

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Corporate Performance Panel

Agenda

Wednesday, 24th August, 2016
at 6.00 pm

in the

**Committee Suite
King's Court
Chapel Street
King's Lynn
PE30 1EX**



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King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1EX
Telephone: 01553 616200
Fax: 01553 691663

16 August 2016

Dear Member

Corporate Performance Panel

You are invited to attend a meeting of the above-mentioned Panel which will be held on **Wednesday, 24th August, 2016 at 6.00 pm** in the **Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn** to discuss the business shown below.

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Minutes (Pages 6 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 July 2016.

3. Declarations of Interest

Please indicate if there any interests which should be declared. A declaration of an interest should indicate the nature of the interest (if not already declared on the Register of Interests) and the agenda item to which it relates. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared, the Member should withdrawn from the room whilst the matter is disclosed.

These declarations apply to all Members present, whether the member is part of the meeting, attending to speak as a local Member on an item or simply observing the meeting from the public seating area.

4. Urgent Business Under Standing Order 7

To consider any business which, by reason of special circumstances, the

Chairman proposes to accept as urgent under Section 100(b)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. Members Pursuant to Standing Order 34

Members wishing to speak pursuant to Standing Order 34 should inform the Chairman of their intention to do so and on what items they wish to be heard before the meeting commences. Any Member attending the meeting under Standing Order 34 will only be permitted to speak on those items which have been previously notified to the Chairman.

6. Chairman's Correspondence (if any)

7. Car Parking Machines (requested by Councillor Collop)

The Panel will receive a Powerpoint presentation from the Business Manager and be invited to ask any questions.

8. 2016/2017 Q1 Performance Monitoring and Action Report (Pages 11 - 18)

9. Council Tax Discounts for Empty and Unfurnished and Uninhabitable Properties (Pages 19 - 25)

10. Enterprise Zones - Discretionary Business Rates Discounts (Pages 26 - 33)

11. Borough Council's Efficiency Plan

The Panel will receive a Powerpoint presentation from the Assistant Director.

12. Work Programme 2016/2017 (Pages 34 - 35)

13. Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel will take place on Thursday 22 September 2016 at 6 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

14. Report (for noting purposes only) (Pages 36 - 40)

- Formal Complaints against the Borough Council 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016.

To:

Corporate Performance Panel: B Anota, B Ayres, P Beal (Vice-Chairman), R Bird, J Collop, I Gourlay, G Hipperson, Lord Howard, H Humphrey, A Morrison, D Tyler and G Wareham (Chairman)

Portfolio Holders:

Item 7: Councillor Mrs K Mellish
Items 8 and 11: Councillor N Daubney
Items 9 and 10: Councillor B Long

Management Team Representatives:

Lorraine Gore, Assistant Director
Ray Harding, Chief Executive

Appropriate Officers: The following officers are invited to attend in respect of the Agenda item shown against their name

Item 7: Martin Chisholm, Business Manager
Item 8: Becky Box, Personnel Services Manager
Items 9 and 10: Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager
Item 11: Lorraine Gore, Assistant Director

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Corporate Performance Panel held on Monday, 18th July, 2016 at 6.00 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillor G Wareham (Chairman)
Councillors B Anota, B Ayres, P Beal, R Bird, J Collop, I Gourlay and D Tyler

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor B Long – Leader and Portfolio Holder for Environment
Councillor N Daubney – Portfolio Holder for Performance
Councillor Mrs K Mellish – Portfolio Holder for Human Resources, Facilities and Shared Services

Officers:

Lorraine Gore, Assistant Director
Becky Box, Personnel Services Manager
Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager

In attendance:

Councillors I Devereux and S Squire

CP15 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lord Howard and H Humphrey.

CP16 MINUTES

The minutes from the Corporate Performance Panel held on 8 June 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

CP12: Nomination to Outside Bodies and Partnerships – Hunstanton Sailing Club Development Sub-Committee

Councillors Collop and Gourlay voted against the resolution.

CP17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CP18 URGENT BUSINESS UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

None.

CP19 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

None.

CP20 **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

None.

CP21 **COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2017/2-18: DRAFT SCHEME FOR CONSUTATION**

In presenting the report, the Revenues and Benefits Manager explained that the Council must agree a Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme for its residents every year. The report outlined options for the CTS Scheme for 2017/2018 for the Panel to discuss and questions for the Panel to consider. The agreed draft CTs Scheme would then be presented to Cabinet on 7 September 2016.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager outlined the three options for a draft CTS Scheme as detailed in the report to take to a six week consultation. It was highlighted that the Council must agree a CTS Scheme for 2017/2018 by 31 January 2017. Members were advised that the Council was free to agree any CTS Scheme it wished, subject to the parameters set by Central Government. The Council, however, must also have due regard for its equality and diversity duties.

The Panel was provided with background information as detailed in the Executive Summary.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager invited the Panel to discuss and recommend a draft CTS Scheme for 2017/2018 for Cabinet to agree in advance of the consultation period in September and October, and to consider a number of questions and issues.

In response to questions regarding information available from other Norfolk Authorities, the Revenues and Benefits Manager explained that information from other Norfolk Councils was available for the current year and undertook to forward it to the Panel.

Following comments on how individuals will be affected, the Revenue and Benefits Manager explained that the Council had over 11,000 claimants and agreed to email examples to the Panel.

In response to questions regarding how the CTS was a discounted and reduced the Council's taxbase, the Revenues and Benefits Manager explained that the Borough Council's Revenue Support Grant contained an element of funding for CTS, although the amount was not specified. The Assistant Director added that in 2019/2020 when the

Revenue Support Grant ceased the Borough Council would be required to fund the CTS completely.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager responded to questions relating to options 2 and 3 and explained that claimants would see different levels of support if Child Benefit or Child Maintenance were not included as income.

