

arp | the **anglia** revenues **partnership**

Performance Report

October 2009

CONTENTS

1. FOREWORD	3
2. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS	4
3. PROJECTS	5
4. STAFFING CHANGES	5
5. COMPLAINTS	5
6. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT	5

1. Foreword

Breckland Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council & Forest Heath District Council work together to provide their Revenues and Benefits services through the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP). This partnership was the first of its kind, being in operation since 2003.

Because of this history is both nationally & internationally renowned & has won many accolades such as Beacon Status, Local Government efficiency & innovation awards. We have also hosted a number of successful open days where other organisations can come & see the ARP experience.

ARP has provided both significant improvements in service delivery & annual financial savings in excess of £1,000,000 per annum, including at this time of recession.

Through the partnership the authorities provide consistently high performance with high customer focus for those who use our service and for every current and future partner with whom we work. Rigorous processes produce the highest standards of performance and regular monitoring of results ensures that continuous improvements are achieved.

ARP's primary focus is service delivery within the Revenues & Benefits arena but because of the partnership's unique position it is also in demand for consultancy, training & resilience services to other Local Authorities, private companies & external agencies.

The Partnership seeks to grow by providing high standards of service across a broader partnership base, whilst improving the income of the Partnership and thus reducing the overall cost of service provision to the Partner Authorities.

In 2006 a trading arm was created to enable a full range of services offered as part of a procurement process and as a result of the high demand for our services. This company ARPT Ltd offers a range of services to Local Government and it's website can be accessed by the following URL link. <http://www.arptrading.co.uk>

Questions relating to this document should be directed to:

Rod Urquhart
Operations Manager
Anglia Revenues Partnership
Tel 01842 756437

rod.urquhart@angliarevenues.gov.uk

or

Sharon Jones
Strategic Partnership Manager
Anglia Revenues Partnership
Tel 01842 756463

sharon.jones@angliarevenues.gov.uk

2. Key Achievements

This month's key achievements include.

Cost Reduction

- Having procured new suppliers for confidential waste disposal & water cooler providers savings have been found that will be realised during 2010/11.
- A resilience service is being provided to St Edmundsbury Borough Council. This will result in additional income being generated by the Partnership.

Help for Businesses

- As you will see from our performance chart we have surpassed our service plan target for the % of eligible businesses claiming Small Business Rate Relief. The Annual Target for all three authorities was 90%.

Help for Customers

The following events not only help our customers but also add to our evidence for the presentation of KLOEs

- Officers of ARP attended two Money fair events in Watton (Wayland Partnership) & Swaffham to promote the benefits service & benefit take up.
- Officers of the Partnership also attended an East Anglian "Homeless / Workless" conference in Norwich. This meeting's aims were to enable homeless people to find work & claim the benefits they are entitled to.
- Officers of the Partnership also attended a liaison meeting with Jobcentre Plus at Ipswich to discuss & review working practices on the new "In and Out of Work Scheme".
- We also attended a Landlord Forum in October.

Increasing Revenue

- At the last Joint Committee meeting it was agreed that the Partnership would give an update on progress with regard to the pursuit of Council Tax debtors that were refusing to pay by serving Charging Orders or Bankruptcy proceedings. A summary of the charging order cases per authority and the debt value is shown below.
- Breckland Council – 7 orders have been granted for a total debt of £25,262 with a further 6 orders being sought with a debt value of £18,366.
- East Cambs District Council – 15 orders have been granted for a total debt of £79,787.
- Forest Heath District Council – 7 orders have been granted for a total debt of £25,825 with a further 7 orders being sought with a debt value of £4,722.

In terms of Bankruptcy cases the Partnership has undertaken proceedings on 15 cases with a debt value of £85,069. To date we have already had a number of debtors agreeing to pay in full or by arrangement.

There was a request that the partnership should undertake some joint publicity on this and our Income manager is pursuing this with the authorities' PR teams.

3. Projects

The Partnership is currently working on a number of key projects such as

- ARP Website Redesign – Go Live date December 2009
- East Cambs Self Service - Go Live date December 2009
- East Cambs Payments Conversion - Go Live date December 2009
- Business Rates Revaluation - Go Live date April 2010
- End of Year Preparation - Go Live date March 2010

4. Staffing Changes

October was a significant month for the Partnership in terms of staffing with Steve Knights leaving & recruitment to vacancies of 3 new Council Tax officers who started their training in September and 4 new Housing Benefit Officers joining the Partnership in December. These new staff filled vacant posts and did not add to the establishment.

