



Joint Committee Performance Report

December 2022 Q3



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Anglia
Revenues Partnership

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All Partner Councils Combined



Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£ 59,956,790	£ 126,388,945	£ 162,192,287	£ -	●
Target	£ 61,017,227	£ 125,337,447	£ 164,827,052	£ 230,705,106	●
2021/22	£ 51,853,578	£ 112,789,537	£ 152,973,800	£ 211,763,576	●
			Year End Target	£230,705,106	●

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£149,681,569	£287,091,491	£381,275,872	£ -	●
Target	£146,538,087	£288,604,156	£381,819,311	£ 503,394,099	●
2021/22	£93,140,084	£272,346,866	£362,214,778	£485,207,215	●
			Year End Target	£503,394,099	●

Number of Electronic Forms Received					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	56,688	77,347	91,130	0	●
2021/22	9,121	32,059	46,509	76,378	●
			Year End Target	76378	●

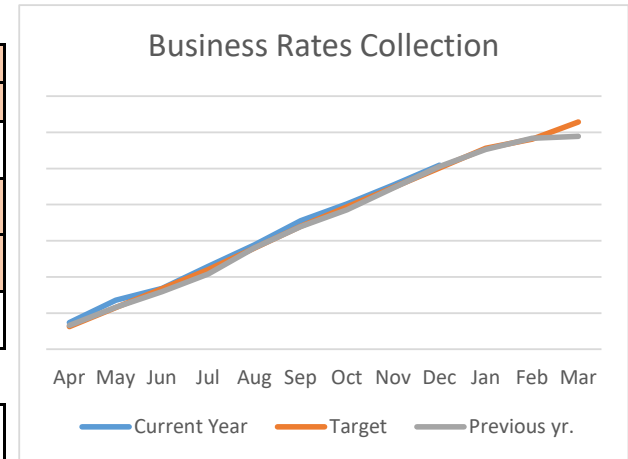
Fraud and Compliance	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Yr Target
Single Person Discount Fraud	£512,630	£880,583	£1,148,144	£ -	£500,000
Local Council Tax Support	£66,134	£122,134	£168,677	£ -	£150,000
Tenancy Fraud	£3,240	£189,240	£282,240	£ -	£400,000
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£110,418	£650,391	£796,044	£ -	£250,000
Fraud Identified	£692,422	£1,842,349	£2,395,105	£ -	£1,300,000

Performance Information December 2022

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2022/23	£ 8,392,011	£ 17,755,633	£ 25,449,325	£ -		●
Target	£ 8,366,400	£ 16,981,701	£ 25,073,515	£ 31,425,071		
Refunds	£ 1,263,666	£ 1,571,225	£ 2,487,300	£ -		
2021/22	£ 7,948,881	£ 16,972,674	£ 25,281,050	£ 29,440,830		●

Year End Target	£ 31,425,071	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

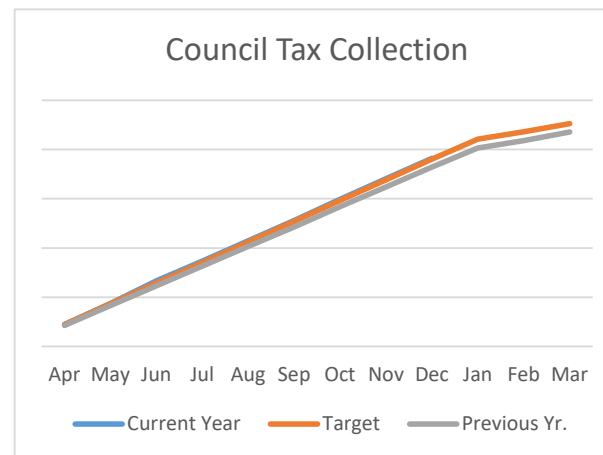
Narrative

Collection is above target at the end of Quarter 3. Preparations are underway for the next financial year and Revaluation.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£ 26,680,055	£ 51,256,995	£ 76,440,286	£ -	●
Target	£ 25,792,865	£ 50,822,745	£ 76,063,240	£ 90,541,484	
Refunds	£ 275,093	£ 698,649	£ 1,028,238	£ -	
2021/22	£ 24,672,337	£ 48,614,835	£ 72,809,733	£ 87,143,136	●

Year End Target	£90,541,484	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

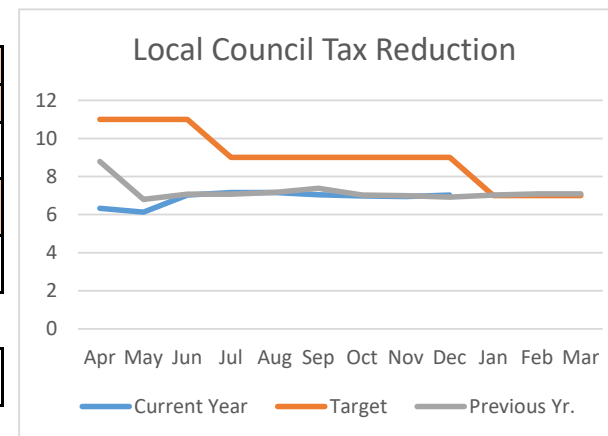
Collection remains above target.