Councillors Collop and Gourlay voted against the resolution set out below.

RESOLVED: The Panel supported the preferred option (3).

CP22 **2016/2017 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE TARGET SETTING REPORT**

In presenting the report, the Personnel Services Manager explained that the Council's Performance Management Framework included quarterly monitoring and reporting of performance. Each quarterly performance report was presented to the Panel.

The report outlined the indicators being proposed for the 2016/2017 year, and provided the associated targets which had been agreed by Executive Directors and Portfolio Holders.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance responded to questions raised relating Indicator CE9 % of capital receipts receive (excluding house sales) and explained that capital receipts could skew the next year's figures and reminded Members that targets were discussed and agreed with Executive Directors and Portfolio Holders.

Following comments on Indicator CE4 – Affordable housing units built as a % of the total number of new build dwellings completed in the Borough, the Portfolio Holder for Performance informed the Panel that affordable housing was the subject of discussion at Panel meetings and that the Council had an affordable housing policy which had been agreed by Council. The Portfolio Holder added that if targets had not been met that questions could be asked at the Corporate Performance Panel.

In response to comments on the target setting process, the Personnel Services Manager advised that there were some national targets within the Planning and Environment service area, but the majority of targets were locally set.

In response to questions relating to CE7- Number of residential houses built - NORA and CE8 – No of residential house sales completed - NORA, the Personnel Services Manager explained that some units had taken longer to progress and complete.

Following comments from Councillor Collop on Recommendation 3, the Portfolio Holder for Performance explained that the financial information and available resources had been presented to Full Council.

Councillors Collop and Gourlay voted against the resolution set out below.

RESOLVED: The Panel reviewed the indicators proposed and agreed that they provided a representative view of the Council's operations.

CP23 STAFF SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT 2015/2016

The Personnel Services Manager advised the Panel of the following amendments:

- Section 2.1: Second paragraph should read: The number of FTE days lost due to long term absence **decreased** to 2161.75 from 28181.13, a decrease of 1%.
- Section 6.1: should read: The total cost of referrals to the counselling support service during the reporting period was **£6,655** (£2,675).
- Appendix B: Sickness Absence Comparison other Norfolk Authorities: Breckland 11.7, South Norfolk 8.65.

The Personnel Services Manager presented the Annual Sickness Report and explained that the headline figure this year was a decrease in the overall average sickness per employee from 9.69 days for 2014/15 to 9.10 days for 2015/16.

In response to questions relating to obtaining comparative figures from private organisations, the Personnel Services Manager explained that the Safety and Welfare Advisor used a public body group to ensure consistency for comparison and the Council was confident that other districts compiled the sickness absence figures in the same way. The local group was also used in a wider context to network and share best practice. The Portfolio Holder for Human Resources, Facilities and Shared Services added that it would be difficult to obtain sickness figures from private organisations because of data protection issues.

The Portfolio Holder for Human Resources, Facilities and Shared Services asked the Panel if it would be acceptable in future to publish the Staff Sickness Absence Annual Report on Insite for Members to view. If there appeared to be a significant variance in figures in future years, the Panel could ask for a report to explain the reasons for the change.

In response to questions in service areas and how sickness absence was assessed, the Personnel Services Manager explained that the Borough Council recorded all sickness absences during the past year.

There was a robust process in place to determine the type of sickness absence. It was noted that it was nationally recognised that 15% of sickness absence due to stress/anxiety/depression was determined as work related.

RESOLVED: 1) The Panel noted the report.

2) The Staff Sickness Absence Annual report be published on Insite for Members to view in future years.

CP24 **WORK PROGRAMME 2016/2017**

The Panel noted the Work Programme for 2016/2017.

The following item had been identified to be considered at a future Panel meeting, dependant on officers' available to attend to present a report:

- Car Parking Machines not having the facility to give change.

CP25 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next scheduled meeting of the Panel would be held on Wednesday 24 August 2016.

CP26 **REPORTS PUBLISHED ON THE INTRANET (FOR NOTING PURPOSES ONLY)**

The following report had been published on the intranet (for noting purposes only):

- Employment Monitoring Report.

The meeting closed at 6.50 pm

POLICY REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Type of Report: Monitoring	Portfolio(s): Resources
Author Name: Becky Box	Consultations: Management Team
Tel: 01553 616502	
Email: becky.box@west-norfolk.gov.uk	
Open report	

PR&D Panel: Corporate Performance Panel
Date: 24 August 2016
Subject: Corporate performance monitoring – Q1 2016/17

Summary

The report contains information on the corporate performance monitoring undertaken during Q1 2016/17.

Recommendations

The Panel is asked to agree the actions outlined within the Action Report.

1. Background

1.1 The Council's Performance Management Framework includes quarterly monitoring and reporting of performance. Each quarterly performance report is presented to the Corporate Performance Panel and is available to all Councillors and Portfolio Holders for information on the Council's intranet, Insite.

2. Format of the reports





2.1 The indicators monitored are reported in full on the corporate performance monitoring report – Q1 2016/17. The report includes a summary of the performance levels achieved for the 'status' and 'trend' categories. It is hoped this provides Members with a useful 'snapshot' at the start of the report.

2.2 Following the collation of the full report, those indicators that have not met their target are drawn out into an Action Report. This report is designed to focus attention on adverse performance. In addition to the notes shown on the full report, senior managers provide information on the actions being taken to bring performance in line or reasons why this cannot happen.

3. Key points from the corporate performance monitoring report– Q1 2016/17



3.1 The following tables summarise the Council's current performance levels, comparing performance to the previous four quarters. This enables comparison to previous quarters.

