality of customer contacts - Monitoring of customer comments and complaints - Review of scripts by Service Information Coordinators 		Minutes of Operational and Partnership Board meetings - Digital Dacorum project streams include channel shift and web functionality and development, digital inclusion	
Sign Off and Comments					
Sign Off Complete					
This risk will be reviewed in 2016/17.					

CE_R11 Integration of CRM systems cannot be accomplished due to technical difficulties or high cost

Category: Infrastructure	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Neil Harden	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	4 Severe	12 Red	3 Likely	3 High	9 Amber

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Consequences	Current Controls	Assurance
The CRM project cannot be completed resulting in failure of the CSCG project and reduced impact of Citizen Insight and Evidence Based Decision Making initiatives. Resource intensive manual operations introduced as work around solutions	- Integration requirements identified in the CRM PID. Integrations assessed and taken forwards on the basis of need, impact and costs CSU Knowledge hub created with up to date online manuals to support development of CRM and training of staff.	CRM Project Initiation Document and project plan. Delivery requirements identified by workshops CRM project board oversight
Sign Off and Comments		
Sign Off Complete		
The implementation of CRM will be reviewed in 2016/17. This will risk will be superseded by the delivery of that project with associated risks and controls.		

FR_F02 Delays to Capital programme

Category:	Corporate Priority:	Risk Owner:	Portfolio Holder:	Tolerance:	
Financial	Dacorum Delivers	David Skinner	CLlr Graeme Elliot	Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	2 Medium	6 Amber	5	2 Medium	10 Red
Consequences	Current Controls	Assurance			
Many of the major projects within the Capital Programme are fundamental to delivery of the Council's corporate objectives. Therefore significant delays can impact on the achievement of the corporate plan. Financial decision-making is negatively affected if the timing of projects in the Capital Programme is wrong. This can result in lost investment income or increased	The controls that have been implemented to mitigate this risk target the robustness of capital bids both at the time they are submitted and throughout the delivery phase of the projects. In particular, scrutiny is focussed on those elements of the capital bid that experience indicates are the primary cause of delays to capital projects. These include	The 2013/14 Final Outturn showed that the slippage of capital projects was around 30% against the Original Budget approved by Members in February 2013. This is an improvement on previous years where slippage against Original Budget has been around 60%. As at the end of Quarter 2 2014/15 (the mid-point of the year), the capital forecast on the General Fund is			

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<p>interest costs as the Council moves closer to the point where it will need to borrow.</p> <p>The estimated delivery date is considered as part of the decision to allocate capital funds to one project over another. If estimated timings are not accurate, there is a risk that the allocation of funds is not being decided on appropriately.</p> <p>If inaccurate project management is tolerated, there is a risk that the culture of financial management across the Council will be negatively affected which will have consequences for wider financial decision-making.</p> <p>Not delivering major projects within the timeframe to which it has committed itself exposes the Council to reputational risk.</p>	<p>¿?¿ How robust are the assumptions on the estimated duration of the procurement exercise?</p> <p>¿?¿ How realistic is the estimated time taken for contractors to deliver the works?</p> <p>¿?¿ How realistic are the assumptions on officer availability to manage the project on time?</p> <p>The rationale behind this approach is that an increased culture of challenge will lead to more realistic programming of future capital projects, and therefore a reduced likelihood of slippage.</p> <p>The following controls are in place with a view to developing a culture of scrutiny and challenge for officers to improve the accuracy of future bids:</p> <p>¿?¿ Capital Strategy Steering Group (CSSG) comprising senior officers from across the Council required to challenge new bids for robustness ahead of recommendation to Members;</p> <p>¿?¿ Monthly meetings take place between accountants and budget holders to monitor progress against original timeframes and costs;</p>	<p>broadly on budget, with no material slippage reported at this stage. Slippage on the HRA capital programme is forecast to be well below 5%.</p> <p>The budget position as at Quarter 3 was reported to Cabinet in February 2015. The report showed that forecast net slippage on the General Fund Capital Programme was low at around 3%. Forecast slippage on the HRA Capital Programme has, however, increased significantly since the Quarter 2 forecast, at around 25%.</p> <p>The Provisional Outturn was reported to Cabinet in May 2015. The report showed that slippage against the full year budget on the General Fund Capital Programme was around 10%. Outturn on the HRA shows slippage of around 24%. These are addressed in more detail in the sign-off notes, below.</p> <p>2014/15 Confirmed slippage into 2015/16 was £10.1m or 10% of the total approved capital programme according to the 2014/15 approved accounts.</p> <p>The Provisional Outturn was reported to Cabinet in May 2016. The report showed that slippage against the full year budget on the General Fund Capital Programme was around 28%. Outturn on the HRA shows slippage of around 5%. These are addressed in more detail in the sign-off notes, below.</p>
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	<p>Ã?Ã? Corporate Management Team (CMT) receive a monthly report on the progress of capital projects against anticipated timeframes;</p> <p>Ã?Ã? Performance Group comprising Chief Officers and cabinet Members receive a monthly report on the progress of current projects;</p> <p>Ã?Ã? Reports go to Cabinet and all Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSC) every quarter. These reports have been redesigned to focus on the more immediate risk of in-year delivery, highlighting higher risk areas to invite closer scrutiny from Members.</p>	
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Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