Further Recovery has collected in £80,557 to date in 2022/23.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	7.03	7.05	7.03	-	●
Target	11	9	9.00	7	
2021/22	7.08	7.38	6.92	7.09	●

Year End Target	7	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average year to date number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

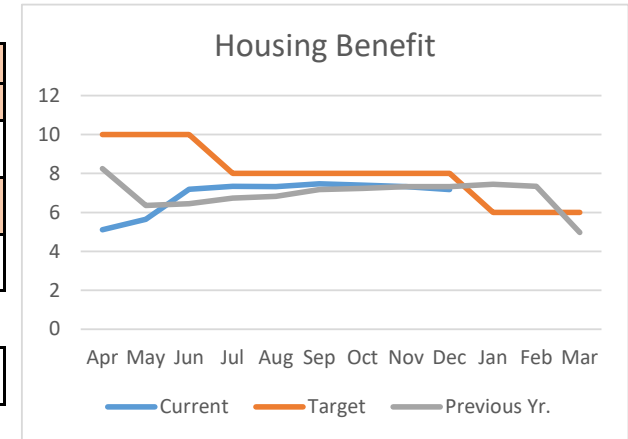
Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	7.19	7.47	7.17	-	●
Target	10	8	8	6	
2021/22	6.45	7.18	6.92	4.97	●

Year End Target	6	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be 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 and Non Domestic Rates.

The team continue to proactively seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

The team are also forging closer working relationships with a number of service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error.

A close working relationship with both Planning Enforcement has resulted in a number of positive outcomes.

More recent discussions with the extended Housing Team has resulted in positive moves and greater planned collaboration

The team continue to work closely with County in the management of the Fraud Hub in Norfolk. This is an attempt to match data sets across County to increase Council Tax and Business Rate income. Funding from Norfolk county continues to support Single Person Discount Reviews. This includes further funding for the roll out of the NFI Premium data matching service in 2023/2024. The team continue to work with both the Covid Grants Team and NNDR in post assurance business rates grants and further investigation and enquiries where required.

Strong performance continues in the identification of Fraud as shown below.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£110,292	£183,574	£227,184	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£8,019	£27,692	£39,571	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£93,000	£93,000	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£49,676	£122,536	£164,563	£0
Fraud Identified	£167,987	£426,801	£524,318	£0



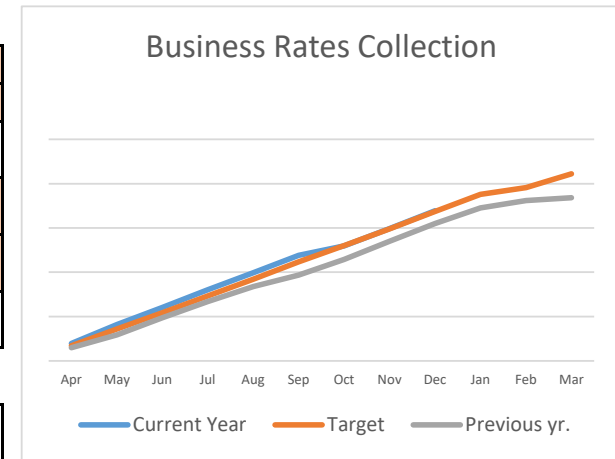
Performance Information December 2022



Business Rates

Business Rates Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£ 6,032,224	£ 11,905,740	£ 16,939,915	£ -	●
Target	£ 5,442,041	£ 11,182,310	£ 16,852,357	£ 21,106,088	
Refunds	£ 155,238	£ 233,226	£ 1,477,529	£ -	
2021/22	£ 4,854,955	£ 9,670,643	£ 15,508,986	£ 18,410,306	●

Full Year Target	£21,106,088	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

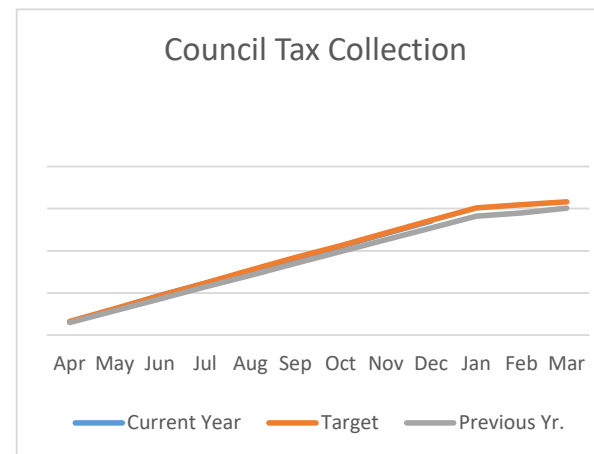
Collection remains above target at the end of Quarter 3.



