



BROMLEY CIVIC CENTRE, STOCKWELL CLOSE, BROMLEY BRI 3UH

TELEPHONE: 020 8464 3333

CONTACT: Philippa Gibbs
Philippa.Gibbs@bromley.gov.uk

DIRECT LINE: 020 8461 7638

FAX: 020 8290 0608

DATE: 14 June 2021

To: Members of the
**EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Christopher Marlow (Chairman)

Councillor Kira Gabbert (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Yvonne Bear, Nicholas Bennett MA J.P., David Cartwright QFSM,
Mary Cooke, Nicky Dykes, Robert Evans, Will Harmer, Colin Hitchins, Simon Jeal,
Melanie Stevens, Michael Tickner, Pauline Tunnicliffe and Angela Wilkins

A meeting of the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and
Scrutiny Committee will be held Bromley Civic Centre on **WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE
2021 AT 7.00 PM**

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at the Civic
Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH. Members of the public can attend the
meeting: you can ask questions submitted in advance (see item x on the agenda) or
just observe the meeting. There will be limited space for members of the public to
attend the meeting – if you wish to attend please contact us, before the day of the
meeting if possible, using our web-form:

<https://www.bromley.gov.uk/CouncilMeetingNoticeOfAttendanceForm>

Please be prepared to follow the identified social distancing guidance at the meeting,
including wearing a face covering.

MARK BOWEN

Director of Corporate Services

Copies of the documents referred to below can be obtained from

<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>

PART 1 AGENDA

Note for Members: Members are reminded that Officer contact details are shown on each
report and Members are welcome to raise questions in advance of the meeting.

STANDARD ITEMS

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, questions that are not specific to reports on the agenda must have been received in writing 10 working days before the date of the meeting.

Questions specifically on reports on the agenda should be received within two working days of the normal publication date of the agenda. Please ensure that questions specifically on reports on the agenda are received by the Democratic Services Team by **5pm on 17 June 2021.**

a **QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE**

b **QUESTIONS FOR THE RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING AND CONTRACTS MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

4 **MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 MAY 2021 (EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS) (Pages 5 - 18)**

5 **MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 19 - 28)**

6 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS (Pages 29 - 36)**

HOLDING THE RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING AND CONTRACTS PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO ACCOUNT

7 **RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING AND CONTRACTS MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

Portfolio Holder decisions for pre-decision scrutiny.

a **TREASURY MANAGEMENT - ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21_(Pages 37 - 54)**

HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT

8 **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

Members of the Committee are requested to bring their copy of the agenda for the Executive meeting on 30 June 2021.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS

9 **CUSTOMER SERVICES CONTRACT MONITORING REPORT (Pages 55 - 70)**

Please note: Appendix 1 is marked "to follow".

10 **EXCHEQUER SERVICE - CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REPORT (Pages 71 - 92)**

11 **BENEFITS SERVICE MONITORING REPORT\COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT\REDUCTION 2022/23 (Pages 93 - 116)**

12 REVENUES SERVICE MONITORING REPORT (Pages 117 - 136)

13 QUESTIONS ON THE EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS INFORMATION BRIEFING

The briefing comprises:

- Risk Management

Members have been provided with advance copies of the briefing via email. The briefing is also available on the Council's website at the following link:

<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=559&Year=0>

This item will only be debated if a member of the Committee requests a discussion be held, in which case please inform the Clerk 24 hours in advance indicating the aspects of the information item you wish to discuss. Questions on the briefing should also be sent to the Clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting.

PART 2 AGENDA

14 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

The Chairman to move that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

Items of Business

Schedule 12A Description

- | | |
|---|---|
| 15 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 25 MAY 2021 (Pages 137 - 138) | Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) |
| 16 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE REPORTS (IF ANY) | |

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EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 25 May 2021

Present:

Councillor Christopher Marlow (Chairman)
Councillor Kira Gabbert (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Yvonne Bear, Nicholas Bennett MA J.P.,
David Cartwright QFSM, Nicky Dykes, Robert Evans,
Colin Hitchins, Simon Jeal, Keith Onslow,
Melanie Stevens, Michael Tickner, Pauline Tunnicliffe and
Angela Wilkins

Also Present:

Councillor Graham Arthur, Portfolio Holder for Resources,
Commissioning and Contracts Management
Councillor Julian Benington and Councillor Tony Owen

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Will Harmer and Councillor Mary Cooke. Councillor Keith Onslow attended as substitute for Councillor Cooke.

The Chairman welcomed those present – particularly the new Members of the Committee - to the first meeting of the new municipal year, noting that it was the first physical meeting of the Committee following what was best described as a ‘peculiar’ year.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Colin Hitchins declared that he had a pecuniary interest in respect of Items 8 and 14 on the Executive Agenda (Biggin Hill Airport Ltd) and left the meeting for the duration of these items.

3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received.

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4 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2021 (EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)

The minutes of the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee meeting held on 24 March 2021, were agreed and signed as a correct record.

5 MATTERS OUTSTANDING AND WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD21059

The report dealt with the Committee's business management including matters outstanding from previous meetings and the proposed work plan for the remainder of the year.

The Committee agreed that its overarching priorities for 2021/22 would be:

1. The Income and Expenditure of the Council post Covid-19,
2. A Review of the best sources of funding for the Council's Housing and Capital Programme,
3. A Review of the Procurement Framework post Brexit, and
4. Review of the timetable for the Council's Transformation Programme and monitor the Transformation Programme to ensure that new technology was used wherever appropriate in order to ensure that the Council's operations were economic, effective and efficient

In addition to the above priorities, Members requested that in October 2021, the Committee undertake a review of the Covid grants that had been received and the way in which the grants had been administered.

Members noted that the Committee's Work Programme would be updated to reflect the Scrutiny of the Amey contract in September.

A Member requested that consideration be given to conducting a review of the Governance of the Council including the Scheme of Delegations, procurement processes and local planning protocols. It was agreed that a recommendation should be made to the Executive for the Constitutional Improvement Working Group to be convened within the next three months.

The Chairman noted that Scrutiny of the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contracts Management had been included in the June meeting of the Work Programme in error. This Scrutiny would instead take place in January 2021.

In addition, the Committee requested that the Information Items be included on the agenda as a substantive item giving Members the chance to call for a discussion on the item (with notice) if necessary.

RESOLVED: That

- 1. The report be noted and the Work Programme updated as required; and**
- 2. The Executive be recommended to convene a meeting of the Constitutional Improvement Working Group within the next 3 months.**

6 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Key Decisions covering the period April 2021 to July 2021.

Members noted that three items due for consideration by the Executive at its May meeting had been delayed:

Procurement of HR/Payroll Software - The report had unfortunately been delayed and was now due to go to the next meeting as a result of some outstanding information regarding change to costs. The current contract was in place until June 2023 with the project planned to start in November 2021.

Adventure Kingdom – the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) was considering its options and a formal proposal was awaited. It was anticipated that the report would be presented to the Executive in July 2021.

Countryside Housing – It was anticipated that the report would be presented to the Executive in July 2021 following receipt of outstanding information. It was noted that this report would be scrutinised by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee.

In respect of the Building a Better Bromley report, a Member noted that both Councillor Fawthrop and Councillor Bennett had, in December 2020, submitted amendments concerning the previous report presented to the Committee. The Member expressed the hope that the Report Author would contact both these councillors prior to the return of the final draft of the Building a Better Bromley Strategy in June 2021.

7 SCRUTINY OF THE RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING & CONTRACT MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contracts Management, Councillor Graham Arthur, attended the meeting to respond to questions from the Committee. Councillor Arthur gave a brief introduction highlighting the following issues:

- It had been a busy year for the Council's IT Team who had supported a number of high profile events throughout the last Mayoral year and had recently been involved in delivering the live stream for the Annual Council meeting on 19 May 2021 and were now supporting the transition back to in-person meetings.

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- The current BT Contract was due to expire in 2023 and Officers were currently reviewing options.
- A review of Polling Stations was underway following the Boundary Review and Members' views were welcomed.
- The Corporate Procurement Team would be producing updated procurement guidance to reflect the position post-Brexit.
- The cleaning contact had been let to the cleaners who were currently providing the Council's Covid deep clean. The TUPE process for relevant staff was underway.
- Disposal of the Y Blocks was a priority and had been achieved.
- The Council's Team of Registrars had performed outstandingly throughout the last year. They had been on the Covid front-line supporting bereaved families and it was important to recognise that the Council owed them much. The Portfolio Holder cited examples of the many instances where staff within the Team had gone above and beyond the call of duty to support the residents of the Borough. The Portfolio Holder reported that he had recently authorised an uplift of 5% for charges and the decision had been taken to scrap the fee for registering the death of a child.
- A draft document setting out the principles of the much-anticipated return to work had been produced and staff within the HR department had been working on innovative solutions to address issues of isolation amongst staff.
- In respect of the return to the Office, it was likely that a hybrid approach to agile working would be taken.
- The Council had a balanced budget for the next 2 years but there was more uncertainty in year 4. The Portfolio Holder held monthly meetings with Senior Officers to discuss the budget and the Cabinet received regular updates of the financial position and the Council's Transformation Agenda.

The Portfolio Holder then responded to questions, making the following comments:

- As yet it was unclear how procurement processes would evolve and what the benefit to smaller local businesses would be. The Portfolio Holder confirmed that all opportunities would be reviewed and considered as they presented.
- It was anticipated that staff would begin to return to the office from 21st June 2021, in line with the national roadmap. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that it would be for managers to agree work patterns and workload for their staff.
- It was right that staff were properly rewarded and in Bromley high performing staff were rewarded in targeted ways.
- During the last 14 months many Council staff had willingly and voluntarily gone over and above what could reasonably be expected of them, undertaking everything expected of them and more. Members stressed their pride in the Council's staff. The Chairman suggested

that case studies of some of the fantastic work done by staff to support the Borough's residents should be encapsulated in case studies and made available to the public.

- Inevitably there had been a degree of 'firefighting' last year as the Council tried to quantify the impact of the pandemic and plan its response. There would now be a need to review whether there was a need for staff to continue to be seconded into Covid related positions. The issue of staff flexibility with staff working across a number of roles in different departments was something for managers to consider and could be discussed with the Departmental Representatives (Dep Reps).
- Members noted that there had been very little "vaccine hesitancy" amongst LBB staff and that the evidence suggested that most staff, including front line staff, were keen to receive their jab.
- A review of the Council's procurement processes was under way and it was hoped that this would result in a more simplified and streamlined process. The Portfolio Holder highlighted that at its meeting in February 2021, the Committee had received an update on the implications of the Government's Procurement Green Paper. The paper was available on the website and Members, especially those who were new to the Committee, were encouraged to re-familiarise themselves with its contents.
- The Dep Reps fulfilled a vital role and should be extremely proud of the work they had delivered including the Mental Health First Aiders Initiative. Going forward they would be consulted on plans for the way in which staff across the Council worked.
- A review of the Property Portfolio was underway and 80% of condition surveys had been completed. Properties to take to the market were identified on a case by case basis. The Council was required to deliver improvements to the Old Palace site and these would be prioritised. In terms of other office accommodation there would be a review of what could be released once staff returned to the office.
- Going forward the Transformation Programme would evolve and would inevitably be informed by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Largely the Transformation Workstreams were on track.

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder for his update.

8 RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING AND CONTRACTS MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the following report where the Resources, Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision.

**a POST COMPLETION REVIEW REPORT - UPGRADE OF
CORPORATE CUSTOMER SERVICES IT SYSTEMS
INCLUDING MS DYNAMICS CRM SYSTEM AND
CORPORATE WEBSITE
Report CSD21052**

The report set out the successful outcomes of the Upgrade of the Corporate Customer Services IT systems including MS Dynamics CRM System and Corporate Website funded from the capital programme.

In response to questions the Assistant Director of Customer Services confirmed that the software supported the corporate website and the customer relationship management system used by the Customer Services Team.

In respect of the cost of the short-term extension, the Assistant Director explained that Microsoft had withdrawn support for the software and arrangements had been put in place for BT to conduct a full review. Consequently, it was felt that the short-term extension represented value for money as the advice from the Council's IT Department was that software had to be supported in the interests of data compliance.

RESOLVED: That the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the findings of the Post Completion Reviews that have been carried out in respect of:

- **The successful upgrade of the CMS Corporate Website to the Jadu Continuum product and the successful migration of the My Bromley Accounts to the new software.**
- **The successful upgrade of Microsoft Dynamics to Version 2011 and the completion of the IT Options Appraisal which outlined the roadmap to move from Dynamics 2011 to Jadu CXM.**

9 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 26 May 2021:

(6) CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE REPORT

The report provided the Executive with key updates on behalf of the senior leadership team across a number of areas including the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, COVID-19 Staff Wellbeing Survey, Return to office working approach, Arrangements for committee meetings, and Economic Development Strategy for 2021 – 2031.

The Director of Finance highlighted that the response from staff in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic had been incredible. There had also been an amazing response to the Staff Wellbeing Survey with a number of staff speaking positively about working for the Council. Thanks was expressed to Members for the support that had been provided throughout the last 14 months.

The Committee noted that there was now a need to look to the future and focus on rebuilding the economy. A key aspect of this would be joint working with partners in the health sector and progress was already being made in this area. There was now a focus on setting aside resources to begin to rebuild post-Covid.

Members highlighted the importance of building on the progress that had been made in relation to agile working, noting that the Covid pandemic had “fast forwarded” plans for agile working. It was recognised that going forward there was a need to harness the benefits that could be delivered in terms of savings on office accommodation and reduction in Council estate.

The Committee noted that the Covid pandemic had significantly impacted on a number of Departments across the Council. It was notable that there had been an unprecedented increase in the number of planning applications received and additional staff had been brought on board to manage this additional demand.

A Member highlighted the opportunities that had now presented in terms of holding remote Member-level meetings. It was noted that back in 2012, the then Secretary of State for Communities, Housing and Local Government had dismissed the idea of remote meetings. However, throughout the pandemic a highly successful programme of remote meetings had been held and this progress should now be sustained. Although Members had now returned to in person meetings there should still be the option of remote meetings available to Members who were unable to attend in person meetings for whatever reason. The technology was in place and had been proven to work. The Chairman suggested that the Leader should be asked to make representations to this effect to the relevant Minister and it was suggested that the Council should provide a response to the Government Call for Evidence in respect of the future of remote meetings.

The Committee noted that the Economic Development Strategy would be considered by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to note the report.

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**(7) SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES – LOT 1: ADULT SERVICES
CONTRACT VARIATION; LOT 2: YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES
CONTRACT VARIATION
Report CSD21062**

The Substance Misuse Service for Adults and Children was an integrated provision for drugs and alcohol services with the aim of moving an individual from the position of problematic drugs and/or alcohol misuse to a position of stability, improved health and positive engagement with employment or education and the community. On 21st May 2018, Executive approved the award of two contracts to Change Grow Live for the provision of Adults Substance Misuse Services and Young Peoples Substance Misuse Services. Both Contracts were awarded for a period 3 years commencing on 1 December 2018 to 30th November 2021, with an option to extend for a further period of up to 2 years. The Adult Service contact had an annual value of £1,349k and a whole life value (inclusive of extension option) of £6,745k. The Young People's contract had an annual value of £149k and a whole life value (inclusive of the extension option) of £745k. On 8th April 2021, Public Health received a Section 31 Local Authority grant of £207k for a one-year non-recurring funding for schemes to support improvements in interventions to reduce drug related offending and deaths in 2021/22. It was proposed to utilise this grant via a variation to the existing Adults Substance Misuse contract. The report sought authorisation to draw down the Section 31 grant and the subsequent variation to the Adults Substance Misuse contract; and to extend both contracts in accordance with their terms.

The Chairman reported that he had spoken with the Chairman of the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee who had no significant concerns surrounding the proposed decision although there was some disappointment around the timing of the decision which had prevented scrutiny by that Committee.

The Assistant Director for Public Health explained that the proposals to the Executive were to utilise a one-off grant to deliver improved treatment. The proposed improvements would be delivered through the existing contract and this required the contract with the existing provider to be varied. Members noted that challenging targets had been set in order to deliver the improvements and it was hoped that this would provide the necessary impetus to move the programme on.

Members noted that one of the specific conditions of the grant was to support adult ex-offenders in recognition of the pressures in this area. Members further noted that the current provider already worked with ex-offenders and detailed consideration had been given to the most effective schemes for the use of the grant. It was anticipated that use of the grant in this way and the multi-disciplinary approach being adopted would lead to system improvement.

The Committee noted that going forward the success of the grant in terms of the outcomes delivered would be scrutinised by the Adult Care and Health PDS Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to approve

- 1. the draw down of the total grant amount of £207k to be used as set out in Paragraphs 3.1 – 3.3.**
- 2. The variation of £177k to the Adults Substance Misuse Services Contract for a period of one year commencing 1st June 2021 and expiring on 31st May 2022**
- 3. The extension of the Adults Substance Misuse Services Contract for a period of two years from 1st December 2021 to 30th November 2023 at an annual value of £1,349k as allowed for within the Contract; and**
- 4. The extension of the Young People’s Substance Misuse Services Contract for a period of two years from 1st December 2021 to 30 November 2023 at an annual value of £149k as allowed for within the Contract.**

At 9.50pm the Chairman proposed that the meeting guillotine be extended to 10.30pm to enable the remaining business on the agenda to be satisfactorily concluded. The motion was seconded, put to the vote and CARRIED.

**(8) BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT LTD (BHAL) REQUEST TO VARY THE USER CLAUSE OF THE AIRPORT LEASE BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND BHAL
Report CSD21048**

Having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, Councillor Colin Hitchins left the meeting for the duration of this item and item 14 on the Executive agenda.

The Leader was present throughout the item via conference call to listen to the debate and hear the views of elected Members.

BHAL had formally notified the Council of their intention to seek to modify the definition of “Permitted User” in Clause 1 of the Lease. They had requested that the Council approve the modification, but should the Council decide not to approve it then pursuant to their rights under section 84 of the Law of Property Act 1925 they would apply to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) for a more expansive modification of the Lease that would permit scheduled and non-scheduled commercial flights.

The Committee was requested to provide views on the following options:

- 1) To agree to the proposal from BHAL to amend the user clause.

- 2) To not agree to the proposal from BHAL to amend the user clause and should BHAL then decide to apply to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) to determine such a change then to contest such an application.

Noting that there was significant public interest in this item and to facilitate a full and thorough debate, the Chairman confirmed that each member of the Committee would be invited to speak in turn.

Speaking against the application by Biggin Hill Airport Ltd (BHAL) currently under consideration by the Committee, a Member noted the increased level of correspondence that had been received from local residents in opposition to the proposals. The Member suggested that the decision that had to be taken by the Council boiled down to an issue of trust, the trust that the Council had in BHAL to honour commitments made and the trust that residents of the Borough could have in the Council to ensure that commitments were honoured.

Concerns were expressed around the overly aggressive stance being taken by BHAL in its approach to the Council and a Member suggested that some of the statements made by BHAL needed to be challenged, for example the assertion that the lease had remained static. A Member expressed surprise that BHAL had not approached this matter in a good faith, calm manner suggesting that the overly aggressive approach raised questions around the long-term intent of BHAL. The Committee noted that there had been no prior approach by BHAL to discuss the application that had been made, instead they had relied on an entirely legal approach.

It was highlighted that the ban on fair paying passengers had been upheld in a 2002 court ruling, which the requested amendment would overturn. A Member explained that it was unwise to alter this High Court backed decision as any alteration could result in the Council losing the protection of that High Court decision. A Member highlighted that were this to be changed many residents would feel let down. The Member highlighted that the main function of the lease was to protect local residents from the excesses of the airport, and it was important to remember that that confidence in the Council had been dented in 2015 with the concession in operating hours.

Members highlighted what they considered to be BHAL's failure to fulfil previous promises that had been made such as the delivery of an aeronautical college at Biggin Hill and the development of a hotel. However, the Committee heard that the decision not to progress an aeronautical college at Biggin Hill had been taken by London South East College (LSEC) and development of the hotel had now started after a period of delay.

It was recognised that BHAL was a business that was seeking to maximise profit but Members felt that these profits should not be at the expense of residential amenity. Concerns were expressed around the ongoing environmental impact associated with the inevitable increase in the number of "Uber jets". Members also suggested that there appeared to be some

inconsistencies in the requests being made by BHAL noting that the current proposal was to amend the user clause with an indication that if an application to the Upper Tribunal was made the request would be expanded. Members recognised that the viability of the airport was an important consideration, however a search of Companies House records had revealed that in the last financial year BHAL had made a significant operating profit demonstrating that it was a highly profitable business without the need for this change.

In the alternative, a Member expressing support for BHAL's request highlighted that consideration needed to focus on the request actually being made by BHAL, rather than some of the misinformation currently being circulated by opponents of the proposals. The Member acknowledged that a number of residents had concerns but once they had been provided with the facts they had been reassured. At the moment BHAL were simply seeking to amend the user clause, however if the matter went to tribunal and the Council lost it was likely this would result in a greater loss of control.

In support of the Airport's proposals, a Member highlighted that there had been an airfield at Biggin Hill since 1917 and as such local residents moved to the area with the full knowledge of the airport. The contract with BHAL had been in operation for 26 years and it was reasonable for any lessee to request changes that reflected evolving circumstances such as quieter jets. The Member highlighted that the Committee was required to consider the reasonableness of the request and it was suggested that as BHAL were seeking a small change to its lease and this change was unlikely in his view to have a significant environmental impact or lead to an increased level of noise the request seemed reasonable. The Committee was reminded that landlords had a duty not to be unreasonable in such matters and to agree this proposal for purely business aviation was a reasonable position to adopt.

A Member noted that until very recently they had received very little communication from residents complaining about the operation of the airport. It was also highlighted that the airport was one of the largest employers in the Borough. It was noted that over the last few years the airline industry had been responding to environmental challenges.

The Chairman noted that ward members had not been consulted for the Executive report. In lieu of this, he had written to the councillors for the following wards in the southern part of the borough for a summary of residents' reactions to the proposal:

- Hayes & Coney Hall
- Bromley Common & Keston
- Petts Wood & Knoll
- Farnborough & Crofton
- Orpington
- Chelsfield & Pratts Bottom
- Darwin

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- Biggin Hill

Councillors for the following wards confirmed significant opposition from residents to the proposed lease amendment:

- Bromley Common & Keston
- Petts Wood & Knoll
- Farnborough & Crofton
- Chelsfield & Pratts Bottom
- Darwin
- Biggin Hill (NB – Members for this ward felt that many of the concerns raised were based on an inaccurate view of the proposal due to misinformation)

He also noted that the Biggin Hill Airport Consultative Committee committee were notified of BHAL's proposal on 24th May, less than two weeks before the airport's deadline.

A Member noted that many residents felt that BHAL wished to remove the restrictions contained within the lease by a process of 'salami-slicing'. The member also noted that it was difficult to reconcile any increase in flights with the spirit of the Council's own commitment to reach net zero by 2029, and at the national level, the target for CO2 emissions to be reduced by 78% by 2035.

The Chairman proposed that the Executive be recommended to not agree to the proposal from BHAL to amend the user clause and should BHAL then decide to apply to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) to determine such a change then to contest such an application. The motion was seconded by Councillor Robert Evans, put to the vote and CARRIED.

The Chairman requested that the vote be recorded:

For	Against	Abstain
Cllr Dykes	Cllr Bennett	Cllr Wilkins
Cllr Bear	Cllr M. Stevens	Cllr Tunnicliffe
Cllr Cartwright		
Cllr Tickner		
Cllr Jeal		
Cllr Evans		
Cllr Onslow		
Cllr Gabbert		
Cllr Marlow		

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to not agree to the proposal from BHAL to amend the user clause and should BHAL then decide to apply to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) to determine such a change then to contest such an application.

**10 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION)
(VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT 2000**

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

**The following summaries
refer to matters involving exempt information**

**11 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH
2021**

The Part 2 (exempt) minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2021 were agreed, and signed as a correct record.

**12 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE
REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 2 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 26 May 2021:

**(14) BIGGIN HILL AIRPORT LIMITED (BHAL) REQUEST TO VARY THE
USER CLAUSE OF THE AIRPORT LEASE BETWEEN THE
COUNCIL AND BHAL.
Report CSD21048**

The Committee noted the Part 2 (exempt from publication) information contained within the report.

**13 PART 2 CONTRACTS REGISTER AND CONTRACTS
DATABASE UPDATE
Report CEO21003**

The report presented May 2021's Corporate Contracts Register for consideration and provided a Part 2 (exempt from publication) detailed commentary on each of the contracts.

A Member expressed disappointment that no action had been taken on two contracts which had been flagged on previous reports to the Committee. The importance of timely action being taken by service departments to regularise arrangements, rather than contracts having to be flagged again in subsequent reports was highlighted.

In respect of the Amey Contract, Members were reminded that in July 2020 a Gateway report had been presented to the Committee setting out the procurement options for that contract.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Meeting ended at 10.22 pm

Chairman

Report No.
CSD21074

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee

Date: 23 June 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **MATTERS OUTSTANDING & FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Contact Officer: Philippa Gibbs, Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 0208 313 4508 E-mail: Philippa.Gibbs@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Corporate Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report deals with the Committee's business management including:

- Monitoring progress against actions arising from previous meetings;
- Developing the 2021/22 Forward Work Programme; and
- A schedule of Sub-Committees and Working Groups across all PDS Committees

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That PDS Committee reviews and comments on:

1. Progress on matters arising from previous meetings;
2. The 2020/21 work programme, indicating any changes or particular issues that it wishes to scrutinise for the year ahead.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: None
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No Cost
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Democratic Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £359k
 5. Source of funding: Revenue Budget
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 6.67 FTE
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: This report does not involve an Executive decision.
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): This report is intended primarily for the benefit of Committee Members.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable People and Children/Policy/Financial/Legal/Personnel/Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Minutes of previous meetings

3. COMMENTARY

Matters Outstanding from Previous Meetings

- 3.1. An update on matters outstanding from previous meetings is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Work Programme

- 3.2 Each PDS Committee determines its own work programme, balancing the roles of (i) pre-decision scrutiny and holding the Executive to account, (ii) policy development and review and (iii) external scrutiny. ERC PDS Committee has the additional role of providing a lead on scrutiny issues and co-ordinating PDS work.
- 3.3 PDS Committees need to prioritise their key issues. The work programme also needs to allow room for items that arise through the year, including Member requests, call-ins and referrals from other Committees. Committees need to ensure that their workloads are realistic and balanced, allowing sufficient time for important issues to be properly scrutinised. Members also need to consider the most appropriate means to pursue each issue – the current overview and scrutiny arrangements offer a variety of approaches, whether through a report to a meeting, a time-limited working group review, a presentation, a select committee style meeting focused on a single key issue, or another method.
- 3.4 **Appendix 2** sets out the ERC PDS Committee Work Programme for 2021/22, including: the provisional report title (or activity); the lead division; and Committee's role. Committee is invited to comment on the proposed schedule and suggest any changes it considers appropriate.
- 3.5 At its meeting on 25 May the Committee agreed that its four overarching priorities for the 2021/22 municipal year would be
1. The Income and Expenditure of the Council post Covid-19,
 2. A Review of the best sources of funding for the Council's Housing and Capital Programme,
 3. A Review of the Procurement Framework post Brexit, and
 4. Review of the timetable for the Council's Transformation Programme and monitor the Transformation Programme to ensure that new technology was used wherever appropriate in order to ensure that the Council's operations were economic, effective and efficient.
- 3.6 Other reports will be added to the 2021/22 Work Programme as items arise. In addition, there may also be references from other committees, the Resources, Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio Holder, or the Executive.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

- 3.7 The Policy Development and Scrutiny Toolkit suggests that each Committee should aim to carry out no more than two or three full scale reviews each year, and it offers guidance and techniques for prioritising reviews. At a time of pressure on Member and officer resources it is important that any additional work is carefully targeted at priority issues where improvements can be achieved. In recent years, this Committee has examined a number of issues through its Working Groups - part of the Committee's workload may include follow-up work on some of these reviews.