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The Provisional Outturn position report presented to this Committee details the projected capital outturn.

The General Fund net position for 2015/16 is forecasting 28% slippage and 7% underspend. This is an increase in slippage from 2014/15 (10%).

HRA Slippage of 5% is forecast based around 3 schemes.

Significant slippage has occurred across a number of large regeneration projects (c£3.8m) and the fleet replacement programme (c£1.7m). The regeneration projects are as result of inaccurate initial profiling of cashflows and the fleet replacement programme is still being scoped out.

The underspends (c£2m) were a result of specific contingency items and a Cabinet decision in October 2015.

On the basis of this analysis I have maintained the residual probability score to 5 as the risk of significant slippage has been crystallised.

Additional actions to address these delays within the capital programme have been included within the 2016/17 budget setting process. The additional measures included scrutiny of delivery schedules, quality assurance of estimates and project challenge were part of the process of officer assurance, the work of the Budget Review Group and the work by members through the Joint Scrutiny process.

An additional action plan has been drafted for consideration to examine escalation and trigger points.

FR_F03 Variances in General Fund revenue budget

Category: Financial	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Graeme Elliot	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	2 Medium	6 Amber	2 Unlikely	2 Medium	4 Green
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
Accurate, well-controlled budgeting relates directly to the achievement of the Dacorum Delivers corporate objective, and indirectly, through the financial decision-making process, to the achievement of all of the Council's corporate objectives.		The following controls aim to reduce the probability of there being a variance in the General Fund Revenue Budget by ensuring that there is strong challenge put to Budget Holders on the robustness of their assumptions, from a range of audiences.		The Council's budgetary controls are assessed each year by Internal Audit. In January 2013, the Council received a 'Full' level of assurance. A further Internal Audit on the Council's budgeting process, undertaken in September 2014, resulted in a	

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Inaccurate budgeting negatively affects the Council's ability to make evidence-based decisions. A significant underspend at year-end could indicate that funds have been needlessly diverted from a competing priority. A significant overspend at year-end could result in reserves being used to support lower priority objectives. Both of these could result in reputational damage for the Council.

Failure to address the causes of inaccurate budgeting could negatively impact the Council's culture of financial management, which in turn increases the risk of poor financial decision-making.

It is intended that these controls will increase the opportunity for flawed assumptions to be exposed as soon as possible, as well as inculcating a stronger culture of financial management across the Council leading to continuous improvement in the setting of accurate budgets.

The annual budget-setting process consists of an ongoing scrutiny process in which senior officers from across the Council, together with the Financial Services team, challenge the following year's budget bids from Group Managers.

This scrutiny process is augmented by the Budget Review Group (BRG), consisting of Chief Officer Group and representatives from the Portfolio Holder group, which provides early Member-level challenge.

There are two opportunities for OSCs to scrutinise the budget proposals and directly question the relevant officers before the budget report is finalised and considered by Cabinet and Council.

Once approved, in-year budget performance is managed through monthly meetings between accountants and budget holders, which underpin monthly reports to CMT and quarterly reports to Cabinet and OSCs.

The Council's Financial Regulations provide a guide to all budget-holders and are subject to annual review.