3.2 The percentage of indicators where performance has improved against the target continues to steadily increase to 39% during Q1 2016/17. However the percentage of indicators that have not improved has also increased by 17% compared to Q1 2015/16.

		Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	Q1 2016/17
Performance has improved against target		15 (35%)	13 (30%)	14 (33%)	16 (37%)	16 (39%)
Performance has not improved against target		6 (14%)	8 (19%)	12 (28%)	12 (28%)	13 (31%)
Performance has met and continues to meet target		4 (9%)	6 (14%)	3 (7%)	4 (9%)	4 (10%)
Performance remains unchanged and below target		0 (0%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
Other: · reported annually · new indicator · monitor only		18 (42%)	15 (35%)	13 (30%)	10 (24%)	8 (20%)
Total number of indicators		43	43	43	43	41*

* Awaiting figure for indicator CO2 - % of household waste recycled and composted

3.3 The percentage of indicators which have met target remains at 56%, with the percentage of indicators that have not met target increasing by 1% compared to Q1 2015/16.

		Q1 2015/16	Q2 2015/16	Q3 2015/16	Q4 2015/16	Q1 2016/17
Performance target met		24 (56%)	24 (56%)	24 (56%)	24 (56%)	23 (56%)
Performance target not met		7 (16%)	10 (23%)	11 (25%)	14 (32%)	7 (17%)
Other: · reported annually · figure not available · monitor only (no target set)		12 (28%)	9 (21%)	8 (19%)	5 (12%)	11 (27%)
Total number of indicators		43	43	43	43	41*

3.4 The opportunity has also been taken to review the performance indicators by Portfolio and by Directorate.

i) **Overview of performance by Portfolio**

Portfolio	No of PIs	Performance target met	Performance target not met	Other
Leader and Environment	9	5	0	4
Housing and Community Development	11	7	2	2
Regeneration and Industrial Assets	6	5	0	1
Performance	6	3	3	0
HR, Facilities and Shared Services	5	2	2	1
Culture, Heritage & Health	4	1	0	3
Total	0	0	0	0
	41*	23	7	11

ii) **Overview of performance by Directorate**

Directorate	No of PIs	Performance target met	Performance target not met	Other
Chief Executive	18	9	3	6
Central and Community Services	11	5	2	4
Commercial Services	5	3	2	0
Environment and Planning	7	6	0	1
Total	41*	23	7	11


4. Overall Conclusion

- 4.1 Additional performance monitoring of indicators consistently not achieving quarterly targets is undertaken by Management Team on a monthly basis. The indicator CE11 - percentage of supplier invoices paid within 30 days, has been monitored closely as it has not achieved the target of 94% by 1% each quarter during 2015/16. As part of the 2016/17 annual target setting process the target for this indicator was changed to 93%. Performance levels have improved with 96% being reported for Q1 2016/17.
- 4.2 The Action Report explains the considerable drop in performance (66%) for indicator CE6 – percentage of freedom of information requests given final response within deadline. As the quarterly figure is calculated on a cumulative basis it is unrealistic to expect this indicator to achieve the 2016/17 annual target of 95%.
- 4.3 Management Team actively monitors this information on a regular basis and uses the information highlighted on the action report to gain an understanding of the reasons for the levels of performance that have been reported.
- 4.4 The Panel is asked to agree the actions outlined in the Action Report.








Performance Monitoring Action Report Q1 2016-17










This report highlights indicators that have not met target for Q1 2016-17 and is a supporting document to the Performance Monitoring Q1 2016-17 report. Comments / actions are recorded to help evidence performance management undertaken by the Council.

Status		This indicator has not met the target.
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Performance Indicators Q1 2016-17













Ref	Name	2016/17 Target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Status	Notes	Actions
CE6	% of freedom of information requests given final response within deadline	95.00%	66.00%		The drop in performance has been caused by issues with staffing.	Eastlaw (where the council's FOI function reports in to) have taken over this work and will retain it for the foreseeable future. Management Team will monitor this indicator on a monthly basis.
CE7	No of residential houses built - NORA	21	13		All expected units have been built, however some of the utility connections (electric / water) have not been connected. Therefore, units can not be handed over and are not counted as finished.	Ensure outstanding works are completed during Q2 and continue to work towards the Q2 target of 39 completed houses.
CE14	No of days to process new benefit claims	17	24		The Benefits team have been experiencing a number of resource issues and has also deleted 50 hours as savings identified in the Business Case for an electronic claim form, which is still bedding in.	It is anticipated that the use of electronic forms will be increased. Current resource issues will be resolved during Q2 2016/17.
CC6	% of Careline alarms installed within 10 days from date of enquiry	85.0%	71.9%		Currently only two installers covering large geographical area, current casual vacancy. During Q1 annual leave has impacted on performance.	To manage growth in the North Norfolk area, a casual Careline installer will be proposed to coincide with the completion of the call handling contract. A postal service is currently being offered where appropriate.
CC11	% reduction of telephone calls to CIC	2.5%	0.0%		During Q1 CIC have answered additional clean-up calls and currently not all of the Council's services are available online.	Respond effectively to any changes which will occur during Q2.
CO4	% of rent arrears on industrial estates	3.00%	5.29%		There are some issues involving late payments and cash flow with tenants which are currently being dealt with.	It is anticipated that all payment issues should be resolved over the coming weeks.
CO6	% rent arrears on retail/general units	3.00%	7.50%			

Status	 Indicator has not met the target	17%	 Indicator is on target	56%	 New 2016-17 indicator	10%
Trends	 The value of this indicator has improved	39%	 The value of this indicator has worsened	31%	  The value of this indicator has not changed	10%







Actions being taken on indicators that have not met target are outlined on the accompanying Action Report