5. Complaints

The Partnership received 1 complaint in respect of Council Tax on 26/10/2009 for Breckland Council. This complaint has been dealt with. We have also received 1 complaint for Council Tax for East Cambs, this case is being reviewed. There was 1 complaint for Forest Heath about collection of Council Tax, received via a Councillor.

6. Performance Measurement

The primary monthly measures of performance shown in this report are the National & Local Performance Indicators. An annual target is set within the Partnership's annual Service Plan that is to be achieved by the end of March each year. A monthly profiled target is estimated to give a meaningful monthly measure of progress towards these targets.

Since its inception we have reported on NI180, "Changes in Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit entitlements within the year", and awaited guidance as this was a figure that was difficult to use as an indication of how the service is performing, in fact the DWP have had several changes in thought about this and the audit commission do not report on NI180 targets or advise whether the aim is for a high number or low number of changes.

This is because there are two schools of thought –

- 1) Is it better to find errors provided by the claimant and correct them, or
- 2) Is it better to prevent errors entering the system by adequate checking before payment and by regular reviews.

Because this indicator is confusing and adds no value it is no longer reported.

Colour coding

If performance is on target against the target this is highlighted in Green

If performance is slightly below target it is highlighted in Amber

Performance significantly underachieving is highlighted in Red.

October Targets & Statistics

Breckland Council							
NI	Description	2007/08	2008/09	Annual	Profile YTD	Actual YTD	Status
181	Time taken to process Housing / Council Tax Benefit new claims & change events	New	7.41	9.5	9.5	9.46	Green
LPI	Description	2007/08	2008/09	Annual	Profile YTD	Actual YTD	Status
BEN1	Cost of Service per Benefit Claimant	New	£8.83	£9.27	£9.27	£9.27	Green
BEN2	Benefit Take up	New	10456	11056	10806	11085	Green
BEN3	Accuracy of processing	99.00%	100.0%	99.30%	99.30%	100.0%	Green
CTAX1	Collection of Council Tax	98.50%	98.30%	98.50%	65.71%	66.56%	Green
CTAX2	% of Payers paying by Direct Debit	66.20%	73.71%	75.00%	72.00%	75.21%	Green
CTAX3	Cost of Service per Council Tax dwelling	New	£4.93	£5.18	£5.18	£5.18	Green
NDR1	Collection of Business Rates	99.50%	99.00%	98.00%	69.00%	71.07%	Green
NDR2	% of Eligible Businesses claiming Small Business Rate Relief	68.00%	95.30%	90.00%	90.00%	97.10%	Green
NDR3	Cost of Service per Business Rate hereditament	New	-£13.91	-£13.21	-£13.21	-£13.21	Green
OPAY1	Total Recovered Overpayments as a % of Overpayments identified during the year	71.00%	73.76%	65.00%	65.00%	67.33%	Green
OPAY2	LA Error Overpayments as a % of Overpayments raised	New	New	0.54%	0.54%	0.24%	Green

Arrears Monitoring - % Reduction of last year's Arrears

Area	Amount of Arrears @ 31 st Mar	Amount of Arrears @ today's date	% Reduction
Council Tax	£1,356,282	£867,712	36.02%
Bus Rates	£188,368	£96,398	48.83%

Arrears Monitoring - % Reduction of all Arrears

Area	Amount of Arrears @ 31 st Mar	Amount of Arrears @ today's date	% Reduction
Council Tax	£3,543,056	£2,753,589	22.28%
Bus Rates	£318,443	£191,166	39.97%