'Substantial' level of assurance. Despite this being a lower mark than the exceptional one achieved in the previous audit, it should be noted that it remains a good result.

The recommendations of the Internal Auditor that led to the reduced marking were not systemic in nature, and they do not pose a material threat to the overall control environment of the budget-setting process. Efforts have, however, been redoubled, and the causes of the recommendations have been addressed.

An Internal Audit report on the Council's 'Main Accounting' function was presented to Audit Committee in February 2015, in which a 'Full' level of assurance was awarded. This audit covered a range of areas including integrity of transactions, manual adjustments, and year-end procedures. All of these areas contribute to the accuracy of the in-year monitoring reports that the Finance team is able to produce. Consequently, Members can draw assurance from this audit opinion that the chances of this risk crystallising are reduced by the robust financial management procedures the Council has in place.

Final confirmed outturn for 2014/15 was within £48k of budget (after contributions to and from reserves) as reported to Audit committee and approved as part of the audited accounts and was consistent with the budget monitoring over the preceding year.

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		<p>An Internal Audit report on the Council's 'Budgetary Control' function was presented to Audit Committee in April 2016, in which a 'Full' level of assurance was awarded. This audit covered a range of areas including budget setting; budget upload; budget monitoring and savings realization; budget alterations and virements; and management information. All of these areas contribute to the accuracy of the in-year monitoring reports that the Finance team is able to produce. Consequently, Members can draw assurance from this audit opinion that the chances of this risk crystallising are reduced by the robust financial management procedures the Council has in place.</p> <p>The 2015/16 audit of Core Financial Systems was also reported to have either Full or Substantial levels of assurance.</p>
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Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

Fin03 is GREEN and is currently projecting a favourable variance (£354k) or 1.8% of the controllable budget. The continued work in examining forecast overspends has achieved positive results.

FR_I02 Failure to optimise income generated by commercial assets

Category: Infrastructure	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Graeme Elliot	Tolerance: Treating
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Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	3 High	9 Amber	2 Unlikely	3 High	6 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
<p>The council has a significant portfolio of commercially let properties, which provides one of the council's largest sources of income.</p> <p>Council officers must attempt to maximise income from these assets whilst avoiding the risk of vacant properties and increasing bad debts, which could arise if rents are set too high, and would jeopardise the council's achievement of its corporate objectives of Regeneration and Dacorum Delivers.</p> <p>The continuing recession and the difficulties it brings for local businesses increases the likelihood of this risk crystallising.</p>		<p>The following controls aim to mitigate the risk of under-performance of the Council's commercial assets by maintaining good communication links between relevant Council services, and by regularly monitoring performance against targets (see KPIs CP01 and CP02) to ensure that underperformance is identified and addressed as quickly as possible. The existence of these controls has led to the 'Inherent Probability' of this risk occurring reducing from a score of 3, which is shown in the Residual Probability (i.e. after controls implemented) being a 1.</p> <p>Estates officers responsible for negotiating rent reviews hold monthly meetings with the Debtors team to track current bad debtors. This increases their understanding of the economic pressures businesses are facing, and how it can impact on council income.</p> <p>There are currently Corvu performance targets to maintain the number of voids (empty properties) below 5%, and to keep the rent arrears below 10%. Failure to meet either of these targets would prompt further investigation.</p>		<p>The year-end performance figures for 2013/14 demonstrate that occupation rates are above target (98.8% against a target of 95%), and that the level of arrears is also better than target (at 7.32% against a target of 9.5%).</p> <p>The year-end performance figures for 2014/15 demonstrate an occupation rate of 98.3% against a target of 95%. The level of arrears is at 6.5% against a target of 9.5%.</p> <p>Quarter 1 performance for 2015/16 are above target and demonstrate an occupation rate of 98.66 versus a target of 95%. The level of arrears has increased slightly to 7.3% versus a target of 9%.</p> <p>Q2 occupation levels are holding up well at 98.49% and arrears are being held within acceptable levels at 8.1%. Q3 occupation levels are marginally down at 97.99% and arrears have improved significantly by 1.7% to 6.4%.</p> <p>Q4 occupation rates have increased slightly to 98.49% and arrears have reduced from 6.45 down to 5%.</p>	
Sign Off and Comments					

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Sign Off Complete

The team have worked hard to maximise the returns whilst ensuring there are high occupancy rates of commercial property. The transfer of properties from the HRA has significantly increased the rental by c£228k (net of repairs costs). Improved methods of full cost recovery have also contributed c£120k.

