

Service Plan 2022-2025 (rolling 3 years)	Head of Service:	Peter Vickers
	Strategic Director:	Graeme Clark
Service:	Finance and Property Services	Portfolio Holders:
		Cllr Mark Merryweather

This Service Plan is a rolling three year programme of both business as usual and project activity. It is reviewed annually to ensure it is consistent with and reflects the Council's priorities and the Medium Term Financial Plan. It has also been prepared within the context of the Covid pandemic which has had an impact on the timing of some projects due to staffing and resourcing implications. From time to time Service Plans will also be subject to review by councillors and officers as a result of the need to reprioritise resources to react to changing circumstances or opportunities. The progress is monitored on quarterly basis as part of the Corporate Performance Report reviewed by Senior Management Team, O&S Committees and Executive.

Service Profile

The Revenues and Benefits Service is responsible for the collection of council tax and business rates, the payment of housing benefit and council tax support. The key objectives for the service are:

- to provide a cost-effective revenue service that achieves the maximum collection rate possible for the Council Tax and Business Rates due from residents and businesses in the Borough
- to ensure our customers receive their entitlement to benefit to help them meet their housing costs and to make payments quickly and accurately.

The Finance Service provides a wide range of accountancy and exchequer services to internal and external customers, corporate risk and insurance management and corporate procurement function. The key objectives for the service are:

- to ensure robust and effective management of Waverley's financial resources with clear and transparent reporting of the Council's accounts and transactions
- to give clear advice to Members, staff and other organisations to support sound decision making and prudent financial management
- to manage all of the Council's incoming and outgoing financial transactions in accordance with good practice and Waverley's policy and control framework

Asset Management Team manages the property investment portfolio, develops and implements the Property Investment Strategy supporting the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Plan. Also provides professional asset management advice to council services and supports the management of the wider diverse operational asset base.

Service Team: Housing Benefit Service **Team Leader: Nicky Harvey - Revenues and Benefits Manager**

Ongoing Service Delivery - reviewed annually

Outcome 1. Waverley residents receive an efficient and accessible Housing Benefit Service.								
Corporate Priority: The value and worth of all residents, with opportunities for all, regardless of race, age, disability, religion, gender or sexual orientation, income or wealth. A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future. The health and wellbeing of our communities.								
Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/25 F1.1	All new housing benefit claims are responded to and where possible provisionally assess on the day of receipt.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Delay in entitlement assessment will negatively impact on claimants housing security.	S	Performance indicator shows that claimants do not have to wait to access service or are unduly delayed.
SP22/25 F1.2	Service performance standards (new claims and changes in circumstances processing) are within target turn around days.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Delay in entitlement assessment will negatively impact on claimants housing security.	S	Performance indicator shows that claimants do not have to wait to access service or are unduly delayed.
SP22/25 F1.3	Weekly review of service performance data with the Housing Benefits team and Head of Finance and Property to inform service delivery planning.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Service performance is not understood, corrective action cannot be taken.	D	Subsidy claim back is avoided

SP22/25 F1.4	Maintain dialogue with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to comply with their requirements for the implementation of Full Universal Credit (UC) (for all new working age claimants).	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Gap in service resulting in a detrimental impact on claimants moving over to Universal Credit.	S	Roll out policy on UC is complied with.
SP22/25 F1.5	Housing benefit subsidy financial performance will be reviewed monthly to maintain benefit calculation accuracy rate within the DWP performance parameters.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Financial impact on the council through subsidy clawback.	S	Monthly review of value of Local Authority Error subsidy calculation is below threshold.

Team Projects - Multi-year

Outcome 2.	Support the Business Transformation Customer Service initiative project objectives.							
	Corporate Priority: High quality public services accessible for all. A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future							
Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/25 F2.2	Collaborate with the Business Transformation Customer Service initiative to develop integrated customer service.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Failure to deliver improvement in customer service and lost opportunity to generate efficiency savings.	D	Integration of the service with the corporate customer service initiative

Ongoing Service Delivery - reviewed annually

Outcome 3.	Maximise collection of local taxation.							
	Corporate Priority: A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future							
Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/23 F3.1	Weekly review of local taxation service performance data with the service manager and Head of Finance and Property to inform service delivery planning.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Poor customer service, negative impact on tax base and collection rates.	D	All aspects of service remain under control with effective plans to manage demands upon capacity
SP22/23 F3.2	Implement a centralised financial systems and processes controls team to develop the effectiveness of corporate financial systems infrastructure, income and debt management, manage the Civica and Agresso systems integrity, development and administration, and responsible for DWP and collection fund government reporting.	None	01/10/2021	31/06/2022	Financial Services Manager (WS)	Inefficient transaction processing, weakened financial governance, inaccurate data reporting, compromised management information, financial systems integrity is impaired.	D	Systems are maintained proactively with no down or impact upon services.
SP22/23 F3.3	Manage the negative impact of Covid on council tax and business rates collection through additional temporary capacity.	Access to covid provision to fund enhanced temporary capacity	01/12/2021	31/03/2025	Revenues and Benefits Manager (NH)	Collection rates will remain below pre covid levels resulting in increased debt on the balance sheet, impaired customer service, debts will be difficult to recover from individuals and businesses experiencing financial pressure post lockdown.	D	Collection rates are maintained within the parameters set for the tax base in the MTFP.

