

Finance Services, Service Plan 2018-22 (2020/21)

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Introduction & Background

The Well-being for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires all public sector bodies to set Well-being objectives in their Corporate Plans. Newport City Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22 has set four Well-being objectives that supports the delivery of Wales' Well-being Goals:

1. To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities;
2. To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment;
3. To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient; and
4. To build cohesive and sustainable communities.

Newport Strategic Recovery Aims

At the start of 2020, Wales faced a Covid 19 pandemic which has impacted on the way which Newport Council and the Finance service in particular here delivers its services to communities. The Council's initial response was to protect frontline services, support the vulnerable in the community and ensure continuity of services. On the Council's road to recovery and reinstatement of services, Newport Council has established [Strategic Recovery Aims](#) that will enable the Council to learn from the impacts that Covid 19 caused, the new and emerging challenges that services face and the opportunities that have emerged from new ways of working. These Aims will support the Council's Corporate Plan and this Service Plan will support the delivery of these aims.

The Finance service comprises of four teams: Accountancy; Internal Audit; Procurement/e-payments; and Revenues. Together, the teams provide a diverse mix of services and activities that support the Council's service areas; setting overall policy frameworks for the whole Council; and Revenues, as one of the biggest external customer departments dealing with all households and businesses. Examples of the areas / functions include:

- Setting policy, good practice, training, support and co-ordination to enable effective financial management and strategic planning of a net revenue budget of c£300M, supporting over 200 budget manager's/service managers, Head teachers and Members;
- Supporting the organisation develop its services and deliver key projects with financial advice and support as needed;
- Providing assurance to the Council and Schools on the effectiveness and efficiency of its governance, risk management and internal control of its financial and non-financial resources including where necessary the investigation of impropriety / theft;
- Collect c£120M of income from Council Tax, Business Rates and various sundry debts.
- Manage and support the Council's interaction with its suppliers to ensure value for money through e-ordering, payments and support services in tendering / awarding / managing contracts.
- Supporting the Head of Finance in carrying out his statutory Section 151 responsibilities.

Through the Corporate Plan and beyond, Finance Services will continue to build on delivering more 'self-service' functions both internally such as the Council's Budget Management System and Procurement and externally through the Council's Customer Relationship System and *My Account* enabling residents and businesses to make more online payments. As the Council faces increasing demands on its services from its residents and businesses, the Council will need to make more difficult decisions and our Finance Business Partners will support and develop strong, integrated financial planning, management and governance. The Internal Audit team is already collaborating with Monmouthshire Council through the sharing of the Chief Internal Auditor and continue to provide high level assurance service to the Council on the financial and non-financial governance, risk management and internal control.

Specifically during the Covid-19 period, the service is focussed on a number of key issues:

- Delivering the 'business grants scheme' where all eligible companies operating from a business premise will be supported via a specific cash grant. Estimated cost c£32m
- Delivering the 'NNDR relief scheme' for eligible businesses
- Dealing with Council Tax and Business Rates payers during the challenging period and moving back to sympathetically recovering arrears etc in due course
- Checking for fraud during the administration of the various Covid-19 grants
- Ensuring the Councils key suppliers are supported during the challenging period, in particular those where services to the Council have been temporarily stopped or changed significantly. Ensuring we accelerate our payments processes to ensure we are able to re-claim as fast as possible and that suppliers are supported through this
- Ensuring all grant supported costs in relation to the pandemic is identified and re-claimed and provide financial forecasts and analysis to support both recovery of services and good financial management

Finance

The Council's budget for 2020/21 was agreed at [Council](#) on 27th February 2020. In 2020/21 Finance Services base revenue budget has been set as £3,434,000. For the financial year 2019/20 the budget for Finance Services was set as £3,267,000.