Council Tax

Council Tax Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2022/23	£ 18,778,113	£ 36,286,983	£ 54,114,832	£ -	●	
Target	£ 18,654,999	£ 36,898,955	£ 54,459,949	£ 63,237,284		
Refunds	£ 207,917	£ 534,043	£ 813,502	£ -		
2021/22	£ 17,191,094	£ 34,009,954	£ 50,890,485	£ 60,238,404	●	

Year End Target	£ 63,237,284	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

Narrative

Collection is on target, within tolerance of 1% at the end of Quarter 3 and is being monitored. Further Recovery has collected £43,292 to date in 2022/23.

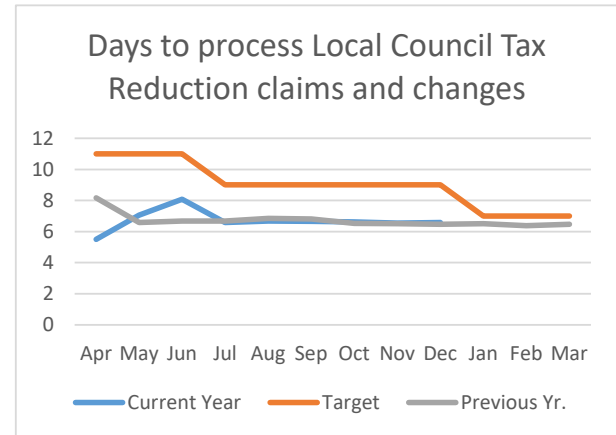


Local Council Tax Reduction



Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	8.08	6.66	6.58	0.00	●
Target	11.00	9.00	9.00	7.00	
2021/22	6.68	6.82	8.00	6.47	●

Year End Target	7	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

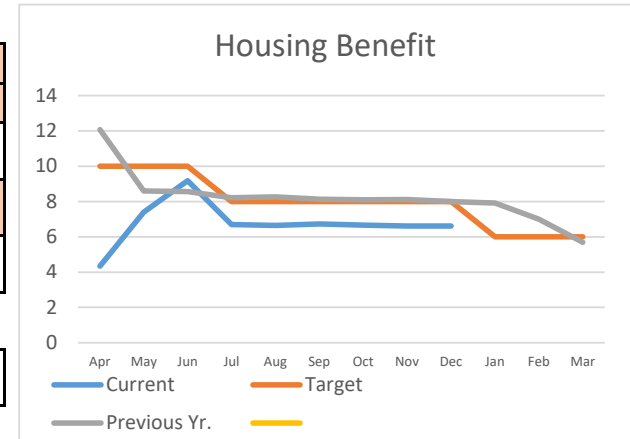


Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	9.18	6.73	6.61	0.00	●
Target	10.00	8.00	8.00	6.00	
2021/22	8.57	8.13	8.00	5.69	●

Year End Target	6	●
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Description
 This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative
 This indicator has been met for this period.



Fraud and Compliance



Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be 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 and Non Domestic Rates.

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes.

The team are working with the largest Social Housing provider in the authority to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

There has been some recent progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and East Camb's DC and Fenland DC approving the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. This would align the Fraud and Compliance work currently being carried out for other partners of the Anglia Revenues Partnership as indicated in the fraud savings on the quarterly performance report. This work has again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. County would fund 2 posts for 3 years when agreement finalised. Discussions continue with the County Council to progress this initiative.

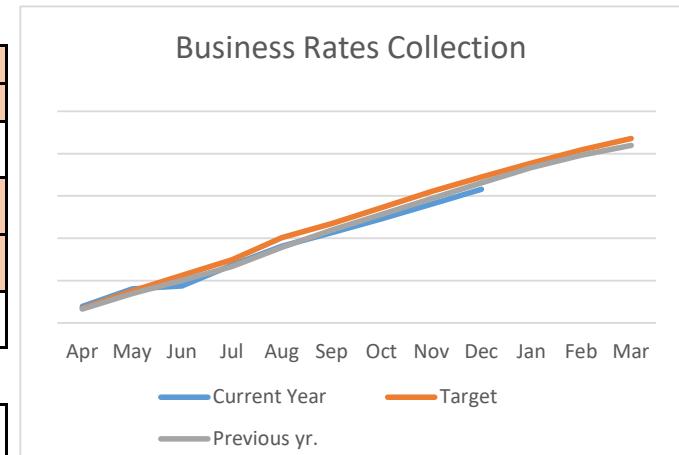
Strong performance continues in the identification of Fraud as shown below.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£10,662	£37,769	£63,269	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£4,787	£18,448	£28,028	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£93,000	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£21,568	£324,698	£324,698	£0
Fraud Identified	£37,016	£380,914	£508,995	£0

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2022/23	£ 17,431,378	£ 42,658,428	£ 63,154,466	£ -		●
Target	£ 22,476,089	£ 46,942,143	£ 68,913,905	£ 87,137,390		
Refunds	£ 6,764,556	£ 8,281,071	£ 11,505,407	£ -		
2021/22	£ 20,107,177	£ 43,843,831	£ 66,117,817	£ 83,886,513		●