- 3.8 A schedule of Sub-Committees and Working Groups across all PDS Committees is attached as **Appendix 3** to this report. This will be updated for future meetings as other PDS Committees meet and confirm the appointment of Working Groups.

MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minute Number/Title/Date	Action/PDS Request	Update	Action by	Expected Completion Date
Minute 6 – forward Plan of Key Decisions	That the Assistant Director for Strategy, Performance and Transformation liaise with the councillors who provided comments on the Draft Building a Better Bromley Strategy prior to the report being presented to the Committee.	The Comments from the councillors have been collated and will be incorporated into the revised document.	Assistant Director for Strategy, Performance and Transformation	June 2021

**EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES & CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE
WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22**

Meeting Date: 15 September 2021		
Meeting Date: 15 September 2021	Division	Committee Role
Matters Arising/Work Programme/Forward Plan	Democratic Services	Standard Items
Executive Agenda	Various	Pre-decision scrutiny
Treasury Management - Annual Report 2020/21	Finance	Pre-decision scrutiny (PH)
Capital Programme Monitoring - 1st Quarter 2021/22	Finance	Pre-decision scrutiny (PH)
Scrutiny of Amey	RPH	PDS Committee
Scrutiny of the Chief Executive	Chief Execs	PDS Committee
Contract Register and Contracts Database	Procurement	PDS Committee
Meeting Date: 13 October 2021		
Meeting Date: 13 October 2021	Division	Committee Role
Matters Arising/Work Programme/Forward Plan	Democratic Services	Standard Items
Scrutiny of the Leader	N/A	PDS Committee
Executive Agenda	Various	Pre-decision scrutiny
Expenditure on Consultants 2020/21 and 2021/22	Finance	PDS Committee
Section 106 Agreements: Update*	Planning and Regeneration	PDS Committee
Risk Register (Red Risks)	Audit	Information Item
Review of Covid Grants	Finance	PDS Committee
Meeting Date: 18 November 2021		
Meeting Date: 18 November 2021	Division	Committee Role
Matters Arising/Work Programme/Forward Plan	Democratic Services	Standard Items

Executive Agenda	Various	Pre-decision scrutiny
Treasury Management - Quarter 2 Performance 2020/21 & Mid-Year Review	Finance	Pre-decision scrutiny (PH)
Insurance Fund - Annual Report 2019/20	Finance	Pre-decision scrutiny (PH)
Risk Register	Audit & Assurance	PDS Committee
BT/ICT Contract Monitoring Report	IT	PDS Committee – Monitoring Report
Scrutiny of the Executive Assistant to the Leader	N/A	PDS Committee
Cost of Agency Staff	HR	PDS Committee
Contracts Register and Contracts Database Update	Procurement	PDS Committee
Meeting Date: 5 January 2022		
	Division	Committee Role
Matters Arising/Work Programme/Forward Plan	Democratic Services	Standard Items
Executive Agenda	Various	Pre-decision scrutiny
Scrutiny of the Resources, Commissioning & Contract Management Portfolio Holder	N/A	PDS Committee
Capital Programme Monitoring - 2nd Quarter 2021/22	Finance	Pre-decision scrutiny (PH)
Benefits Service Monitoring Report	Revenues & Benefits	PDS Committee – Monitoring Report
Revenues Service Monitoring Report	Revenues & Benefits	PDS Committee – Monitoring Report
Customer Services - Contract Performance Report	Customer Services	PDS Committee – Monitoring Report
Exchequer Service - Contract Performance Report	Finance	PDS Committee – Monitoring Report
Meeting Date: 2 February 2022		
	Division	Committee Role
Matters Arising/Work Programme/Forward Plan	Democratic Services	Standard Items
Treasury Management – Annual Investment Strategy and Quarter 3 Performance 2021/22	Finance	PH Decision
Executive Agenda	Various	Pre-decision scrutiny
Scrutiny of the Chief Executive	N/A	PDS Committee

Scrutiny of the Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management Executive Assistant (<i>if applicable</i>)	N/A	PDS Committee
Contracts Register and Contracts Database Update	Procurement	PDS Committee
Property Investment Update	Property	PDS Committee
Risk Register (Red Risks)	Audit & Assurance	Information Item
Meeting Date: 24 March 2022	Division	Committee Role
Matters Arising/Work Programme/Forward Plan	Democratic Services	Standard Items
Executive Agenda	Various	Pre-decision scrutiny
Post Completion Report – Banbury House Demolition/Site Prep	Housing	PDS Committee
Scrutiny of The Leader	N/A	PDS Committee
Annual PDS Report 2021/22	Democratic Services	PDS Committee

*Part 2 (Exempt) Report

PDS SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS 2020/21

SUBJECT	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	MEMBERSHIP
EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES & CONTRACTS PDS		
Any 2020/21 Working Groups of ERC PDS to be agreed by the Committee.	TBC	.
ADULT CARE AND HEALTH PDS		
Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee	13 July 2021	Cllr Cooke (Chairman), Cllr Allatt, Cllr Botting, Cllr Cuthbert, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Ellis, Cllr Evans, Cllr Jefferys.
Any 2020/21 Working Groups of ACH PDS or the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee to be appointed by the parent bodies.		
Our Healthier South East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (with Bexley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham & Southwark)		Cllr Ellis, Cllr Allatt
CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE		
Youth Engagement Task and Finish Group	TBC	TBC
Any 2020/21 Working Groups of the Children, Education & Families PDS Committee to be appointed by the parent bodies.		
ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES PDS		
Any 2020/21 Working Groups of the Environment & Community Services Committee to be appointed by the parent body.		
PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT PDS		
Any 2020/21 Working Groups of the PPE PDS Committee to be appointed by the parent body.		
RENEWAL, RECREATION & HOUSING PDS		
Any 2020/21 Working Groups of the RRH PDS Committee to be appointed by the parent body.		

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY AND PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS PUBLISHED ON: 1 JUNE 2021

PERIOD COVERED: June 2021 - September 2021

DATE FOR PUBLISHING NEXT FORWARD PLAN OF KEY AND PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS: 24 August 2021

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
EXECUTIVE						
PROVISIONAL FINAL ACCOUNTS 2020/21	Executive	30 June 2021 Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: David Bradshaw Tel: 020 8313 4807 David.Bradshaw@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
BUILDING A BETTER BROMLEY	Executive	30 June 2021 Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Naheed Chaudhry Tel: 020 8461 7554 Naheed.Chaudhry@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
DESIGNATION OF SHORTLANDS VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREA AND EXTENSION OF BROMLEY TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA	Executive	30 June 2021 Development Control Committee and Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Ben Johnson Tel. 020 8461 7845 ben.johnson@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meetings in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
ADOPTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY	Executive	30 June 2021 Renewal, Recreation & Housing PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Ose Akpom Tel. 020 8461 7313 ose.akpom@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
TRADING STANDARDS - DELEGATION OF FUNCTIONS	Executive	30 June 2021 Public Protection & Enforcement PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Rob Vale Tel: 020 8313 4785 Rob.Vale@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report & relevant background documents
PROCUREMENT OF HR/PAYROLL SOFTWARE	Executive	30 June 2021 Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Emma Downie Tel. 020 8313 4082 emma.downie@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in Public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY INTERVENTION SERVICES - PERMISSION TO TENDER	Executive	30 June 2021 Adult Care & Health PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Ola Akinlade Tel. 020 8313 4744 7845 ola.akinlade@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
LONDON COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT CONSORTIUM	Executive	30 June 2021 Adult Care & Health PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Esme Ahmeti Tel. 020 8313 4519 7845 esme.ahmeti@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in Public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
GATEWAY REPORT - WOMEN IN REFUGES	Executive	30 June 2021 Adult Care & Health PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Lydia Lewinson Tel. 020 83136 4680 lydia.lewinson2@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
IT CONTRACT	Executive	30 June 2021 Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Vinit Shukle Tel: 0208 461 7713 Vinit.Shukle@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in Public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
PROCUREMENT OF CONSULTANTS FOR EDUCATION CAPITAL SCHEMES	Executive	30 June 2021 Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Robert Bollen Tel: 020 8313 4697 Robert.Bollen@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
YORK RISE, ORPINGTON	Executive	30 June 2021 Renewal, Recreation & Housing PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Isabelle Haddow Tel. 020 8461 7476 isabelle.haddow@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the meetings with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings.</u>	Report and relevant background documents
LD COMPLEX NEEDS DAY SERVICE - CONTRACT AWARD	Executive	30 June 2021 Adult Care & Health PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Colin Lusted Tel: 0208 461 7650 Colin.Lusted@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the meetings with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings.</u>	Report and relevant background documents
AWARD REPORT FOR (1) DOMICILIARY CARE FRAMEWORK (2) DOMICILIARY CARE PATCH CONTRACTS	Executive	30 June 2021 Adult Care & Health PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Kelly Sylvester Tel. 020 8461 7653 kelly.sylvester@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the meeting with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings</u>	Report and relevant background documents
COUNTRYSIDE HOUSING	Executive	22 September 2021 Renewal, Recreation & Housing PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Sara Bowrey Tel: 020 8313 4013 sara.bowrey@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
ADVENTURE KINGDOM	Executive	22 September 2021 Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Michael Watkins Tel: 020 8313 4178 Michael.Watkins@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
HARRIS KENT HOUSE DEVELOPMENT	Executive	22 September 2021 Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Robert Bollen Tel: 020 8313 4697 Robert.Bollen@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the meeting with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings</u>	Report and relevant background documents
DORSET ROAD INFANT SCHOOL	Executive	22 September 2021 Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Robert Bollen Tel: 020 8313 4697 Robert.Bollen@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the meetings with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings</u>	Report and relevant background documents
DISCRETIONARY GRANT POLICY - DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT	Executive	20 October 2021 Adult Care & Health PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Lynnette Chamielec Tel. 020 8313 4009 7845 Lynnette.Chamielec@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
ADULT CARE & HEALTH PORTFOLIO						

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
CHILDREN, EDUCATION & FAMILIES PORTFOLIO						
EDUCATION PLANNED MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME	Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families	Between 15 June 2021 and 30 June 2021 Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Robert Bollen Tel: 020 8313 4697 Robert.Bollen@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING	Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families	Between 15 June 2021 and 30 June 2021 Children, Education & Families PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Robert Bollen Tel: 020 8313 4697 Robert.Bollen@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meeting in public</u>	Report and Relevant background documents
AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR CAPITAL WORKS AT MARIAN VIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL	Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families	Between 15 June 2021 and 30 June 2021 Children, Education and Families PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Robert Bollen Tel: 020 8313 4697 Robert.Bollen@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the agenda, with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings</u>	Report and relevant background documents
ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO						
PUBLIC PROTECTION & ENFORCEMENT PORTFOLIO						
RENEWAL, RECREATION & HOUSING PORTFOLIO						

WHAT IS BEING DECIDED?	WHO IS THE DECISION MAKER?	WHEN WILL THE DECISION BE MADE AND WHO WILL BE CONSULTED BEFORE THE DECISION IS MADE?	HOW WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE PLACE?	HOW CAN YOU MAKE COMMENTS ON THE DECISION BEFORE IT IS MADE?	WILL THIS ITEM BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC OR IN PRIVATE?	WHAT SUPPORT DOCUMENTS AND OTHER INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE?
PETTS WOOD AREA OF SPECIAL RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER - ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION	Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio	Between 16 June 2021 and 30 June 2021 Development Control Committee and Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Ben Johnson Tel. 020 8461 7845 ben.johnson@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Meetings in public</u>	Report and relevant background documents
RESOURCES, COMMISSIONING & CONTRACT MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO						
POSTAL GOODS AND SERVICES CONTRACT AWARD	Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contracts Management	Between 23 June 2021 and 30 June 2021 Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS Committee	Meetings	Contact Officer: Andy Champion Tel. 020 8313 4394 andrew.champion@bromley.gov.uk	<u>Report is expected to be considered in the public part of the meeting with confidential material considered during exempt proceedings</u>	Report and relevant background documents

London Borough of Bromley: 020 8464 3333 www.bromley.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Graham Walton, Chief Executive's Department: 020 8461 7743, graham.walton@bromley.gov.uk

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Report No.
FSD21034

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Resources, Commissioning & Contract Management Portfolio Holder
Council

Date: For pre-decision scrutiny by Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee on 23rd June 2021
Council 12th July 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: TREASURY MANAGEMENT – ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Contact Officer: Katherine Ball, Principal Accountant
Tel: 020 8313 4792 E-mail: katherine.ball@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Finance

Ward: All wards

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report summarises treasury management activity during the March quarter and includes the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2020/21, which is required to be reported to Full Council. The report ensures that the Council is implementing best practice in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management. Investments as at 31st March 2021 totalled £380.1m and there was no external borrowing. For information and comparison, the balance of investments stood at £396.9m as at 31st December 2020 and £336.1m as at 31st March 2020, and, at the time of writing this report (4th June 2021) it stood at £407.2m
-

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 **The Portfolio Holder and Council are asked to:**

- (a) **Note the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2020/21;**
- (b) **Approve the actual prudential indicators within the report.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy. To maintain appropriate levels of risk, particularly security and liquidity, whilst seeking to achieve the highest rates of return on investments.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Interest on Balances
 4. Total current budget for this head: £3.591m budget (net interest earnings) in 2020/21; surplus of £1.5m achieved in 2020/21. Budget for 2021/22 £3.591m
 5. Source of funding: Net investment earnings
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 0.25 fte
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 9 hours per week
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-statutory - Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3 COMMENTARY

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 Under the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council is required, as a minimum, to approve an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year, a mid-year review report and an annual report following the year comparing actual activity to the strategy. In practice, the Director of Finance has reported quarterly on treasury management activity for many years, as well as reporting the annual strategy before the year and the annual report after the year-end. This report includes details of investment performance in the final quarter of 2020/21 and the annual report for the whole of the financial year 2020/21.
- 3.1.2 The 2020/21 annual treasury strategy, including the MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision) Policy Statement and prudential indicators, was originally approved by Council in February 2020.
- 3.1.3 Recent changes in the regulatory environment place a much greater onus on Members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is important in that respect, as it provides details of the actual position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by Members.
- 3.1.4 The Council has monies available for Treasury Management investment as a result of the following:
- Positive cash flow;
 - Monies owed to creditors less than monies owed by debtors;
 - Receipts (mainly from Government) received in advance of payments being made;
 - Capital receipts not yet utilised to fund capital expenditure;
 - Provisions made in the accounts for liabilities (e.g. provision for outstanding legal cases) which have not yet materialised;
 - General and earmarked reserves retained by the Council.
- 3.1.5 Some of the monies identified above are short term and investment of these needs to be highly "liquid", particularly if it relates to a positive cash flow position, which can change in the future. Future monies available for Treasury Management investment will depend on the budget position of the Council and whether the Council will need to substantially run down capital receipts and reserves. Against a backdrop of unprecedented cuts in Government funding (which will require the Council to make further revenue savings to balance the budget in future years), there is a likelihood that such actions may be required in the medium term, which will reduce the monies available for investment.
- 3.1.6 The Council has also identified an alternative investment strategy relating to property investment. To date, this has resulted in actual and planned acquisitions which generated £3m income in 2015/16, £4.6m in 2016/17, £5.6m in 2017/18, £5.5m in 2018/19, £5.4m in 2019/20, and £5.3m in 2020/21. This is based on a longer term investment timeframe of at least 3 to 5 years and ensures that the monies available can attract higher yields over the longer term.
- 3.1.7 A combination of lower risk investment relating to Treasury Management and a separate investment strategy in the form of property acquisitions (generating higher yields and risks) provides a balanced investment strategy. Any investment decisions will also need to consider the likelihood that interest rates will increase at some point. The available resources for the medium term, given the ongoing reductions in Government funding, will need to be regularly reviewed.

3.2 Treasury Performance in the quarter and year ended 31st March 2021

3.2.1 **Borrowing:** The Council's healthy cashflow position continues and, other than some short-term borrowing at the end of 2015/16, no borrowing has been required for a number of years.

3.2.2 **Investments:** The following table sets out details of investment activity during the third quarter of 2020/2021 and the whole of the 2020/21 financial year:

	Qtr ended 31/03/21		2020/21 financial year		Ref para
	Deposits £m	Ave Rate %	Deposits £m	Ave Rate %	
Balance of "core" investments b/f	270.00	1.12	220.00	1.25	
New investments made in period	50.00	0.69	225.00	0.89	
Investments redeemed in period	-55.00	1.44	-180.00	1.20	
"Core" investments at end of period	265.00	0.97	265.00	0.97	
Money Market Funds	23.00	0.01	23.00	0.09	3.4.1
CCLA Property Fund*	40.00	12.45	40.00	3.60	3.4.4.5
Multi-Asset Income Funds*	40.00	-0.75	40.00	13.90	3.4.4.7
Schroders Diversified Growth Fund*	10.00	4.88	10.00	4.88	3.4.4.8
Project Beckenham Loan	2.10	6.00	2.10	6.00	3.4.3
"Alternative" investments at end of period	115.10	4.18	115.10	6.22	
Total investments at end of period	380.10	1.94	380.10	2.56	

* The rates shown here are the total return i.e. dividend income received, plus change in capital value.
Only dividend income will be recognised during the year; the change in capital value is held in the Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account and will be recognised on the sale of the investments.
A more detailed breakdown of the rates for these investments is shown in the relevant paragraphs.

3.2.3 Details of the outstanding investments at 31st March 2021 are shown in maturity date order in Appendix 2 and by individual counterparty in Appendix 3. The return on the new "core" investments placed during the fourth quarter of 2020/21 was 0.69%.

3.2.4 Reports to previous meetings have highlighted the fact that options with regard to the reinvestment of maturing deposits have become seriously limited in recent years following bank credit rating downgrades. Changes to lending limits and eligibility criteria, as well as the introduction of pooled funds and housing associations have alleviated this to some extent, but there are still not many investment options available other than placing money with instant access accounts at relatively low interest rates.

3.2.5 Despite this, the Council's treasury management performance compares very well with that of other authorities; the Council was in the top decile nationally for 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 (the most recent CIPFA treasury management statistics available), and officers continue to look for alternative investment opportunities both within the current strategy and outside, for consideration as part of the ongoing review of the strategy.

3.2.6 Active UK banks and building societies on the Council's list now comprise only Lloyds, RBS (ring-fenced – including National Westminster Bank), Santander, Goldman Sachs International Bank, Close Brothers, and Yorkshire, Principality, Nottingham & Skipton Building Societies, and all of these have reduced their interest rates significantly in recent years. The Director of Finance will continue to monitor rates and counterparty quality and take account of external advice prior to any investment decisions.

3.2.7 The chart in Appendix 1 shows total investments at quarter-end dates back to 1st April 2004 and shows how available funds have increased steadily over the years. This has been a significant contributor to the over-achievement of investment income against budgeted income in recent years.

3.3 Interest Rate Forecast (provided by Link Asset Services)

3.3.1 Investment returns which had been low during 2019/20, plunged during 2020/21 to near zero or even into negative territory. Most local authority lending managed to avoid negative rates and one feature of the year was the growth of inter local authority lending. The expectation for interest rates within the treasury management strategy for 2020/21 was that the Bank Rate would continue at the start of the year at 0.75 % before rising to end 2022/23 at 1.25%. This forecast was invalidated by the Covid-19 pandemic bursting onto the scene in March 2020 which caused the Monetary Policy Committee to cut Bank Rate in March, first to 0.25% and then to 0.10%, in order to counter the hugely negative impact of the national lockdown on large swathes of the economy. The Bank of England and the Government also introduced new programmes of supplying the banking system and the economy with massive amounts of cheap credit so that banks could help cash-starved businesses to survive the lockdown. The Government also supplied huge amounts of finance to local authorities to pass on to businesses. This meant that for most of the year there was much more liquidity in financial markets than there was demand to borrow, with the consequent effect that investment earnings rates plummeted.

3.3.2 While the Council has taken a cautious approach to investing, it is also fully appreciative of changes to regulatory requirements for financial institutions in terms of additional capital and liquidity that came about in the aftermath of the financial crisis. These requirements have provided a far stronger basis for financial institutions, with annual stress tests by regulators evidencing how institutions are now far more able to cope with extreme stressed market and economic conditions.

3.3.3 Investment balances have been kept to a minimum through the agreed strategy of using reserves and balances to support internal borrowing, rather than borrowing externally from the financial markets. External borrowing would have incurred an additional cost, due to the differential between borrowing and investment rates as illustrated in the charts shown above and below. Such an approach has also provided benefits in terms of reducing counterparty risk exposure, by having fewer investments placed in the financial markets.

3.3.4 The latest forecasts are shown in the table below:

Date	LATEST FORECAST (May 21)				PREVIOUS FORECAST (Dec 20)			
	Base Rate	3 month ave earnings	6 month ave earnings	1 year ave earnings	Base Rate	3 month ave earnings	6 month ave earnings	1 year ave earnings
Jun-21	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%
Dec-21	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%
Jun-22	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.20%
Dec-22	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.30%				

3.4 Other Investments

3.4.1 Money Market Funds

3.4.1.1 The Council currently has 7 AAA-rated Money Market Fund accounts, with Prime Rate, Aberdeen Standard (formerly known as Ignis), Insight, Blackrock, Fidelity, Morgan Stanley and Legal & General, all of which have a maximum investment limit of £15m. In common with market rates for fixed-term investments, interest rates on money market funds have fallen

considerably in recent years. The Aberdeen Standard, Prime Rate and Fidelity currently offer the best rate at around 0.01%.

- 3.4.1.2 The total balance held in Money Market Funds has varied during the year, moving from £34.8m as at 31st March 2020, to £31.7m at 30th September 2020, £44.8m as at 31st December 2020 and £23m as at March 2021. The Money Market Funds currently offer the lowest interest of all eligible investment vehicles with the exception of the Government Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (current indicative rate 0.01%); however they are the most liquid, with funds able to be redeemed up until midday for same day settlement.

Money Market Funds	Date Account Opened	Ave. Rate 2020/21	Ave. daily balance 2020/21	Actual balance 31/03/2021	Latest balance 04/06/2021	Latest Rate 04/06/21
		%	£m	£m	£m	%
Prime Rate (Federated)	15/06/2009	0.11	13.4	8.00	15.00	0.01
Aberdeen Standard	25/01/2010	0.13	14.7	15.00	15.00	0.01
Insight	03/07/2009	0.08	2.68	-	-	-
Legal & General (LGIM)	23/08/2012	0.11	7.29	-	-	-
Blackrock	16/09/2009	-	-	-	-	-
Fidelity	20/11/2002	0.09	6.84	-	14.9	0.01
Morgan Stanley		-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL			44.95	23.00	44.90	

3.4.2 Housing Associations

- 3.4.2.1 Following the reduction of the counterparty rating criteria to A- for Housing Associations approved by Council in June 2017, deposits of £10m each were placed with Hyde Housing Association (A+) and Places for People Homes (A) for two years at rates of 1.30% and 1.60% respectively. Both of these investments have since matured. More recently, a deposit of £5m was placed with Metropolitan Housing Trust (A+) in April 2018 for two years at a rate of 1.75%. On 25th February 2019, Council approved an increase in the limit for investments with Housing Associations from £25m to £50m. On 28th March 2019 a further investment of £10m was made with Southern Housing Group (A2) for two years at a rate of 1.70%. On 9th April 2019 a £5m investment was made with Thames Valley Housing Association (A-) for 2 years at a rate of 1.73% and on 22nd August with Optivo Housing (A2) for 2 years at a rate of 1.45%. On April 14th 2020, a £10m investment was made with Places for People Homes Ltd (A3) for two years at a rate of 2.15%, and on June 12th 2020, a £5m investment was made with Metropolitan Housing Trust (A-) for two years at a rate of 1.50%. On January 20th 2021 a £10m investment was made with Yorkshire Housing Ltd (A3) for two years at a rate of 1%. On 1st March 2021 Council approved an increase in the limit for investments with Housing Associations from £50m to £80m. Current investments in Housing Associations total £45m.

3.4.3 Loan to Project Beckenham

- 3.4.3.1 Council has also approved the inclusion in the strategy of the secured loan to Project Beckenham relating to the provision of temporary accommodation for the homeless that had previously been agreed to be advanced from the Investment Fund. This loan was made in June 2017, at a rate of 6%, although that may increase to 7.5% if the loan to value ratio

exceeds a specified value. £0.7m of this loan was re-paid during August 2019 and £0.3m was re-paid in September 2019 leaving a balance of £1.3m as at the end of March 2020. Sums of £0.35m and £0.45m were advanced in August 2020 and December 2020 respectively and the current balance is £2.1m.

3.4.4 Pooled Investment Schemes

- 3.4.4.1 In September 2013, the Portfolio Holder and subsequently Council approved the inclusion of collective (pooled) investment schemes as eligible investment vehicles in the Council's Investment Strategy with an overall limit of £25m and a maximum duration of 5 years. The limit was subsequently increased to £40m by Council in October 2015, £80m in June 2017 and £100m in December 2017. Such investments would require the approval of the Director of Finance in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder.
- 3.4.4.2 Until March 2018, accounting rules required that the change in capital value of these investments be held in the Available for Sale Financial Assets Reserve, and only recognised in revenue on the sale of the investment. In year projections for interest on balances therefore only reflected the dividends from these investments.
- 3.4.4.3 However, from 2018/19 onwards, local authorities are required to account for financial instruments in accordance with IFRS9. One of the results of this is that changes in the capital value of pooled fund investments are recognised in revenue in-year. MHCLG have since issued regulations providing a statutory override to reverse the impact of IFRS9 on the Council's General Fund, which came into force in December 2018. The regulations are currently only applicable for a period of five years to March 2023, when it is intended for movements in value to be recognised in year.
- 3.4.4.4 Due to the regulations being time limited and the potentially volatile nature of these investments, interest/dividend earnings above 2.5% (£1,196k in 2019/20 & £1,509k in 2018/19) and above 2% for 2020/21 (£1,520k) and £5,310k to date, relating to the CCLA Property Fund and Fidelity Multi-Asset Income Fund were set aside in an Income Equalisation earmarked reserve. This will protect the council against unexpected variations in the capital value of these investments and any timing issues arising from the expiry of the statutory override.

CCLA Property Fund

- 3.4.4.5 Following consultation between the Director of Finance and the Resources Portfolio Holder, an account was opened in January 2014 with the CCLA Local Authorities' Property Fund and an initial deposit of £5m was made, followed by further deposits of £5m in July 2014, £5m in March 2015, £10m in October 2015, £5m in October 2016 and £10m in October 2017. The investment in the CCLA Fund is viewed as a medium to long-term investment and dividends are paid quarterly. A breakdown of the dividend earned and capital growth is provided in the table below.

	Dividend	Capital Growth	Total Return
	%	%	%
Annualised net return			
01/02/14- 31/03/14	4.29	-29.64	-25.35
01/04/14 - 31/03/15	5.03	3.44	8.47
01/04/15 - 31/03/16	5.02	1.63	6.65
01/04/16 - 31/03/17	4.55	-2.50	2.05
04/04/17 - 31/03/18	4.58	2.41	6.99
01/04/18 - 31/03/19	4.46	1.57	6.03
01/04/19 - 31/03/20	4.45	-3.68	0.77
01/04/20 - 31/03/21	4.30	-0.71	3.60
Cumulative return	4.53	-0.28	4.25

3.4.4.6 The negative “growth”, particularly in the first two months, was mainly a result of the bid-offer spread that is inherent in property funds when the original and subsequent investments were made. This has less of an effect over the longer-term that these investments are expected to be held, and overall there has been a reduction in capital of -0.28%.

Multi-Asset Income Fund

3.4.4.7 Following approval by Council in June and December 2017, the limit for pooled investment schemes was increased to £100m, and an investment of £30m was made on 12th July 2017 in the Fidelity Multi-Asset Income Fund following the agreement of the Resources Portfolio Holder, followed by a further £10m in December 2019. The fund return for the year to 31st March 2021 was capital growth of 9.52% and dividends paid of 4.38%, resulting in a total return of 13.9%. Since inception, dividends paid have averaged 4.32% per annum and the capital value has reduced by 0.86% per annum resulting in a net annual return of 3.47%. It should be noted that the Fund represents a longer-term investment of around five years.