Chief Executive Services

Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
CE1	2	% of known licensable HMO's with a current licence	Aim to maximise	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			
CE2	2	% of long term empty homes in the Borough as a percentage of overall dwellings	Aim to minimise	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%			
CE3	2	Unintentional priority homeless acceptances per 1,000 households	Aim to minimise	0.39	-	To follow	-	-	New indicator - data will be available one quarter in arrears. 2015/16 data - Q1 0.31 Q2 0.54 Q3 0.55 Q4 0.39
CE4	2	Affordable housing units built as a % of the total number of new build dwellings completed in the Borough	Aim to maximise	13.0%	13.0%	-	-	-	Reported annually
CE5	2	No of households living in Temporary Accommodation	Aim to minimise	39	40	40			
CE6	1	% of freedom of information requests given final response within deadline	Aim to maximise	95.5%	95.0%	66.0%			The drop in performance has been caused by issues with staffing.
CE7	2	No of residential houses built - NORA	Aim to maximise	53	21	13			All expected units have been built, however some of the utility connections (electric / water) have not been connected. Therefore, units can not be handed over and are not counted as finished.
CE8	2	No of residential house sales completed - NORA	Aim to maximise	53	3	5			
CE9	1	% of capital receipts received (excluding house sales)	Aim to maximise	53.5%	100.0%	-	-	-	Reported annually
CE11	1	% of supplier invoices paid within 30 days	Aim to maximise	93%	93%	96%			
CE12	1	% of local supplier invoices paid within 10 days	Aim to maximise	81%	-	79%	-		Monitor only during 2016/17 - under review as part of the current LEAN project






Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
CE14	1	No of days to process new benefit claims	Aim to minimise	17	17	24			The Benefits team have been experiencing a number of resource issues and has also deleted 50 hours as savings identified in the Business Case for an electronic claim form, which is still bedding in.
CE15	1	No of days to process changes of circumstances	Aim to minimise	6	12	12			
CE16	1	% of Council Tax collected against target	Aim to maximise	97.60%	29.12%	29.62%			
CE17	1	% of Business Rates collected against target	Aim to maximise	98.54%	29.36%	29.91%			
CE18	1	No of residential dwellings subject to Council Tax	Aim to maximise	72045	-	72148	-		For monitoring purposes only
CE19	1	Base for Council Tax setting purposes - Band D equivalent	Aim to maximise	48218	-	48353	-		For monitoring purposes only
CE20	1	Income from business rates for Renewable Energy projects	Aim to maximise	£731,189	£755,610	£844,793			





Central and Community Services

Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
CC1	1	Staff turnover	Aim to minimise	9.78%	-	2.00%	-		For monitoring purposes only
CC2	1	Average no of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee	Aim to minimise	9.10	2.00	1.39			
CC3	1	% of short term sickness	Aim to minimise	47%	-	51%	-		For monitoring purposes only
CC4	1	Telephone satisfaction rates	Aim to maximise	99%	98%	99%			

Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
CC6	6	% of Careline alarms installed within 10 days from date of enquiry	Aim to maximise	82.5%	85.0%	71.9%			Currently only two installers covering large geographical area, current casual vacancy. During Q1 annual leave has impacted on performance.
CC7	6	Time taken (in weeks) from first visit to completion of work on Disabled Facilities Grant	Aim to minimise	37.0	35.0	30.0			
CC8	6	Time taken (in weeks) from first visit to completion of work on Adapt passported cases with a value under £6,000	Aim to minimise	20.0	20.0	20.0			
CC9	1	% of customer satisfaction with on-line forms	Aim to maximise	97.0%	80.0%	96.0%			
CC10	1	% of eligible employees in post on 1st April receiving a performance appraisal	Aim to maximise	100%	100%	-	-	-	This indicator will be reported annually in Q2.
CC11	1	% reduction of telephone calls to CIC	Aim to maximise	-	2.5%	0.0%			During Q1 CIC have answered additional clean-up calls and currently not all of the Council's services are available online.
CC12	1	No of customers registered for OneVu account	Aim to maximise	-	-	-	-		This indicator will commence in Q2.

Commercial Services

Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
CO1	3	Average response time for removal of fly-tips (days)	Aim to minimise	0.5	1.0	0.5			
CO2	3	% of household waste recycled and composted	Aim to maximise	To follow	45.00%	To follow			Q4 2015/16 & Q1 2016/17 data to follow.
CO3	1	% of rent achievable on industrial estates	Aim to maximise	86.34%	90.00%	91.45%			
CO4	1	% of rent arrears on industrial estates	Aim to minimise	3.59%	3.00%	5.29%			There are a number of issues involving late payments and cash flow with tenants which are currently being dealt with.

Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
CO5	1	% rent achievable on retail/general units	Aim to maximise	93.10%	96.00%	96.17%			
CO6	1	% rent arrears on retail/general units	Aim to minimise	2.79%	3.00%	7.50%			There are some issues involving late payments and cash flow with tenants which are currently being dealt with.