Year End Target	87,137,390	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

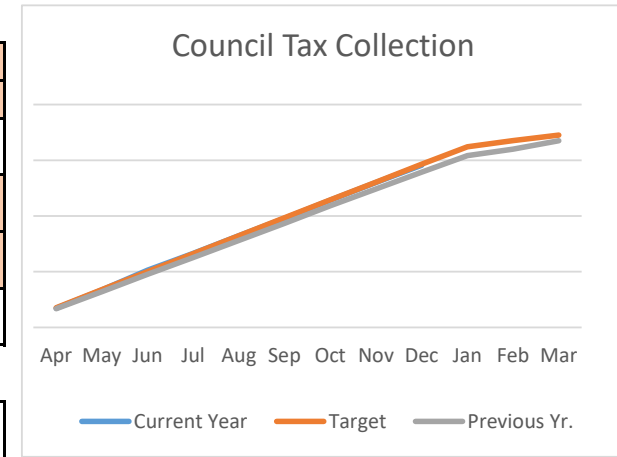
Narrative

Collection is below the target, affected by a large refund during the year.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£ 51,262,165	£ 97,920,907	£ 145,561,042	£ -	●
Target	£ 50,118,148	£ 98,303,365	£ 146,505,840	£ 172,583,155	
Refunds	£ 509,229	£ 1,449,780	£ 2,092,286	£ -	
2021/22	£ 47,659,907	£ 93,493,803	£ 139,441,540	£ 167,532,185	●

Year End Target	172,583,155	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

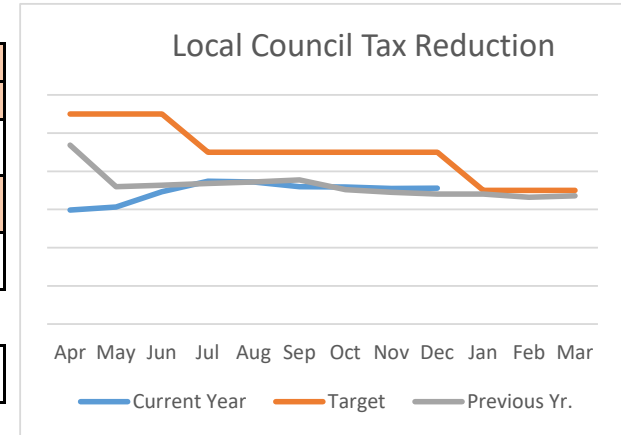
Narrative

Collection is on target, within tolerance of 1% at the end of Quarter 3 and is being monitored.
Further Recovery has collected £142,736 to date for 2022/23.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	6.93	7.19	7.11	-	●
Target	11	9	9	7	
2021/22	7.27	7.55	6.81	6.72	●

Year End Target	7	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

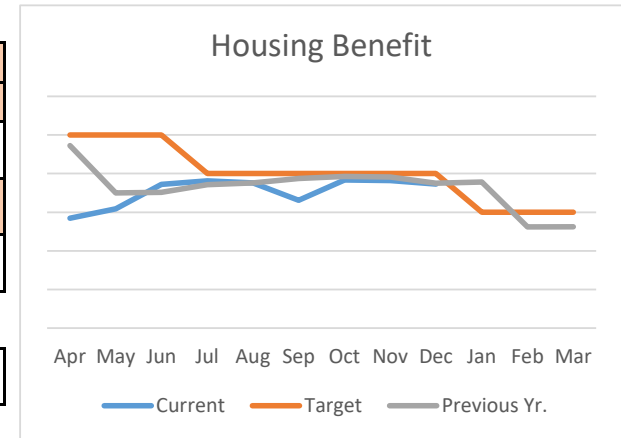


Housing Benefit



Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	7.44	6.62	7.45	-	●
Target	10	8	8	6	
2021/22	7.03	7.75	7.51	5.25	●

Year End Target	6	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be 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 and Non Domestic Rates.

The reviews of NFI SPD matches and newly awarded Single Person Discounts continue to provide very positive outcomes.

The team work closely with the East Suffolk Corporate Fraud Team and ensure the transfer of fraud referrals across the teams.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

Work within the NFI SPD review process continues to provide a number of positive outcomes. Suffolk County have agreed to fund a further post in order that the NFI Premium matching service can be utilised. The Fraud Manager is closely involved in the energy rebate scheme and is in the process of creating a Fraud Risk Assessment.

