






Commitments towards our Vision





Financial Services - 2019-2020 – Six month report






Performance Measure	Link to Corporate Plan Priority	Target and reporting timescale (i.e. 6 monthly or annually)	Baseline from previous year / output from previous year	Owner and co-owners	Status (at 6 month stage)	Outcome or output (at 6 month stage)
<p>To ensure the objective assurance of the Council's activities are paramount.</p> <p>To ensure the long term financial sustainability of the Council</p>	<p>A customer driven efficient Council with a "can do" attitude and pro-business approach and commercially focused to ensure financial self-sufficiency for the tax payer</p> <p>Delivering a financially sound & well managed council</p>	<p>Ensure that the Annual Internal Audit Plan adds value to the organisation</p> <p>Meet with 100% of Service Managers to assist in the preparation of the annual Internal Audit Plan</p> <p>To deliver the agreed Internal Audit Plan by 31st March 2020</p>	100%	LGSS Internal Audit		A two year operational Internal Audit Plan was approved in March 2019. Delivery of the Audit Plan by 31 st March 2020 is on track.
		<p>Produce a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with balanced budgets for two years, i.e. the budget year and the subsequent year, with a trajectory which will allow the Council to remain financial secure</p> <p>Regularly review high level corporate risks, including public sector funding and major income streams, not least for 2020-21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Government's spending review and fair funding review for local government East Cambs. Trading Company's financial health and potential financial transactions between it and the Council 	Completed and presented to Council in February 2019	Ian Smith - Finance Manager		<p>Initial work has started on the Budget and MTFS for 2020-21 and beyond; 2020-21 remains balanced, but further work is needed to balance 2021-22.</p> <p>The Government has delayed the major spending review expected in 2019 and this will now happen in 2020. Further guidance is still awaited with regard to the impact of this on local government, but the expectation is that 2020-21 will be a roll forward of 2019-20.</p>
		<p>Produce the detailed budget for 2020-21 to a time frame that allows the Council to set a legal budget</p> <p>To hit the Full Council meeting in February 2020</p>	Completed and presented to Council in February 2019	Ian Smith - Finance Manager		See above, while detailed work continues, the Council will have a balanced budget for 2020-21, using funding from its Surplus Savings Reserve.

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To effectively monitor and report identified fraud		Produce quarterly budget monitoring reports to Committees, (both revenue and capital) and an Outturn report at yearend Quarterly reports to hit Committee deadlines	Quarterly	Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant John Steel - Management Accountant		Reports for the first quarter where presented to the first available committee and half yearly reports have / will be presented this month, including to this meeting.
		To provide continued financial support to East Cambs. Street Scene, including the production of monthly budget monitoring reports and cashflow projections for future years. On-going general support. Reporting to hit respective Company Board meetings.	Monthly reports introduced for management purposes and presented to Board meetings as appropriate	Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant		Monthly budget monitoring reports are being prepared and shared with ECSS management, with then further, ad-hoc financial information provided on request.
		Work with partners to provide a co-ordinated approach to tackling fraud (in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Anti-Fraud Network priorities) As required - On-going	The Cambridgeshire Anti-Fraud Network has been established and provides the means for a co-ordinated approach to tackling fraud	LGSS Internal Audit ARP Fraud Team		The main area of work for LGSS Internal Audit has been co-ordinating the review of the matches arising from the latest National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise. Work has also commenced to request data for the completion of the annual NFI Single Persons Discount exercise. At its meeting on the 17 th September 2019 ARP Joint Committee received a performance report detailing the value of fraud and compliance findings across all partners of £1,282,849 as at July 2019, this against an annual target of £1,300,000.