Environment and Planning

Ref	Link to Corporate Priority	Name	Good Performance	2015/16 Full year perf.	Q1 2016/17 target	Q1 2016/17 cumulative performance	Q1 2016/17 status	Versus this time last year	Note
EP1b	2	% of Minor, Other and Planning Enforcement decisions lost at appeal	Aim to minimise	41%	33%	0%			
EP1c	2	% of decisions on applications for major development that have been overturned at appeal, measured against total number of major applications determined	Aim to minimise	-	10%	-	-		This indicator will be reported annually in the Q2 report. It is calculated over a two year period 01/01/2014 – 31/12/2015 + 9 months to allow for appeals on decisions within this period.
EP2a	2	Processing of planning applications - <u>Major</u>	Aim to maximise	82%	60%	88%			
EP2b	2	Processing of planning applications - <u>Minor</u>	Aim to maximise	86%	70%	74%			
EP2c	2	Processing of planning applications - <u>Other</u>	Aim to maximise	93%	82%	84%			
EP4	3	Premises rated 3 or above in accordance with the food hygiene rating system	Aim to maximise	95.4%	95.0%	96.0%			
EP5	2	% of standard land charges searches carried out within 10 working days	Aim to maximise	100%	95%	100%			

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Type of Report: Policy Development	Portfolio(s): Resources
Author Name: Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager	Consultations: Management Team Cabinet Cllr Brian Long
Tel: 01553 616349	
Email: joanne.stanton@west-norfolk.gov.uk	
Open report	

Date of meeting: 24 August 2016

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS FOR EMPTY / UNFURNISHED AND UNINHABITABLE PROPERTIES

1. Introduction

1.1. The Council has powers to reduce or remove the council tax discount for empty / unfurnished and uninhabitable properties. This report outlines these powers and presents options for the Panel to discuss and recommend, along with some issues and questions for the Panel to debate.

2. Executive Summary

2.1. Since April 2004 we have had the power to increase the council tax charge for second homes from the nationally set 50% to 90%. Since April 2013 we have had the power to further increase the council tax charge for second homes to 100%, to increase the charge for properties which are unfurnished, uninhabitable or long term empty to 100%, and to charge a premium of a maximum additional 50% for properties empty for more than two years.

2.2. The aim of these powers is to encourage properties back into use and raise additional revenue for areas affected by high numbers of second homes and empty properties.

2.3. We have already made changes in previous years and a summary is overleaf:

Class of Property	Start	End	Discount	Council Tax Charge	Time Limit
Second Homes	01/04/1993	31/03/2004	50%	50%	None
	01/04/2004	31/03/2013	10%	90%	None
	01/04/2013	31/03/2016	5%	95%	None
	01/04/2016		0%	100%	None
Empty / Unfurnished properties	01/04/1993	31/03/2013	100%	0%	6 months
	01/04/2013		100%	0%	3 months
Uninhabitable Properties	01/04/1993	31/03/2013	100%	0%	12 months
	01/04/2013		50%	50%	12 months
Long Term Empty Properties	01/04/1993	31/03/2013	50%	50%	None
	01/04/2013		0%	100%	None
Properties Empty over 2 years	01/04/2013		(50%)	150%	After 2 years

2.4. Empty / unfurnished properties and uninhabitable properties are the only two classes where we still award a discount. These have been identified for review as part of the Council's cost reduction exercise.

2.5. There are no powers to charge more than the additional 50% premium for properties empty more than two years. Also no changes are proposed to the council tax charges for Second Homes, Long Term Empty Properties and Properties empty over two years.

3. Issues

3.1. Any council tax discount reduces the taxbase and is a cost to the Council. Removing these discounts increases the taxbase by 365 Band D properties, equivalent to income of around £60,764 a year. It also encourages properties back into use, contributing towards our New Homes Bonus at £1,224 per Band D property for four years. Any increase in the number of empty properties also reduces our New Homes Bonus. Offering a reduction to owners of empty properties can act as a disincentive to bringing the property back into use.

3.2. There may be some property owners who are adversely affected by the changes. A Discretionary Fund of £10,000 is recommended for exceptional circumstances and to assist those genuinely trying to bring a property back into use.

4. Rationale for the Proposal

4.1. The Council can consider increasing the charge for empty / unfurnished and uninhabitable properties by reducing or removing the discounts. The implications of completely removing these discounts and charging 100% of the council tax are detailed below. This is in addition to the extra revenue already generated by the removal of the second home discount from 1 April 2016.

	Empty / Unfurnished	Uninhabitable	Total
Properties Affected	415	71	486
Taxbase Increase @ Band D	334	31	365
Additional Revenue Raised	£523,775	£48,201	£571,977
NCC	£397,248	£36,557	£433,805
PCC	£71,037	£6,537	£77,574
BCKLWN	£55,491	£5,107	£60,764

4.2. The changes will affect 486 properties from a total of 72,000 in the Borough (0.7%) and taxpayers will no longer see a reduction in their bill if their property is empty. The current reductions only apply for a limited time before they are removed and the 100% charge applies, and the changes will remove this initial reduction completely. This could encourage taxpayers to bring their properties back into use or complete structural works sooner than would be the case if there was a discount available.

4.3. Other Norfolk authorities have different schemes and the charges for 2016/2017 for the different classes of property are shown below.

	Charges				
	2 nd Homes	Empty / Unfurnished	Uninhab.	Long Term Empty	Over 2 years
BCKLWN	100%	0%ⁱ	50%ⁱⁱ	100%	150%
Broadland	100%	100%	100%	100%	150%
Breckland	100%	0% ¹	50% ²	100%	150%
North Norfolk	95%	0% ⁱ	50% ⁱⁱ	100%	150%
Norwich	95%	100%	50% ⁱⁱ	100%	150%
Great Yarmouth	95%	0% ⁱ	50% ⁱⁱ	100%	150%
South Norfolk	95%	0% ⁱ	50% ⁱⁱ	100%	150%

4.4. Broadland District Council and Norwich City Council have already removed their discounts for empty and unfurnished and uninhabitable properties. It is understood that other authorities will also consider doing so for 2017/2018 although these decisions are yet to be formalised.

