

# SERVICE PLAN 2009/10 – FINANCIAL SERVICES

## NOW ANALYSIS

### THE SERVICE

**Objective:** To provide efficient, effective and well managed financial service to the council so that the Council can carry out its functions and that its financial matters comply with legislation, in particular the Deputy Chief Executive's statutory responsibility.

**Budget:** Gross Expenditure (excluding Benefits payments) £6,446,230, Benefit payments £28,771,280, net expenditure £3,451,170

**Staffing:** 56.8 FTE

The Service Teams:

- a. **Accountancy** Statutory Accounts, Financial Advice, revenue and Capital budgets, Budget Monitoring, Tax, Financial returns and claims, Treasury Management, Insurance,.
- b. **Exchequer Services** Payment of Invoices, Collection of Sundry Debts and Income Management, Concessionary Fares, Petty Cash
- c. **Revenues** Collection of all sums of money due to the council from council tax and business rates
- d. **Benefits** Calculation and payment of Housing Benefits,

Key Partners: Valuation Office Agency, Department of Works and Pensions (DWP), Pension Service, Rent Service, Audit Commission, IT suppliers, Canterbury City Council and other Kent Local Authorities.

### PERFORMANCE

Information on performance can be found in the quarterly Budget and Performance Monitoring Reports to the Executive.

## WHERE ANALYSIS

### GOALS

#### Short Term

- Close 2008/09 Accounts by the end of June with positive comments from auditors
- Promote Financial awareness throughout the organisation (GQS)
- Produce balanced budget (GQS)
- Manage the adoption of IFRS into the SORP
- Achieve KLOE level 3 (GQS)
- Progress with partnership/shared services initiative (GQS)
- Pay 96.5% of invoices within credit terms (GQS)
- Achieve target for Local PI's (GQS)
- Achieve top quartile for National Indicators (NI)
- Investigate further shared service initiatives in Revenues & Benefits
- Implement VICTER (electronic Rent Service information exchange)
- Introduce Direct Debit collection for Sundry Debts
- Major upgrade of i-world (Revenues & Benefits software system)
- Fraud & Visiting Service to be administered in a shared service partnership
- Ensure excellent rating in the DWP's Performance Standards in preparation of CAA inspection
- Upgrade eFin to version 3.4 to deliver BTP review findings
- Improve current score for Use of Resources
- Complete all Equality Impact Assessments
- Shared Service in operation for Insurance Administration

#### Medium Term

- Achieve 2% efficiency savings (GQS)
- Develop a strategy to balance the MTFP position.
- Pay 97% of invoices within credit terms (GQS)
- Achieve top quartile for NI's (GQS)
- Achieve target for Local PI's (GQS)
- Implementation of new fees for Bailiffs
- Provide e-billing service for Council Tax and NNDR
- Implement any Government changes to the Revenues & Benefits Service
- Shared Services Accountancy and Debtors as per BRS
- Shared Service in operation for Debtors and Creditors

#### Long Term

- Develop a strategy to balance the MTFP position.
- Manage any Local Government reorganisation proposals.
- Pay 97.5% of invoices within credit terms (GWS)
- Achieve top quartile for NI's (GQS)
- Achieve target for Local PI's (GQS)
- Implement Governments review of Council Tax Benefit
- Implement any other Government changes to the Revenues & Benefits Service
- Shared Service in operation for Revenues & Benefits

### IMPROVEMENT PLAN/STRATEGIES

#### People & Finance

- Meet training needs of staff members
- Hold Monthly team meetings
- Further enhance a process of skills gap analysis with action plans to close any gaps
- Reduce cost of Service at all opportunities
- Continue to develop staff through generic working in Revenues and Benefits.
- Improve performance through Performance Management system

#### Technology

- Continue to develop e-fin with the introduction of workflow
- Improve training programme and guidance notes for e-fin users
- Develop e-fin user group and develop partnership working with other authorities
- Implement e-procurement
- Improve use of technology for Bank Reconciliation
- Continue to develop i-world, DIP and workflow
- Keep Revenue and Benefit users updated and trained on all system changes & upgrades
- Implement e-billing
- Promote customer self help at all opportunities

#### Strategies

- Implement all Legislative changes
- Development of MTFP process
- Use of Resources KLOE action plan
- Improve take up of BACS payments
- Promote refunds by BACS
- Promote payment by Direct Debit
- Implement Internal Audit recommendations.