Finance Services Programmes and Projects 2020-22

To support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan 2017-22 objectives, Finance Services is delivering the following projects:

Programme / Project Name	Brief Programme / Project Description and how it supports the Corporate Plan.	Wellbeing (WB) Objective(s) that it supports	Does the project support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Corporate Theme(s)	Programme / Project Start Date	Anticipated Programme / Project Completion Date
Digital Transactions for Council Tax payers	To provide the means for customers to carry out routine transactions digitally. To enable citizens to access their council tax records and carry out routine transactions digitally which will improve efficiency, reduce costs and reduce unnecessary contact. It will also allow the Revenues Team to focus more on recovery of debts and not deal with low level transactional matters.	Not Applicable	No	Modernised Council	1 st November 2019	31 st October 2020
Council Tax & HMRC arrears project.	This is a pilot and HMRC data will be used to enable the Council to improve council tax collection and reduce significantly the cases that are sent to bailiffs each year. We will identify those households that are in Council Tax arrears and look to signpost them to specialist support which will provide advice, guidance, and measures to help them reduce their Council Tax arrears and other household's debts. This	Wellbeing Objective 2 – To promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment. Wellbeing Objective 3 – To enable people to be healthy, independent and resilient Wellbeing Objective 4 – To build cohesive and sustainable communities.	Not directly but it should help in recovering Council Tax arrears which funds the Council and therefore underpins all actions in that respect. It should also provide a better means of recovering debt	Thriving City Resilient Communities	1 st October 2020	31 st March 2022

Programme / Project Name	Brief Programme / Project Description and how it supports the Corporate Plan.	Wellbeing (WB) Objective(s) that it supports	Does the project support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Corporate Theme(s)	Programme / Project Start Date	Anticipated Programme / Project Completion Date
	will enable vulnerable households to better manage their finances and provide long term resilience and provide wellbeing and economic opportunities.		and provide support where needed and this is relevant during the recovery phase			
Upgrade to a new financial system	<p>The current financial system is on an unstable platform and consists of a number of different modular systems that feed into the ledger. It is important that a move is made to a more stable platform, preferably in the Cloud, and have a more integrated financial system.</p> <p>This should allow employees to access the systems on a remote basis more readily therefore supporting the Modernised Council and Strategic Recovery Aims linked into a more healthy and productive workforce.</p>	Not Applicable	<u>Strategic Recovery Aim 3</u> – Sustain a safe, healthy and productive workforce.	Modernised Council	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2022

Service Plan Objectives and Actions 2020/21

Finance Services has set 6 Objectives to deliver in 2020/21:

- Objective 1** – Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.
- Objective 2** – The Income Collection team will increase the options available for customers to transact digitally.
- Objective 3** – We will support the organisation by developing good financial management practices including: Robust medium term financial projections to ensure key priorities have funding and the organisation understands its financial challenge. We will support the delivery of efficiency and change; and enabling robust financial management by budget managers through effective systems, processes and business partnering.
- Objective 4** – To achieve earlier closedown of accounts and as minimum, meet statutory deadlines and requirements
- Objective 5** – Implement and embed the revised operating model for strategic procurement. Seek improvements in full P2P cycle process.
- Objective 6 (New)** – Embed principles of Fair and Local Procurement and Ethical Supply Chains into Procurement Gateway Process.
- Objective 7 (New)** – In collaboration with Her Majesty Revenues and Customs (HMRC), identify financially vulnerable households and signpost them to specialist partners to provide support, financial advice and guidance.
- Objective 8 (New)** - Administer and Pay Eligible Business Rate Covid-19 Grants
- Objective 9 (New)** - Implement and Administer the Business Rate Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme 2020-21
- Objective 10 (New)** - Establish Post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols

Objective 1		Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.				
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Internal Audit is a statutory requirement within local government in accordance with S151 Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; the team will comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Audit work will be undertaken to assess the adequacy of the internal control environment, governance and risk management, to ensure public money is being spent appropriately and fraud / error is minimised across all service areas. This will enable the Chief Internal Auditor to provide an annual overall opinion. The Internal Audit team will be alert to any potential fraudulent activity and will report any concerns to the Chief Internal Auditor who will risk assess the situation and decide whether or not to investigate further.</p> <p>The Internal Audit team will provide assurance that controls are working well and provide advice where improvements are required to encourage stronger financial management across all service areas. To add more value, where applicable, the Internal Audit will identify potential savings during the course of their work. The Chief Internal Auditor will provide assurance to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Not Applicable				
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Undertake audit work in line with the agreed Internal Audit Plan	<p>Sufficient audit work is undertaken to provide appropriate assurance on the effectiveness of governance, risk management and internal control.</p> <p>As a result of Covid 19 the full 2020/21 Audit Plan will not be achieved. We will work with Heads of Service to prioritise audit workload in order to provide appropriate assurance in key areas.</p>	No	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2021
2	Review and report on how many of the agreed management actions have been implemented within service areas to improve service delivery, controls and governance.	Service areas are implementing agreed management actions within the timescales agreed to improve service delivery, controls and governance. Where actions are not completed these are escalated accordingly.	No	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2021
3	Co-ordination of the review of returned data matches from NFI.	Where cases of fraud and corruption have been identified these are investigated thoroughly and appropriate action is taken.	No	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st October 2020	31 st March 2022

Objective 1		Internal Audit to provide assurance on the adequacy of the Council's systems of Governance, Risk Management and Internal Control to ensure the proper use of public funds and to minimise fraud and corruption within the Authority.				
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Internal Audit is a statutory requirement within local government in accordance with S151 Local Government Act 1972 and Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014; the team will comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Audit work will be undertaken to assess the adequacy of the internal control environment, governance and risk management, to ensure public money is being spent appropriately and fraud / error is minimised across all service areas. This will enable the Chief Internal Auditor to provide an annual overall opinion. The Internal Audit team will be alert to any potential fraudulent activity and will report any concerns to the Chief Internal Auditor who will risk assess the situation and decide whether or not to investigate further.</p> <p>The Internal Audit team will provide assurance that controls are working well and provide advice where improvements are required to encourage stronger financial management across all service areas. To add more value, where applicable, the Internal Audit will identify potential savings during the course of their work. The Chief Internal Auditor will provide assurance to the Audit Committee on a quarterly basis.</p>				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Not Applicable				
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
	Respond and then investigate allegations of fraud / corruption					
4	Raise awareness of the Council's Anti-fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy.	Members and Officers are aware of their role and responsibilities to report any incidents where fraud and corruption occur in the Council.	No	Chief Internal Auditor	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2021

Objective 2		The Income Collection team will increase the options available for customers to transact digitally.				
Objective Outcome(s)		To provide the means for customers to carry out routine transactions digitally. To enable citizens to access their council tax records and carry out routine transactions digitally which will improve efficiency, reduce costs and reduce unnecessary contact. It will also allow the Revenues Team to focus more on recovery of debts and not deal with low level transactional matters.				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the Action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Project plan and delivery of the project.	<p>We will have delivered a system that will enable residents and businesses to transact digitally and to have a self-service functionality.</p> <p>The outcomes of this work will improve the efficiency revenue transactions and provide greater options for users to monitor and pay their bills.</p>	No	Income Collection Manager	1 st December 2019	5 th June 2020
2	The facility to transact digitally has been installed and tested and is working. The next step involves imbedding the facility into the Newport City Council website as part of 'my council services' to offer a seamless experience for the customer.	<p>Digital transactions are now working and available, and are awaiting integration by the Council's web service software partner into the main council website.</p> <p>This aspect of the project has been delayed due to covid and key personnel not being available.</p>	No	Income Collection Manager	1 st March 2020	31 st October 2020
3	<p>Publicity campaign to inform residents of online services and encourage uptake.</p> <p>Following an initial soft launch of the online services a coordinated campaign will be run. This will include promotion on social media, council website and flyers included with council tax</p>	Raise awareness of the online services and encourage residents to transact digitally for routine council tax transactions.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1	Income Collection Manager	1 November 2020	31 March 2021

Objective 2		The Income Collection team will increase the options available for customers to transact digitally.				
Objective Outcome(s)		To provide the means for customers to carry out routine transactions digitally. To enable citizens to access their council tax records and carry out routine transactions digitally which will improve efficiency, reduce costs and reduce unnecessary contact. It will also allow the Revenues Team to focus more on recovery of debts and not deal with low level transactional matters.				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the Action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
	correspondence such as bills etc.					