ⁱ 3 months then 100%

ⁱⁱ 12 months then 100%

5. Options Considered:

5.1. Option 1

5.1.1. Do nothing and retain the current level of charges for empty / unfurnished and uninhabitable properties.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial Implications
No Policy change	No increase in the taxbase and New Homes Bonus, therefore income, is lost	No increase in income
	No additional incentive to bring empty properties back into use	

5.2. Option 2

5.2.1. Remove the discounts for empty / unfurnished and uninhabitable properties from 1 April 2017 and agree a Discretionary Fund for exceptional cases.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial Implications
Encourages properties back into use	May be unpopular with landlords who have short term vacant periods between lets which they will no longer receive a discount for	Potential increase in taxbase of 365 Band D properties and more New Homes Bonus
Only affects a small number of properties (<1% of the total)	May financially disadvantage some customers but in the case of hardship they can make an application to the Discretionary Fund	

6. Preferred option

6.1. Option 2 is the preferred option as it encourages properties back into use whilst maintaining a safety net for exceptional cases affected by the changes. It also increases the taxbase and our income.

7. Questions and issues for the Panel

7.1. The Panel are asked to decide whether they agree with the rationale for the preferred option and whether they wish to recommend this option to Cabinet.

7.2. The Discretionary Fund will assist those suffering hardship and those in exceptional circumstances. In 2016/2017 a budget of £10,000 exists for a Hardship Fund and will be transferred to the Discretionary Fund. The Panel are asked whether they agree with this approach.

7.3. There will be no administrative saving from implementing the changes as the records will still need to show if a property is empty, even though it receives no discount. This is for government returns, including the calculation of our New Homes Bonus. Additional resource will be needed to test, implement and publicise the changes and deal with enquiries. Norfolk County Council has agreed to provide £50,000 to meet these costs. The Panel is asked to note this issue.

8. Policy Implications

8.1. Changes to the discounts are a change to Council policy and will need approval by full Council.

9. Financial Implications

9.1. Removing the discounts for empty / unfurnished and uninhabitable properties will increase the taxbase by approximately 365 Band D properties which equates to income of around £60,764 a year. It can also encourage owners to bring empty properties back into use which will contribute towards our New Homes Bonus.

9.2. Funding has been secured from Norfolk County Council towards the administrative cost of implementing and publicising the changes.

9.3. £10,000 will be allocated to the Discretionary Fund. The cost of this is met by the preceptors in proportion to their share of the council tax.

10. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

10.1. Pre-screening EIA attached.

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Name of policy	Council Tax Discounts for Empty / Unfurnished and Uninhabitable Properties				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	Amendment to an existing policy				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	Council Tax discounts for properties which are empty and unfurnished, or uninhabitable. These properties currently attract a discount and these are being reviewed. Whilst the powers are awarded in statute, any decision is at the discretion of the Council				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			√	
	Disability			√	
	Gender			√	
	Gender Re-assignment			√	
	Marriage/civil partnership			√	
	Pregnancy / maternity			√	
	Race			√	
	Religion or belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
	Other -				
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	NA	Actions: None			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by: Name Jo Stanton					
Job title Revenues and Benefits Manager	Date 25 July 2016				

Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Type of Report: Policy Development	Portfolio(s): Resources
Author Name: Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager	Consultations: Cllr Brian Long Ray Harding
Email: joanne.stanton@west-norfolk.gov.uk	
Open report	

Date of meeting: 24 August 2016

NORA ENTERPRISE ZONE: DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATES DISCOUNTS

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. In 2015 the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) made a bid to central government to designate a number of sites across East Anglia as Enterprise Zones (EZs). One of these sites was the NORA site at South Lynn. The Cabinet Report of 9 September 2015 contains the full details of this process. The NALEP bid was successful and the NORA site was awarded Enterprise Zone (EZ) status from April 2016.
- 1.2. An EZ allows businesses located within the zone to benefit from reduced burdens including lower tax levels, planning, regulatory and other administrative burdens. To help reduce the tax burden on business within the EZ we can choose to award a business rates discount of up to 100% of the business rates bill for five years (subject to State Aid limits – see Appendix A) and central government will reimburse the full cost.
- 1.3. Any business rates growth within the EZ is fully retained and split between us, the County Council and NALEP for investment in infrastructure in the EZ and priorities in the Strategic Economic Plan.
- 1.4. This report details the options for a discretionary business rates discount within the EZ and asks the Panel to agree a preferred option to go to Cabinet and Council for approval.

2. Background

- 2.1. As the discount is discretionary we are free to decide what amount of discount we will award, any specific categories of business or types of occupation we will award the discount to, and for what length of time. Central government will reimburse the cost of any discount we award for up to 100% of a business rates bill for up to five years.

2.2. All the other business rates reductions and reliefs apply as usual including Small Business Rate Relief, Mandatory Relief and the three month exemption period for unoccupied properties (six months for industrial properties). Any EZ discretionary discount is awarded after all other relevant reliefs have been applied. Businesses can also still apply for Hardship Relief.

3. Issues

3.1. The decision to award the discount is fairly straightforward as the cost is fully reimbursed by central government. However there are still some issues for the Panel to consider.

3.2. Occupied and unoccupied properties

3.3. The purpose of the discount is to reduce the tax burden for business within the EZ. The discount should be awarded to occupied properties to encourage businesses to locate within the EZ and to free up resources so they can grow.

3.4. Those liable for business rates for unoccupied properties outside the EZ normally receive a three month exemption from payment of business rates, rising to six months if the property is classed as industrial. After this the full business rates are payable again.

3.5. Awarding a 100% discount for unoccupied properties within the EZ makes it more beneficial for the owner to have an unoccupied property within the EZ than outside it, and is not an incentive to keep properties within the EZ occupied. The only exception is the King's Lynn Innovation Centre where the 'easy in, easy out' approach to encourage new businesses may mean more time when the offices are unoccupied.