	Dividend	Capital Gain / Loss	Total Return
	%	%	%
Annualised net return			
12/07/2017 - 31/03/2018	4.24	-6.02	-1.78
01/04/18 - 31/03/2019	4.26	1.38	5.64
01/04/19 - 31/03/2020	4.37	-11.81	-7.44
01/04/20- 31/03/2021	4.38	9.52	13.9
Cumulative Return	4.32	-0.86	3.47

Diversified Growth Fund

3.4.4.8 An investment of £10m was made on 1st March 2021 in the Schroders Diversified Growth Fund following the agreement of the Resources Portfolio Holder. The fund return for year to 31st March 2021 was capital growth of 2.43% and dividends paid of 2.45%, resulting in a total return of 4.88%.

Investment with Heritable Bank

3.4.5.1 Members will be aware from previous updates to the Resources Portfolio Holder and the Executive that the Council had £5m invested with the Heritable Bank (2007), a UK subsidiary of the Icelandic bank, Landsbanki. In October 2008, the bank was placed in administration and the investment was frozen. To date a total of £5,044k has been received (99% of the total claim of £5,087k), leaving a balance of £43k (1%).

3.5 Actual prudential indicators for 2020/21

3.5.1 The old capital control system was replaced in April 2004 by a prudential system based largely on self-regulation by local authorities themselves. At the heart of the system is The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, developed by CIPFA. The Code requires the Council to set a number of prudential indicators designed to monitor and control capital expenditure, financing and borrowing. The indicators for 2020/21 were approved by the Executive and the Council in February 2020. Appendix 4 sets out the actual performance in 2020/21 against those indicators.

3.6 Economic Background during 2020/21 (provided by Link Asset Services)

3.6.1 Further information on the economic background is included as Appendix 5.

3.7 Regulatory Framework, Risk and Performance

3.7.1 The Council's treasury management activities are regulated by a variety of professional codes and statutes and guidance:

- The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act), which provides the powers to borrow and invest as well as providing controls and limits on this activity;
- The Act permits the Secretary of State to set limits either on the Council or nationally on all local authorities restricting the amount of borrowing that may be undertaken (although no restrictions have been made to date);
- Statutory Instrument (SI) 3146 2003, as amended, develops the controls and powers within the Act;
- The SI requires the Council to undertake any borrowing activity with regard to the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
- The SI also requires the Council to operate the overall treasury function with regard to the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services;
- Under the Act, the CLG has issued Investment Guidance to structure and regulate the Council's investment activities;

Under section 238(2) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Secretary of State has taken powers to issue guidance on accounting practices. Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision was issued under this section on 8th November 2007.

3.7.2 The Council has complied with all of the above relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, which limit the levels of risk associated with its treasury management activities. In particular, its adoption and implementation of both the Prudential Code and the Code of Practice for Treasury Management means that its capital expenditure is prudent, affordable and sustainable and its treasury practices demonstrate a low risk approach.

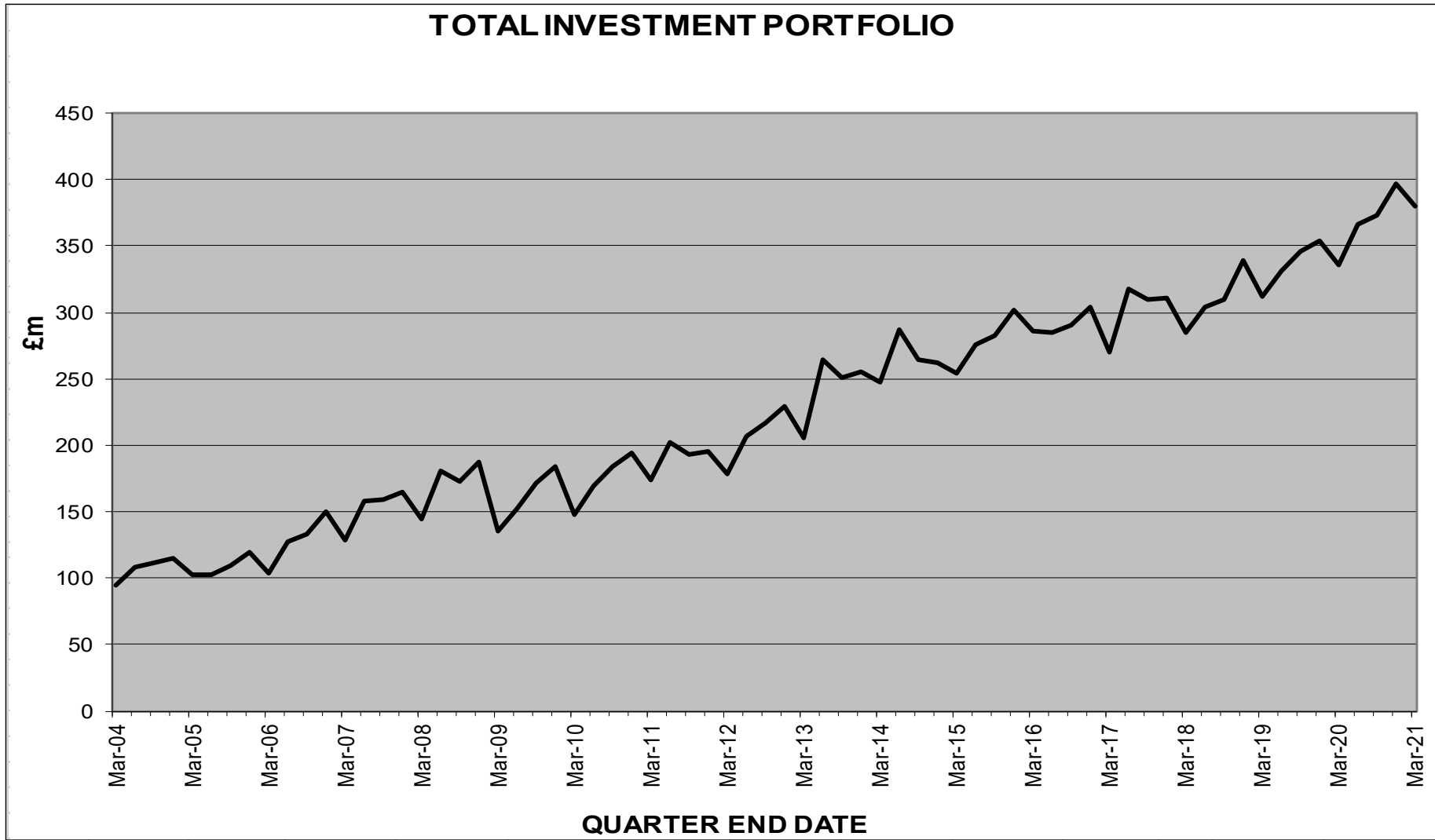
4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 In line with government guidance, the Council's policy is to seek to achieve the highest rate of return on investments whilst maintaining appropriate levels of risk, particularly security and liquidity.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Bank of England base rate has remained at 0.10% during 2020/21, and this has led to new core investments being taken out at lower rates; this was not forecast to have a substantial impact on the amount of interest received in 2020/21 as most of the rates on the core investments were already fixed, but is projected to have an impact over the next few years as the core investments taken out at higher rates mature and are replaced by investments at lower rates.
- 5.2 The treasury management strategy has previously been revised to enable alternative investments of £100m which will generate additional income of around £2m compared with lending to banks.
- 5.3 Although the Council has seen a significant reduction in the rates offered for new fixed-term investments as well as overnight money market funds, as part of the treasury management strategy there are a number of existing longer-term fixed investments at higher rates that are cushioning the Council from the impact of the drop in interest rates, and are partly responsible for the surplus of £1.5m for the year. The projected surplus is also due to higher interest earned on the pooled funds and the Project Beckenham loan.
- 5.4 With regard to 2021/22, the draft budget has remained at £3,591k, to reflect the increased level of interest earnings from alternative investments as set out above which is in part offset by an expected reduction in balances available for investment as a result of the utilisation of capital receipts and grants/contributions as well as earmarked revenue reserves.
- 5.5 The final outturn for net interest on investments in 2020/21 was £5,140k compared to the budget of £3,591k, mainly due to the continued high level of balances available for investment as well as the high level of interest earned on the pooled funds, housing association deposits and Project Beckenham loan.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal, Personnel & Procurement Implications, Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Treasury Management - Annual Investment Strategy 2020/21, Council, 24 th February 2020 CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities CLG Guidance on Investments External advice from Link Asset Services



INVESTMENTS HELD AS AT 31ST MARCH 2021

Counterparty	Start Date	Maturity Date	Rate of Interest %	Amount £m
FIXED DEPOSITS				
BATH & NE SOMERSET DC	01/04/2020	01/04/2021	1.50	15.0
STOCKTON ON TEES BC	01/04/2020	01/04/2021	1.50	5.0
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL	17/09/2020	06/04/2021	0.45	5.0
NATWEST BANK	09/04/2019	09/04/2021	1.35	10.0
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL	21/09/2020	12/04/2021	0.42	5.0
THURROCK COUNCIL	16/04/2020	16/04/2021	1.90	10.0
PRINCIPALITY BUILDING SOCIETY- CARDIFF	31/07/2020	30/07/2021	0.38	10.0
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	05/08/2020	04/08/2021	0.40	10.0
CLOSE BROTHERS	14/08/2020	16/08/2021	0.80	10.0
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	19/08/2020	19/08/2021	0.43	5.0
OPTIVO	22/08/2019	23/08/2021	1.45	10.0
SOUTHERN HOUSING GROUP	29/03/2021	30/09/2021	1.70	10.0
WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL	29/10/2019	29/10/2021	1.55	15.0
CLOSE BROTHERS	30/10/2020	29/10/2021	0.70	10.0
SANTANDER BANK	16/11/2020	16/11/2021	0.45	15.0
QATAR NATIONAL BANK SAQ	04/12/2020	03/12/2021	0.58	10.0
QATAR NATIONAL BANK SAQ	04/12/2020	06/12/2021	0.54	5.0
NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL	18/12/2020	17/12/2021	0.40	10.0
SANTANDER BANK	18/12/2020	17/12/2021	0.45	15.0
CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	23/12/2019	23/12/2021	1.40	5.0
GOLDMAN SACHS INTERNATIONAL BANK	27/01/2021	27/01/2022	0.14	5.0
NATIONAL BANK OF KUWAIT (INTERNATIONAL) - LONDON	28/01/2021	27/01/2022	0.22	15.0
CLOSE BROTHERS	18/03/2021	18/03/2022	0.40	10.0
PLACES FOR PEOPLE HOMES LTD	14/04/2020	14/04/2022	2.15	10.0
WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL	20/04/2020	20/04/2022	1.45	5.0
METROPOLITAN HOUSING TRUST	12/06/2020	10/06/2022	1.50	5.0
THURROCK COUNCIL	12/06/2020	13/06/2022	1.55	5.0
YORKSHIRE HOUSING LTD	20/01/2021	20/01/2023	1.00	10.0
WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL	20/04/2020	20/04/2023	1.68	10.0
TOTAL FIXED INVESTMENTS				265.0
OTHER FUNDS				
ABERDEEN -STANDARD LIFE (IGNIS) LIQUIDITY FUND				15.0
FEDERATED (PRIME RATE) STERLING LIQUIDITY FUND				8.0
CCLA LOCAL AUTHORITY PROPERTY FUND	30/01/2014			40.0
FIDELITY MULTI-ASSET INCOME FUND	12/07/2017			40.0
SCHRODER'S GLOBAL DIVERSIFIED INCOME	01/03/2021			10.0
PROJECT BECKENHAM LOAN	09/06/2017			2.1
TOTAL INVESTMENTS				380.1

INVESTMENTS HELD AS AT 31ST MARCH 2021

	Start Date	Maturity Date	Rate of Interest %	Amount £m	Total £m	Limit £m	Remaining £m
<u>UK BANKS</u>							
NATWEST BANK	09/04/2019	09/04/2021	1.35	10.00	10.0	80.0	70.0
SANTANDER BANK	16/11/2020	16/11/2021	0.45	15.00			
SANTANDER BANK	18/12/2020	17/12/2021	0.45	15.00	30.0	30.0	0.0
NATIONAL BANK OF KUWAIT (INTERNATIONAL) - I	28/01/2021	27/01/2022	0.22	15.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
GOLDMAN SACHS INTERNATIONAL BANK	27/01/2021	27/01/2022	0.14	5.00	5.0	20.0	15.0
QATAR NATIONAL BANK SAQ	04/12/2020	03/12/2021	0.58	10.00			
QATAR NATIONAL BANK SAQ	04/12/2020	06/12/2021	0.54	5.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
CLOSE BROTHERS	14/08/2020	16/08/2021	0.80	10.00			
CLOSE BROTHERS	30/10/2020	29/10/2021	0.70	10.00			
CLOSE BROTHERS	18/03/2021	18/03/2022	0.40	10.00	30.0	30.0	0.0
<u>BUILDING SOCIETIES</u>							
PRINCIPALITY BUILDING SOCIETY- CARDIFF	31/07/2020	30/07/2021	0.38	10.00	10.0	10.0	0.0
<u>LOCAL AUTHORITIES</u>							
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL	17/09/2020	06/04/2021	0.45	5.00			
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL	21/09/2020	12/04/2021	0.42	5.00	10.0	15.0	5.0
THURROCK COUNCIL	16/04/2020	16/04/2021	1.90	10.00			
THURROCK COUNCIL	12/06/2020	13/06/2022	1.55	5.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	05/08/2020	04/08/2021	0.40	10.00			
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	19/08/2020	19/08/2021	0.43	5.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL	20/04/2020	20/04/2022	1.45	5.00			
WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL	20/04/2020	20/04/2023	1.68	10.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
BATH & NE SOMERSET DC	01/04/2020	01/04/2021	1.50	15.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
STOCKTON ON TEES BC	01/04/2020	01/04/2021	1.50	5.00	5.0	15.0	10.0
WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL	29/10/2019	29/10/2021	1.55	15.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL	18/12/2020	17/12/2021	0.40	10.00	10.0	15.0	5.0
CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	23/12/2019	23/12/2021	1.40	5.00	5.0	15.0	10.0
<u>HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS</u>							
OPTIVO	22/08/2019	23/08/2021	1.45	10.00	10.0	10.0	0.0
SOUTHERN HOUSING GROUP	29/03/2021	30/09/2021	1.70	10.00	10.0	10.0	0.0
PLACES FOR PEOPLE HOMES LTD	14/04/2020	14/04/2022	2.15	10.00	10.0	10.0	0.0
METROPOLITAN HOUSING TRUST	12/06/2020	10/06/2022	1.50	5.00	5.0	10.0	5.0
YORKSHIRE HOUSING LTD	20/01/2021	20/01/2023	1.00	10.00	10.0	10.0	0.0
<u>OTHER INVESTMENTS</u>							
ABERDEEN -STANDARD LIFE (IGNIS) LIQUIDITY FUND				15.00	15.0	15.0	0.0
FEDERATED (PRIME RATE) STERLING LIQUIDITY FUND				8.00	8.0	15.0	7.0
CCLA LOCAL AUTHORITY PROPERTY FUND	30/01/2014			40.00			
FIDELITY - MULTI ASSET INCOME FUND	12/07/2017			40.00			
SCHRODER'S GLOBAL DIVERSIFIED INCOME	01/03/2021			10.00	90.0	100.0	10.0
PROJECT BECKENHAM LOAN	09/06/2017			2.10	2.1	2.3	0.2
TOTAL INVESTMENTS				380.1	380.1		

Prudential and Treasury Indicators – Actual 2020/21

Prudential and Treasury Indicators are relevant for the purposes of setting an integrated treasury management strategy and require the approval of the Council. The table below shows the actual performance in relation to the indicators in 2019/20 and compares the actual in 2020/21 with the original estimates approved in February 2020 and with the revised estimates (“probable”) reported in the Q3 review in February 2021. Further details on capital expenditure outturn will be reported to the Executive in June 2021.

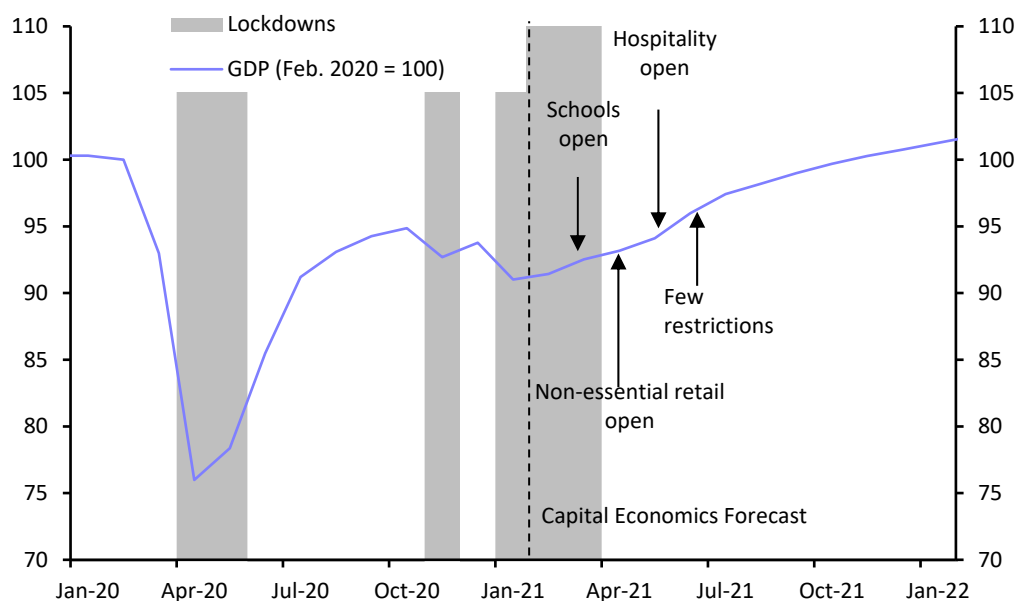
The Council is also required to indicate if it has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. The revised Code (published in 2009 and updated in 2011 and 2017) was adopted by full Council on 15th February 2010.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
	actual	estimate	probable	actual
Total Capital Expenditure	£23.4m	£44.3m	£37.6m	£19.7m
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	0%	0%	0%	0%
Net borrowing requirement (net investments for Bromley)				
brought forward 1 April	£311.6m	£272.6m	£336.1m	£336.1m
carried forward 31 March	£336.1m	£259.8m	£328.3m	£380.1m
in year borrowing requirement /movement in net investments	£24.5m	-£20.8m	-£7.8m	£44.0m
Capital Financing Requirement as at 31 March	£9.6m	£0.4m	£8.9m	£7.5m
Incremental impact of capital investment decisions	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Increase in council tax (band D) per annum	-	-	-	-

TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
	actual	estimate	probable	actual
Authorised Limit for external debt -				
borrowing	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m
other long term liabilities	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m
TOTAL	£60.0m	£60.0m	£60.0m	£60.0m
Operational Boundary for external debt -				
borrowing	£10.0m	£10.0m	£10.0m	£10.0m
other long term liabilities	£20.0m	£20.0m	£20.0m	£20.0m
TOTAL	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m	£30.0m
Actual external debt	£1.2m	£1.1m	£0.7m	£9.6m
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure	20%	20%	20%	20%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for more than 364 days beyond year-end dates	£170.0m	£170.0m	£170.0m	£170.0m

Further Information on the Economic Background during 2020/21 (provided by Link Asset Services)

UK. Coronavirus. The financial year 2020/21 will go down in history as being the year of the pandemic. The first national lockdown in late March 2020 did huge damage to an economy that was unprepared for such an eventuality. This caused an economic downturn that exceeded the one caused by the financial crisis of 2008/09. A short second lockdown in November did relatively little damage but by the time of the third lockdown in January 2021, businesses and individuals had become more resilient in adapting to working in new ways during a three month lockdown so much less damage than was caused than in the first one. The advent of vaccines starting in November 2020, were a game changer. The way in which the UK and US have led the world in implementing a fast programme of vaccination which promises to lead to a return to something approaching normal life during the second half of 2021, has been instrumental in speeding economic recovery and the reopening of the economy. In addition, the household saving rate has been exceptionally high since the first lockdown in March 2020 and so there is plenty of pent-up demand and purchasing power stored up for services in the still-depressed sectors like restaurants, travel and hotels as soon as they reopen. It is therefore expected that the UK economy could recover its pre-pandemic level of economic activity during quarter 1 of 2022.



Both the Government and the Bank of England took rapid action in March 2020 at the height of the crisis to provide support to financial markets to ensure their proper functioning, and to support the economy and to protect jobs.

The **Monetary Policy Committee** cut Bank Rate from 0.75% to 0.25% and then to 0.10% in March 2020 and embarked on a £200bn programme of quantitative easing QE (purchase of gilts so as to reduce borrowing costs throughout the economy by lowering gilt yields). The MPC increased the QE by £100bn in June and by £150bn in November to a total of £895bn. While the Bank Rate remained unchanged for the rest of the year, financial markets were concerned that the MPC could cut the Bank Rate to a negative rate; this was firmly discounted at the February 2021 MPC meeting when it was established that commercial banks would be unable to implement negative rates for at least six

months – by which time the economy was expected to be making a strong recovery and negative rates would no longer be needed.

Average inflation targeting. This was the major change adopted by the Bank of England in terms of implementing its inflation target of 2%. The key addition to the Bank's forward guidance in August was a new phrase in the policy statement, namely that "it does not intend to tighten monetary policy until there is clear evidence that significant progress is being made in eliminating spare capacity and *achieving the 2% target sustainably*". That seems designed to say, in effect, that even if inflation rises to 2% in a couple of years' time, do not expect any action from the MPC to raise the Bank Rate – until they can clearly see that level of inflation is going to be persistently above target if it takes no action to raise the Bank Rate. This sets a high bar for raising the Bank Rate and no increase is expected by March 2024, and possibly for as long as five years. Inflation has been well under 2% during 2020/21; it is expected to briefly peak at just over 2% towards the end of 2021, but this is a temporary short lived factor and so not a concern to the MPC.

Government support. The Chancellor has implemented repeated rounds of support to businesses by way of cheap loans and other measures, and has protected jobs by paying for workers to be placed on furlough. This support has come at a huge cost in terms of the Government's budget deficit ballooning in 20/21 and 21/22 so that the Debt to GDP ratio reaches around 100%. The Budget on 3rd March 2021 increased fiscal support to the economy and employment during 2021 and 2022 followed by substantial tax rises in the following three years to help to pay the cost of the pandemic. This will help further to strengthen the economic recovery from the pandemic and to return the government's finances to a balanced budget on a current expenditure and income basis in 2025/26. This will stop the Debt to GDP ratio rising further from 100%. An area of concern, though, is that the government's debt is now twice as sensitive to interest rate rises as before the pandemic due to QE operations substituting fixed long-term debt for floating rate debt; there is, therefore, much incentive for the Government to promote Bank Rate staying low e.g. by using fiscal policy in conjunction with the monetary policy action by the Bank of England to keep inflation from rising too high, and / or by amending the Bank's policy mandate to allow for a higher target for inflation.

BREXIT. The final agreement on 24th December 2020 eliminated a significant downside risk for the UK economy. The initial agreement only covered trade so there is further work to be done on the services sector where temporary equivalence has been granted in both directions between the UK and EU; that now needs to be formalised on a permanent basis. There was much disruption to trade in January as form filling has proved to be a formidable barrier to trade. This appears to have eased somewhat since then but is an area that needs further work to ease difficulties, which are still acute in some areas.

USA. The US economy did not suffer as much damage as the UK economy due to the pandemic. The Democrats won the presidential election in November 2020 and have control of both Congress and the Senate, although power is more limited in the latter. This enabled the Democrats to pass a \$1.9trn (8.8% of GDP) stimulus package in March on top of the \$900bn fiscal stimulus deal passed by Congress in late December. These, together with the vaccine rollout proceeding swiftly to hit the target of giving a first jab to over half of the population within the President's first 100 days, will promote a rapid easing of restrictions and strong economic recovery during 2021. The Democrats are also planning to pass a \$2trn fiscal stimulus package aimed at renewing infrastructure over the

next decade. Although this package is longer-term, if passed, it would also help economic recovery in the near-term.

After Chair Jerome Powell spoke on the **Fed's adoption of a flexible average inflation target** in his Jackson Hole speech in late August 2020, the mid-September meeting of the Fed agreed a new inflation target - that *"it would likely be appropriate to maintain the current target range until labour market conditions were judged to be consistent with the Committee's assessments of maximum employment and inflation had risen to 2% and was on track to moderately exceed 2% for some time."* This change was aimed to provide more stimulus for economic growth and higher levels of employment and to avoid the danger of getting caught in a deflationary "trap" like Japan. It is to be noted that inflation has actually been under-shooting the 2% target significantly for most of the last decade, (and this year), so financial markets took note that higher levels of inflation are likely to be in the pipeline; long-term bond yields duly rose after the meeting. There is now some expectation that where the Fed has led in changing its policy towards implementing its inflation and full employment mandate, other major central banks will follow, as indeed the Bank of England has done so already. The Fed expects strong economic growth during 2021 to have only a transitory impact on inflation, which explains why the majority of Fed officials project US interest rates to remain near-zero through to the end of 2023. The key message is still that policy will remain unusually accommodative – with near-zero rates and asset purchases – continuing for several more years. This is likely to result in keeping treasury yields at historically low levels. However, financial markets in 2021 have been concerned that the sheer amount of fiscal stimulus, on top of highly accommodative monetary policy, could be over-kill leading to a rapid elimination of spare capacity in the economy and generating higher inflation much quicker than the Fed expects. They have also been concerned as to how and when the Fed will eventually wind down its programme of monthly QE purchases of treasuries. These concerns have pushed treasury yields sharply up in the US in 2021 and is likely to have also exerted some upward pressure on gilt yields in the UK.

EU. Both the roll out and take up of vaccines has been disappointingly slow in the EU in 2021, at a time when many countries are experiencing a sharp rise in cases which are threatening to overwhelm hospitals in some major countries; this has led to renewed severe restrictions or lockdowns during March. This will inevitably put back economic recovery after the economy had staged a rapid rebound from the first lockdowns in Q3 of 2020 but contracted slightly in Q4 to end 2020 only 4.9% below its pre-pandemic level. Recovery will now be delayed until Q3 of 2021 and a return to pre-pandemic levels is expected in the second half of 2022.

Inflation was well under 2% during 2020/21. **The ECB** did not cut its main rate of -0.5% further into negative territory during 2020/21. It embarked on a major expansion of its QE operations (PEPP) in March 2020 and added further to that in its December 2020 meeting when it also greatly expanded its programme of providing cheap loans to banks. The total PEPP scheme of €1,850bn is providing protection to the sovereign bond yields of weaker countries like Italy. There is, therefore, **unlikely to be a euro crisis** while the ECB is able to maintain this level of support.

China. After a concerted effort to get on top of the virus outbreak in Q1 of 2020, economic recovery was strong in the rest of the year; this has enabled China to recover all of the contraction in Q1. Policy makers have both quashed the virus and implemented a programme of monetary and fiscal support that has been particularly effective at stimulating short-term growth.

Japan. Three rounds of government fiscal support in 2020 together with Japan's relative success in containing the virus without draconian measures so far, and the roll out of vaccines gathering momentum in 2021, should help to ensure a strong recovery in 2021 and to get back to pre-virus levels by Q3.

World growth. World growth was in recession in 2020. Inflation is unlikely to be a problem in most countries for some years due to the creation of excess production capacity and depressed demand caused by the coronavirus crisis.