Objective 3		We will support the organisation by developing good financial management practices including:				
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Robust medium term financial projections to ensure key priorities have funding and the organisation understands its financial challenge. We will support the delivery of efficiency and change plans. 2. Enabling robust financial management by budget managers through effective systems, processes and business partnering. 				
Objective Outcome(s)		The Council requires a robust medium term view of its financial position to ensure priorities can be delivered and that appropriate plans are developed to achieve balanced budget over the medium-term which are robust. This can be supported with effective and easy to use financial systems and processes.				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Continued improvement of transactional processes undertaken by the Centralised Accountancy Team.	Further standardised and automated processes by the centralised accountancy team including linking the manpower with the new HR system.	No	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2021
2	Bring schools finance systems in line with the Council finance systems including BMS.	This will allow for more efficient working practices and avoid duplication of work carried out by schools business managers and accountancy's schools finance team.	No	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	31 st July 2020
3	Upgrade the financial system which includes the integration of other systems, including the main ledger, procurement, debtors and asset register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A financial system on a more sustainable platform, preferably on the Cloud - Greater efficiency of working practices due to less down time and speed of processing - Far greater level of support and business continuity - Ability to access systems on multiple platforms such as mobile phones and tablets i.e. to authorise orders on the go. 	No	Assistant Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	1 st April 2022
4	Meet with Heads of Service to agree the impact on the individual service areas on the impact of their response and recovery of the Covid-19 impact, alongside the "business as usual" forecasts to be including within monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide Cabinet with a reliable, timely forecast on the position facing the authority. - Understand what measures are in place to mitigate the impact and implementation of those measures. 	No	Head of Finance	1 st April 2020	31 st December 2020

5	Carry out a capital workshop with Senior Officers to re-profile capital budgets in light of previous year's slippage, and understand the demands on the capital programme and the long-term impact of these on the Capital Programme.	- Make decisions on the future of the capital programme and its impact on the MTFP, taking into account the long-term affordability and sustainability of the programme.	No	Chief Accountant	1 st August 2020	30 th September 2020
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Objective 4		To achieve earlier closedown of accounts and as minimum, meet statutory deadlines and requirements				
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>For accounts year ending 31st March 2021 the financial accounts of the Authority will need to be audited and published 2 months earlier than the current deadline. This is a significant challenge for the accountancy department. Timescales as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For accounts year ending 31st March 2019 and 31st March 2020 the draft accounts deadline will move from 30th June 2019/20 to 15th June 2019 and the final accounts deadline from 30th September to 15th September. <p>For accounts year ending 31st March 2021 the draft accounts deadline will be 30th June 2021 and the final accounts deadline will be 31st July 2021.</p>				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Not Applicable				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the Action support the Strategic Recovery Aims(s)	Action Owner	Action Start date	Anticipated Completion date
1	Ongoing challenge of existing processes and timetables. Requires 'buy-in' from senior management and service areas. Timetable updated with processes completed in shorter timescales with some year-end tasks being completed in year.	Enable Service areas and senior management to become more efficient and effective in their monthly forecasting. This will also enable the Finance teams to provide more specialist support, advice and guidance to the high risk areas of the Council throughout the year.	No	Assistant Head of Finance	1st April 2019	30th July 2021
2	Work alongside Wales Audit Office to assess which areas of work accountancy can complete early in the year and can be audited before draft stage.	WAO provide an assurance function to ensure the Council continues to provide value for money to its citizens. The findings of the WAO enable continuous improvement of the Council's internal controls, governance and risk management of its finances.	No	Assistant Head of Finance	1st April 2019	30th July 2021