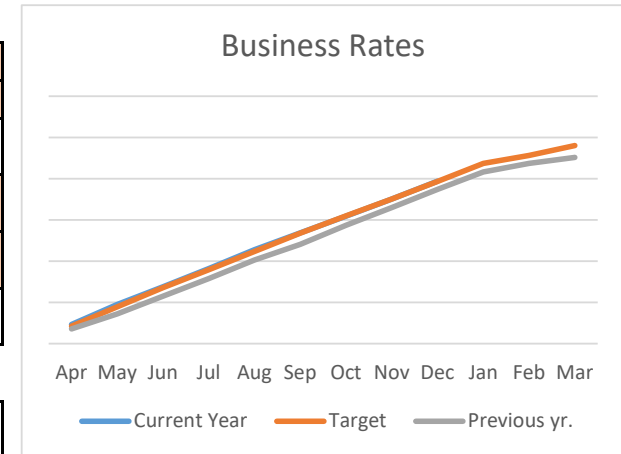
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£184,887	£326,038	£419,085	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£34,479	£39,380	£47,997	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£3,077	£19,724	£35,457	£0
Fraud Identified	£222,443	£385,142	£502,539	£0

Performance Information December 2022

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2022/23	£ 6,886,502	£ 13,413,855	£ 19,699,069	£ -		●
Target	£ 6,800,574	£ 13,377,011	£ 19,675,095	£ 24,017,406		
Refunds	£ 473,771	£ 810,074	£ 1,208,670	£ -		
2021/22	£ 5,750,467	£ 12,027,514	£ 18,696,649	£ 22,579,308		●

Year End Target	£24,017,406	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

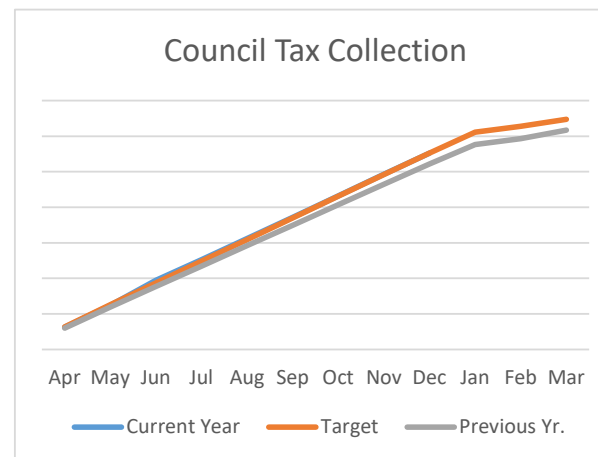
Narrative

Collection remains above target at the end of Quarter 3.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£ 19,437,583	£ 37,186,868	£ 55,231,245	£ -	●
Target	£ 18,732,751	£ 36,999,469	£ 55,244,528	£ 64,734,624	
Refunds	£ 169,052	£ 500,416	£ 769,180	£ -	
2021/22	£ 17,701,900	£ 34,963,410	£ 52,134,820	£ 61,692,720	●

Year End Target	£64,734,624	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

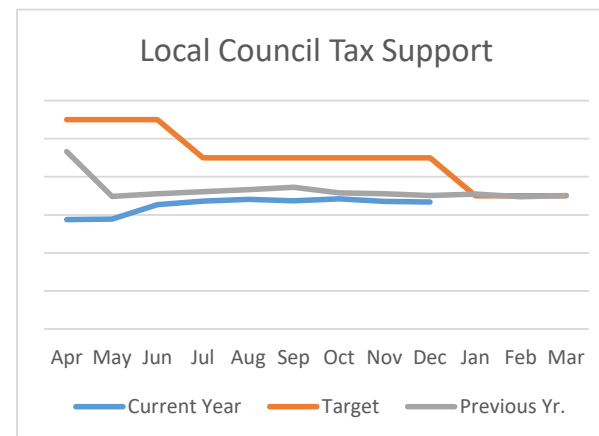
Narrative

Collection is on target, within tolerance of 1% at the end of Quarter 3 and is being monitored.
Further Recovery has collected £165,380 to date in 2022/23.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	6.54	6.73	6.67	-	●
Target	11	9	9	7	
2021/22	7.11	7.44	7.02	7.02	●

Year End Target	7	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

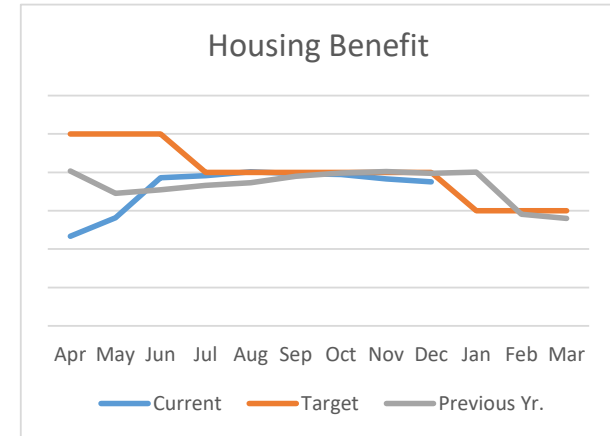
Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	7.72	7.93	7.51	-	●
Target	10	8	8	6	
2021/22	7.09	7.79	7.95	5.60	●

Year End Target	6	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Fraud and Compliance

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be 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 and Non Domestic Rates.