FR_I04 Failure to maintain an effective business continuity plan for all relevant service areas

Category: Infrastructure	Corporate Priority: Safe and Clean Environment	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Graeme Elliot	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	4 Severe	12 Red	2 Unlikely	4 Severe	8 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
Disruption caused by service failure leading to hardship for individuals, potential loss of business and significant reputational damage		<p>These controls are implemented to ensure that the Council is adequately prepared and able to continue providing key services in the event of an emergency situation. Through this control, the probability of the Council being unable to respond to such an emergency is reduced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual review process. - Corporate business continuity process and procedures set out in emergency response toolkit. 			

Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

A review of business continuity procedures is being arranged and will be factored into service planning.

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FR_R01 Council Tax and Business Rates collections rates drop below budget

Category: Reputational	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Graeme Elliot	Tolerance: Treating	
Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
3 Likely	2 Medium	6 Amber	3 Likely	2 Medium	6 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
<p>Distribution of collection fund to other preceptors is based on the budgeted collection level, if collection falls short this could lead to a cashflow issue within the Council's finances. The fund distribution is balanced after the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Reputational risk if collection rate falls significantly – this could also impact on future years' council tax base leading to increased budget pressures.</p> <p>Financial risk in relation to business rate retention scheme if rates collection falls below government set baseline.</p>		<p>The following controls aim to identify as quickly as possible if the Council is falling behind on its collection rates target for the year. If a problem is identified, the Council is then able to invoke a range of options to minimise the ongoing negative impact on collection.</p> <p>Profiled monthly collection rates are monitored monthly - see KPIs RBF04 and RBF05. Reasons for variances are then investigated in order to address problems quickly as possible.</p> <p>Direct debit payment is recommended for all customers – a pre-filled instruction is sent to all non-DD payers with their annual bill or a first bill for a new taxpayer. The direct debit method reduce the risk of under-collection because it eliminates the risk of a payer forgetting to make a monthly payment.</p> <p>There is an active programme for taking formal recovery action against non payers.</p>		<p>The full year Council Tax Collection Rate for 2013/14 (Performance Indicator RBF05) was 97.7% against a budget of 97.5%.</p> <p>The full year Business Rates collection rate in 2014/15(Performance Indicator RBF04) was under budget at 98.1% against a target of 99%.</p> <p>Q1 Council Tax collection rates is 30.2% versus a target of 30.1%</p> <p>Q1 Business Rates collection is 30.2% versus a target of 24.8%</p> <p>Q2 Business rates collection is 52.6% achieved versus a target of 51.5%.</p> <p>Council tax collection is on target at 58%.</p> <p>Q3 Business rates collection is 77.2% and is running at 0.5% ahead of target.</p> <p>Council tax collection is at 86.2% which is 0.2% off target but is a 0.1% improvement from the same period</p>	

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		<p>last year.</p> <p>Internal Audit have performed a routine assessment of the control environment within Council Tax collection and have given an assurance of Full/Substantial . This is a good result and has highlighted a number of minor improvements that can be made to the timeliness of some work. This does however provide assurance to members that the fundamental design and operation of the control processes are robust.</p> <p>Members can gain additional assurance from the routine Internal Audit assessment of Business Rates as being at Full/Substantial levels.</p> <p>Council tax collection for 2015/16 was 98% which is 0.3% improvement on 2014/15. Business rate collection was 98.3% narrowly missing the target of 99% but improving on the 2014/15 performance by 0.2%.</p>
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Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

The team continue to improve year on year collection rates and this approach coupled with the assurance statements from internal audit will allow them to continue to develop the approaches required to deliver the high levels of collection required.