Deglobalisation. Until recent years, world growth has been boosted by increasing globalisation i.e. countries specialising in producing goods and commodities in which they have an economic advantage and which they then trade with the rest of the world. This has boosted worldwide productivity and growth, and, by lowering costs, has also depressed inflation. However, the rise of China as an economic superpower over the last 30 years, which now accounts for nearly 20% of total world GDP, has unbalanced the world economy. In March 2021, western democracies implemented limited sanctions against a few officials in charge of government policy on the Uighurs in Xinjiang; this led to a much bigger retaliation by China and is likely to mean that the China / EU investment deal then being negotiated, will be torn up. After the pandemic exposed how frail extended supply lines were around the world, both factors are now likely to lead to a sharp retrenchment of economies into two blocs of western democracies v. autocracies. It is, therefore, likely that we are heading into a period where there will be a reversal of world globalisation and a decoupling of western countries from dependence on China to supply products and vice versa. This is likely to reduce world growth rates.

Central banks' monetary policy. During the pandemic, the governments of western countries have provided massive fiscal support to their economies which has resulted in a big increase in total government debt in each country. It is therefore very important that bond yields stay low while debt to GDP ratios slowly subside under the impact of economic growth. This provides governments with a good reason to amend the mandates given to central banks to allow higher average levels of inflation than we have generally seen over the last couple of decades. Both the Fed and Bank of England have already changed their policy towards implementing their existing mandates on inflation, (and full employment), to hitting an average level of inflation. Greater emphasis could also be placed on hitting subsidiary targets e.g. full employment before raising rates. Higher average rates of inflation would also help to erode the real value of government debt more quickly.

Report No.
CSD 21073

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 23 June 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: CUSTOMER SERVICES CONTRACT MONITORING REPORT

Contact Officer: Duncan Bridgewater, Assistant Director – Customer Services
Tel: 0208 461 7676 E-mail: Duncan.Bridgewater@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Human Resources and Customer Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. REASON FOR REPORT

This report provides information on the performance of the Customer Service Contract provided by Liberata for the period 1st December 2020 to 31st May 2021.

A letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Contract Director for Liberata, provides her update on each individual element and is attached at Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee is requested to note and comment on the information contained within the report and the letter provided by Liberata detailed in Appendix 1.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: An Equality Impact Assessment indicates that ongoing support for vulnerable adults and children will be provided by Customer Service by phone and face to face for those unable to access digital services. For those unable to visit or phone us, the service supports the enhancement of self-service options.
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Customer Services Contract
 4. Total current budget for this head: £909k 2021/2022
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional):1
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance:
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: None
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (pre-covid) and current: (64,000) 11,000 visitors, (680,000) 570,000 phone calls, (20,000) 23,000 e-mails and (4.5 million) 10 million web visits annually.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: N/A

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Customer Services contract covers four key areas: Corporate Contact Centre, Reception Services, Web Team (Bromley Knowledge) and Blue Badge/Freedom Pass processing. The Corporate Contact Centre deals with telephone enquiries regarding environmental services, electoral, registrars, parking, blue badges, disabled freedom passes as well as the switchboard and a general enquiry line.
- 3.2 Reception deals with face to face enquiries from main reception and north block, for most areas of the council with the exception of registrars and children services, who manage their own reception points.
- 3.3 The Web Team (Bromley Knowledge) maintain the corporate website (www.bromley.gov.uk) in terms of its technical functionality, performance and accuracy of the content as provided by service experts. Administration of Blue Badge and Discretionary Disabled Freedom Passes applications and renewals is also carried out within the contract.
- 3.4 Overall the contractor has performed well throughout this monitoring period, with some evidence of under-performance outlined in the report. Volumes of calls fluctuated as a result of the normal seasonal changes, as well as an increased demand in appointments for notices of marriage/civil partnerships that were previously impacted by government restrictions on ceremonies. During the lockdowns there has been an increase in customer contact via the website as customers were advised to use online services instead of traditional contact channels. Many web transactional services remain high over the reporting period with overall traffic to the website remaining at around double its normal rate compared to pre-covid volumes.
- 3.5 Reception remains an appointment only service, except for emergencies and vulnerable customers. Opening times are limited to allow for cleaning and to control volumes. Demand has risen as lockdown easements have been implemented, but still manageable. Customers have reported they prefer the appointment based service, as it avoids crowding.
- 3.6 The Key Performance Indicators for this contract are listed in the table below and referenced in appendix 2; they measure the headline activities within the contract in order that our customers get a quick response and access to our services efficiently and effectively. The Contractor has provided benchmark comparison data across some of their other key contracts in appendix 3.

	Measure	Definition	Target
1	Call Management	Number of calls answered by the agents within the specified timescales compared to total number of calls received	50% Calls answered within 1 minute
2	Call Management	Number of days that the service dropped below 40%	Daily service level does not drop below 40% of call answered within 1 minute
3	Email Management	Number of emails responded to within 5 working days compared to total number of emails received	100% responded to within 5 working day

4	Face to Face Management	Number of customers entering the reception areas must be seen within 5 minutes of their arrival compared to total number of customers, remainder within 15 minutes	80% of customers seen within 5 minutes of arrival
5	Switchboard Management	% of calls bailed to operator or requesting operator	50% Calls answered within 1 minute
6	Customer Satisfaction	% of randomly selected customers, across different channels are either satisfied or very satisfied	90%

3.7 **Customer Services – Contact Centre:** This area performed well and generally within service level. Daily minimum level not met due to an increase in calls for green waste subscription payments and increased Registration appointment demand to give notice of marriage or civil partnership. Waste Services are implementing a new payment scheme for this service which should reduce demand on telephone payments. Appropriate service credits will be applied.

Contact Centre Target – 50% within 60 secs	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Answered	7698	9199	10577	12099	11247	9997
% of calls ans. in 60 secs	73.50%	75.60%	74.30%	79.00%	63.50%	58.90%
Average wait time (secs)	54	48	51	58	82	93
Number of day's service fell below 40%	0	0	0	0	1	0

3.8 **Switchboard:** Performance and volumes for this area were as expected and within service level.

Switchboard Target – 50% within 60 secs	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Answered	5090	6163	5721	7694	6427	5648
% of calls ans. within 60 secs	98%	98%	98%	96%	94%	94%
Average wait time (secs)	8	8	9	11	17	16

3.9 **Reception:** Reception remains an appointment only service, with limited opening times to allow for additional cleaning. Emergencies and vulnerable customers are seen without an appointment. Demand has increased as lockdown has lifted, however, numbers are easily manageable.

Reception	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Number of customers seen	56	49	73	112	110	146
80% within 5 minutes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
100% within 15 minutes	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.10 **E-mail:** E-mail handling targets were met for the reporting period.

Emails Target – 80% within 1 day and 100% within 5 days	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Number of emails received	1468	1764	2025	2893	2322	1542
% emails processed within 1 day	95%	96%	98%	98%	91%	97%
% emails processed within 5 days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.11 Out of Hours Emergency Call Centre: Performance was generally within service level with the exception of 1 month when they fell below. This was impacted by Storm Bella in December 2020 and staff shortages. Appropriate service credits will be applied.

Out of Hours (Appello) Target – 80% within 30 secs	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Answered	1260	1310	1053	1130	1328	1577
% of calls ans. in 30 secs	73.70%	83.89%	87.22%	89.95%	85.27%	81.50%
Average wait time (secs)	22.11	18.31	13.74	6.54	15.54	19.19

3.12 Web – Bromley Knowledge: The web team achieved 100% against all targets during this reporting period. The Council's Customer Service's Service Delivery Partner (Liberata), were tasked to carry out a review of the corporate Website style and presentation and provided recommendations to Bromley. The review's findings concluded that the website is visually and technically tired in terms of its design templates, whilst being fragmented with a number of sub-sites. Technologically, things have moved on over the years with the use of mobile technology which Liberata feels is not reflected in the structure and functionality of the existing website.

In agreement with Chief Officers, Liberata have recommended that the current website provider (Jadu) is commissioned to undertake a redesign of the website, utilising their Photon platform to improve accessibility, security and search engine optimisations of the site whilst offering a long term solution to managing vanilla templates on the council's sub-sites. Photon would support any design changes required as a result of broader personalisation of pages and it would also safeguard long term technical support, and unify the template technology across all Jadu products. Redesigning the main corporate website on Jadu's new technological platform would also enable Bromley to take advantage of emerging technologies, like web bots, to gain better online engagement from our customers, collect form data more accurately and develop further self-service functionality.

A project team and formal project board have been set up to start work on the redesign project with Liberata leading on the implementation for Phase 1 of the project. Council representatives from each department have been chosen to work with the project team to help steer the website design and content review changes. The redesign process will take several months to complete and progress of the project will be reported to Chief Officers and future ER&C PDS meetings.

Web site – Target 100%	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Critical updates within 1 working hour	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Urgent updates within 1 working day	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Important updates within 2 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Regular updates within 5 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.13 Blue Badge and Discretionary Freedom Pass: This area performed well and within service level. As part of the service transformation and efficiency under the new contract with Liberata, the contractor has redesigned the administrative process to manage applications for Blue Badges and Freedom Passes. This aims to reduce processing times of straightforward applications to around 10 days and improve the overall customer experience. The new

process enables closer, real-time monitoring and alert mechanisms to ensure customers receive their passes in the shortest possible time.

Blue Badges – target 80% within 4 weeks	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Volume	290	334	311	363	382	461
% processed within 4 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Freedom Pass – Target 100% within 4 weeks	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Volume	174	80	54	76	36	50
% processed within 4 weeks	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

3.14 **MyBromley Account:** The table below outline the volume usage for the services currently available to registered users, and volume of customers registering in this monitoring period. MyBromley Account continues to grow and as of the end of May 2021 the number of registrations had risen to 93,385. Promotion of this service continues through the call centre, receptions and council tax billing. The statistics for MyBromley registrations currently include inactive accounts. Accounts are not automatically deleted when a resident moves out of the borough as they may need access to information (Council Tax records) for various reasons e.g. outstanding arrears and evidence of residency. Customers can request their account can be closed if they no longer need to use it. A procedure is being drafted to remove inactive accounts. The proposal incorporates an e-mail to being sent to the account holders registered address requesting that they sign in to MyBromley. If they fail to do this, a reminder would be sent. Should this fail to provoke a response, it would be assumed they no longer require an account and it would be deleted. Once this procedure has been adopted it is anticipated that the number of registered accounts will initially reduce.

MyBromley registrations	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Volume	1387	1074	1319	2402	2476	1617
Cumulative Volume	84497	85571	86890	89292	91768	93385

3.15 **Customer Satisfaction:** The number of customers surveyed, and responses are outlined below, satisfaction is generally above target for this service. Customer satisfaction was 60% for the month of April, this was associated to the new survey and difficulties with reporting which made it hard to measure the number of satisfied customers. This issue has been resolved by adding an additional question to the survey which summarises the level of satisfaction. A review of the existing survey was completed and a new survey has been developed that focuses more on the service provided specifically by the customer services team via the various contact channels. An overview of this survey can be viewed in Appendix 4. There is a contractual obligation to collect customer satisfaction data each month, in order to meet this requirement the contractor had to review how they could encourage customers to complete the survey and increase the number of submissions.

Action taken:

- Adding the survey link to every email response that is sent via the Customer Contact Centre team
- Each back office team that manages customer contact has included the link within the email signature along with the telephony teams
- Included the link on every message that is sent to the customer via email or SMS

- Including the survey link on each auto response which is sent to customers upon completion of the online forms
- Adding the survey link to customer completion notifications that are sent to customers

They are expecting the number of completed surveys to increase through implementing the steps outlined above, this will be reviewed on a month by month basis.

Customer Satisfaction Target – 90% Customer Satisfaction	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Number of surveys sent	298	197	234	179	0	0
Number of responses	9	6	11	27	22	24
% Customer Satisfaction	100%	100%	100%	100%	60%	100%

- 3.16 **Compliments and Complaints:** During this period, fourteen customers made contact to thank the staff regarding the service that was provided by the Customer Service Centre advisors. The contractor also received five complaints during this reporting period which were associated to Blue Badges, Electoral and the Out of Hours service

Compliments & Complaints	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21
Complaints	0	1	0	1	1	2
Compliments	1	3	3	4	1	2

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment indicates that ongoing support for vulnerable adults and children will be provided by Customer Service by phone and face to face for those unable to access digital services. For those unable to visit or phone us, the service supports the enhancement of self-service options.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is currently projected the contract expenditure in 2021/22 will be to budget at £909k.
- 6.2 For information, the actual spend for the contract in 2020/21 was £900k.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Council's Constitution provides the terms of reference for the Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee as it relates to the Executive and the Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management Portfolio, including receiving reports and making recommendations on performance monitoring of services falling within the remit of this portfolio.

- 8.2 Contract Procedure Rule 23.4 provides that a Council agreed Gateway Review process must be applied to all Contracts deemed to be High Risk, High Value or High Profile. The process must be applied at key stages of major procurements.
- 8.3 Contract Procedure Rule 23.3 provides that for all Contracts with a value higher than £1,000,000, or which are High Risk, an annual report must be submitted to the Executive- the responsible Officers having submitted for consideration a formal Gateway Review, covering, as appropriate, the matters identified in the Council's standard Gateway Review Template for consideration as part of Contract Monitoring/Management requirements.

9. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

None

Non-Applicable Sections:	5, 7, 9
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Appendix 1 – Letter from Liberata Appendix 2 – Key Performance Indicators Appendix 3 – Benchmarking Data Appendix 4 – Survey Overview

Appendix 2 – Key Performance Indicators

Customer Contact Centre - Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

	Measure	Definition	Target
1	Call Management	Number of calls answered by the agents within the specified timescales compared to total number of calls received	50% Calls answered within 1 minute
2	Call Management	Number of days that the service dropped below 40%	Daily service level does not drop below 40% of call answered within 1 minute
3	Email Management	Number of emails responded to within 5 working days compared to total number of emails received	100% responded to within 5 working day
4	Face to Face Management	Number of customers entering the reception areas must be seen within 5 minutes of their arrival compared to total number of customers, remainder within 15 minutes	80% of customers seen within 5 minutes of arrival
5	Switchboard Management	% of calls bailed to operator or requesting operator	50% Calls answered within 1 minute
6	Customer Satisfaction	% of randomly selected customers, across different channels are either satisfied or very satisfied	90%
7	Blue Badge Processing	% of Blue badge application and renewals processed within 4 weeks of receipt of complete application form	80%
8	Discretionary disabled Freedom Pass Processing	% of discretionary Disabled Freedom Pass applications and renewals processed within 4 weeks of receipt of complete application form	100%

Web Management – Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Title	Measure	Monitoring Frequency	Reporting Frequency	Target
Critical Updates	% completed within 1 working hour	Daily	Monthly	100% within 1 working hour
Urgent Updates	% completed within 1 working day	Daily	Monthly	100% within 1 working day
Important Updates	% completed within 2 working days	Daily	Monthly	100% within 2 working days
Regular Updates	% completed within 5 working days	Daily	Monthly	100% within 5 working days

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R&B Contact Centre	Bromley R&B Contact Centre			Hounslow R&B Contact Centre		Hillingdon R&B Contact Centre		
	Call Volumes	Performance (KPI = 95% in 90 secs.)	Performance (KPI = 5% abandoned)	Call Volumes	Performance (KPI = 7% abandoned)	Call Volumes	Performance (KPI = 80% in 120 secs.)	Performance (KPI = 15% abandoned)
Dec 20	5830	95.0%	0%	5285	2%	10080	83%	3%
Jan 21	6687	93.0%	0.7%	7256	4%	12919	82%	3%
Feb 21	8291	88.0%	1%	6655	3%	10233	80%	3%
Mar 21	11473	86.0%	1%	11196	4%	19098	56%	8%
Apr 21	8438	85.0%	1%	9845	7%	15181	62%	9%
May 21	6458	93.0%	0.6%	6458	3%	9902	79%	4%

R&B F2F	Bromley R&B F2F		Hounslow R&B F2F	
	Footfall	Performance (KPI = 85% in 15 mins.)	Footfall	Performance (KPI = 95% in 15 mins.)
Dec 20	97	100%	0	N/A
Jan 21	80	100%	0	N/A
Feb 21	110	100%	0	N/A
Mar 21	147	100%	0	N/A
Apr 21	142	100%	0	N/A
May 21	134	100%	0	N/A

Corporate Contact Centre	Bromley Corporate Contact Centre		Corporate F2F	Bromley Corporate F2F		
	Current Year (Actual)	Performance (KPI = 50% in 1 mins.)		Current Year (Actual)	Performance (KPI = 80% in 5 mins.)	Performance (KPI = 100% in 15 mins.)
Dec 20	7968	73.5%	Dec 20	56	100%	100%
Jan 21	9480	75.6%	Jan 21	49	100%	100%
Feb 21	10905	74.3%	Feb 21	73	100%	100%
Mar 21	12624	79.0%	Mar 21	112	100%	100%
Apr 21	11578	63.5%	Apr 21	110	100%	100%
May 21	10543	58.9%	May 21	146	100%	100%

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Customer Experience Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete our experience survey. Any feedback that you provide will be used to help decide how our services should be developed in the future.

This should only take a few minutes to complete.

Please only use the "Previous" and "Next" buttons, not your browser back button.

Use of your personal data

The London Borough of Bromley may use your personal data without your specific consent to provide you with one or more council services, and to comply with the council's statutory and legal obligations. Information about how the council uses and protects personal data and about personal data rights is available at www.bromley.gov.uk/privacy

Fill in form »

Customer Experience Survey

Please tell us which service you contacted us about?



You are 17% complete.

1. Which service did you contact us about? (Required)

- Adult Social Services
- Benefits
- Blue Badges
- Building Control
- Business Rates
- Children Social Services
- Council Tax
- Education
- Electoral Services
- Financial Services
- Freedom Passes
- Greenspaces
- Housing Services
- Human Resources
- Parking Services
- Planning
- Public Protection
- Registrars
- School Admissions
- Streets
- Traffic and Highways
- Waste Services
- Other - please state below

2. Other

Previous

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Customer Experience Survey

How did you contact us?



You are **33%** complete.

1. Please tell us how you got in touch (Required)

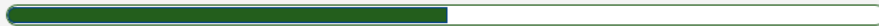
- Phone
- In person
- By email
- Online web form
- Social Media

Previous

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Customer Experience Survey

Phone



You are **50%** complete.

1. Was your call answered within an acceptable time? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

2. Were you treated fairly and respectfully? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

3. Was your enquiry handled professionally? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

4. Was the advisor able to assist you with your enquiry? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

5. Were you confident with the answers you were provided with? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

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Customer Experience Survey

In person



You are 50% complete.

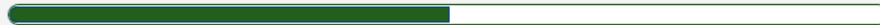
1. Were you seen with in 15 minutes of your arrival? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
2. Were you treated fairly and respectfully? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
3. Was your enquiry handled professionally? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
4. Was the advisor able to assist you with your enquiry? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
5. Were you confident with the answers you were provided with? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable

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Customer Experience Survey

Email



You are 50% complete.

1. Was your email responded to within 5 working days? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
2. Was your enquiry handled professionally? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
3. Was the advisor able to assist you with your enquiry? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable
4. Were you confident with the answers you were provided with? (Required)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not applicable

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Customer Experience Survey

Online form



You are 50% complete.

1. Was your form responded to within 5 working days? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

2. Did you find the form easy to locate and complete? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

3. Was the use of language clear and concise? (Required)

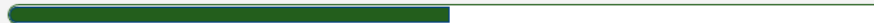
- Yes
- No
- no

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Customer Experience Survey

Social Media



You are 50% complete.

1. Was your enquiry responded to within 5 working days? (Required)

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

2. Were you satisfied with the response provided? (Required)

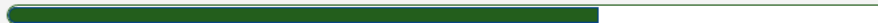
- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

Previous

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Customer Experience Survey

Service received



You are 67% complete.

1. Can you tell us what you found particularly good about the service?

2. Please state how satisfied you were with the service provided by the Customer Services team

- Not Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

3. Please tell us how can we improve?

4. What is your postcode?

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Report No.
FSD21037

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 23 June 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: EXCHEQUER SERVICE - CONTRACT PERFORMANCE
REPORT

Contact Officer: Claudine Douglas-Brown, Assistant Director: Exchequer Services
Tel: 020 8461 7479 E-mail: Claudine.Douglas-Brown@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Director of Finance

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

This report provides information regarding Liberata's performance in the provision of Exchequer Services for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

- 1.2 A letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Liberata's Contract Director, provides an update on each individual service and is attached at Appendix 1 with statistical data relating to the services shown in subsequent appendices.
-

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

The Committee is requested to note the information contained within the report on Liberata's performance and the action taken to address any performance issues.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: None
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Exchequer Service – Payment, Income and Charging
 4. Total current budget for this head: £1.89m
 5. Source of funding: Existing budget 2020/21
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 5fte plus Liberata staff
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984
Late Payment of Commercial Debts (interest) Act 1998
The County Court Act 1984
The Civil Procedure Rules
Environmental Protection Act 1990
Housing Act 2004
The Care Act 2014
The Public Contracts regulations 2015
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable:
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: None
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The services covered in this report affect those who owe general income to the Council, all of the Council's suppliers and all adult social care clients. This amounts to an estimated 40,000 people
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 This report provides information regarding the performance of the Exchequer Services provided by Liberata for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.
- 3.2 The Exchequer Client Unit monitor the contractor's compliance against the contract to ensure that services are provided to the required standard, meeting the agreed targets and performance standards. Where there are areas of concern or underperformance, the Assistant Director, Exchequer Services will agree an action plan with Liberata to address these issues. The team also ensures the services comply with current legislation, financial regulations, contractual obligations and audit requirements.
- 3.3 To maintain the drive for improved service performance, monthly service review meetings are held with operational and senior Liberata management. To further illustrate the commitment to the continuous improvement agenda the Contract Director and Finance Service Delivery Director meets with Bromley regularly to deal with escalated issues, review policies and develop new ideas.
- 3.4 The Exchequer Services covered in this report are:-
- Sundry Debtors, Mortgages and Corporate Debt
 - Accounts Payable
 - Financial Assessment and Management
 - Appointee and Deputyship

4. SERVICE PROFILE/DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Sundry Debtors, Mortgages & Corporate Debt

- 4.1.1 The sundry debts performance is measured on the amounts recovered at the end of each reporting period. At the 31st March 2021, there were 3,636 invoices outstanding totalling £24.5m. Of the total amount, £12.84m (52.41%) had been outstanding for less than 30 days.
- 4.1.2 As at 31st March 2021, the amount recovered in respect of invoices raised between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 was £46.75m or 71.49% against a target of 92%.
- 4.1.3 There were several debts Liberata were unable to pursue and a high number of invoices were raised within the last 14 days of the month. These factors adversely affected in-year collection and are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Description	No. of Invoices	Value of Invoices
Invoices raised during the last 14 days of the month	574	£5,488,655
Community Infrastructure Level (CIL) invoices due after the 31 st March 2021	13	£973,266
Disputed debts	153	£778,584
Debts placed on hold	50	£1,490,576
Debts secured by a Charging Order	4	£93,847
Deferred Commercial Rent debts due to COVID-19	10	£300,372
Debts submitted for write off	21	£13,572
Premises Licence invoices recovery by LBB Department	71	£16,840
Total	896	£9,155,712

- 4.1.4 Table 2 shows the in-year collection rate however to reflect Liberata's recovery performance it has been adjusted to take account of those debts where Liberata could not pursue payment. This gives a revised collection rate of 83.13% at 31st March 2021.
- 4.1.5 The deficit can be attributed to nine invoices raised in March 2021 for NHS South East which totalled £7.1m. The invoices are raised on a quarterly basis and the levels of authorisation required internally mean payment is often delayed. £6.6m has been paid leaving one invoice raised on 31st March for £547k outstanding. If these funds had been credited in month then the final adjusted collection rate for March would have been 93.45%.

Table 2

	As at 31/03/19	As at 31/03/20	As at 31/03/21
Unadjusted Collection Rate	86.63%	86.77%	71.49%
Adjusted Collection Rate	94.03%	99.79%	83.13%

- 4.1.6 The suspension of enforcement action during the pandemic has contributed to the reduction of income collected. Liberata have also received an increased volume of calls from customers struggling financially because of the pandemic. The total impact of the Covid-19 on collections is difficult to quantify however it is estimated to be somewhere between £4m and £7m. However Liberata are continuing to pursue these debts.
- 4.1.7 **Appendix 2** shows the comparison between the levels of outstanding debt for each month from April to March for the years 2016/17 through to 2020/21.
- 4.1.8 **Appendix 3** shows the comparison between the numbers of invoices outstanding each month from April to March for the years 2016/17 through to 2020/21.

Aged Debt as at 31st March 2021

- 4.1.7 The out-of-year collection rate across all financial years was 99.1% with £6.1m collected in 2020/21. The factors which continue to affect out-of-year collection are shown below.

Table 3

Description	Value of Invoices
Disputed invoices	£2,984,467
Debts on hold with LBB Service Departments	£238,266
Debts with LBB's Legal Team	£69,862
Debts Secured by Charging Order	£199,570
Debts on hold due to Rent Deferment	£39,216
Premises Licences debt with the Licensing Team	£4,974
Debts awaiting Write Off	£895,767
Total	£4,432,122

4.1.8 Table 4 shows the movement in the out-of-year debt for the year 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 along with the overall percentage reduction.

Table 4

Fin Year	31-Mar-20	31-Mar-21	Reduction since 31/03/20
	£,000	£,000	%
Pre 2016	1,122	1,023	9%
2016/17	449	386	14%
2017/18	756	722	4%
2018/19	881	652	26%
2019/20	8,683	3,052	65%
Total	11,891	5,835	51%

4.1.9 **Appendix 4** shows the overall recovery position of debts in each financial year up to 31st March 2021.

4.1.10 The category with the largest debt is 'debts in dispute'. One of the invoices included in this category is for £1.8m which has since been cancelled as it was not contractually due yet and had only been raised at the request of the customer who is no longer able to pay in advance of the due date. Liberata continue to work with LBB officers to resolve queries and disputes as quickly as possible so that recovery action can continue.

4.1.11 Cases are escalated by Liberata to the Exchequer Client Unit who liaise with senior LBB officers regarding pursuing the debt or writing it off if it is uncollectable.

Utilities

4.1.12 The total debt outstanding for utilities was £236k as at 31st March 2021, which was £46k higher than the previous year. However, it should be noted that of the £236k outstanding, 55% is less than 30 days old. The outstanding debts for BT and Thames Water have reduced and we continue to liaise with the service department regarding the disputed sum.

4.1.13 **Appendix 5** shows a summary of Utility debts as at 31st March 2021.

Income

4.1.14 The Income Team raised 9,381 sundry invoices (excluding Trade Refuse invoices) with a value of £68m from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

4.1.15 During the same period 1,055 invoices relating to all financial years, with a total value of £3.98m were subsequently cancelled. This includes invoices for charges raised in advance where the service was subsequently cancelled.

4.1.16 **Appendix 6** shows the value of invoices raised month by month for the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 compared to the same periods in the previous three financial years. This shows that the value of invoices raised in March has continued to increase and was significantly higher in March 2021.

4.1.17 **Appendix 7** shows the number of invoices raised month by month for the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 compared to the same periods in the previous three financial years.

4.1.18 The outstanding debt for Trade Waste was £142k as at 31st March 2021. Table 5 provides an analysis of the outstanding debt and compares it to the position as at 31st March 2020. This shows an increase of 26% (£29k) since 31st March 2020.

Table 5

Age Analysis of Trade Balance	As at 31st March 2020	As at 31st March 2021	Variance	
			£	%
Under 30 days old	1,711	2,066	355	
Invoices 31-365 days old	28,738	49,707	20,970	
Invoices over 1 year old	82,298	90,311	8,014	
Total	112,747	142,085	29,338	26.02%
Recovery Status of Trade Balance				
Payment arrangements/Direct Debits	169	1,416	1,247	
Invoices in dispute	22,073	26,614	4,541	
Awaiting cancellation	0	0	0	
Awaiting write off	49,073	40,395	-8,677	
Active Recovery	41,432	73,660	32,228	
Total	112,747	142,085	29,338	26.02%

Nightly Paid Accommodation Charges

4.1.19 The outstanding debt for Nightly Paid Accommodation charges as at 31st March 2021 was £7.99m for current and former occupiers. Table 6 gives a breakdown of the outstanding debt as at 31st March 2020 and 31st March 2021 which shows an increase of £1.6m.