The review of newly awarded Single Person Discounts continues to provide positive outcomes.

The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges.

There has been some recent progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub and East Camb's DC and Fenland DC approving the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. This would align the Fraud and Compliance work currently being carried out for other partners of the Anglia Revenues Partnership as indicated in the fraud savings on the quarterly performance report. This work has again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. County would fund 2 posts for 3 years when agreement finalised. Discussions continue with the County Council to progress this initiative.

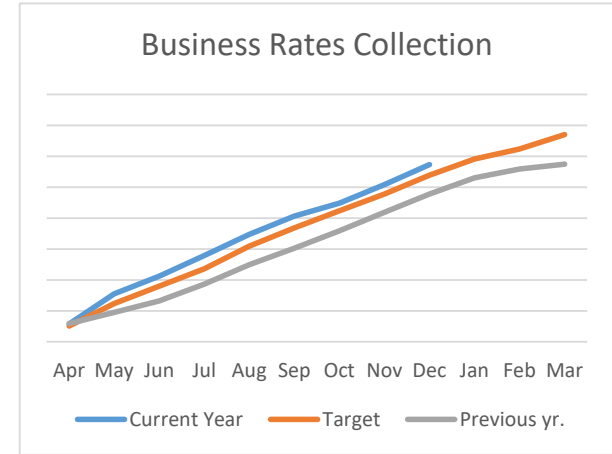
Strong performance continues in the identification of Fraud as shown below.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£30,687	£85,969	£133,690	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£6,033	£16,931	£22,531	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£15,644	£41,369	£43,330	£0
Fraud Identified	£52,364	£144,269	£199,551	£0

Business Rates

Business Rates Collection						
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
2022/23	£ 21,214,675	£ 40,655,289	£ 57,318,195	£ -		●
Target	£ 17,932,123	£ 36,854,282	£ 53,906,319	£ 67,019,151		
Refunds	£ 403,115	£ 1,125,476	£ 3,516,403	£ -		
2021/22	£ 13,192,098	£ 30,274,875	£ 47,793,720	£ 57,446,619		●

Year End Target	67,019,151	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the NNDR Collection Fund against the actual collection.

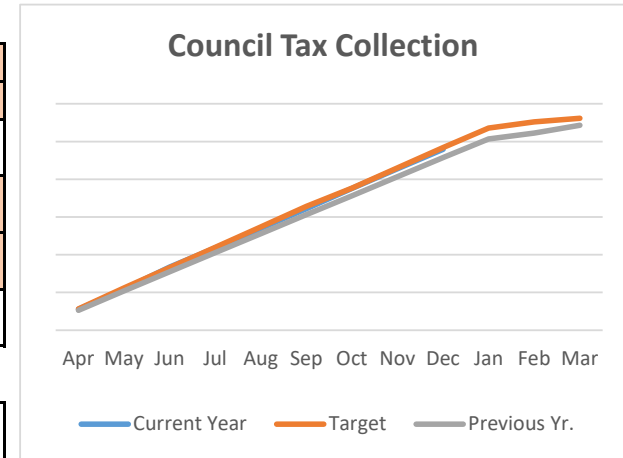
Narrative

Collection continues to exceed target at the end of Quarter 3.

Council Tax

Council Tax Collection					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	£ 33,523,653	£ 64,439,738	£ 95,871,308	£ -	●
Target	£ 33,239,324	£ 65,579,622	£ 96,755,571	£ 112,297,552	
Refunds	£ 366,606	£ 914,117	£ 1,414,123	£ -	
2021/22	£ 31,052,369	£ 61,264,863	£ 91,470,836	£ 108,600,770	●

Year End Target	112,297,552	●
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Description

This shows the amount of money required to be collected within the financial year, payable to the Council Tax Collection Fund against the actual collection.

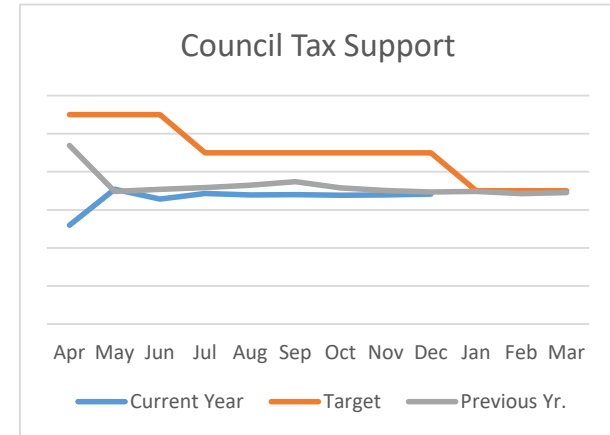
Narrative

Collection is on target, within tolerance of 1% at the end of Quarter 3 and is being monitored.
Further Recovery has collected £114,879 to date for 2022/23.