Objective 5		Implement and embed the revised operating model for strategic procurement. Seek improvements in full P2P cycle process.				
Objective Outcome(s)		Implement and embed the revised operating model for Strategic Procurement. Taking account of the resource levels within the function, to identify key outcomes and work-streams which need to be completed to ensure the Council is compliant with the Public Contract Regulations, WG policy that adds value, delivers financial/non-financial benefits wherever possible for the Council. Further improve the payment of manual invoices by seeking alternative payment methodologies to enhance the process– through procurement card solutions and any other viable payment options.				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Thriving City and Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)?	Action Owner	Action start date	Anticipated Completion date
1	Current Procurement Strategy expires 2019, new Strategy to be written.	New Procurement Strategy is approved and adopted by the Council. The adoption of the new Procurement Strategy will be aligned to the Wellbeing for Future Generations Act to encourage more local and sustainable procurement. This will support the City's local economy through business growth and employment opportunities.	Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st November 2019	30 th Sept 2020
2	Implement and embed the revised operating model for strategic procurement. Delivering both the added value strategic and operational elements of procurement. To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Procurement Gateway Board following appointment of new CEO • Compilation of and use of annual 'spend analysis' to identify opportunities for review e.g. off-contract spending etc. • If resource allows conduct reviews of spend to identify opportunities to 	The delivery of this actions ensures that the Council adheres to its Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the necessary legislative requirements. This action also ensures that procurement decisions are effectively managed at the right level of the organisation and can demonstrate value for money to citizens.	N/A	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2019	31 st March 2021

Objective 5		Implement and embed the revised operating model for strategic procurement. Seek improvements in full P2P cycle process.				
Objective Outcome(s)		Implement and embed the revised operating model for Strategic Procurement. Taking account of the resource levels within the function, to identify key outcomes and work-streams which need to be completed to ensure the Council is compliant with the Public Contract Regulations, WG policy that adds value, delivers financial/non-financial benefits wherever possible for the Council. Further improve the payment of manual invoices by seeking alternative payment methodologies to enhance the process– through procurement card solutions and any other viable payment options.				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Not Applicable				
Corporate Theme		Thriving City and Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)?	Action Owner	Action start date	Anticipated Completion date
	maximise value and / or deliver savings • Self-service opportunities for lower value competitive action					

Objective 6		Embed principles of Fair and Local Procurement and Ethical Supply Chains into Procurement Gateway Process				
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales have set out numerous ways to improve public procurement in order to contribute to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, in particular around ethical employment in supply chains, and using procurement to promote inclusive growth. This is in support of two key goals being A Prosperous Wales and A Globally Responsible Wales.</p> <p>Additionally, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic new requirements from Welsh Government also require the Council to ensure that its key 'at risk' suppliers are supported where appropriate both financially and operationally in the local and regional economy. This will also support any additional impacts from Brexit Trade negotiations.</p>				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Well Being Objectives 1, 2 & 3				
Corporate Theme		Thriving City, Resilient Communities, Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion
1	Review procurement documentation to ensure compliance with new & emerging WFG themes.	NCC tenders contribute to the wellbeing of supply chain employee's.	N/A	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2020	31 st March 2021

Objective 6		Embed principles of Fair and Local Procurement and Ethical Supply Chains into Procurement Gateway Process				
Objective Outcome(s)		<p>Welsh Government and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales have set out numerous ways to improve public procurement in order to contribute to the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, in particular around ethical employment in supply chains, and using procurement to promote inclusive growth. This is in support of two key goals being A Prosperous Wales and A Globally Responsible Wales.</p> <p>Additionally, as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic new requirements from Welsh Government also require the Council to ensure that its key 'at risk' suppliers are supported where appropriate both financially and operationally in the local and regional economy. This will also support any additional impacts from Brexit Trade negotiations.</p>				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Well Being Objectives 1, 2 & 3				
Corporate Theme		Thriving City, Resilient Communities, Modernised Council				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion
2	Ensure managers and officers across the Council are familiar with new CSO's which allow greater flexibility to ring-fence contract opportunities to local businesses.	Local businesses are given greater opportunity to supply the Council and contribute to local wealth building and economic growth.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2 Strategic Recovery Aim 3	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2020	30 th June 2020
3	Support Services Area's in the delivery of PPN/02 and PPN/04 requirements	To ensure our key 'at risk' suppliers are supported, where appropriate both financially and operationally in order for these suppliers to survive the fallout of COVID19, and be ready to recommence service delivery once the recovery phase is operating.	Strategic Recovery Aim 2 Strategic Recovery Aim 3	Strategic Procurement Manager	1 st April 2020	31 st December 2020