4.1.20 The collectable rent has increased by 12% (£1m) since 31st March 2020. Housing Benefit (HB) receipts have increased by 8% (£465k) in the same period, however cash collections have decreased by 14% (£272k).

4.1.21 The Coronavirus Act 2020 was introduced on 26th March 2020 and continues to adversely affect the collection of rent charges. Initially, the stay on eviction proceedings meant that non-paying tenants were permitted to remain in temporary accommodation thereby accruing charges. Liberata and the Housing team were unable to issue Notices to Quit or follow through with any pending eviction proceedings. On 29th August 2020, the guidance changed to allow notice to be given but arrears levels had to reach the value of a minimum of 6 months' rent first. The debt for eviction cases referred to Housing amounted to approximately £450k. From 1st June 2021, notice periods must be at least 4 months including cases where tenants have less than 4 months' arrears.

4.1.22 In addition to the impact of the pandemic recovery of this type of debt means that frequently payment arrangements are for very small instalments over long periods of time. Tenants have issues with affordability and do not possess the assets to enable successful enforcement or legal action.

4.1.23 Liberata participated in the implementation of the Orchard Housing system along with Housing Officers with phase one going live in December 2019. As with any new system, Orchard Housing has not been without its 'teething problems' since implementation. However, Liberata and the Housing team continue to work together to resolve the issues and build on the capabilities of the new system. They are also in discussions regarding phase two which will include direct debits and text messages to tenants.

Table 6

	Arrears as at 31 March 2020	Arrears as at 31 March 2021	Variance %
Charges raised for current year	£8,586,258	£9,600,409	12%
Charges raised and arrears brought forward for previous years	£5,534,272	£6,295,740	14%
Payments received from debtors	-£1,898,338	-£1,626,205	-14%
Housing Benefit awards	-£5,794,757	-£6,260,302	8%
Sub total	£6,427,435	£8,009,642	25%
Less combined total debts written on/off	-£82,522	-£17,097	-79%
Total	£6,344,912	£7,992,544	26%

4.2 Accounts Payable

4.2.1 Under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 the Council is required to publish prompt payment data showing the percentage of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days.

4.2.2 A BV8 summary covering the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 is shown below. This shows that the percentage of undisputed invoices that were paid within 30 days was 98%, against a target of 99%. The percentage of invoices paid within 20 days was 96%. There was a slight dip of 1% when compared to 2019/20 and this can be attributed to the reprioritisation of payments to suppliers in services such as Social Services, as well as changes to procedures to reduce the risks associated with remote working during the pandemic.

Table 7

Target: 99%	Invoices Over 30	Invoices Under 30	Total	%	Invoices Over 20	Invoices Under 20	Total	%
Manuals	90	17,039	17,129	99%	134	16,995	17,129	99%
I-Proc	374	11,380	11,754	97%	684	11,070	11,754	94%
Carefirst	408	11,969	12,377	97%	725	11,652	12,377	94%
Adults	3	516	519	99%	21	498	519	96%
Cumulative YTD Total	875	40,904	41,779	98%	1,564	40,215	41,779	96%

4.2.3 Table 8 below shows the percentage split in the method of payments to suppliers. The percentage of suppliers paid by BACS from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 was 95%. This is an increase of 3% compared to last year.

4.2.4 Officers recognise that it is more cost effective to make payments by BACS and are working with Liberata to continue to reduce the number of cheque payments further.

Table 8

Month	2019/20				2020/21			
	BACS		Cheque		BACS		Cheque	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Apr	2,966	93%	214	7%	2,917	97%	93	3%
May	2,440	91%	235	9%	2,531	95%	134	5%
Jun	2,485	89%	297	11%	2,566	95%	140	5%
Jul	2,639	92%	215	8%	2,688	95%	140	5%
Aug	2,114	91%	214	9%	2,220	94%	154	6%
Sep	2,596	92%	227	8%	2,739	94%	161	6%
Oct	2,406	93%	189	7%	2,710	94%	164	6%
Nov	2,248	93%	174	7%	2,702	95%	151	5%
Dec	2,941	95%	145	5%	2,972	96%	114	4%
Jan	2,644	92%	217	8%	2,672	97%	91	3%
Feb	2,500	94%	170	6%	2,627	95%	139	5%
Mar	3,012	93%	217	7%	3,460	95%	187	5%
	30,991	92%	2,514	8%	32,804	95%	1,668	5%

4.3 Financial Assessment and Charging

4.3.1 The Key Performance Indicator figures for the team covering the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 are shown in table 9 below.

Table 9

Indicator	Target	Actual 2017/18	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2020/21
Complete Financial Assessments within 10 working days	100%	95%	80%	65%	78%
Produce the charging file from CareFirst weekly	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%

4.3.2 During 2020/21 Liberata lost several key Financial Assessment staff, however they have since successfully recruited to the roles. Performance in the latter part of the year improved with performance back to 90% in November 2020 however they lost three staff in January 2021 and these posts were not filled until March 2021. Although the work was being managed by the local and shared services the performance was affected resulting in Liberata being unable to achieve the KPI for completing financial assessments within 10 working days.

4.3.3 Face to face visits have not yet resumed and as such the DWP's Trust and Protect protocols are still in place. This enables Liberata to accept the customer's financial circumstances verbally to allow the financial assessment to be carried out on the basis that the evidence will be verified when it is appropriate to do so.

4.3.4 Cross training of Liberata employees is being carried out to provide additional resilience within the Financial Assessment Service during peak times such as February to March when the annual reassessment of client contributions is carried out. Liberata’s Quality Team conduct targeted quality checking on these employees that have been trained in new areas to ensure their understanding is in line with the procedures. This provides assurance on accuracy and compliance.

Service Improvements

4.3.6 Liberata developed an online Residential Review Web Form which has been widely used since implementation last year. This enables clients to complete their review form online and submit evidence digitally through the Evidence Upload portal. In July 2021, Liberata will implement a new Online Web Form which will enable clients to complete both Residential and Non-Residential Financial Assessments. This development will support the Council’s drive for channel shift as well as well as transform the customer experience.

4.3.7 Liberata’s ‘Project Salmon’ is a full review of all unified assessment services and includes the delivery of online financial assessment forms. Once these forms have been implemented, the Liberata Robotic Processing Automation (RPA) Team will be working to introduce process automation. This will enable non-complex cases to be processed automatically, without the need for manual intervention. This will also reduce, if not eradicate, errors associated with re-keying.

4.3.8 The Information@Work Document Management System (DMS) continues to be a critical for workload management of the team. The parameters of the system have been amended to ensure the most efficient working model which manages the service KPI’s. The suite of reporting from the system enables robust management of the employee and team performance.

4.3.9 Liberata and the Exchequer Client Unit are working closely with colleagues in Care Services and the Finance on the implementation of two key LBB systems, Oracle Fusion and Liquid Logic/Controcc. Once implemented both systems will help to streamline processes making them more efficient and support digital transformation.

4.4 Appointee and Deputyship

4.4.1 The Key Performance Indicator figures for the team, covering the 12 months to 31st March 2021, are shown in table 10 below. This shows the service continues to perform well.

Table 10

Indicator	Target	Actual 2017/18	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2020/21
Referral of applications to the Panel within 14 working days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Raise invoices within 2 months of the anniversary of the court order	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%

5. USERS/STAKEHOLDER SATISFACTION

- 5.1 Complaints are treated as free intelligence to drive improvement and learning. Each complaint is used as a tool for improvement, with individual errors seen as an opportunity to put things right not just for the individual complainant but for the wider community.
- 5.2 The table below shows the number of complaints received since April 2017 split between justified and unjustified. For the range of services being provided the number of complaints is relatively low however there was an increase in the number of complaints received by the Income and Recovery team in relation social care debts due from deceased clients. These cases are highly sensitive and despite our best efforts, complaints are often received from families and representatives in response to requests for payment.
- 5.3 Liberata strive to deal with such cases with extra care and consideration and will continue to improve processes based on feedback received, where appropriate.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Sundry Debtors/Income				
Justified	2	6	4	11
Unjustified	2	8	3	5
Total	4	14	7	16
Accounts Payable				
Justified	-	-	-	-
Unjustified	1	-	-	1
Total	1	-	-	1
Financial Assessment & Management				
Justified	20	6	13	14
Unjustified	5	2	5	11
Total	25	8	18	25
Appointee & Deputyship				
Justified	1	-	-	-
Unjustified	-	-	-	1
Total	1	-	-	1

6. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 6.1 The Single Financial Assessment Unit are required to carry out timely and accurate financial assessments so that the adults receiving social care and support are informed as early as possible how much they are required to pay towards their care. When there are delays in completing financial assessments or providing information this can cause distress or anxiety for clients and their families.
- 6.2 The Accounts Payable Team are responsible for making direct payments to vulnerable adults, children with disabilities, foster carers and care homes. Making the correct payments on time ensures there is no impact on vulnerable adults or children.
- 6.3 The Appointee and Deputyship Team provide services to vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to manage their finances. Prompt submission of court and DWP applications ensures that the risk of financial abuse is removed as early as possible.

6.4 The Appointee and Deputyship Team also carries out protection of property in order to prevent or mitigate the loss or damage to property belonging to adults in Bromley who are receiving care and support from the Council or are in hospital and no suitable arrangements have been made.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Although annual changes to the Council's Personal Budget and Contribution's policy impact on the work undertaken by the contractor these are generally not significant to affect the contract price.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The services provided through the Exchequer Services Contract referred to within this report deal with significant financial transactions with examples illustrated below:

- Accounts Payable - £500m per annum
- Sundry debts (income) - £65m per annum
- Financial Assessments - £14m per annum
- Appointee and Deputyship - £3m per annum

8.2 For 2020/21 the total cost of the contract was £1.89m and met from within the Exchequer Services revenue budget provision.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

None

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This report is a contract performance report for Exchequer Services and is submitted in compliance with rule 23 of the Contract Procedure Rules which requires an annual update report to be submitted when the value of the contract is in excess of £1 million.

11. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

None

Non-Applicable Sections:	9 and 11
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Appendices 1-7

Claudine Douglas-Brown
Assistant Director of Exchequer Services
London Borough of Bromley
Civic Centre
Stockwell Close
Bromley
BR1 3UH

Appendix 1

11 June 2021

Our Ref: AIF/RJ

Dear Claudine,

As we approach the June 2021 Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee where we consider and review the Exchequer service, we take this opportunity to write to you with Liberata's assessment of the performance that we have provided to London Borough of Bromley (LBB) and its citizens.

This summary covers performance for the year to 31st March 2021.

Debtors and Income

The Sundry Debts unadjusted in-year collection figure for the year was 71.49%. This represented cash of £46.75m and was below the target of 92%. At the year end there remained a number of debts where we were unable to take any further recovery action. If we exclude these debts then the adjusted collection rate would be 83.13%. Although this is still below the target figure the reason for this variance is mainly down to a small number of large value NHS invoices totalling £6.5m which were raised during March 2021 but were not paid until 7th April 2021. If these funds had been paid in month then the final adjusted rate would have been 93.45%. Details of the other excluded debts are listed below:

- £973k of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) invoices were raised during the year but were not due for payment until after the year end.
- Invoices totalling £5.49m were raised during the last 14 days of the year. Active recovery action can only commence on these debts after 21 days.
- £2.57m of debts were placed on hold either due to the debt being in dispute, because we were awaiting further instructions from the Council or due to the

Council agreeing to defer payment due to the Coronavirus, as was the case for the Commercial Rents.

- Debts totalling £93k had been secured by Charging Orders on properties.

In Year Collection	31/31/20	31/03/2021	Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Net Collectable Debt	£65.78	£65.39	-£0.39
Amount Collected	£57.08	£46.75	-£10.33

Unadjusted Collection Rate	86.77%	71.49%	-15.28%
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Adjustments to Net Collectable Debt:			
- CIL Debts	-£1.47	-£0.97	-£0.50
- Disputed Debts	-£0.82	-£0.78	-£0.04
- With LBB	-£2.51	-£1.49	-£1.02
- Charging Orders	-£0.09	-£0.09	-
- Awaiting write off	-	-£0.01	£0.01
- Deferred Commercial Rents	-	-£0.30	£0.30
- Invoices less than 14 days old	-£3.69	-£5.49	£1.80
- Premises Licence	-	-£0.02	£0.02
Adjusted Net Collectable Debt	£57.20	£56.24	-£0.96

Adjusted Collection Rate	99.79%	83.13%	
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Of the out of year debt we collected £6.06m and achieved a combined collection rate across financial years of 99.10%. In line with the current year debt position, there were also a large number of out of year invoices where no further recovery action could take place. These totalled £4.43m at the year end and represented 73.2% of the outstanding balance at the year end. An analysis of these debts is shown below:

- £3.33m of debt was either in dispute or was on hold pending instructions from the Council.
- £896k of debt had been either recommended for, or was awaiting, write off.
- £200k of debt had been secured by Charging Orders.

Throughout the year our recovery work on all debt types was adversely impacted by the Coronavirus. The first lockdown in March 2020 resulted in a suspension of all recovery action including court action and any activity by Enforcement Agents. In response we encouraged debtors in financial difficulty to contact us in order to discuss and agree on achievable repayment plans or implement short term payment

deferrals. Although our active recovery work recommenced during the summer this was once again curtailed following the second national lockdown in November 2020. In addition the Coronavirus Act 2020 initially prevented eviction proceedings for non-paying tenants and allowed them to remain in temporary accommodation. Although in August 2020 the guidance changed to allow notice to be served, arrears had to reach the value of at least six months' rent first. This resulted in an increase in Nightly Paid Accommodation debt. As a result the net debt figure for this area increased by £1.65m (26%) compared to the previous year.

Accounts Payable

During the year the percentage of undisputed invoices that were paid within 30 days was 98%. Although this was 1% below the target performance was affected by the increased time that was required to undertake additional validation checks on payment requests. These checks were implemented as an additional security measure while both the Liberata processing team and the Councils employees worked remotely. The percentage of invoices paid within 20 days was 96%. The percentage of suppliers paid by BACS rather than cheques during the year was 95%, which was 3% higher than the previous years' figure.

Financial Assessment and Management Team

Our client base, as at 31st March 2021, comprised of 760 clients receiving residential care and 3,644 clients receiving non-residential care.

Liberata has now created a smart online form for Residential and Non-Residential assessments, which is scheduled to go live in July 2021, once final approval has been received from the Council. The online form will have inbuilt validation routines to ensure that only relevant questions are presented to the applicant, based on their responses provided. This will make the application process more efficient for the customer.

The annual uplift for Non-Residential clients was successfully completed. In preparation for the Residential reviews, over 750 renewal forms will be sent to clients, providing the link to the online form which proved to be the preferred channel for submitting applications last year.

In January 2021, Liberata lost three key full time employees on the team within the space of two weeks. This had a significant impact on our service delivery in terms of meeting the KPI's. These vacancies have now been filled and the new recruits have all successfully completed the in depth four week classroom based training programme, delivered by the Liberata Quality and Policy Team, and have been working as part of the virtual team since April 2021.

Appointee & Deputyship Team

As at 31st March 2021, the team had 282 clients of which 218 were for Appointeeship and 64 were for Deputyship. The use of Lloyds Commercial Online Banking continues to be extremely effective with significant improvements in transaction times when processing payments to clients and payment of invoices to LBB.

The full implementation of Information@Work Data Management System (DMS) across the Adult Social Care services will create significant resilience across our London contracts with the ability to flex resource where required.

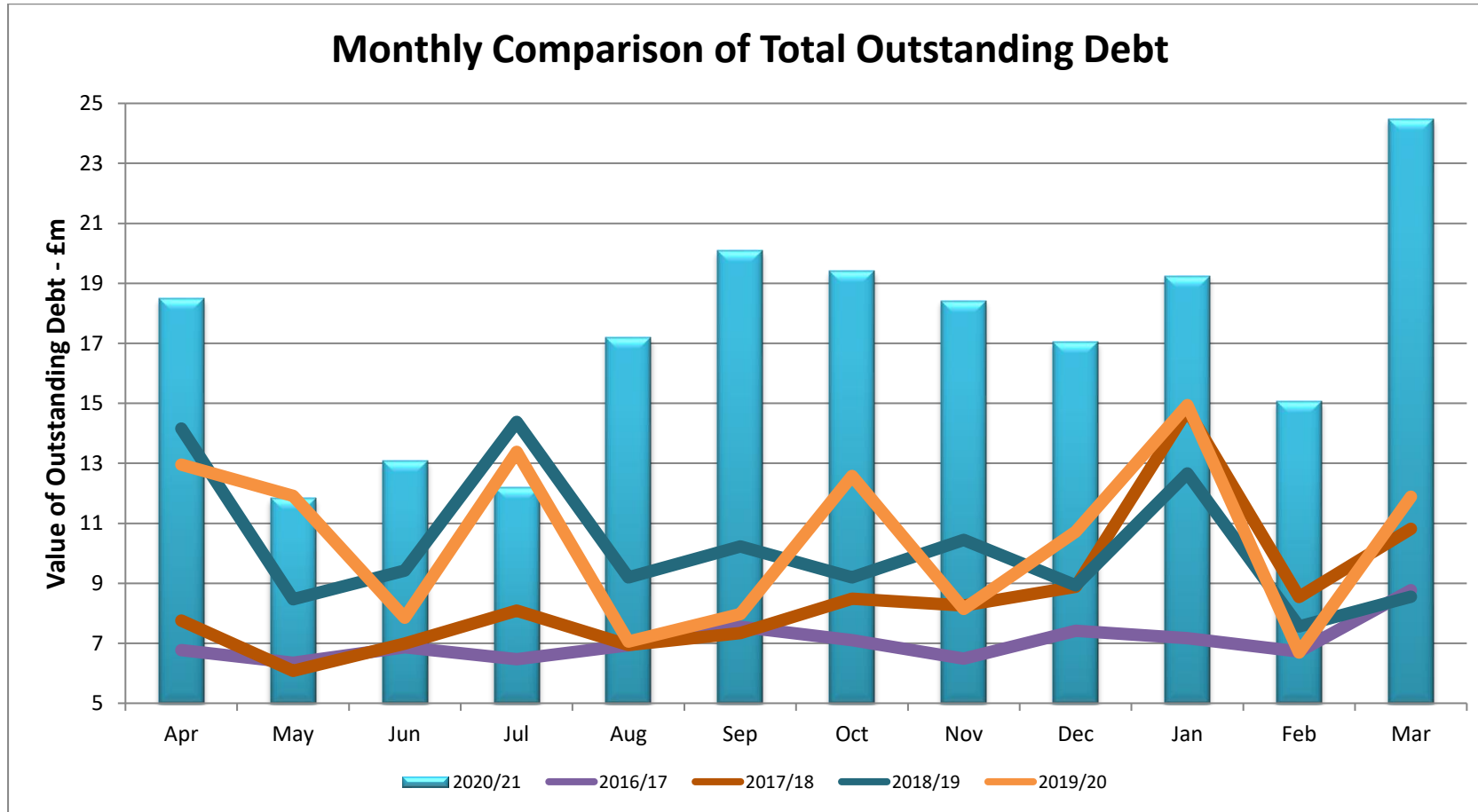
Impact of the Coronavirus

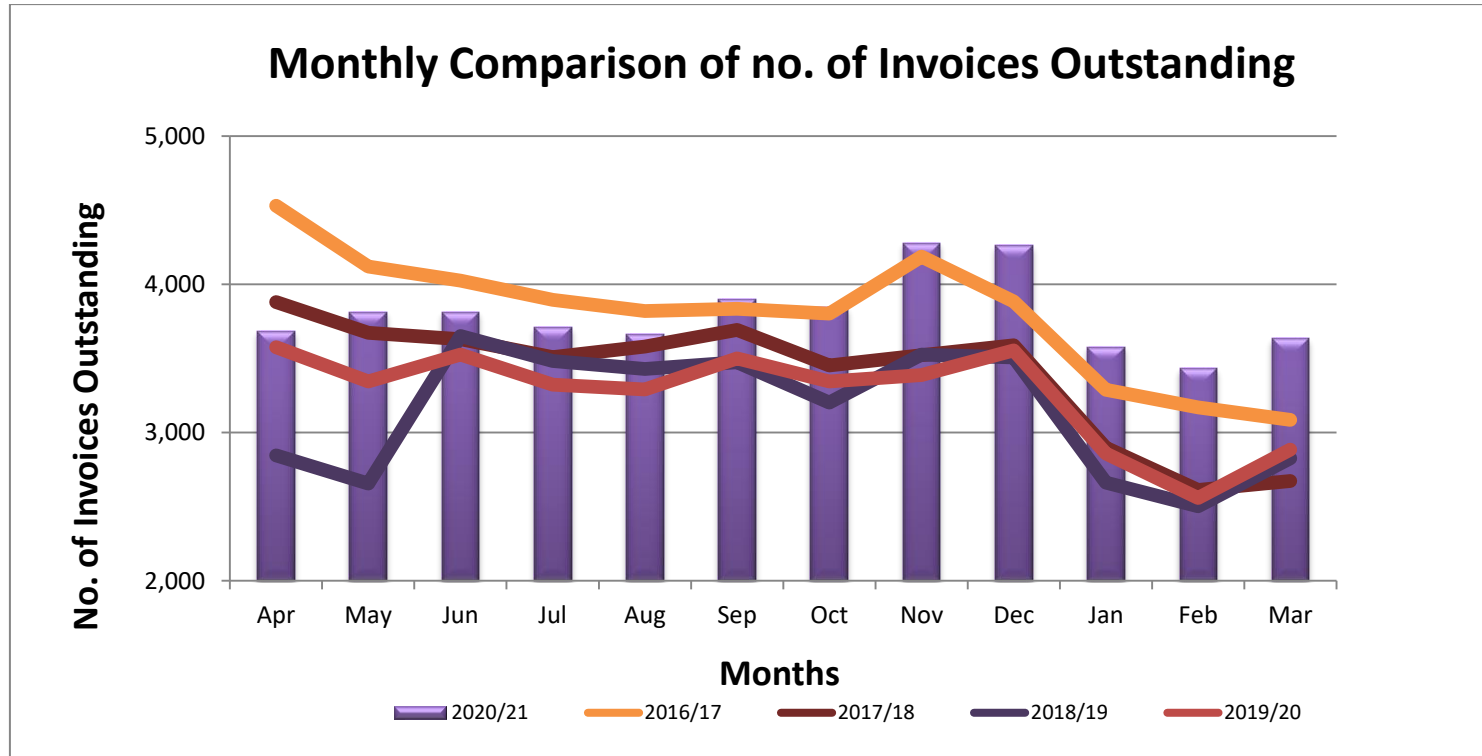
The Coronavirus had a significant impact on the way that Liberata were able to provide a service to the Council and the residents of Bromley. This can be seen in the debt collection rates achieved which reflected the additional financial strain experienced by many residents and businesses in the Borough. In addition it also meant that some of our service lines which were previously paper based, such as Accounts Payable, had to adopt new working methods to deal with both Liberata and Council employees working remotely. The enforced period of local and national lockdown also highlighted the need to provide an online channel to businesses and residents to allow them to quickly access information about their accounts. As part of the new contract, which commenced on 1st April 2020, we have a Transformation Programme which will improve service efficiency and allow online customer access. This can be seen in the process improvements on the Financial Assessment and Management Team detailed above, and also in the roll out of self-service on the Pensions and Payroll service line.

Liberata remains firmly committed to delivering an outstanding service to the London Borough of Bromley and its citizens.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Inwood-Field
London Regional Contract Director





Overall Recovery position of Debts raised in the financial years as at 31st March 2021

Financial Year in which the original debt was raised	Pre 2016	2016/17	2017/18	208/19	2019/20	2020/21	Grand Total
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
In reminder letter cycles (no pro-active recovery)						11,585	11,585
Recovery being actively pursued	27	3	9	11	37	3,574	3,661
In Recovery, paid by instalments	51	11	6	18	35	106	226
Appointee & Deputyship in place		5	3		11	25	43
Deceased Accounts			5	6	82	199	291
Searching for probate		30	15	23	35	118	221
Probate granted (in recovery)			7	7	20	11	45
With LBB for Instructions		1		13	225	1,491	1,729
Rent Deferement					39	300	340
Pre Debt Collector checks	6	3	2	8	16	2	36
With Debt Collector	27	5	22	22	64	35	175
Returned from Debt Collector	2	6	4	2	2		16
Court Action (pre-legal action review & application)	85	93	65	82	309	111	744
Judgement obtained - Enforcement options in review	20	2					22
Judgement obtained - Attachment of Earnings							
Judgement obtained - Charging Order	29	54	13	92	11	94	293
Judgement obtained - Post CCJ Payment Arrangement	9						9
Judgement obtained - High Court Enforcement	15	6	1		1		23
Judgement obtained -Third Party Debt Order							
Judgement obtained - Bankruptcy				13			13
With LBB Legal Dept for instructions	5	12	33	15	5		70
Awaiting cancellation						9	9
Recommended for Write Off	637	42	109	50	59	14	909
In dispute/under query with LBB service departments	111	114	429	290	2,098	966	4,009
Premises Licences - awaiting instruction from department					5	17	22
Grand Total	1,023	386	722	652	3,053	18,657	24,493

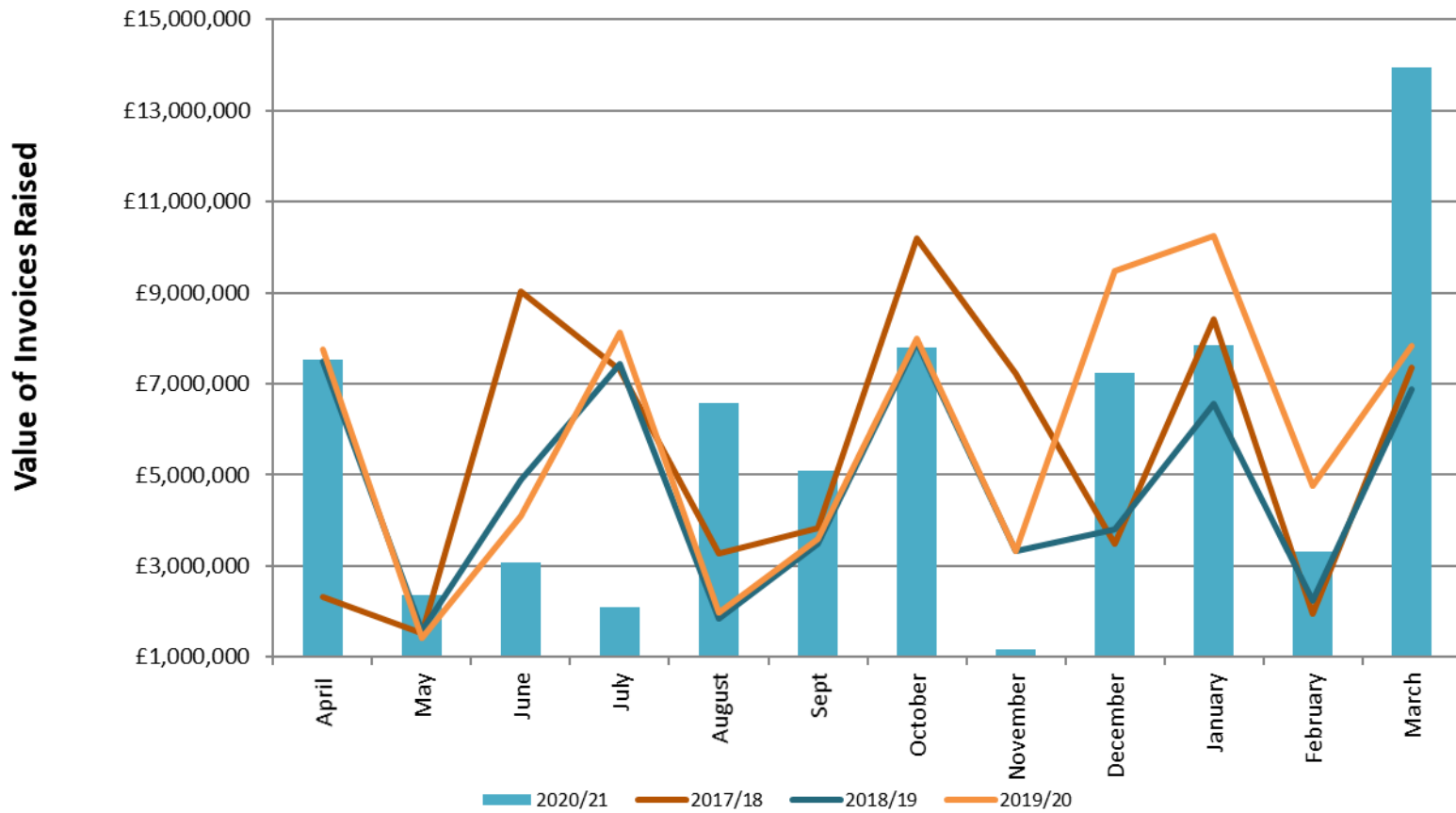
Age Profile of outstanding Utility Debts as at 31st March 2021