4. Rationale for the Proposal:

4.1. The Panel is asked to agree a discretionary business rates discount that encourages economic growth and supports businesses within the EZ by remitting their business rates bill for five years.

5. Options Considered

5.1. We are free to decide whatever discount we choose. The options below detail three choices for a discretionary discount for businesses within the EZ.

6. There are there options:

6.1. Option 1

Do not award any discretionary discount to businesses within the EZ

Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial Implications
None	Missed opportunity to support economic growth within the Borough and the encourage new and growing businesses in the EZ	None
	Hard to justify as the cost of the relief is met by central government	

6.2. Option 2

Award a 100% discount to occupied properties within the EZ for five years, subject to State Aid limits

Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial Implications
Supports businesses occupying properties within the EZ	Unoccupied properties have to pay the empty rate once their statutory exemption has ended	None – the cost of the relief is met by central government
Avoids the disparity where unoccupied properties benefit from a discount in the EZ but not outside it which may encourage people to leave properties empty in the EZ		

6.3. Option 3

Award a 100% discount for occupied properties within the EZ for five years, subject to State Aid limits (see Appendix A). Also award a 100% discount to occupied and unoccupied offices within the King's Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC) but not to any other unoccupied properties within the EZ

Advantages	Disadvantages	Financial Implications
Supports businesses occupying properties within the EZ	Unoccupied properties have to pay the empty rate once their statutory exemption has ended	None – the cost of the relief is met by central government
Avoids the disparity where unoccupied properties benefit from a discount in the EZ but not outside it which may encourage people to leave properties empty in the EZ		
Supports the KLIC where there may be unoccupied periods due to the purpose of the centre – supporting new businesses, ‘easy in, easy out’ approach		

7. Questions/issues for the Panel

- 7.1. Do you agree with awarding 100% discount for occupied properties within the EZ?
- 7.2. Do you agree with awarding a 100% discounts for offices within the KLIC, whether they are occupied or unoccupied?
- 7.3. Do you agree with awarding the discount for the maximum five years?

8. Preferred option

- 8.1. Option 3 is the preferred option. It supports businesses occupying properties within the EZ whilst avoiding the issue of having a more generous reduction for unoccupied properties within the EZ compared to outside it.
- 8.2. Option 3 also supports the KLIC, reducing the business rates liability and allowing them to focus their resources on encouraging new, small, start-up businesses who will hopefully, in time, move into bigger units within the EZ. The nature of the leases for these offices (shorter tenancy periods, reduced notice periods) means these may be unoccupied on a more regular basis.

9. Policy Implications

- 9.1. The discretionary business rates discount for properties in the EZ is a new policy and must be approved by Cabinet and Council.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. Provided the discretionary discount is awarded for a maximum of five years and does not exceed State Aid limits (see Appendix A) , there are no financial implications. The cost of the discount is met in full by central government.

11. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 11.1. Pre-screening report attached

12. Risk Management Implications

- 12.1. None

13. Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

- 13.1. None

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Name of policy	Business Rates Discretionary Discounts for Enterprise Zones				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	New				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	The discount aims to remit the business rates liability for people occupying properties within the NORA Enterprise Zone. The decision to award the discount is wholly at the discretion of the Council				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			√	
	Disability			√	
	Gender			√	
	Gender Re-assignment			√	
	Marriage/civil partnership			√	
	Pregnancy & maternity			√	
	Race			√	
	Religion or belief			√	
	Sexual orientation			√	
	Other -			√	
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	N/A	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by: Name Jo Stanton					
Job title Revenues and Benefits Manager	Date 8 July 2016				

Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.

Appendix A – State Aid

Any relief from taxes, including non-domestic rates, can constitute state aid. This includes discretionary relief for properties in an Enterprise Zone, as well as other non-domestic rates discounts.

There is a de minimus limit of €200,000 for any one business over a three year period. This equates to around £55,000 a year per business, so over the five year period the maximum amount of discretionary discount any one business can receive is £275,000.

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PANEL WORK PROGRAMME 2016/2017

8 June 2016

- 2015/2016 Full Year Performance Monitoring Report – B Box
- 2015/2016 Full Year Action Report – B Box
- Q4 2015/2016 Corporate Business Plan Monitoring Report – B Box
- Nomination to Outside Bodies and Partnerships – Hunstanton Sailing Club Development Sub Committee

18 July 2016

- Employment Monitoring Annual Report – B Box
- 2016/2017 Corporate Performance Target Setting Report – B Box
- Council Tax Scheme – J Stanton
- Staff Sickness Absence 2015/2016 – D Clack

24 August 2016

- Car Parking Machines – no facility to give change – M Chisholm (first item)
- 2016/2017 Q1 Performance Monitoring and Action Report – B Box
- Council Tax Discounts for Empty and Unfurnished and Uninhabitable Properties – J Stanton
- Enterprise Zones – Discretionary Business Rates Discounts – J Stanton
- Borough Council's Efficiency Plan – Presentation by L Gore
- To note only: link to Insite - Formal Complaints against the Borough Council 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016

22 September 2016

- Annual Communications Update – S Clifton, H Howell, A Howell
- Project Management/cost: Bus Station Project – Finance – L Hampshire/O Paparega
- Hunstanton Sailing Club Progress Report – six monthly basis

9 November 2016

19 December 2016

- Update Report on Improving Attainment in West Norfolk – Annual Basis
- 2016/17Q2 Performance Monitoring Report – B Box
- 2016/20Q2 17 Action Report – B Box
- 2016/2017 Q2 Corporate Business Plan Monitoring Report

20 February 2017

- 2016/2017 Q3 Performance Monitoring Report – B Box
- 2016/2017 Q3 Action Report – B Box
- 2016/2017 Q3 Corporate Business Plan Monitoring Report
- Developing the New Corporate Business Plan – Monitoring Report – B Box

21 March 2017

- Hunstanton Sailing Club Progress Report – six monthly basis

FORTHCOMING ITEMS

Presentations from Corporate Project Groups

Welfare Reform and Work Bill – Briefing – All Members invited to attend – J Stanton to advise of date

Post Implementation Reviews of both major projects and significant policy changes/introduction of new policies will be scheduled on the Work Programme as required.