Objective 7		In collaboration with Her Majesty Revenues and Customs (HMRC), identify financially vulnerable households and signpost them to specialist partners to provide support, financial advice and guidance.				
Objective Outcome(s)		We will identify those households that are in Council Tax arrears and look to signpost them to specialist support which will provide advice, guidance, and measures to help them reduce their Council Tax arrears and other household's debts. This will enable vulnerable households to better manage their finances and provide long term resilience and provide wellbeing and economic opportunities.				
Well-being Objectives / Steps		Well Being Objectives 2, 3 and 4				
Corporate Theme		Resilient Communities				
Action No.	Action	Action Outcome(s)	Does the action support Strategic Recovery Aim(s)?	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion
1	Collate Data for submission to HMRC.	Comprehensive data collection and cleansing exercise to be undertaken.	Strategic Recovery Aim 4	Income & Collection Manager	1 st October 2020	31 st October 2020
2	Submit data to HMRC	Data submitted in the correct format	Strategic Recovery Aim 4	Income & Collection Manager	1 st October 2020	31 st December 2020
3	Data returned from HMRC with updated information.	Financially vulnerable households identified and offered support via specialist partners. Households with debt offered pathway to resolve and support to maintain payments.	Strategic Recovery Aim 4	Income & Collection Manager	1 st December 2020	31 st March 2022

Objective 8		Administer and Pay Eligible Business Rate Covid-19 Grants				
Objective Outcome(s)		To identify businesses eligible for financial help under Welsh Government's covid-19 business rate support grants scheme. Once identified to set up a mechanism for businesses to apply for and receive payment as quickly and efficiently as possible				
What Strategic Recovery Aim(s) does this objective support?		Strategic Recovery Aims 1 and 2				
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		To promote economic growth and regeneration and To build cohesive & sustainable communities				
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities				
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Does the Action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)?	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Create simple application process for businesses to apply for a business rate grant.	To ensure that businesses can easily apply for the grants that are available, whilst ensuring that the process is robust enough to capture the information needed to verify is entitlement to a grant under the terms of the scheme	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	20 th March 2020	1 st April 2020
2	Pay grants direct to eligible businesses.	Create a secure mechanism for payment via BACS to enable businesses to receive the funds as quickly as possible. The payment mechanism needs to get the payment to businesses whilst also meeting agreed anti-fraud criteria to reduce the possibility of fraudulent claims.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	28 th March 2020	7 th August 2020
3	Carry out an exercise with Welsh Government to capture state aid information for all applicants.	One off exercise to be carried out to capture information and collate into agreed format information from each business to ensure compliance with state aid rules.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	1 st August 2020	30 th September 2020

Objective 9		Implement and Administer the Business Rate Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Relief Scheme 2020-21				
Objective Outcome(s)		To assist businesses that operate in the retail, leisure and hospitality sectors that are affected by the covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown, Welsh Government has introduced a new rate relief scheme that removes the requirement for qualifying businesses to pay rates in 2020-21.				
What Strategic Recovery Aim(s) does this objective support?		Strategic Recovery Aims 1 and 2				
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		To promote economic growth and regeneration and To build cohesive & sustainable communities				
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities				
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Does the Action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)?	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Identify the businesses in the city that meet the qualifying criteria.	To provide accurate estimates of potential qualifiers so that Welsh Government can ensure that the correct level of funding is made available to the Council.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	20 th March 2020	1 st April 2020
2	Ensure that the business rate ICT system is updated with new software, tested and fully operational to facilitate the new scheme.	To issue revised business rate bills confirming that full rate relief has been awarded for 2020-21. Action to be completed prior to 5 April when the first direct debit of the year is due to be collected.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	28 th March 2020	2 nd April 2020
3	Keep accurate records and ensure the final reconciliation is provided to Welsh Government.	Final reconciliation to ensure that the Council is reimbursed for the full cost of the scheme.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	1 st April 2020	5 th April 2021