Utility	Pre 2016	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	TOTAL BALANCE
Virgin Media	£0	£0	£0	£0	£570	£38,309	£38,879
British Telecom	£9,738	£0	£0	£0	£2,375	£4,075	£16,188
EDF	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
UK Power Networks Ltd	£2,068	£345	£0	£0	£0	£11,366	£13,779
Southern Gas	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£7,973	£7,973
Thames Water	£0	£0	£0	£0	£583	£71,966	£72,548
Other Utilities	£7,938	£1,209	£2,250	£0	£2,455	£72,965	£86,817
TOTAL	£19,743	£1,554	£2,250	£0	£5,983	£206,654	£236,183

Overall Recovery Position of outstanding Utility Debts as at 31st March 2021

Utility	Total under 30 days old	Total over 30 days old	Total outstanding	No. of invoices in dispute	Value of invoices in dispute	Value marked for write off
Virgin Media	£14,740	£24,139	£38,879	0	£0	£0
British Telecom	£2,038	£14,150	£16,188	2	£9,738	£0
EDF	£0	£0	£0	0	£0	£0
UK Power Networks Ltd	£6,184	£7,596	£13,779	0	£0	£2,413
Southern Gas	£7,973	£0	£7,973	0	£0	£0
Thames Water	£65,981	£6,568	£72,548	2	£6,568	£0
Other Utilities	£33,390	£53,427	£86,817	9	£5,600	£1,680
TOTAL	£130,305	£105,879	£236,183	13	£21,905	£4,093

Monthly Comparison of the Value of invoices Raised



Monthly Comparison of No. of Invoices Raised



Report No.
FSD21035

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 23 June 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: BENEFITS SERVICE MONITORING REPORT AND COUNCIL
TAX SUPPORT\REDUCTION 2022/23

Contact Officer: Jayne Carpenter, Revenue and Benefits Manager
Tel: 020 8461 7996 E-mail: Jayne.Carpenter@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Peter Turner, Director of Finance

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides information regarding the performance of the Benefits Service provided by Liberata for the period 1 December 2020 to 31 March 2021. A letter from Amanda Inwood-Field Liberata's London Regional Contract Director is attached as Appendix 1. This communication provides Liberata's perspective of performance, together with an update on initiatives to be introduced in the coming months.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 **The PDS is requested to:**

- **note the information contained with the report and the letter provided by Liberata detailed in Appendix 1; and**
- **consider the Council Tax Support\Reduction scheme options recommended for the public consultation exercise for financial year 2022/23.**

2.2 **The Portfolio Holder to approve the scheme to be recommended in the consultation exercise for the Authority's 2022/23 Council Tax Support\Reduction scheme.**

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The Benefits Service impacts on all benefit recipients including vulnerable adults and/or those with children.
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Exchequer – Benefits
 4. Total current budget for this head: £2.59m
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2020/21 including Government Grants and Subsidy
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 3 plus Liberata staff
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not applicable
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement
The main pieces of legislation covering the Service are:
Housing Benefit Regulations 2006
The Council Tax Reduction\Support Schemes Regulations 2012
The Local Government Finance Act 2012
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: The Benefits service is provided by Liberata as part of the Exchequer Services contract.
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):18,152
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Exchequer Services Team monitors the contract, sets targets and performance standards, liaises with partners, progresses the development and improvement of services through leadership on specific improvement initiatives. The team also ensures the services comply with current legislation, financial regulations, contractual obligations and audit requirements. Graphical illustrations as to the level of performance being achieved are attached as appendices to this report.
- 3.2 To maintain the drive for improved service performance, monthly service review meetings are held with operational and senior Liberata management. Regular meetings take place between senior managers in both organisations to discuss escalated items, technological advances and further development opportunities.
- 3.3 The Exchequer Service specification effective from 1 April 2020 introduced key performance indicators for the processing of new claims and change in circumstances as well reducing the tolerance level for errors to 4% (previously 5%).
- 3.4 During this reporting period there has been a significant increase in Council Tax Support claims and reported change in circumstances as a result of Covid19. The Service has remained stable and has been able to mitigate the impact by using automated processes and re-prioritising tasks. However, it is anticipated that the Benefits service may be put under further pressure when the Government's furlough scheme ceases.

3.5 Outstanding work

The target in the specification requires that the level of outstanding work is less than 5,700 documents of which 2,200 are in pending. At the 31 March 2021 there were 4075 outstanding documents. Of the 4075 documents, 1,118 were in pending awaiting further information. A graph showing the level of outstanding work since April 2019 is attached at Appendix 2.

A graph illustrating the number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support new claims and change in circumstance received since January 2020 is attached at Appendix 3

3.6 Claim Processing

The speed of processing indicator is a combination of the time taken to assess new claims and change of circumstances.

The below table shows the Benefits Sections performance under the Right Time Indicator, the annual target for which is 13 days:

Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
4.38	10.23	8.43	7.53	7.32	7.36	8.55	5.18	10.02	8.13	6.81	2.67

Average 2018/19 **9.40 days**
Average 2019/20 **6.22 days**
Average 2020/21 **6.13 days**

Performance under the Right Time Indicator is illustrated as Appendix 4

- 3.7 Tabled below are the performance figures in respect of the 2 components, new claims and change of circumstances.

New claims – target for 2020/21 is 19 days

Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
16.40	12.11	13.24	14.22	13.88	15.24	16.46	13.12	15.71	16.36	13.99	12.89

Average 2018/19 **20 days**
Average 2019/20 **14 days**
Average 2020/21 **14 days**

3.8 Change in circumstances – target for 2020/21 is 9 days

Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
4.12	10.19	8.06	7.13	6.94	6.83	7.97	4.83	9.50	7.59	6.41	2.54

Average 2018/19 **9 days**
Average 2019/20 **6 days**
Average 2020/21 **7 days**

3.9 The average processing days covers a wide variance amongst claims. Appendix 5 and 5a show the “spread” in respect of new claims and change of circumstances.

For the period 1 December to 31 March 2021, 408 new Housing Benefit claims were processed, no claim took in excess of 100 days to process. Of the 26,781 changes in circumstances processed, 7 (0.02%) took in excess of 100 days to process. The reasons why are detailed below:

Change in circumstances

Reason why the change was processed in excess of 100 days	Number of claims
Additional time given for the claimant to provide information	6
Administration delay	0
Retrospective changes advised by DWP report (Atlas)	1
Total	7

Attached as Appendix 6 is the latest benchmarking figures released by the DWP in respect of new claims and change of circumstances processing. The tables/graphs show performance for the period October to December 2020 for Outer London authorities (Quarter 3, 2020/21), which is the latest information available.

3.10 Error rate

From 1 April 2020 the Exchequer Services specification requires the contractor to ensure that financial errors are found in less than 4% of the cases checked by the Authority’s monitoring team. The level of tolerance for errors is strict compared to many other authorities; with DWP statistics indicating that the average error rate nationally is in excess of this figure. However, the

tolerance was set in the knowledge that errors result in poor customer service and waste of resources through reworking.

The contractor remained within the 4% tolerance contained in the specification for the 12 months covered in this reporting period as shown in the table below. A graphical illustration is entered as Appendix 7.

Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21
0%	2.3%	3.7%	1.8%	2.6%	1.4%	1.3%	3.3%	0.6%	1.2%	0%	2.1%

3.11 **Complaints**

Considerable changes have occurred in both Housing Benefit legislation and Council Tax Support since April 2013, with many experiencing a reduction in entitlement. In many cases this has led to a complaint and/or an appeal as a result of the claimant not comprehending the revised entitlement is due to changes in the scheme. There were no “Stage 2” complaints during the period December 2020 to March 2021 which is an indication that a good service is being provided and that the customer’s areas of discontent are being resolved therefore preventing unnecessary complaints.

3.12 **Housing Benefit Overpayments**

At the May 2016 meeting of the Executive it was agreed that the recovery target and the corresponding penalty/incentive scheme should be suspended from the 1 September 2014. The level of overpayments being created as a result of Real Time Information and projected under Optional Real Time Information making the terms included in the Exchequer Services specification unattainable.

Appendix 8 shows the monthly recovery rates since April 2019.

3.13 **Call Centre (Help line)**

The graph at Appendix 9 details the performance of the Call Centre from March 2019.

The number of calls received for the period December 2020 to March 2021 was 32,281 this has reduced by 2835 compared to the same period in 2019/20. The reduction is a result of customers moving to the on-line self-service system and the migration of new Housing Benefit claims to Universal credit.

The average abandonment rate for the period December 2020 to March 2021 was 0.82 % which is within the 5% tolerance allowed for under the specification.

3.14 **Caseload**

A graph showing the overall number of claims in payment and the Council Tax Support caseload is attached as Appendix 10. Prior to the Covid-19 the overall caseload had been consistently reducing due to the natural migration of working age Housing Benefit claimants to Universal Credit.

At the end of March 2021 the combined caseload was 18,152 and the Council Tax Support was 15,212.

3.15 **Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)**

The DWP allocation for 2020/21 was £893,289. The actual sum spent was £893,375 and 921 awards were made.

3.16 **Council Tax Support/Reduction (CTS)**

The Council Tax scheme for 2020/21 retained the minimum contribution of working-age claimants to 25% of the household's Council Tax liability.

At the end of March 2021 there were 15,212 households in receipt of Council Tax Support of which 9943 were of working age and 5,269 were elderly.

The working age caseload split by Council Tax band is shown below:

Council Tax Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Number of working-age claims	353	1977	4016	2573	738	224	58	4	9943

Since March 2020 the number of working age households in receipt of CTS has increased by 1090 (over 12%). It is anticipated that the caseload will fluctuate once the furlough scheme ends and the restrictions ease.

In response to Covid-19, the Government provided local Authorities in England £500m to support "economically vulnerable people and households in their local area". Bromley were allocated £1,814,229.

At 31 March 2021 we have been able to reduce 12,822 Council Tax Support household's annual liability up to £150.

Council Tax Support/Reduction scheme for 2022/23

The Authority is required to undertake an annual consultation exercise to seek resident's views on the scheme to be operated in the following financial year. It is recommended that the Authority commences a consultation exercise in August 2021.

Officers investigated various scheme options. The table below shows the options available based on 2021/22 Council Tax levels:

Option	Proposed scheme	Net variation in costs £000's
1	Working-age minimum liability reduced to 20%	+399
2	Working-age minimum liability reduced to 20% and entitlement restricted to band "D" Council Tax liability	+179

3	Working- age minimum liability 25% - current scheme	0
4	Working-age minimum liability reduced to 25% and entitlement restricted to band “D” Council Tax liability	-143
5	Working- age minimum liability increased to 30%	-342
6	Working age minimum liability increased to 30% and entitlement restricted to band “D” Council Tax liability	-393
7	Working-age minimum liability increased to 35%	-446
8	Working age minimum liability increased to 35% and entitlement restricted to band “D” Council Tax liability	-678

In light of the on-going effects of the pandemic, leaving the scheme unchanged for 2022/23 (Option 1) would be the Officers recommendation.

3.17 **Universal Credit (UC)**

Universal Credit (UC) ‘Full service’ started in Bromley on 25th July 2018.

Only working age residents in Supported Exempt or in Temporary accommodation are eligible to apply for Housing Benefit, all other working age residents making a new application for assistance with their housing costs have to apply for Universal Credit.

The Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) statistics show 19,760 households in Bromley were on Universal Credit (latest provisional figures from February 2021, increased from 8,293 from February 2020) with 22,956 people in total on UC of which 8,166 are in employment increased from 9,058 and 3,253 since February 2020.

The DWP also advise that 95% of new Universal Credit claims are being paid in full at the initial 1st payment date (5 weeks from application date). Advance payments for clients who cannot manage for the first 5 weeks are available and easy to apply for once the initial application and Identification checks are completed, these are loans that will need to be paid back from future entitlement.

The DWP terminated the partnership with all Local Authorities to deliver support from 1st April 2019 therefore Bromley no longer have a role to assist their residents in applying and assisting with budgeting when having to claim UC. The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) have been contracted to deliver this assistance and they provide both assistance in claiming UC and follow that through with Budgeting support. This service is available in person at Bromley Jobcentre Plus and also via telephone.

It was announced in February 2020 that the existing working-age Housing Benefit claimants will be transferred over to Universal Credit by September 2024, it was previously stated that the transfer would happen in 2023.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support present significant “business”. The 2020/21 budget includes payments in excess of £100m for Housing Benefit and £12m (net) for Council Tax Support. Any deterioration in performance could result in, for example:

- Increase in “Local Authority Error” overpayments, leading to receipt of reduced subsidy from Central Government

- Potential increase in overpayments which may not be recoverable.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Full legal implications were set out in the report considered by members of the Executive on the 2 August 2019. However, in summary Section 33(1) (e) of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the National Council Tax benefit. Section 10 (1) of that Act introduced a new Section 13A (2) into the Local Government Finance Act 1992 which obliged each local authority to make its own scheme for those it considered to be in financial need.

Schedule 1A of the 1992 Act sets out the procedural steps required to make a revised scheme. These include the obligation to consider whether or not to change a scheme for any financial year. Where changes are made there is a statutory obligation to publish a draft scheme and to consult with such persons as we deem to have an interest. This will include both individuals who receive benefit and those who don't. Any new scheme must be adopted by 31st January in the financial year preceding that in which it is to apply.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children, Policy, Personnel and Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	

Claudine Douglas-Brown
Assistant Director of Exchequer Services
London Borough of Bromley
Civic Centre
Stockwell Close
Bromley
BR1 3UH

Date: 11th June 2021

Our Ref: AIF/GT

Dear Claudine,

As we approach the June Executive, Resources & Contracts PDS meeting where we consider and review the performance of the Benefits service, we take this opportunity to write to you with Liberata's assessment of the performance of this critical, high profile service that we provide to London Borough of Bromley (LBB) and its customers.

Liberata's Business Continuity plans are still in place and employees remain working from home, continuing to provide high levels of service to customers. The online application functionality which has been implemented enables customers to access the Benefis Service safely online and provide the required evidence and information through the Evidence Upload Facility.

Our commitment to channel shift customers to digital channels is a key focus for Liberata. Our experience of seamless continuation of service delivery throughout the COVID pandemic demonstrates our ability to further develop online services and supports the Council's transformation programme. Liberata have implemented additional provision for vulnerable customers that require assistance in accessing services online.

This summary covers performance for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

1. Current Status of the Benefits Service

The Benefits caseload, which measures all households receiving Housing Benefit (HB) and/or Council Tax Support (CTS), was 18,152 as at the end of March 2021. The caseload at the same time last year was 17,808. The caseload has continued to increase as a direct result of the COVID 19 pandemic.

In terms of our position for the processing of New Claims and Changes, our average performance for the 2020/21 financial year was 14.43 days for New

Claims and 5.82 days for Changes. This is against an annual contractual target of 19 days and 9 days respectively.

As at the end of March 2021, the amount of outstanding work totalled 4,075 items. We also had 1,118 items pended, whilst awaiting information from the claimant and/or third-party. The impact of COVID19 has had a significant impact on volumes which we are receiving in respect of new Universal Credit (UC) award notices and changes. This increased volume has continued throughout this year which we believe will continue until the end of 2021.

1.1 Temporary Accommodation

Liberata have maintained strong relationships with the various LBB Housing Teams, Orchard & Shipman and the Mears Group. We meet regularly each month to resolve any benefit issues quickly and when necessary fast track cases to minimise the risk of arrears accumulating which ultimately sustains tenancies and prevents homelessness.

The dedicated Temporary Accommodation benefit assessment staff and LBB's Housing staff and stakeholders have created a robust, collaborative virtual team which focuses on benefit claims being paid quickly and efficiently.

1.2 Verify Earnings and Pensions (VEP) Alerts Service

Liberata continue to receive VEP alerts, from the DWP. The processing of the alerts have proven to be an effective tool in ensuring the earnings and pension information within the Academy benefits system is accurately maintained.

Liberata's specialised VEP Team, based in the shared service centre, plays a key role in ensuring that the daily VEP files provided by the DWP are downloaded and processed in accordance with the information being provided. The VEP alerts draw relevant information held by various organisations including HMRC and the Pension Service which provide 'real time' information essential in the administration of Benefits.

The effective processing of the alerts not only ensure that the Academy database is accurate, but also significantly reduce the potential for overpayments where the customer has delayed or not notified the Council of any changes in their household income.

1.3 ATLAS

ATLAS is a process of transferring data from the DWP systems to the Local Authority systems. This includes state benefit changes which may not have been previously notified to us by the customer. The majority of the ATLAS files which we receive have been developed to automate directly into the benefits database, which improves the speed of processing and reduces the risk of input error by

assessors when re-keying information. However, since April 2020 we have seen a month on month decrease in ATLAS files transmitted to us by the DWP compared to last year.

1.4 Quality

We continue to be firmly focused on quality and strive to eradicate error from the assessment process. The average financial error rate for the period April 2020 to March 2021 was 1.69% which is a significant improvement from 2018/19 when it was 2.1%. This is compared to a contractual target of 4%. The additional quality checking undertaken during the year was key in ensuring that Liberata were delivering a high quality service to customers and mitigating the risk of financial error.

Liberata undertakes an intense training program for all new recruits and the upskilling of existing employees. This involves significant post completion monitoring and mentoring to ensure accuracy rates remain at a high level. Errors which have been identified are addressed immediately with employees and additional refresher training or mentoring is provided to maintain our high standard of quality in the assessments that are undertaken.

The DWP accept that a certain level of error will be made in the administration of Benefits. As such, an upper and lower threshold of Local Authority error is outlined by the DWP. Liberata's performance continues to remain well below the lower threshold attracting maximum subsidy for the Authority.

1.5 Overpayment Strategy

The creation of overpayments is a natural bi-product of the administration of Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support, with recovery needing to be sought from some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

The year to date recovery rate of overpaid Housing Benefit as at the end of March 2021 was 121.34%. This underlying trend includes the recovery of current year and previous year debts. Liberata continues to effectively recover debts by using a variety of techniques including Blameless Tenant recovery, Direct Earnings Attachment and Debt Collection Agencies. These recovery techniques have proven effective tools in securing the repayment of these debts.

1.6 Universal Credit

Liberata has continued to receive high volumes of UC notifications advising us of new UC awards and changes to existing ones. The impact of COVID 19 has been significant in this area and reflects the financial hardship which residents of the borough have experienced during the pandemic. We are currently working with the Academy software supplier to finalise automation which will upload data from the notifications directly into the Benefits database. This solution will minimise

assessment errors in re-keying data and also increase performance in processing claims.

Since April 2020 the volumes of Council Tax Support (CTS) applications have increased month on month. Though the increase has slowed down since August 2020, the caseload still remain higher than it was in 2019. The increase in applications has been as a direct result of the COVID19 pandemic, which we forecast will continue to increase for the remainder of 2021.

The online smart forms for new claims and changes which were implemented earlier this year have simplified the application process for customers applying for assistance. At the point in which a customer submits their online form they are advised whether there is a requirement for them to provide any further information. The information can then be submitted online along with their application.

Liberata's Customer Services team continue to play an active role in sign posting customers to the Job Centre Plus, when they contact the Civic Centre reception and are unclear as to where to claim assistance with their housing costs.

1.7 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

As a result of the new contract, Liberata now administer DHP and are able to assist some of the most vulnerable customers within Bromley. During 2020/21, the DWP released funding which was significantly higher than previous years, to be used to support customers that were experiencing issues with rent arrears and rent shortfalls during the pandemic. The funding provided totalled £893k which was fully utilised by the end of March 2021.

2. Corporate Visiting Team (CVT)

The COVID 19 pandemic has prevented Visiting Officers from conducting face to face visits with customers in their home. We incorporated the DWP's 'Trust and Protect' principles last year, which means that information required from the customer in respect of income and capital is accepted verbally or by email which will be verified at a later date once visits can resume. This principle has been effective and enabled the Benefits Service to carry out assessments without creating a delay to the customer. All assessments which have been made under 'Trust and Protect' have been logged and we are aiming to visit customers in June once lockdown has been lifted.

3. Call Centre & Customer Services

The Revenues & Benefits Call Centre received 92,324 calls for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021, with 98% being answered with an average speed to answer of 40 seconds. Of these calls 86% were answered within the service level target. The Call Centre also received 7,591 NNDR calls, up from 4,065 in the same period 2019/20. This large increase was indicative of the turmoil being felt by businesses as lockdown was imposed.

The Customer Services front facing team re-opened at the end of June 2020 after being closed for the whole of April and May, and most of June due the national Covid lockdown restrictions. The service was mainly appointment only, but vulnerable customers who presented without an appointment were seen. During this reporting period, the team saw just 1,434 customers compared to 26,453 during the same period in 2019/20. This large reduction does not appear to have been to the detriment of customers being able to transact with the Council, and there have been no complaints about the appointment only service.

4. Service Developments

Liberata's goal is to continue to improve and enhance the services provided to the Council and its citizens through the introduction of innovative and effective solutions.

Examples of current year new and ongoing initiatives;

- Risk Based Verification (RBV) has been implemented; this now enables claims to be risk scored in line with the customers circumstances. Customers deemed as low risk have their new claims and changes processed without the requirement for them to provide additional information to validate their claims. This provides enhanced customer experience and significantly improves the speed of processing times.
- Planned implementation of RBV automation; once implemented, this will enable low risk claims to be automated through the back office database without the need of re-keying information. This will also significantly increase the processing times for new claims and changes as well as a further enhancement to customer experience.
- A full launch implementation of the Benefits self-service portal; this is currently in use by the LBB Housing teams, Leaving Care and the Citizens Advice Bureau. This enables online new claims and changes to be submitted directly into the back office system.
- Liberata in conjunction with LBB have now reviewed the the content of the LBB website and also the letters which are sent out by the Benefit Service. This forms part of our ongoing digital transformation programme to channel shift customers to online services.
- Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative (HBAAI); Liberata will commence processing HBAAI workloads from information provided by the

DWP. Existing cases will be reviewed to ensure that current awards of Benefits are accurate and the Benefits database is up to date.

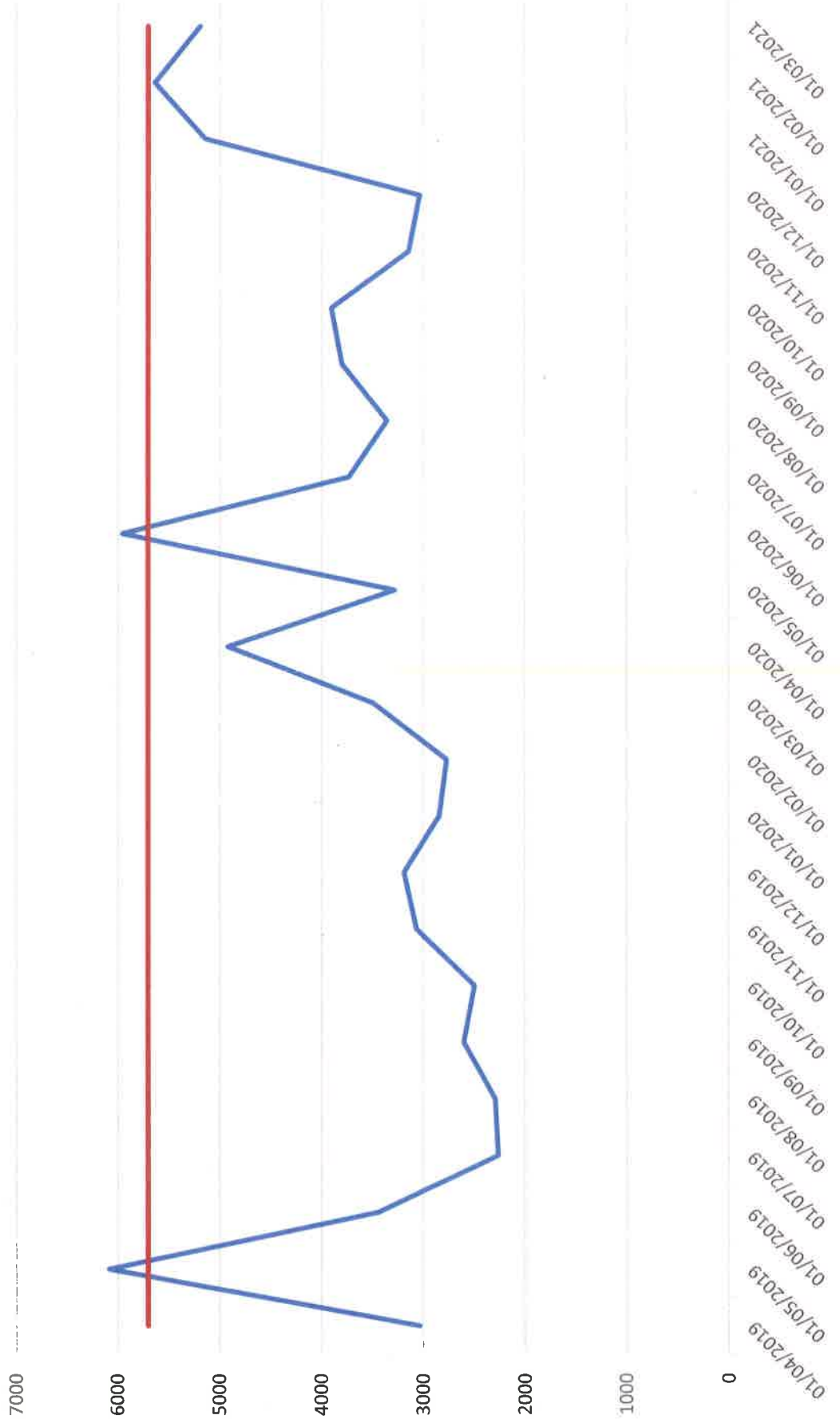
- Universal Credit (UC) Automation; We will be implementing UC automation later this year. This will enable us to automate the vast majority of UC notifications and reduce errors as a result of manual re-keying of data into the database.

Liberata remains firmly committed to delivering an outstanding service to the London Borough of Bromley and its citizens.