East Cambs District Council							
NI	Description	2007/08	2008/09	Annual	Profile YTD	Actual YTD	Status
181	Time taken to process Housing / Council Tax Benefit new claims & change events	New	New	9.5	9.5	8.08	Green
LPI	Description	2007/08	2008/09	Annual	Profile YTD	Actual YTD	Status
BEN1	Cost of Service per Benefit Claimant	New	£8.83	£9.27	£9.27	£9.27	Green
BEN2	Benefit Take up	New	4957	5227	5155	5205	Green
BEN3	Accuracy of processing	99.00%	100.0%	99.30%	99.30%	100.0%	Green
CTAX1	Collection of Council Tax	98.50%	99.00%	98.70%	68.93%	69.16%	Green
CTAX2	% of Payers paying by Direct Debit	66.20%	70.15%	75.00%	72.00%	70.83%	Green
CTAX3	Cost of Service per Council Tax dwelling	New	£4.93	£5.18	£5.18	£5.18	Green
NDR1	Collection of Business Rates	99.50%	99.00%	98.00%	67.90%	69.88%	Green
NDR2	% of Eligible Businesses claiming Small Business Rate Relief	68.00%	89.00%	90.00%	90.00%	92.70%	Green
NDR3	Cost of Service per Business Rate hereditament	New	-£13.91	-£13.21	-£13.21	-£13.21	Green
OPAY1	Total Recovered Overpayments as a % of Overpayments identified during the year	71.00%	70.77%	65.00%	65.00%	99.15%	Green
OPAY2	LA Error Overpayments as a % of Overpayments raised	New	New	0.54%	0.54%	0.40%	Green

Arrears Monitoring - % Reduction of last year's Arrears

Area	Amount of Arrears @ 31 st Mar	Amount of Arrears @ today's date	% Reduction
Council Tax	£664,218	£436,715	34.25%
Bus Rates	£127,206	£77,641	38.96%

Arrears Monitoring - % Reduction of all Arrears

Area	Amount of Arrears @ 31 st Mar	Amount of Arrears @ today's date	% Reduction
Council Tax	£1,898,603	£1,513,529	20.28%
Bus Rates	£180,272	£124,472	30.95%

Forest Heath District Council							
NI	Description	2007/08	2008/09	Annual	Profile YTD	Actual YTD	Status
181	Time taken to process Housing / Council Tax Benefit new claims & change events	New	New	9.5	9.5	9.06	Green
LPI	Description	2007/08	2008/09	Annual	Profile YTD	Actual YTD	Status
BEN1	Cost of Service per Benefit Claimant	New	£8.83	£9.27	£9.27	£9.27	Green
BEN2	Benefit Take up	New	3953	4193	4093	4391	Green
BEN3	Accuracy of processing	99.0%	100.0%	99.30%	99.30%	100.0%	Green
CTAX1	Collection of Council Tax	98.20%	98.00%	98.30%	66.96%	66.23%	Amber
CTAX2	% of Payers paying by Direct Debit	66.90%	68.82%	75.00%	72.00%	69.74%	Amber
CTAX3	Cost of Service per Council Tax dwelling	New	£4.93	£5.18	£5.18	£5.18	Green
NDR1	Collection of Business Rates	99.30%	99.00%	98.00%	67.90%	69.55%	Green
NDR2	% of Eligible Businesses claiming Small Business Rate Relief	67.80%	94.80%	90.00%	90.00%	94.80%	Green
NDR3	Cost of Service per Business Rate hereditament	New	-£13.91	-£13.21	-£13.21	-£13.21	Green
OPAY1	Total Recovered Overpayments as a % of Overpayments identified during the year	64.60%	70.71%	65.00%	65.00%	80.19%	Green
OPAY2	LA Error Overpayments as a % of Overpayments raised	New	New	0.54%	0.54%	0.32%	Green

Arrears Monitoring - % Reduction of last year's Arrears

Area	Amount of Arrears @ 31 st Mar	Amount of Arrears @ today's date	% Reduction
Council Tax	£675,145	£434,520	35.64%
Bus Rates	£170,879	£72,647	57.49%

Arrears Monitoring - % Reduction of all Arrears

Area	Amount of Arrears @ 31 st Mar	Amount of Arrears @ today's date	% Reduction
Council Tax	£1,727,164	£1,278,491	25.98%
Bus Rates	£287,738	£129,906	54.85%

Key Notes

1. Whilst the Council collection rate is at Amber this is because since April 2009 there has been a large increase in collectable Council Tax due to 323 new properties have been brought into the Council Tax List & circa 400 previously USAF exempt properties now being chargeable.

2. The profile of the collection target will need to be adjusted and agreed. Council Tax payers who are having difficulty paying their council tax over 10 months have negotiated to pay over 12 months so more money will be collected in February and March 2010 than anticipated when compiling the profile at the start of the financial year.
3. Whilst the total number of Direct Debit payers has increased from 13634 payers to 13852 payers (218 new DD Payers) it is less than the increase in properties / changes in exempt cases as stated in 1 above.