Objective 10		Establish Post Covid-19 Debt Recovery Protocols				
Objective Outcome(s)		To resume collection of arrears and establish a debt recovery protocol that recognises and assists individuals and local businesses as they endeavour to get back to normal following the pandemic and national lockdown.				
What Strategic Recovery Aim(s) does this objective support?		Strategic Recovery Aims 1 and 2				
What Well-being Objective(s) does this objective support?		To promote economic growth and regeneration and To build cohesive & sustainable communities				
What Corporate Theme(s) does this objective support?		Thriving City and Resilient Communities				
Action No.	Action Description	Action Outcome(s)	Does the Action support the Strategic Recovery Aim(s)?	Action Owner	Action Start Date	Anticipated Completion Date
1	Recruit to fill existing vacancies within the Income & Collection Section.	New staff recruited.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	1 st August 2020	30 th September 2020
2	Identify key personnel responsible for recovering debts.	Staff to be allocated to a specific recovery caseload.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	1 st August 2020	31 st March 2021
3	Work with partner agencies and 3 rd sector to provide advice and assistance to those with debts and financial problems.	Hold regular liaison meetings with partner organisations such as CAB to establish a joined-up approach to assisting those with arrears to find a sympathetic and sustainable way collect the debt.	Strategic Recovery Aim 1 Strategic Recovery Aim 2	Income & Collection Manager	1 st September 2020	1 st March 2021

Finance Services Performance Measures 2020/21

Performance Measure	National / Local / Management Information	Service Plan (SP) Objective	2018/19 Actual	2018/19 Target	2019/20 Target	2020/21 Target
Percentage of Internal Audit Plan completed	Local	Objective 1	83%	82%	82%	41%
Percentage agreed management actions - implemented within 6 months of receipt of final Internal Audit Report.	Local	Objective 1		90%	90%	90%
Percentage of audits started	Management Information	Objective 1	88%	82%	82%	41%
Percentage of draft reports issued	Management Information	Objective 1	83%	N/A	N/A	41%
Percentage of final reports issued	Management Information	Objective 1	48%	N/A	N/A	25%
Number of days to issue a draft report	Management Information	Objective 1	11	10 days	10 days	10 days
Number of days to issue a final report	Management Information	Objective 1	3	5 days	5 days	5 days
Directly chargeable time against planned productivity	Management Information	Objective 1	89%	N/A	N/A	50%
Percentage Non Domestic Rates Collected	National	Objective 2	97.07%	97%	97%	95%
Percentage Council Tax Collection	National	Objective 2	96.64%	97%	97%	95%
Percentage total Council Tax Collected as a percentage of annual budgeted amount.	Local	Objective 2	101.35%	100%	100%	100%
Increase Council Tax accounts paid by Direct Debit	Local	Objective 2	60%	74%	75%	76%
% of Council Tax and NNDR transactions (payments & basic administration tasks) completed online.	Local	Objective 2	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%
Percentage of Council Tax arrears collected	Management Information	Objective 2	155.28%	40%	40%	40%
Percentage of NNDR arrears collected	Management Information	Objective 2	52.42%	40%	40%	40%
Percentage Payment of Invoices within timescales	Local	Objective 5	88.9%	90%	90%	90%
Total value of spend through the procurement card	Local	Objective 5	N/A	N/A	£1.825m	£2.625m

Glossary

National – Collected and reported to an external organisation such as Welsh Government / Estyn / WLGA etc for benchmarking / comparison

Local – specifically collected and reported by NCC / Service area to support delivery of an objective.