Local Council Tax Reduction

Days to process Local Council Tax Support					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	6.56	6.79	6.82	-	●
Target	11	9	9	7	
2021/22	7.07	7.47	6.94	6.91	●

Year End Target	7	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Council Tax reduction new claims and change of circumstances.

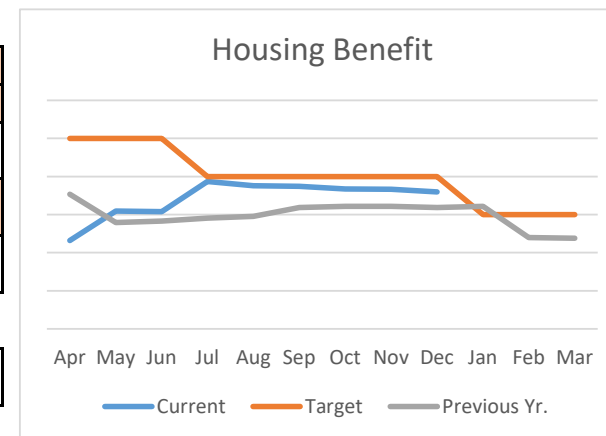
Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Housing Benefit

Days to process Housing Benefit					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
2022/23	6.15	7.49	7.19	-	●
Target	10	8	8	6	
2021/22	5.66	6.37	6.38	4.76	●

Year End Target	6	●
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Description

This indicator measures the average number of days to process Housing Benefit new claims and change of circumstances.

Narrative

This indicator has been met for this period.

Fraud and Compliance

Following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud to the DWP on the 1 September 2015, the team continue to be 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 and Non Domestic Rates.

The team work closely with the Housing Option Team and also with Housing Associations to tackle Right to Buy and subletting abuse. The team continue to seek opportunities to identify dwellings and businesses not registered or having had an undeclared change in use, leading to increased charges – including possible retrospective charges. The team are also forging closer working relationships with a number of service areas in an attempt prevent and detect fraud and error. A closer working relationship with Planning Enforcement, Public Health and Housing and Economic Development has had a positive effect. The team continue to assist in post assurance of businesses entitled to the NNDR government business rates grant scheme.

The team continue to work closely with the Internal Audit team to carry out the assurance work.

The NFI SPD review process and SPD New awards continue to provide positive outcomes. Suffolk County have agreed to fund a further post in order that the NFI Premium matching service can be utilised.

Strong performance continues in the identification of Fraud as shown below.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Single Person Discount Fraud	£176,103	£247,234	£304,916	£0
Local Council Tax Support	£12,816	£19,684	£30,550	£0
Tenancy Fraud	£3,240	£96,240	£96,240	£0
Other (Council Tax and NDR)	£20,452	£142,065	£227,997	£0
Fraud Identified	£212,612	£505,223	£659,702	£0

Service Updates as at December 2022



Enforcement

The team is now fully staffed with Enforcement Agents with just one vacancy in the Compliance the team. A new Council has come onboard and ongoing discussions are taking place with existing partner's car parking teams as to the amount of cases being submitted for collection. At the end of December we are forecasting there will be a shortfall against budgeted income for enforcement. Due to the Energy Rebate awards and the cost of living impact, significantly less cases have gone through the recovery process for enforcement action so far this year, whilst the additional partners have sent though less cases than they forecast. Whilst we anticipate this may improve later in the year, we continue to monitor the position.

In total to the end of December Enforcement has collected debt of £2,963,023.50 and fees of £743,630.29.

Further Recovery

Further Recovery has continued strongly in Council Tax.

Council Tax	NDR	HBOP	Total
£557,501.67	£190,450.53	£3,196.81	£751,149.01

Council Tax

Overall collection is on target, within tolerance of 1% at the end of Quarter 3 and is being monitored.

There is a risk that the collection target will not be met due to the cost of living pressures, this is being closely monitored.

Demand for council tax billing continues at very high levels, in particular the high number of people moving continues to be higher than last year overall. The amount of outstanding work has reduced considerably over Q3 to under 7000 items. Ahead of annual billing we have focussed on moves which are currently being processed in less than 2 weeks on average. This is testament to our project to introduce the generic Council Tax Billing Officer role, which provides a resilient team who have been able to switch between billing and benefits to help cope with ever changing workloads and priorities during the past few years, providing increased flexibility to the use of our resources, along with maximising automation functionality. Work has continued on the change of address automation project despite the focus on additional schemes this year and we continue to work closely with Capita to further develop the functionality and expand its use.

The Cabinet Office pilot has continued to struggle with incomplete data being returned. Further, we received disappointing news that HMRC will not release all of their data on the cases unless a Date of Birth or National Insurance Number is known. This means that there are a substantial number of cases to progress.

The Council Tax energy rebate main scheme was extended for 2 months and ended on 30th November, along with the Discretionary scheme and an exercise was undertaken to ensure we made full use of the discretionary funds. At the end of December the Government announced a new £100m Council Tax Support Fund to help economically vulnerable residents with their Council Tax Bills and we are currently working with partners to seek approval for a proposed local approach which will see the majority of allocations applied directly to 2023-24 Council Tax bills during annual billing.