Items identified by Opposition Members

- Car Parking Machines – facility not to give change (Councillor Collop requested item – to be discussed at CPP 24 August 2016)

POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL REPORT

REPORT TO:	<i>Corporate Performance Panel</i>		
DATE:	24 August 2016		
TITLE:	Complaints against the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk 1 April 2015 - 31 March 2016		
TYPE OF REPORT:	<i>For information</i>		
PORTFOLIO(S):	Cllr Nick Daubney		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Ray Harding		
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open	WILL BE SUBJECT TO A FUTURE CABINET REPORT:	No

SUMMARY:

This report is produced on an annual basis for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 and sets out the breakdown of Corporate and Ombudsman complaints and MP Enquiries, it is presented to Members for information only. Previously the report has been received by the Resources and Performance Panel.

ANALYSIS:

MP Enquiries

In total, 172 MP Enquiries were dealt with during 2015/16, compared with 212 during the previous year. These were broken down by service area with Leisure (30), Planning (40), Central Services (15) and Chief Executive (87).

Corporate Complaints

31 Corporate Complaints were received during 2015/16, compared with 32 during the previous year. Of these complaints, 6 were considered to be justified and 2 were partly justified. One Corporate complaint was awarded £15.00 at Stage 1.

Of the 31 Corporate Complaints which were received, 13 went to an Appeal to the Chief Executive (Stage 2) and out of the 13 complaints, 2 were considered to be justified and 0 partly justified. Two complaints were awarded a total of £125.00 at Stage 2. One complaint was awarded £25.00 and the other was awarded £100.00.

Ombudsman Complaints

In total 18 complaints were received by the Local Government Ombudsman. Attached at **Appendix A** is the brief Ombudsman Annual Report 2015/16 for information. Of these 18 complaints, 2 were upheld. Two complaints that went to the Ombudsman were awarded a total of £308.99. One complaint was awarded £100.00 and the other was awarded £208.99.

In total in 2015/16, 5 complaints were awarded a total of £448.99 between them.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS:

There are no recommendations; it is an annual report for Members to note.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

N/A

21 July 2016

By email

Ray Harding
Chief Executive
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council

Dear Ray Harding,

Annual Review Letter 2016

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions we made about your authority during the period. I hope that this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

Last year we provided information on the number of complaints upheld and not upheld for the first time. In response to council feedback, this year we are providing additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the amounts received.

We provide a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the person came to us. In addition, we provide a compliance rate for implementing our recommendations to remedy a fault.

I want to emphasise that these statistics comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

Effective accountability for devolved authorities

Local government is going through perhaps some of the biggest changes since the LGO was set up more than 40 years ago. The creation of combined authorities and an increase in the number of elected mayors will hugely affect the way local services are held to account. We have already started working with the early combined authorities to help develop principles for effective and accessible complaints systems.

We have also reviewed how we structure our casework teams to provide insight across the emerging combined authority structures. Responding to council feedback, this included reconfirming the Assistant Ombudsman responsible for relationship management with each authority, which we recently communicated to Link Officers through distribution of our manual for working with the LGO.

APPENDIX 1

Supporting local scrutiny

Our corporate strategy is based upon the twin pillars of remedying injustice and improving local public services. The numbers in our annual report demonstrate that we continue to improve the quality of our service in achieving swift redress.

To measure our progress against the objective to improve local services, in March we issued a survey to all councils. I was encouraged to find that 98% of respondents believed that our investigations have had an impact on improving local public services. I am confident that the continued publication of our decisions (alongside an improved facility to browse for them on our website), focus reports on key themes and the data in these annual review letters is helping the sector to learn from its mistakes and support better services for citizens.

The survey also demonstrated a significant proportion of councils are sharing the information we provide with elected members and scrutiny committees. I welcome this approach, and want to take this opportunity to encourage others to do so.

Complaint handling training

We recently refreshed our Effective Complaint Handling courses for local authorities and introduced a new course for independent care providers. We trained over 700 people last year and feedback shows a 96% increase in the number of participants who felt confident in dealing with complaints following the course. To find out more, visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Ombudsman reform

You will no doubt be aware that the government has announced the intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something we support, as it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

We will continue to support government in the realisation of the public service ombudsman, and are advising on the importance of maintaining our 40 years plus experience of working with local government and our understanding its unique accountability structures.

This will also be the last time I write with your annual review. My seven-year term of office as Local Government Ombudsman comes to an end in January 2017. The LGO has gone through extensive change since I took up post in 2010, becoming a much leaner and more focused organisation, and I am confident that it is well prepared for the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely



Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

APPENDIX 1

Local Authority Report: King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council
For the Period Ending: 31/03/2016

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:

<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits and Tax	Corporate and Other Services	Education and Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways and Transport	Housing	Planning and Development	Other	Total
0	1	4	0	3	1	1	7	1	18

Decisions made

				Detailed Investigations			
Incomplete or Invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for Local Resolution	Closed After Initial Enquiries	Not Upheld	Upheld	Uphold Rate	Total
2	1	8	4	1	2	67%	18

Notes

Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.

The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

The compliance rate is the proportion of remedied complaints where our recommendations are believed to have been implemented.

Complaints Remedied

by LGO	Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement	Compliance Rate
2	0	100%