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<div style="background-color: red; height: 100%; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: blue; height: 100%; width: 100%; color: white; padding: 5px;"> To ensure the continued efficiency of Financial Services </div>		<p>Raise awareness of fraud and corruption across the organisation</p> <p>Review of Counter Fraud procedures, hot line and poster campaign</p>	<p>LGSS Internal Audit raised awareness of fraud and corruption within 2 x staff induction sessions.</p> <p>Editorial presented in ECDC Connect on fraud awareness.</p> <p>Completion of assessment on the Council's counter fraud arrangements against the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption.</p>	LGSS Internal Audit		<p>LGSS Internal Audit presented to the staff induction seminar for new employees in July 2019 covering fraud awareness. A second seminar is due to take place in November 2019.</p> <p>LGSS Internal Audit played a major part in the up-date of the Council's Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy which was approved by Full Council on the 17th October 2019 and now forms part of the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>A dedicated fraud reporting mailbox for members of the public to report any concerns has been set up and will be managed / reviewed by LGSS Internal Audit.</p> <p>The Council will participate in the International Fraud Awareness Week which takes place in November 2019.</p>
		<p>Pay 99% of undisputed invoices within 30 days</p>	<p>96.43% (for the first 11 months of 2018-2019)</p>	Eleanor Fretwell - Senior Accountancy Assistant		<p>96.98% - Whilst most services authorise their invoices in a timely manner during the period, one service had an unusually high percentage of failures in the first quarter due to the service lead being out of office for periods of time and the undertaking of a high level of scrutiny to ensure the accuracy of the charges received. The second quarter's rate improved to 98.22%.</p>

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		Average time taken to collect income in relation to external invoices (this indicator does not include Council Tax and Business Rates). Target to be below 25 days	Average collection time in the first eleven months of 2018-19 was 20.74 days	Eleanor Fretwell - Senior Accountancy Assistant		18.61 days
		Review the operation of the Payroll Service, in its second year of operation, to ensure that this is working as efficiently as possible and best advantage is being achieved from the greater use of self-service and workflow within the systems functionality	System implementation date was the 1 st April 2018 but we had more initial teething problems than would have been hoped for, which took much of 2018-19 to resolve	Lorraine Kratz – Payroll Officer		<p>The service we receive from MHR continues to be monitored and reviewed with the intention to seek further improvements.</p> <p>Much on-site remedial work has been undertaken in the past six months, which has further improved the workings of the system. However, as mandatory up-dates take place, these need to be monitored to ensure that they don't have unforeseen consequences in other parts of the system.</p>
		Pay 99.5% of staff the correct amount and on time	Target 99.5%	Lorraine Kratz – Payroll Officer		99.7% achieved in the first half of the year. However, with the Council implementing a new pay scale in the second half of the year there is an increased risk of error. Actions are being taken to mitigate this risk as much as possible.
		<p>Improve the process for the production of the Statement of Accounts</p> <p>Prepare the draft Statement of Accounts for 2018-19 by the end of May 2019 and then support the external auditors in undertaking their review by 31st July</p>	The 2017-18 draft Statement was produced in line with the end of May requirement, but our external auditors were unable to sign off the final Statement until the 3 rd August (missing the deadline by 3 days)	Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant		<p>The 2018-19 Statement of Accounts was produced in line with the statutory deadline of the 31st May, actually being posted onto our website on the 30th May.</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to significant resourcing issues within EY (our external auditors) these were not audited by the 31st July 2019.</p>

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		<p>To install CivicaPay software and fully implement its use (replacing the PARIS software previously used by the Council, which is no longer considered fit for purpose)</p> <p>Deadline for implementation 30th September 2019</p>	New target	Eleanor Fretwell - Senior Accountancy Assistant		There have been delays in the implementation of CivicaPay, but an implementation date has now been agreed for the 20 th November 2019 and significant user acceptance testing is currently taking place, to ensure that a minimal number of issues arise at this time.
To maintain an effective and well-maintained service		<p>Support the continued development of members of the Financial Services Team to ensure that they are given personal and professional career development opportunities</p> <p>To provide training to staff in line with their personal training and development plan as detailed in their appraisal document (90% of training needs to be met)</p>	Successfully completed – work will be on-going moving forward	Ian Smith - Finance Manager		Within the constraints of the team's budget, all members of staff are given the opportunity to attend training courses that assist them with their day to day duties.
Ensure that the Council's corporate risks are managed effectively and mitigations are put in place to reduce impact.	Delivering a financially sound & well managed council	<p>To regularly review higher level corporate risks, including:</p> <p>Public Sector Funding Loss of major income streams</p>	These risks are picked up when preparing the MTFS and budget. See section on ensuring the long term financial stability of the Council	Ian Smith - Finance Manager		These risks are picked up when preparing the MTFS and budget. See section on ensuring the long term financial stability of the Council.