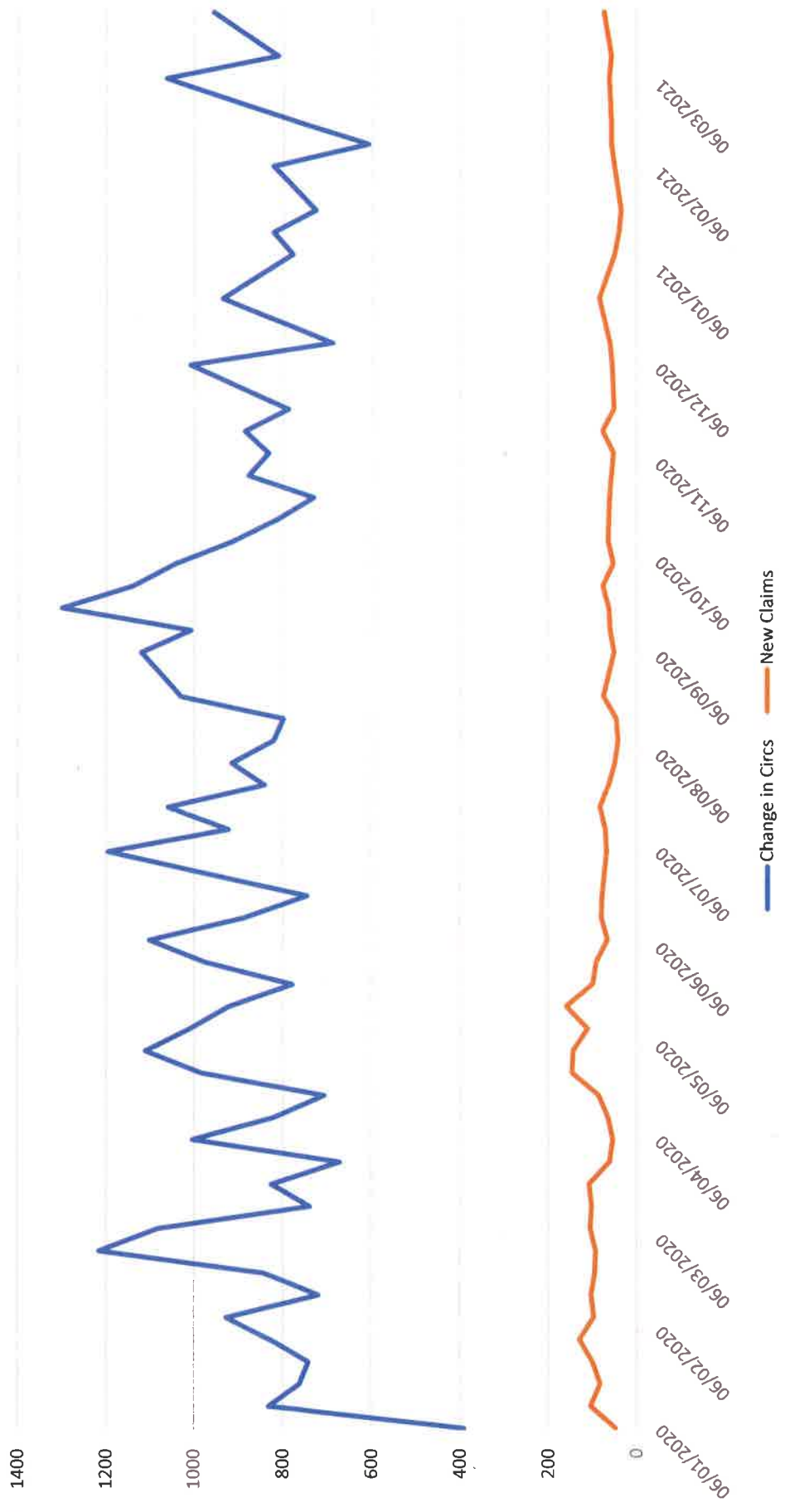
Yours sincerely,

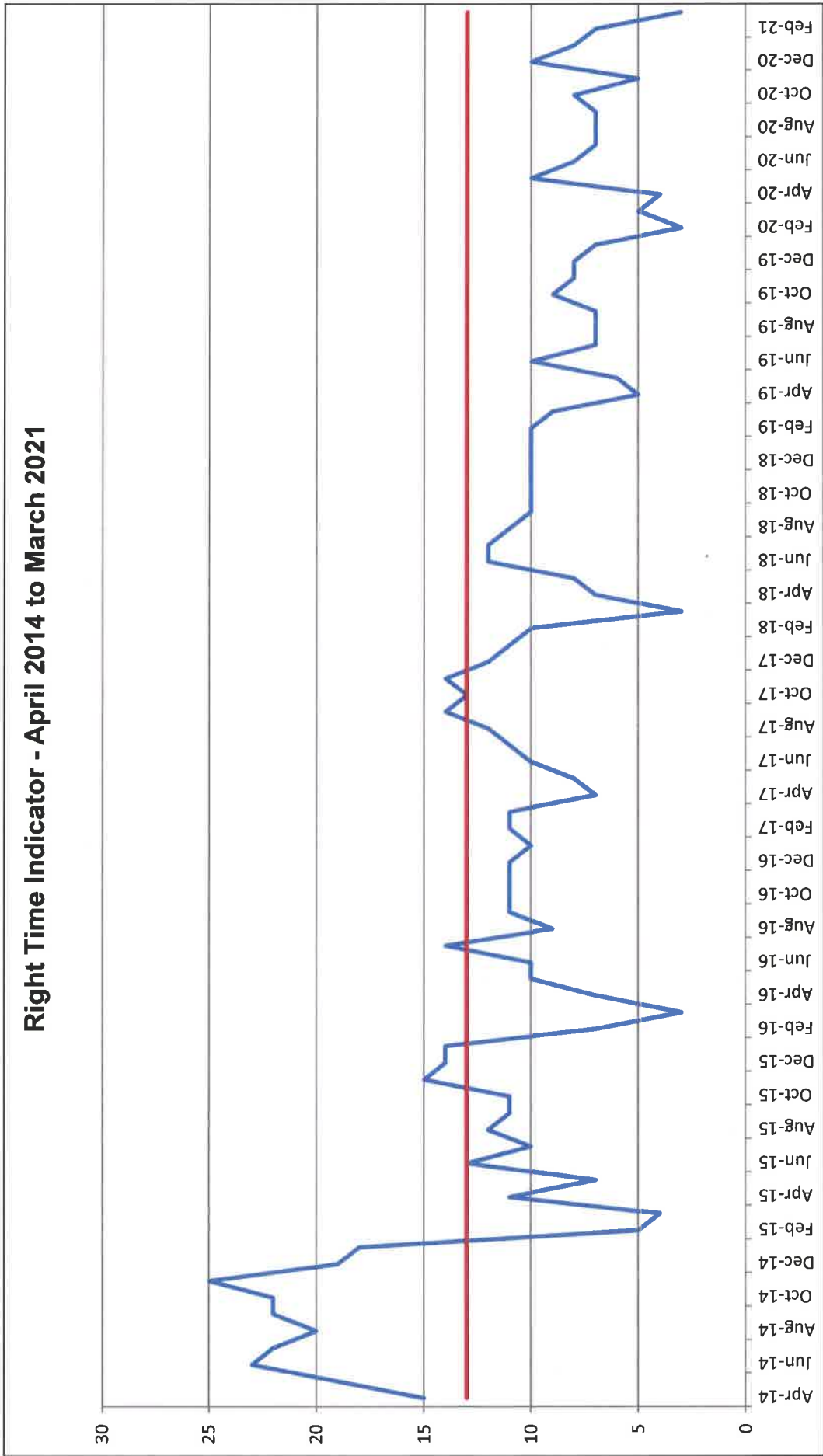
Amanda Inwood-Field
London Regional Contract Director

Outstanding Work - April 2019 to March 2021 Target - 5700

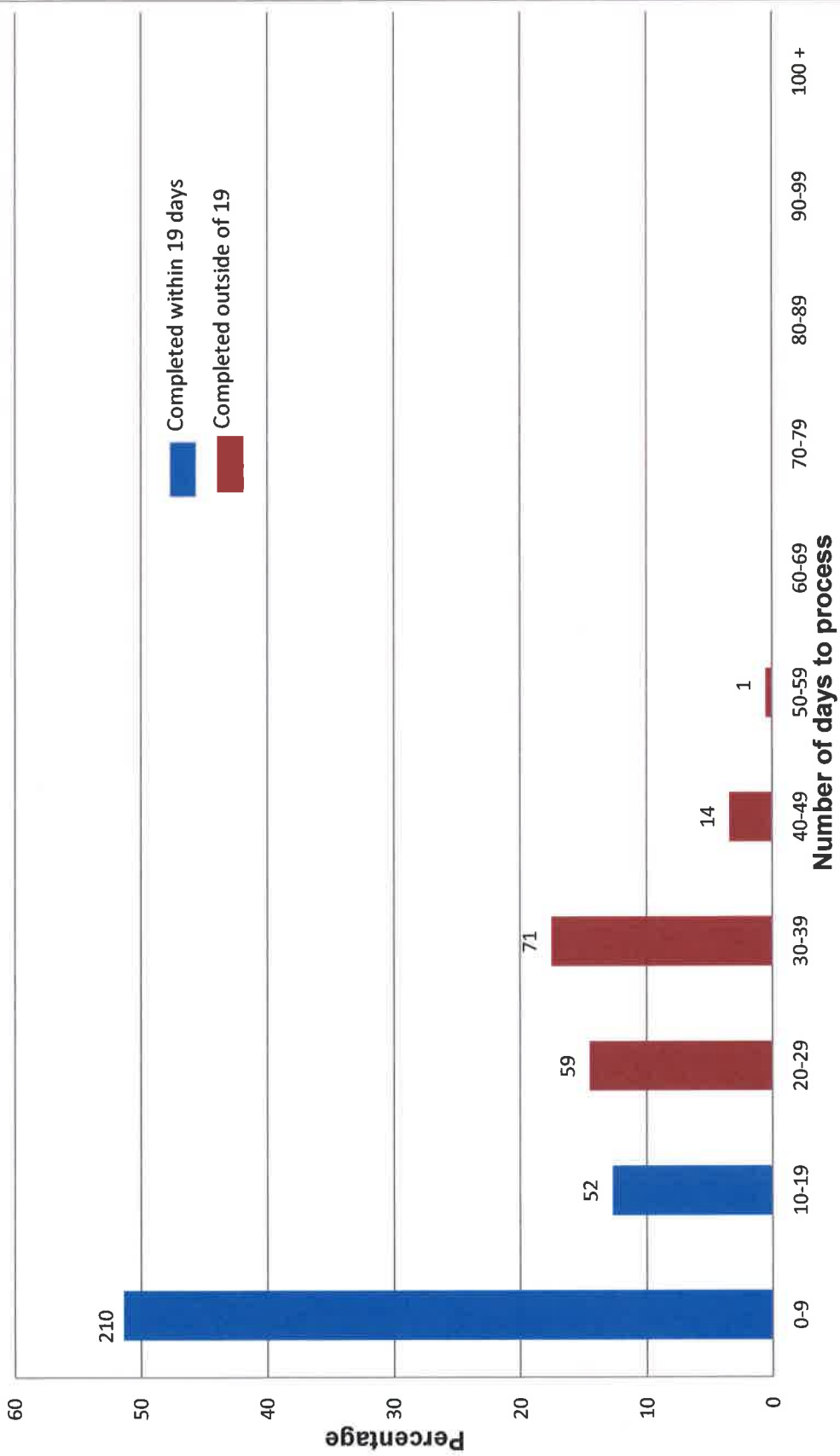


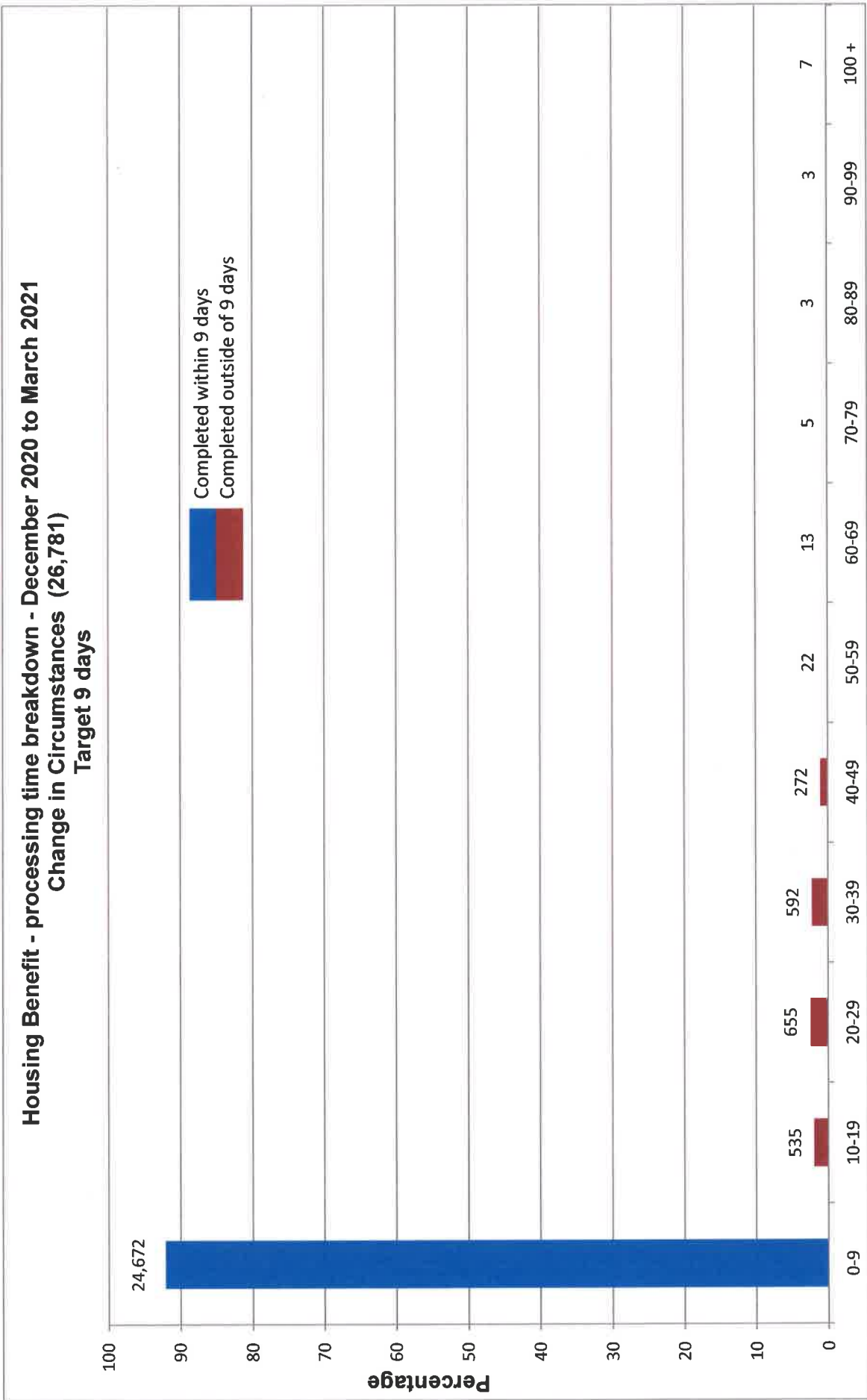
New Claims and Changes in Circumstances received from January 2020 to March 2021



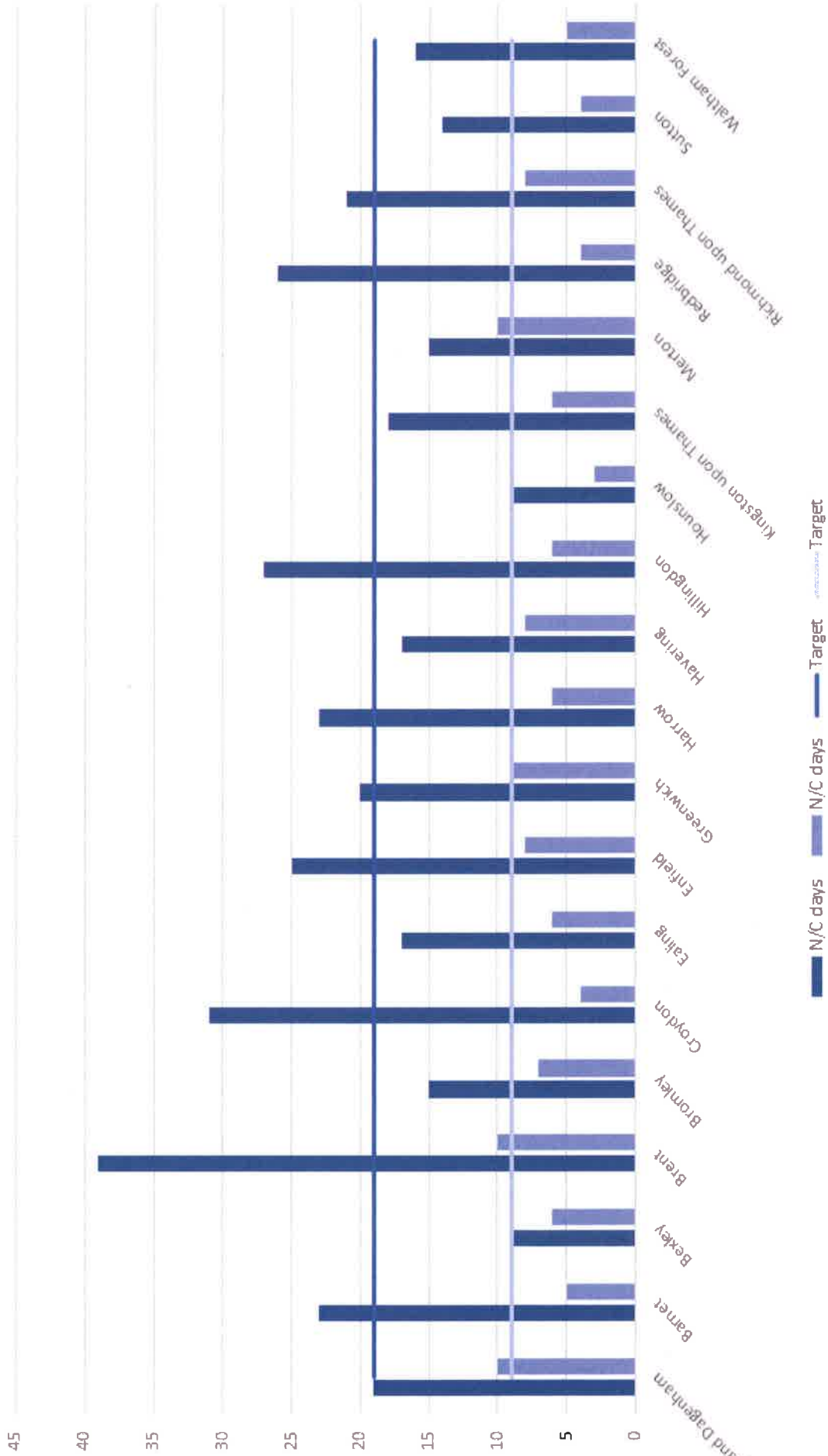


Housing Benefit - processing time breakdown December 2020 to March 2021 New Claims (408 cases)

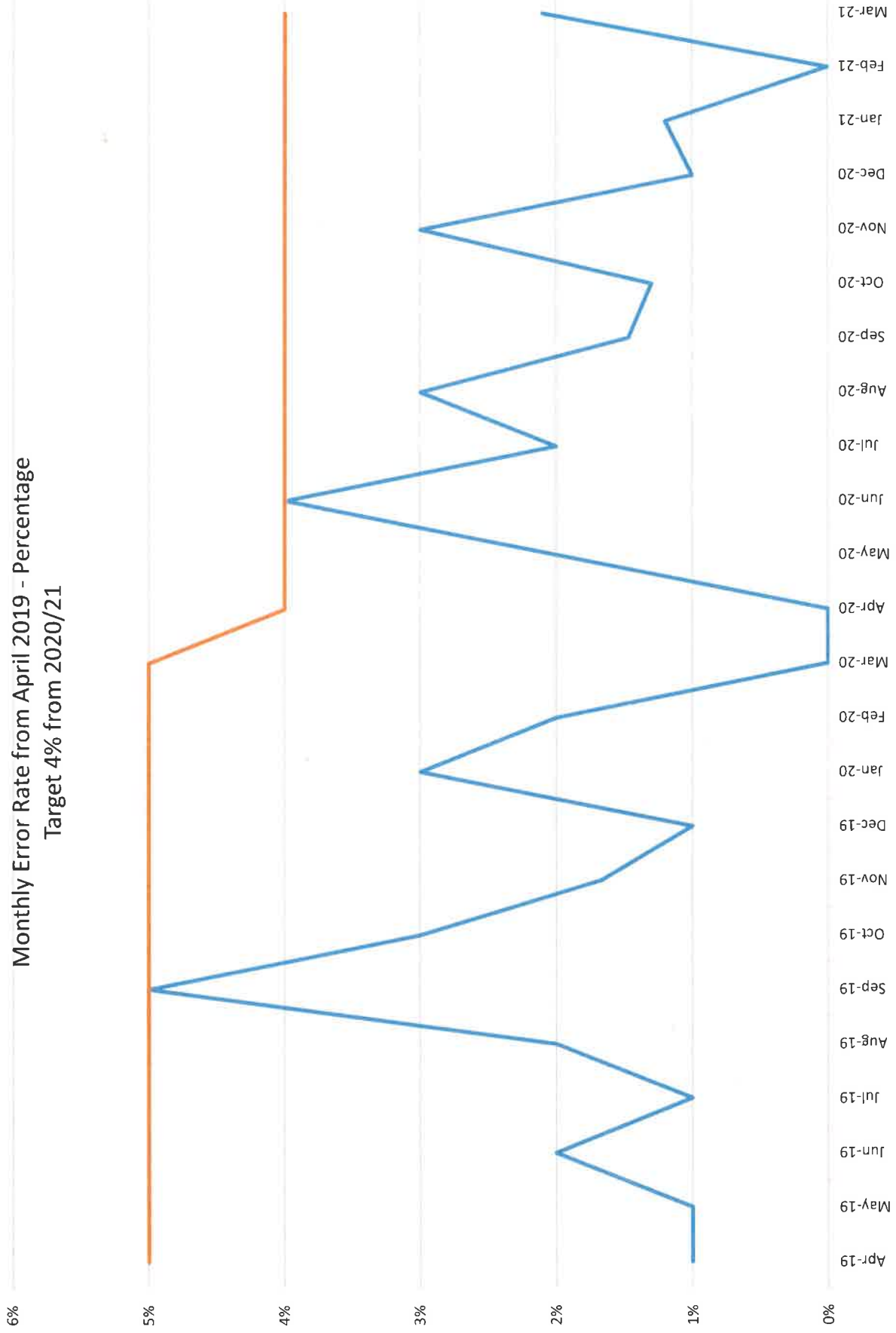




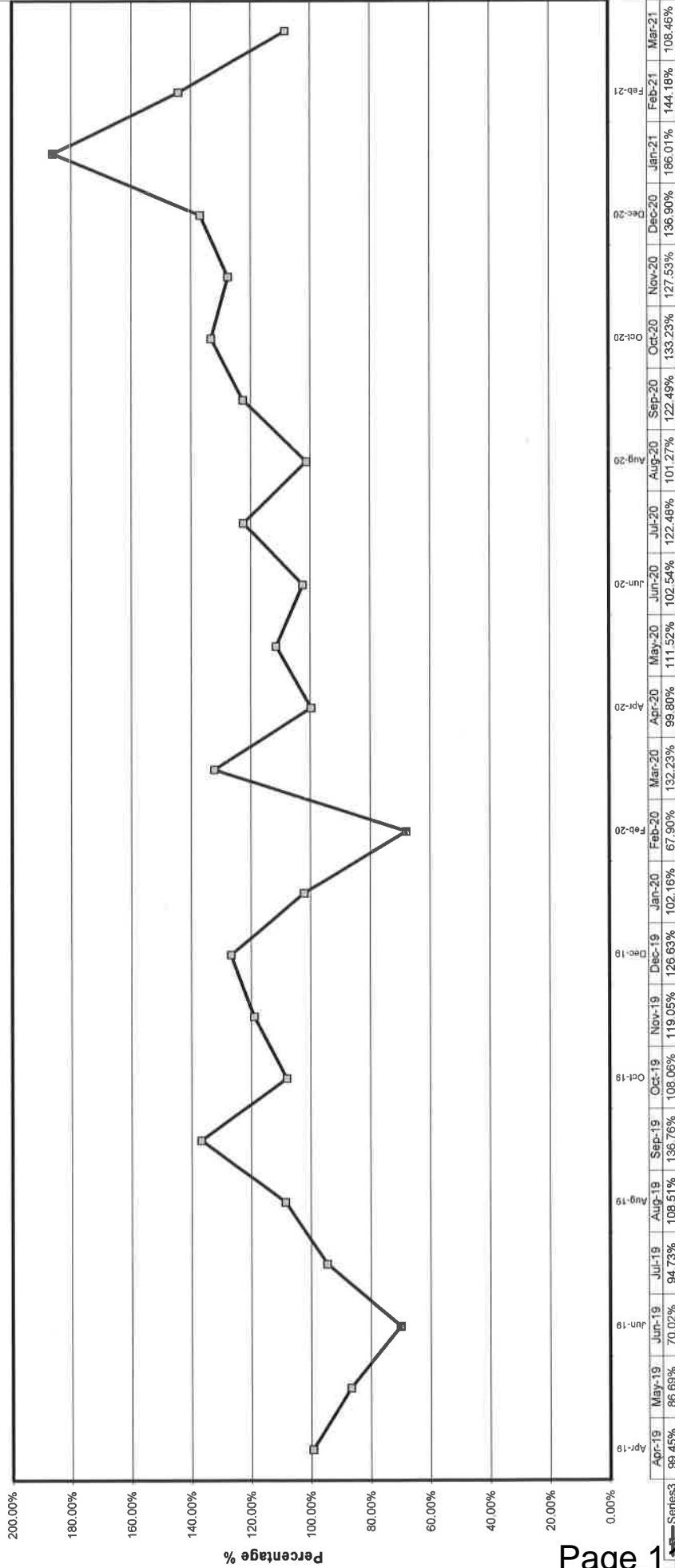
Outer London - DWP Q3 Performance - 2020/21



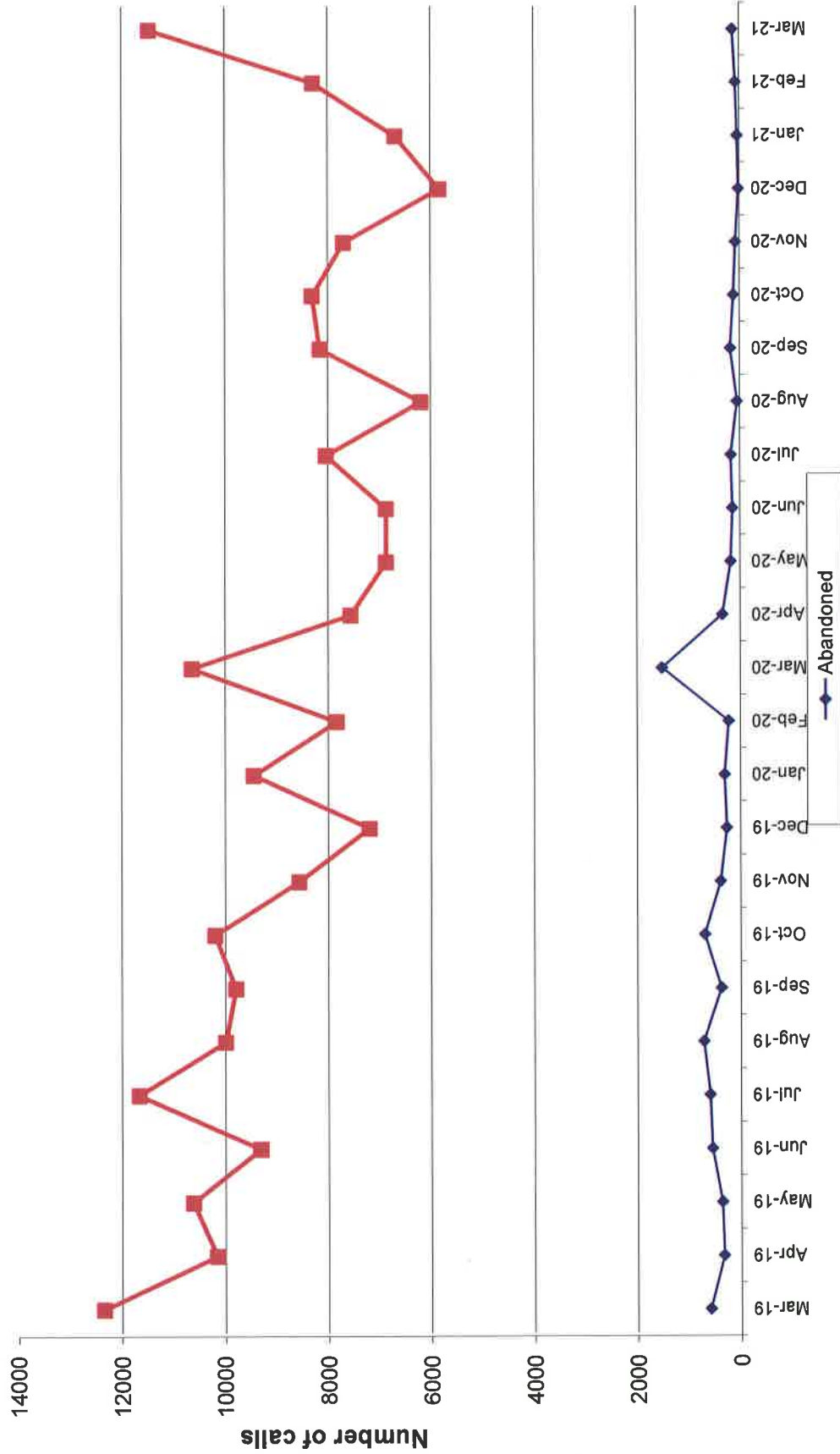
Monthly Error Rate from April 2019 - Percentage
Target 4% from 2020/21