FR_R02 Delays and errors in the processing of Benefits claims

Category: Reputational	Corporate Priority: Dacorum Delivers	Risk Owner: David Skinner	Portfolio Holder: Cllr Graeme Elliot	Tolerance: Treating
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Inherent Probability	Inherent Impact	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Probability	Residual Impact	Residual Risk Score
4 Very Likely	3 High	12 Red	3 Likely	2 Medium	6 Amber
Consequences		Current Controls		Assurance	
<p>This risk links to the corporate objective Dacorum Delivers, focussing on an efficient and effective council.</p> <p>Customers could suffer personal hardship resulting from delays or errors in the processing of claims.</p> <p>Significant reputational risk associated with high-profile errors.</p> <p>Staff time spent on addressing unnecessary errors leads to duplication of effort and is an inefficient use of resources.</p> <p>Government subsidy for housing benefit expenditure is based on external audit certification of the claim made. There is financial risk if errors on cases are identified during their testing.</p> <p>Communications with claimants needs to be well written and jargon-free in order to reduce the risk of repeat queries which puts pressure on limited staff resources.</p>		<p>The controls in place aim to mitigate this risk by closely monitoring performance to assist with effective decision-making around resource allocation. This is a heavily process driven service area and close monitoring also helps to identify bottle necks in the process which need to be improved to optimise performance. By subjecting the process to this regular in-depth scrutiny the Service is able to reduce the probability of the risk crystallising, hence the reduction between the Inherent Risk score (4) and the Residual Risk score (2) after the controls have been taken into account.</p> <p>Quality checking and individual performance management is in place. These mean that each officer has targets for their personal productivity and accuracy, and information from quality checks is fed back in order to sustain improvement.</p> <p>Average time taken for processing new claims and changes in circumstances forms part of monthly monitoring.</p> <p>Processes are in place to expedite cases where the customer is vulnerable or facing eviction. These processes start when a case is identified within benefits,</p>		<p>The successful and continuously improving management of this risk can be seen in the improved performance of KPI RBF01a - Average Time Taken to Decide a New Benefit Claim.</p> <p>Performance for the full year 14/15 was 22.9 days, which was within the target of 23 days for the first time.</p> <p>This represents an improvement of 4.5 days over the 27.4 days average in 2014/15, and an improvement of 9.9 days against the 12/13 result of 32.8 days.</p> <p>It should be noted that these improvements have been achieved without additional resource. It has purely been the result of improved process design and increased efficiency.</p> <p>Average time taken to decide a new claim for Housing benefit is 22.7 days versus a target of 23. This is the first quarter since the same period last year where the target has been met.</p> <p>Average time taken to decide a change event in Housing Benefit is at 12.3 days versus a target of 13.0.</p> <p>Q2 performance has been very good in relation to new</p>	

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	<p>or by customer services, homelessness, housing etc.</p> <p>Monthly meetings are held between senior officers within Finance & Resources to monitor detailed performance levels at each stage of the claims process.</p> <p>This enables intermediary targets to be set for discrete elements of the process, which in turn enables the more effective monitoring which has resulted in significantly improved performance over the last 6 months.</p>	<p>claims. The team have achieved 19.6 days versus a target of 23 days.</p> <p>Q3 performance has been very good. New claims are now being processed within 17.4 days versus a target of 23 days. This is an improvement of 9.2 days on the same period last year and 2.2 days improvement on the previous quarter.</p> <p>The average time taken to decide on a change event in Housing benefit is 10.8 days versus a target of 13 days. This is an improvement of 5.6 days on the same period last year and an improvement of 1.5 days on the previous quarter in this year.</p> <p>Q4 performance has been very good. New claims are now being processed within 18.4 days versus a target of 23 days. This is an improvement of 6.2 days on the same period last year.</p> <p>The average time taken to decide on a change event in Housing benefit is 4.9 days versus a target of 13 days. This is an improvement of 2.2 days on the same period last year and an improvement of 5.9 days on the previous quarter in this year. This reflects the inclusion of calculations relating to annual benefit uprating and rent changes but is still better than last year when similar changes occurred.</p>
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Sign Off and Comments

Sign Off Complete

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The Q4 performance is great news and significant performance benefits are beginning to see sustained levels of improvement. The year on year improvement in performance is good work that demonstrates the benefits of clearly focusing on improvements and clear performance management. The introduction of the Risk Based Verification (RBV) procedures will help to embed this performance level moving forward. The risk score is being maintained as though there is a positive trend in performance there is still some variability in underlying indicators. This is being monitored and once this has stabilised the score will be reviewed. Performance targets have been tightened for 2016/17.