SP22/23 F3.4	Re establish a debt recovery/collection service in house (or in collaboration with GBC) in readiness for the Reigate and Banstead notice to terminate the temporary recovery service agreement on 31/3/2022.	None - will be contained within existing base budget.	01/11/2021	31/03/2022	Financial Services Manager (WS)	Significant under collection of local taxation and increase in level of provision and write-off. Negatively impact revenue account.	D	Seamless of transfer of debt recovery service to inhouse provision.
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Team Projects - Multi-year

Outcome 4		CPR18-7						
		Corporate Priority: A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future						
Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/25 F4.1	Implement the Civica self service module to integrate into the corporate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and client portal.	People resource will be fully detailed in project plan.	01/06/2021	31/03/2023	NH and Walter Stockdale	Will negatively impact ability to integrate into the centralised customer service team and affects every household and business in the borough.	D	Implementation is completed as planned.
SP22/25 F4.2	Implement and commission "Civica Pay" replacement income management system.	Funding and capacity fully resourced.	01/11/2021	31/03/2023	Financial Services Manager (WS)	Current system "Adelante" will be out of support in 2022 by software house due to a recent takeover. This is a core financial system impacting on the transactional capability of all other systems.	D	Implementation is completed as planned.
SP22/25 F4.3	Identify opportunities to collaborate across revenues, benefits and financial service teams with GBC with the objective of saving money or building business resilience.	None	01/11/2021	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property	Lost opportunity to identify budget savings, service enhancement and resilience.	D	opportunities are identified or clearly demonstration of work done to identify opportunities to collaborate.

Service Team: Finance

Team Leader: Walter Stockdale/Rosie Plaistowe - Financial Services Managers

Ongoing Service Delivery - reviewed annually

Outcome 5.		Robust budget monitoring arrangements are in place that is commensurate with the size, risk, complexity and volatility associated with particular revenue budgets and capital schemes.						
		Corporate Priority: A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future						
Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/23 F5.1	Ensure the monthly management reporting is accurate, risk based and tailored to specific audiences.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Financial services Manager (Rosie Plaistow)	Inappropriate management information will impact decision making and governance.	D	Accurate management information is provided.
SP22/23 F5.2	Implement the CIPFA Financial management code.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2023	Financial services Manager (Rosie Plaistow)	Financial Governance will be sub-optimal and opportunities to improve will be missed.	S	Code is implemented based upon a gap analysis and action plan

SP22/23 F5.3	Ensure all services are supported with proactive financial management and support.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Financial services Manager (Rosie Plaistow)	Services carrying higher financial risk will not be adequately managed leading to potential financial loss.	D	Service expenditure is within budget and no surprises preventing timely management action.
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Outcome 6. An effective process is in place to ensure the Council has a balanced General Fund annual budget and robust Medium Term Financial Plan.

Corporate Priority: A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future

Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/25 F6.1	Ensure management are engaged in effective service planning and review processes.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property (PV)	Lack of understanding and buy-in to the current and future financial situation.	D	Management sign off their budget responsibilities.
SP22/25 F6.2	Review previous year annual outturn against current year performance and future budget requirements with Heads of Service.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property (PV)	Mis-aligned and uninformed management decisions.	D	Clear line of consistency between time periods and explanations for changes.
SP22/25 F6.3	Ensure the Policy Scrutiny committee and Executive are briefed on the all decisions that impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property (PV)	Decisions are taken out of line with the Medium Term Financial Plan.	D	Committees have had a chance to debate detail.
SP22/25 F6.4	Lead on developing and implementing actions plans to ensure a balanced annual budget and Medium Term Financial Plan.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property (PV)	Unsound financial situation.	D	All MTFP targets have clear actions plans to deliver.
SP22/25 F6.5	Lead on risk and governance management ensuring sound financial decision making.	None	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property (PV)	Unsound financial situation.	D	Clarity in process, plans developed in timely way.
SP22/25 F6.6	Ensure Treasury prudential limits are appropriate for market conditions (specified and non specified). Ensure treasury management performance by reviewing security, liquidity and return.	None	44652	45747	Financial Services Manager (WS)	Unsound financial situation.	S	Treasury management limits and performance is regularly reviewed.

Service Team: Asset Management (formerly Estate and Valuation) Team Leader: Caroline Wallis - Asset Manager

Ongoing Service Delivery - reviewed annually

Outcome 7. Increased revenue from the commercial portfolio.