Management Information – Collected and reported to support the delivery of a specific activity and/or service.

Current Service Area Risks 2020/21

Risk Name	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Corporate Risk / Service Risk	Risk linked to Wellbeing Objective	Risk linked to Corporate Theme?	Risk linked to Service Objective?	Inherent Risk Score (0-25)	Target Risk Score (0-25)
Balancing the Council's Medium Term Budget	To meet the Council's requirement of reducing the gap between Council spend and budget allocation over the next 3-5 years' timescale The challenge is significant over the medium term but the Council to date has managed to produce balanced annual budgets which is the basic minimum requirement	Assistant Head of Finance	Corporate Risk	Not Applicable	Not applicable	Not Applicable	16	10
Finance Staffing (Recruitment & Resilience)	Finance has historical issues to recruit for key positions in the service area also to ensure there is sufficient cover / technical expertise for key roles.	Head of Finance	Service Risk	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	12	6
ICT Key systems (Oracle / C Tax / NNDR) failure	Key systems (Oracle / C Tax / NNDR) failure which would have very significant implications for service delivery and organisational impacts.	Assistant Head of Finance	Service Risk	Not Applicable	Modernised Council	Not Applicable	16	5
ICT – Self Service within C Tax / NNDR area	Self-service within C Tax / NNDR area does not develop because of lack of IT capacity.	Income Collection Manager	Service Risk	Not Applicable	Modernised Council	Objective 2. Increase Income Collection Digital Transaction options.	12	6
In Year Financial Management / Covid 19 implications	This risk is related to the in year financial management of forecasting of expenditure against the Council's budget. Due to Covid 19, there is significant financial impact on the Council due to increased costs to support the recovery, loss of income and	Assistant Head of Finance	Corporate Risk	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	20	6

Risk Name	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Corporate Risk / Service Risk	Risk linked to Wellbeing Objective	Risk linked to Corporate Theme?	Risk linked to Service Objective?	Inherent Risk Score (0-25)	Target Risk Score (0-25)
	delay in delivering against identified savings. WG financial support package not yet known in detail but provides some mitigation and lower probability.							
Procurement – Risk of Non Compliance	Risk of non-compliant procurement taking place outside of the corporate service.	Strategic Procurement Manager	Service Risk	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Objective 5. Review operating model for strategic procurement.	12	5
(New) Post Covid-19 Income Reduction	Collection of Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts has been adversely affected by the covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown. There is a risk that the resumption of normal debt recovery will come too late in the year to ensure that the usual income collection is achieved in 2020-21.	Head of Finance	Service Risk	No	Yes strategic aims 1 & 2	Objective 10. establishing a post covid debt recovery protocol (new objective)	20	9
(New) Internal Audit to provide sufficient assurance to management	Due to the Covid 19 pandemic and potential future lock downs, the Council's Chief Internal Auditor may not be able to deliver the full 2020/21 audit programme and therefore unable to provide an appropriate level of assurance across all planned service areas on governance, internal control and risk management arrangements in place.	Chief Internal Audit	Service Risk	No	Not Applicable	Objective 1.	12	3

5x5 Risk Matrix

Probability	5	5 - Moderate	10 - Major	15 - Severe	20 - Severe	25 - Severe
	4	4 - Moderate	8 - Moderate	12 - Major	16 - Severe	20 - Severe
	3	3 - Low	6 - Moderate	9 - Major	12 - Major	15 - Severe
	2	2 - Low	4 - Moderate	6 - Moderate	8 - Moderate	10 - Major
	1	1 - Very Low	2 - Low	3 - Low	4 - Moderate	5 - Moderate
		1	2	3	4	5
		Impact				

Inherent Risk	This is based upon the initial risk score given in the absence of any controls.
Target Risk	This is the level of risk the Council, service area, programme / project is willing to tolerate in reflection of the Council's overall Risk Appetite (See Risk Management Policy).