Benefits

Both Council Tax Support and Benefits performance has achieved targets, despite increased demand. We continue to see increases in demand from the continuing high levels of changes of addresses and continue to utilise generically trained staff to focus resource where it is most needed. We have beta tested and implemented Capita's fraud prevention automation functionality for one LA and are now live with the remaining four.

We are now automating 97% of changes in UC and have become a reference site for other Capita sites. Council Tax Support scheme review process is now complete with four partner's retaining the current scheme with West Suffolk opting to increase the maximum LCTR for working age applicants to 100% for one year only. BEIS announced in December that Local Authorities will be assisting them with the administration of the Energy Bills Support Scheme (Alternative Funding). ARP has been involved from an early stage with West Suffolk taking part as one of 4 early adopting pilot sites.

Non-Domestic Rates

Overall collection is slightly behind target due to a large refund at East Suffolk, although the other four Councils are ahead of their individual targets.

Work continues with the review of Small Business Rates Relief claims.

Preparation has begun for the 2023 Revaluation with a draft list received from the Valuation Office Agency and anomalies dealt with.

All NDR lists are in balance.

Work continues with various BIDs in Suffolk.

ARP Systems and Digital

Work is progressing with Capita to review their Digital product working with other LA's to provide feedback from a wider group of Capita users.

We are working with a large Unitary Council where we are sharing our knowledge and experiences, this will be beneficial for ARP in the future.

Work volumes with both System admin and EDMS have been quite high, but through working with the Programme Manager we are making a strong plan of priorities so we can ensure that resources can meet expectations and demands. All ongoing projects have been scored in line with strategic priorities and regular project updates are provided for each team.

The systems team was heavily involved in the delivery of both the Council Tax energy rebate scheme which ended on 30th November and the CARF scheme. We are also starting work with Capita on several new automation projects. Work to amend the system start date has been completed for Council Tax for one of the 3 systems. Work on the other 2 and NNDR will recommence after annual billing. The team is currently busy planning the main annual billing process which will include the Council Tax Support Fund allocations and NNDR property revaluations.

Fraud and Compliance

There has been progression with the Cambridgeshire Fraud Hub with East Camb's DC and Fenland DC approving the business case to extend the Fraud and Compliance work for the two partners. It is hoped that the project will commence shortly. This would align the Fraud and Compliance work currently being carried out for other partners of the ARP as indicated in the fraud savings in the performance report. This work has again consistently seen savings outweighing the costs of the work in the areas of Local Council Tax Reduction and Single Person Discounts particularly, over several years. Once confirmed, recruitment will begin for two further posts within the team. Norfolk County Council continue to fund one Council Tax compliance Officer to continue Single Person Discount reviews for Norwich City Council and any additional work identified through the Norfolk Fraud Hub. Funding from Norfolk County Council has now been secured for two years from April 2022, including funding of the Norwich post plus an additional post to utilise the premium matching service for Breckland and Norwich. Suffolk County Council have also approved an increase in funding from April 2022 for a period of two years. This funding includes the premium matching service for both East and West Suffolk, and providing funding for an additional post within the team.

The Fraud Manager and Assistant Fraud Manager have undertaken a review of the Fraud Service at Broadland and South Norfolk Councils. This was on a consultancy basis and a report has been produced detailing findings and recommendations. OIB and Joint Committee have agreed the business cases submitted in respect of taking on fraud and SPD review work for Broadland and South Norfolk and taking on the SPD review work for seven Lincolnshire Councils. The Fraud Manager is closely involved with the energy rebate schemes, having completed a fraud risk assessment and similar work will continue relating to the new Energy Bill Support Scheme.

Better Customer Experience Programme

Our Council Tax change of address portal service continues to be a success, with around 45% of address changes being submitted via this service, contributing greatly to increase automation, creating a digital by default environment for our customers.

Further projects on the automation of online direct debit and refund request will complement the change of address service already on offer. Project teams in ARP continue to invest resources to implement automation. Our close working relationship with our supplier allows us to act as a pilot for upgrades, new developments and improvements. This allows us to shape and nurture what the supplier provides, making us a trusted and valuable partner to them whilst ensuring we have a workable product.

To increase debtor engagement, Tel Solutions was rolled out with a light touch approach in September. Data from Q3 not only shows significant increases in collection in the 9 day window between soft and hard reminders, but also considerable print and postage efficiencies due to the reduction in reminders being sent. Work is also underway to test the option of sending e-bills as a PDF attachment to simplify the customer experience and increase take up. This will mean customers will not need to log into their online account and can view their bills at a glance.

A thorough review of the ARP website is planned with input from the Customer Strategy Team, including reducing the number of clicks to improve the customer experience and our recruitment page along with an updated version of our customer contact form. The ARP brochure has been reviewed and updated, achieving significant savings by editing and hosting this document in house rather than using a third party supplier.