Corporate Priority: A financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and resilient services fit for the future

Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/25 F7.1	Identify and develop opportunities to generate revenue through property development schemes to increase overall income in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan, Property Investment Strategy and HM Treasury "not for yield" guidelines.	Significant additional resource will be needed from reserves or from borrowing	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Asset Manager (CW)	This will impact negatively of budget projections.	D	Plan is in place and being actioned.
SP22/25 F7.2	Effectively manage the investment property portfolio in support of the Council's Carbon Neutrality Plan whilst ensuring income levels match or exceed budget targets.	Within existing budgets	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Asset Manager (CW)	This will impact negatively on budget projections and failure to reduce carbon emissions.	D	Carbon action plans are identified and in place.

SP22/25 F7.3	Ensure skilled staff recruited and/or retained. Engage external expertise as appropriate in acquisition, portfolio management and project delivery.	Within existing budgets	01/04/2022	31/03/2025	Head of Finance and Property	Insufficient skilled resource will negatively impact on our ability to meet this objective.	D	Service is performing and low staff turnover.
SP22/25 F7.4	Revise the Asset Management Strategy to incorporate the latest Property Investment Strategy, Capital Strategy, Financial Management Code and changes in Prudential Code.	None	01/11/2021	31/07/2022	Asset manager (VB)	The Asset Management framework will be out of date and impair the quality of the asset management governance potentially resulting in lost opportunity, negative financial impact.	D	Strategies are adopted.

Corporate compliance

Outcome 8. Standing Corporate Compliance Actions are achieved								
Corporate Priority: ALL								
Ref. No.	Actions / Outputs	Reference any additional resources needed	Start Date	End Date	Lead Officer	Impact of not completing the action	D/S*	Success is measured / demonstrated by
SP22/25 F8.1	All Performance Agreement Meetings are completed by the target date, staff targets are set and L&D identified.	Within existing budgets, support of HR Team needed	March	May	Head of Service	Staff performance and personal development is compromised and morale affected.	D	Objective achieved
SP22/25 F8.2	Service Plans are reviewed and budget implications fed into budget process.	Dependent on outcome of review, support of the Policy & Performance Officer	August	January	Head of Service	Corporate Strategy objectives will not be achieved.	D	The Service Plans proposals are prepared and presented to the OS and Executive
SP22/25 F8.3	Complete budget preparation in line with agreed timetable.	Within existing budgets, support of Finance Team	August	January	Head of Service	Legal obligations are jeopardised.	D	Budget adopted by Full Council.
SP22/25 F8.4	The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed and updated quarterly in accordance with the agreed timetable.	Dependent on outcome of review, support from the Procurement Officer	Quarterly		Head of Service	Risk Register is not kept up to date and risks are not identified sufficiently to protect the organisation.	S	HoS has updated the register
SP22/25 F8.5	Internal Audit Recommendations are actioned in line with agreed timescales.	Within existing budgets, support from the Internal Audit Manager	Ongoing		Head of Service	Organisation is put at risk.	D	no outstanding recommendations
SP22/25 F8.6	Annual Review of Employee Risk Assessments.	Within existing budgets, support from Emergency Planning Officer	April	July	Head of Service	Employees' health is potentially put at risk and the organisation fails to comply with the H&S regulations.	S	All employees to have completed their relevant risk assessments. Measured by annual audit via H&S team.
SP22/25 F8.7	Annual Business Continuity Plans Review.	Within existing budgets, support from Emergency Planning Officer	January	February	Head of Service	Unable to provide vital services in an emergency situation.	S	Each Service to review their business continuity plan annually. Measured by annual test of plans against most likely business continuity events

SP22/25 F8.8	Make sure that Accessibility regulations are adhered to – ensure all documents that appear on the Waverley website (owned by the service) are created in an accessible format and make available accessibility training to staff where appropriate. Make sure that Equality Impact Assessments are carried out by teams as appropriate.	Within existing budgets, support from Corporate Equality Group	Ongoing		Head of Service	Visually impaired website readers will be excluded from accessing documents. Failure to comply with the legislation puts the organisation at risk of being fined.	S	All documents published on our website to be accessible - checked quarterly by Website Team
SP22/25 F8.9	HoS to ensure that all staff within the service are aware of the current Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults-updated2020.docx process and procedures including the Safeguarding referral process and that any issues are dealt with in a prompt manner. Where required make sure that key members of staff complete appropriate training recommended by Waverley's Safeguarding Board.	Within existing budgets, support from Safeguarding Board	Ongoing		Head of Service	Failure to discharge our responsibility under the Care Act 2014 and Children Act 2004, and potentially putting lives and wellbeing of our residents and staff at risk.	S	Safeguarding Policy regularly refreshed and updated; staff and members know how to make a safeguarding referral to Surrey County Council's Children and Adult Services Training programme implemented and rolled out to all staff and members.
SP22/25 F8.10	Information management - data is deleted in accordance with the data retention schedule.	Within existing budgets, support from Data Protection Officer and Information Governance representatives	Ongoing		Head of Service	Failure to comply with the legislation puts the organisation at risk of being fined. Over retention of information is costly in terms of storage and access.	S	The teams can demonstrate that data outside of the retention period gets logged and safely disposed off

Last update: 05/01/2022 14:34

*D/S - Discretionary / Statutory