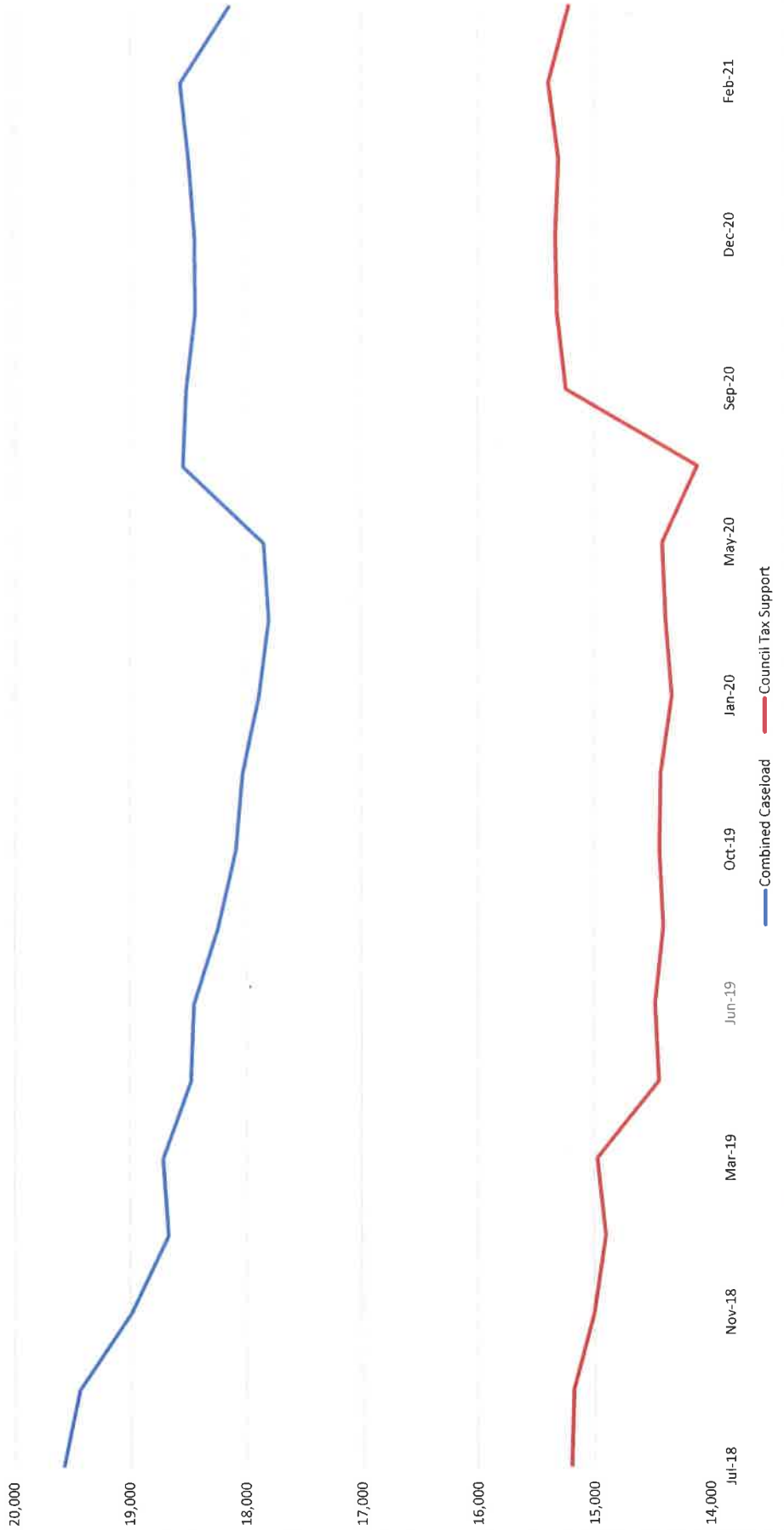
Monthly Overpayment % recovered against that created since April 2019



Revenues and Benefits Call Centre - number of telephone calls received and abandoned from March 2019 to March 2021



Caseload from July 2018 to March 2021



Report No.
FSD21036

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 23 June 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: REVENUES SERVICE MONITORING REPORT

Contact Officer: Jayne Carpenter, Revenues and Benefits Manager
Tel: 020 8461 7996 E-mail: Jayne.Carpenter@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Peter Turner, Director of Finance

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report provides information regarding the performance of the Revenues Services provided by Liberata for the period 1 December 2020 to 31 March 2021. A letter from Amanda Inwood-Field, Liberata's London Regional Contract Director, provides an update on each of the individual service and is attached Appendix 1 with statistical data relating to the Revenues Service attached at Appendix 2.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The PDS is requested to:

- to note the information contained within the report and the letter provided by Liberata detailed in Appendices 1 & 2
- to consider the recommendation that the decision to increase to the Empty Homes Premium is deferred until 2022/23
- to note the reasons for the postponement of the Academy and Information and Work systems review, and that a report will be presented to the Executive later in the year seeking delegated authority for the renewal of the contracts.

- 2.1 The Portfolio Holder to approve the deferral of the decision to increase the Empty Homes Premium to 2022/23

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The Revenues Service impacts on all residents in the Authority including vulnerable adults/and those with children.
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Exchequer - Revenues
 4. Total current budget for this head: £2.96m
 5. Source of funding: Existing Revenue Budget for 2020/21
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 2 plus Liberata staff
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Existing Revenue budget for 2020/21
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement:
Local Government Finance Act 1988
The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992
The Local Government Finance Act 2012
Rating Law and Practice; England and Wales
LGPS Regulations 2013
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: The Revenues Service forms part of the Exchequer Services contract
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The Services covered in this report affect all the Council Tax payers, Business Rates payers, Members and Pensioners, this could be estimated to 150,000 households.
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? No
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Exchequer Services team monitors the contract, sets targets and performance standards. Liaises with partners, progresses the development and improvement of services through leadership on specific improvement initiatives. The team also ensures the services comply with current legislation, financial regulations, contractual obligations and audit requirements.
- 3.2 To maintain the drive for improved service performance, monthly service review meetings are held with operational and senior Liberata management. The Heads of Service of Liberata and Bromley meet regularly to deal with escalated issues, review policies and develop new ideas.

3.3 **Council Tax**

Collection

The in-year Council Tax collection rate for the year to 31 March 2021 was 96.51% which was a 1.35% reduction on that achieved in the previous year. The collection figure was affected by the suspension of recovery action which followed the national lockdown in March 2020. This meant that all activity from Enforcement Agents was suspended, no court summonses were issued and payment deferrals of up to 3 months were offered to residents in financial difficulties.

Issuing of reminder letters re-commenced in July and the use of Enforcement Agents was restarted during September. Their work was then placed on hold again during the November national lockdown. No court hearings were held between February 2020 and 31 March 2021 and as a result we had been unable to issue any summonses/liability orders or hold any summons surgeries in conjunction with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).

We have recently taken part in our first “virtual” court hearing. Court dates have now been obtained for 2021 and recovery action has re-commenced.

Of the 33 London authorities that declared their in-year recovery rate for 2020/21, Bromley’s performance was the 5th highest.

The collection rate on current year and arrears was 96.01% which was a 1.84% adverse variance when compared to the last financial year.

Number of properties on the Council Tax register

At the 31 March 2021 the number of properties registered for Council Tax was 141,911. The table below shows the number of properties by Council Tax “band” and the number in receipt of Single Person Discount (SPD):

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Number of properties	2,006	10,389	30,068	36,315	29,445	18,249	13,796	1,643	141,911
Number of properties with SPD	1,166	6,067	13,357	11,011	6,696	3,313	1,928	139	43,677

In comparison to last year, the number of registered properties has increased by 428 and the number receiving SPD has increased by 746.

Single Person Discount review

The accounts in receipt of SPD are regularly reviewed. The 2020/21 review finished in February 2021 and resulted in SPD being removed from 428 accounts which equated £169,784.60. The next review is due to commence at the end July 2021.

Direct Debit

Council Tax can be paid by direct debit on either 1st or 15th of the month and over 10 or 12 months. On average 68.08% of the accounts where there is liability to pay are paid by this method compared to 68.93% in 2019/20. The reduction has been attributed to the pandemic.

Empty Homes Premium

The Executive at their meeting of the 27 November 2019 approved the introduction of the Empty Homes Premium (EHP) from the 1 April 2020. For properties empty longer than two years a 50% premium was to be levied, increasing to 100% once the property had been empty for five years.

At the 1 April 2020, 289 properties had an EHP applied.

At the 31 March 2021 an EHP was applied to 323 properties. The table below shows the long-term empty properties by Council Tax band:

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Total
Number of properties	13	66	93	85	31	19	13	3	323

The small increase that transpired in the financial year has mainly been attributable to the pandemic's impact on the housing market, both in respect of sales and development/repair.

A report to the 13 January 2021 meeting of the Executive proposed the increase of the EHP from the 1 April 2021 to 100% being levied for properties empty over 2 years, increasing to 200% after 5 years and 300% after 10 years.

The Executive decided to defer the decision for one year in recognition of the ongoing impact of the pandemic.

The level of communication being received against the EHP indicates that difficulties are still being experienced with sales and developments/repairs and it is therefore recommended that the decision on increasing the EHP is deferred for a further year in recognition of the pandemic's continuing affect.

3.4 Business Rates

The in-year Business Rates collection rate for the period ended 31 March 2021 was 91.89% which was down by 6.14% on the previous year. Like Council Tax, collection was adversely affected by the impact of Covid19 and the suspension of recovery action.

The collection rate for current years and arrears was 82.07%, which was a 13.61% decrease compared to the previous financial year.

Of the 33 London authorities that declared their in-year recovery rate for 2020/21, Bromley's performance was 12th.

As at the 31 March 2021 there were 7,507 properties registered for Business Rates an increase of 75 on the figure as at the 31 March 2020.

3.5 **Cashiers**

The number of payments received, including amounts received via either of the payment kiosks, or by post, was lower than in previous years. This was due to the closure of the Civic Centre and the Penge Library. As a result, £5,982,102 (6,902 transactions) were taken compared to £10,898,516 (28,168 transactions) for the previous year.

3.6 **Payroll**

The number of payments made in March 2021 was as follows;

LBB General/Schools	2,575
Pensions	5,382

For the period 1 April to 31 March 2021, Liberata achieved 99.98% accuracy.

3.7 **Pensions**

Membership numbers recorded on the pension administration system as at 31 March 2021 were 6,411 actives, 6,665 deferred and 5,669 pensioners.

Liberata have provided assurance that all pension entitlement and benefits are calculated and paid in accordance with Legislation and the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

3.8 **Academy and Information@Work**

The Academy system is provided by Capita Business Services Limited and is used for the assessment and payment of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims for an estimated 18,152 claimants per annum. The system is also used for the billing and collection of Council Tax and Business Rates of £332m per annum.

The cost of the system for 2020/21 is £179,108 with a total value of £1.73m

The Information@Work system is provided by Northgate Public Services Limited and is a document management and workflow system used in conjunction with the Academy system. The cost of the system for 2020/21 is £4,276.50 with a total value of £0.098m.

The agreements held with Capita and Northgate are annual rolling agreements with a six months' notice period for termination of the agreement.

Both are key systems used by the Council's contractor Liberata in the provision of the Exchequer Service Contract which commenced on 1st April 2020. The contract includes a provision for a review of several IT systems including Academy and Information@Work within 12 months of the commencement of the contract.

Liberata staff and officers from the Exchequer Client Unit have been responsible for the administration of the Covid-19 business grants and Isolation payments since April 2020 which has meant there has been no capacity to carry out a review of these systems. However, we are now in discussion with Liberata regarding proposals for the review.

The Council's Contract Procedure Rules require Member authorisation for further annual renewal of the Academy system agreement. A report will be presented to the Executive later in the year to seek delegated authority to renew both agreements with an intent to carry out a full system review in due course and present a Gateway Report setting out the commissioning strategy.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report refers to significant income collection undertaken through the Exchequer Service contract with Liberata. For 2020/21 the key financial elements of the Revenues Service are;

- £233m - annual Council Tax raised
- £98.9m – annual Business Rates raised
- £68.2m – gross amount paid in staff salaries (inclusive of Schools but excluding Academies) for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021
- £30.5m – gross amount paid in Pensions for the period 1 April to 31 March 2021
- £5.98m - revenue on 6,902 transactions for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 (including kiosks)

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This is a contract monitoring report pursuant to CPR23. There are no specific legal implications raising from this report.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children, Policy, Personnel and Procurement
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	



Claudine Douglas-Brown
 Assistant Director of Exchequer Services
 London Borough of Bromley
 Civic Centre
 Stockwell Close
 Bromley
 BR1 3UH

Knollys House
 17 Addiscombe Road
 Croydon CR0 6SR
 United Kingdom

T +44 (0)20 7378 3700
 F +44 (0)20 7378 3701

www.liberata.com

11 June 2021

Our Ref: AIF/RJ

Dear Claudine,

As we approach the June 2021 Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee where we consider and review the Exchequer service, we take this opportunity to write to you with Liberata's assessment of the performance that we have provided to London Borough of Bromley (LBB) and its citizens.

This summary covers performance for the year to 31st March 2021.

Council Tax

We achieved an in-year collection for the year of 96.51%, which represented £210.26m of cash collected. Although the collection rate was 1.36% lower than the previous year, this reflected the impact that the Coronavirus had on our recovery activity. Following the first national lockdown in March, and in keeping with the Council's objective of being sympathetic to residents rapidly worsening financial position, we amended our recovery processes accordingly. Although we continued to issue reminder letters to residents, all other active recovery work was stopped. This included the use of Enforcement Agents and the issuing of court summonses. Instead we focused on encouraging residents in financial difficulty to contact us in order to discuss and agree on achievable repayment plans or implement short term payment deferrals. Although we restarted the use of Enforcement Agents during September, this was again stopped as a result of the second national lockdown in November and did not recommence for the remainder of the year. Court hearings also remained suspended which prevented us from issuing any summons letters or liability orders. Since the year end the courts have commenced with 'virtual hearings' however these have so far been restricted to cover a maximum of 500 cases per hearing. As such this will take some time to clear the backlog that has built up during 2020/21. To provide some context for our collection results the in year figure of 96.51% placed Bromley in 5th place when compared to the other London

Boroughs where the average fall in collection was 2.63% compared to Bromley's 1.36%.

	31/03/2021	31/03/2020	Variance
In Year	£m	£m	£m
Net collectable Debt	£217.88	£211.18	£6.70
Amount collected	<u>-£210.26</u>	<u>-£206.66</u>	£3.60
Debt remaining	<u>£7.62</u>	<u>£4.52</u>	
Collection Rate	96.51%	97.87%	-1.36%

The all-years collection figure achieved was 96.01% which was a decrease of 1.84% compared to the previous year.

	31/03/2021	31/03/2020	Variance
All Years	£m	£m	£m
Net collectable Debt	£220.90	£213.78	£7.12
Amount collected	<u>-£212.08</u>	<u>-£209.19</u>	£2.89
Debt remaining	<u>£8.82</u>	<u>£4.59</u>	
Collection Rate	96.01%	97.85%	-1.84%

During the first six months of the year we saw a 19% increase in the number of new registered MyBromley Accounts being set up, compared to the previous year and a 36% increase in the number of visits to the MyBromley Account portal pages. This highlighted the channel shift as residents chose to use the online services as a faster and more convenient way of accessing information about their accounts. We also included promotional flyers with this year's annual bills to encourage residents to sign up for e-billing and replace their paper bills with online versions. This not only provides residents with a faster service but also saves on paper usage. The number of registered MyBromley Accounts currently stands at over 93,000.

Business Rates

Our in-year collection rate to 31st March 2021 was 91.89% which was down by 6.14% compared to the previous year's figure. This placed Bromley in 12th place when compared to the collection rates of the other London Borough's. However the average fall in collection experienced by these Borough's was 8.31%. In line with the position on Council Tax, the Business Rates collections were also adversely impacted by the Coronavirus. This placed additional financial strain on local businesses who were either forced to close or saw their trading drastically reduced. This, together with the cessation in activity by the Enforcement Agents and the ongoing closure of courts, reduced our ability to recover debts.

In Year Collection:

	31/03/2021	31/03/2020	Variance
In Year	£m	£m	£m
Net collectable Debt	£40.14	£96.51	-£56.37
Amount collected	-£36.89	-£94.61	-£57.72
Debt remaining	£3.25	£1.90	
Collection Rate	91.89%	98.03%	-6.14%
<i>Adjusted to incl outstanding LBB debt as paid</i>	92.12%	98.03%	-5.91%

The all year's collection rate for the period was 82.07%, which is a fall of 13.61% on the previous year.

All Years Collection Rate:

	31/03/2021	31/03/2020	Variance
All Years	£m	£m	£m
Net collectable Debt	£39.89	£98.44	-£58.55
Amount collected	-£32.74	-£94.19	-£61.45
Debt remaining	£7.15	£4.25	
Collection Rate	82.07%	95.68%	-13.61%

Cashiers

We collected £5.98m during the year which was made up of 6,902 transactions and included amounts taken via the kiosks, post and central income. The closure of the Civic Centre and the Penge library during the year reduced the usage of the kiosk machines located there. Although the Civic Centre did re-open, this was on an appointment only basis which further contributed to the decrease in usage of the kiosk there.

Pensions and Payroll

The Pension Team achieved an average of 97.48% service level compliance over the year to 31st March 2021. The Payroll Team also continued to provide a valued service with an average accuracy rate of 99.98% across the Council's Corporate, Schools and Pensions payrolls.

Impact of the Coronavirus

As detailed above the Coronavirus had a material impact on our debt recovery due to the effect it had, and continues to have, on the finances of both residents and businesses. Liberata has been able to support the Council in the implementation and administration of a number of business support grants which offer financial support to local businesses and other organisations. We have worked with the Council to deliver the Small Business Grants, the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant and various Discretionary and Local Restriction Support Grants. As a result we have so far processed over 25,000 applications and paid out over £89.69m in grants.

Liberata remains firmly committed to delivering an outstanding service to the London Borough of Bromley and its citizens.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Inwood-Field
London Regional Contract Director

Appendix 2

Actual 31st March 2021 – 96.51%

The amount of collectable debt raised for the year 2020/21 was **£233.04m** in respect of **141,399** properties.

294 Cheque refunds and **8,141** BACs refunds totalling **£2,447,170.86** have been issued from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

The following Council Tax recovery notices were issued:

	31/03/12	31/03/13	31/03/14	31/03/15	31/03/16	31/03/17	31/03/18	31/03/19	31/03/20	31/03/21
Reminders	51,920	45,816	56,256	54,745	52,125	55,553	78,657	63,387	57,196	54,201
Summonses	16,436	16,168	19,267	13,158	9,543	14,052	10,755	9,375	9,561	0
Liability Orders	9,396	10,868	9,999	8,645	8,337	10,338	9,115	8,105	8,606	0
14 day letters – Enforcement Agent warning	11,757	12,518	15,816	10,103	12,214	8,247	8,647	10,074	9,129	0

The suspension of court hearings in March 2020, which was in response to the national lockdown, meant that no Summonses, Liability Orders or 14 day letters were issued during the year.

The key elements of the Revenues Service include (2020/21 figures):

- £233.04 million – Annual amount of Council Tax raised
- £98.93 million – Annual amount of Business Rates raised
- £12.56 million – Annual payment of Council Tax Support
- £91m million – Annual expenditure of Housing Benefit
- £68.2 million – Gross payment of staff salaries (through the LBB payroll service, including schools, excluding Academies) for the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021
- £30.5 million – Payment of Pensions from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021
- £5.98 million – 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 revenue on 6,902 transactions, this includes Kiosk
- (811 Loomis cash collections during the year to 31st March 2021)

Council Tax Data:

In year collection performance by Liberata is shown below:

Best Value PI's	Actual 11/12	Actual 12/13	Actual 13/14	Actual 14/15	Actual 15/16	Actual 16/17	Actual 17/18	Actual 18/19	Actual 19/20	Actual 20/21
BV9:CTAX Collected	97.65%	97.76%	97.50%	97.70%	97.79%	97.93%	98.04%	98.00%	97.86%	96.51%

The 2019/20 debt carried forward at the 1st April 2020 was £4,897,521.05

Council Tax - Summoned Debt	
Summonses / costs	£538,537.29
Arrangement	£356,325.99
Bailiff /14 DAY	£2,020,711.96
Attachment	£28,519.94
Bankruptcy	£22,794.38
Liability	£835,659.68
Un-summused Debt	
Finals	£400,026.72
Un-summused	£694,945.09
Total	4,897,521.05

The breakdown analysis of the total 2019/20 debt outstanding at the 1st April 2020 of £4,897,521.05 is shown above.

The balance of the total 2019/20 debt outstanding as at the 31st March 2021 is £3,637,344.21 a reduction of £1,260,176.84.

Council Tax Arrears Breakdown as at 31st March 2021

	Arrears B/F 31.03.2020	Arrears carried forward	Net reduction	Actual % collection
1998	£384.89	111.92	£272.97	
1999	£8.97	0	£8.97	
2000	£2,837.58	£2,826.81	£10.77	
2001	£9,180.51	£7,040.76	£2,139.75	
2002	£18,562.19	£15,476.74	£3,085.45	
2003	£29,373.47	£26,424.33	£2,949.14	
2004	£37,897.21	£34,329.95	£3,567.26	
2005	£60,856.92	£50,990.74	£9,866.18	
2006	£92,649.51	£79,114.41	£13,535.10	
2007	£118,820.19	£109,187.78	£9,632.41	
2008	£153,220.53	£135,208.85	£18,011.68	
TOTAL	£523,791.97	£460,712.29	£63,079.68	12.04%
2009	£177,522.47	£160,718.94	£16,803.53	9.47%
2010	£217,068.30	£198,976.56	£18,091.74	8.33%
2011	£275,722.53	£254,618.00	£21,104.53	7.65%
2012	£359,346.77	£339,000.21	£20,346.56	5.66%
2013	£585,632.18	£534,638.88	£50,993.30	8.71%
2014	£752,041.09	£686,555.34	£65,485.75	8.71%
2015	£963,191.92	£883,524.41	£79,667.51	8.27%
2016	£1,276,545.41	£1,158,181.02	£118,364.39	9.27%
2017	£1,750,637.73	£1,563,950.44	£186,687.29	10.66%
2018	£2,637,420.79	£2,289,063.60	£348,357.19	13.21%
2019	£4,897,521.05	£3,637,344.21	£1,260,176.84	25.73%
TOTAL	£14,416,442.21	£12,167,283.90	£2,249,158.31	

The **2020/21** debt carried forward at 1st April 2020 was **£1,840,994.40**

NDR recovery stage	Amount
Un-summoned	£276,211.14
Arrangement	£66,255.43
Enforcement Agent	£340,882.76
Final	£384,617.17
Liability	£280,018.32
Reminders	£435,801.05
Summoned	£57,208.53
Total	£1,840,994.40

Movement in arrears for reporting period –

Arrears total 2001 - 2019/20 as at **01/04/20** **£3,299,725.08**

Arrears total 2001 - 2019/20 as at **31/03/21** **£2,858,674.12**

Reduction in Overall arrears **£441,050.96**

Business Rates Data:

In year collection performance by Liberata is shown below:

Best Value PI's	Actual 11/12	Actual 12/13	Actual 13/14	Actual 14/15	Actual 15/16	Actual 16/17	Actual 17/18	Actual 18/19	Actual 19/20	Actual 20/21
BV10: Rates Collected	98.81%	98.72%	98.70%	98.80%	99.05%	98.87%	98.53%	98.53%	98.03%	91.89%

The amount of collectable debt raised for the year 2020/21 is **£98.93 million** in respect of 7,483 properties.

There have been 1,063 refunds actioned from the 1st April 2020 to the 31st March 2021 amounting to **£7,036,637.18** in respect of vacation and rateable value reductions.

The following recovery notices were issued -

	31/03/12	31/03/13	31/03/14	31/03/15	31/3/16	31/3/17	31/3/18	31/03/19	31/03/20	31/03/21
Reminders Issued	2,536	4,023	3,545	4,445	4,263	4,288	3,525	3,245	3,447	1,803
Final Notices Issued	1,741	2,014	2,472	2,353	1,560	1,960	1,985	1,312	2,201	0
Summonses Issued	1,156	987	1,091	1,053	535	1,123	768	601	429	0
Liability Orders	749	683	771	734	411	525	522	550	438	0
7 day letters issued	471	501	No longer used	No longer used	No longer used	No longer used	No longer used	No longer used	No longer used	0
Accounts passed to Enforcement Agent	537	645	650	444	283	184	159	203	369	0

The suspension of court hearings in March 2020, which was in response to the national lockdown, meant that no Summonses, Liability Orders or 14 day letters were issued during the year.

Business Rates Arrears breakdown as at 31st March 2021

	Arrears B/F 31.03.2020	Arrears carried forward	Net reduction	Actual % collection
2001	£137.94	£137.94	£0.00	
2008	£2,226.54	£1,143.35	-£1,083.19	48.65%
2009	£2,295.44	£938.03	-£1,357.41	59.14%
2010	£11,415.65	£7,659.01	-£3,756.64	32.91%
2011	£17,763.66	£8,689.02	-£9,074.64	51.09%
2012	£45,096.04	£28,475.03	-£16,621.01	36.86%
2013	£48,379.15	£40,003.31	-£8,375.84	17.31%
2014	£75,580.35	£71,719.80	-£3,860.55	5.11%
2015	£88,970.89	£80,005.44	-£8,965.45	10.08%
2016	£186,048.94	£161,495.10	-£24,553.84	13.20%
2017	£366,700.81	£397,476.67	£30,775.86	-8.39%
2018	£614,115.27	£573,791.39	-£40,323.88	6.57%
2019	£1,840,994.40	£1,487,140.03	-£353,854.37	19.22%
	£3,299,725.08	£2,858,674.12	-£441,050.96	

Backdated revaluations and the removal of discounts and exemptions can result in a backdated increase in arrears

Cashiers Data

The cashiering service dealt with the following transactions in the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021:

Civic Centre Total	Transactions including Kiosk
£5,982,102	6,902

Payroll Data:

The average number of payments made each month/annually is shown below:

	Monthly	Annually
Non-Teaching/Teaching	2,554	30,651
Pensions	5,355	64,264

Appendix 2

Complaints Data:

Service	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Council Tax	118	277 (210 unfounded)	372 (292 unfounded)	540 (446 unfounded)	427 (378 unfounded)	348 (274 unfounded)	373 (309 unfounded)	344 (299 unfounded)	337 (260 unfounded)	170 (114 unfounded)
NNDR	1	7 (7 unfounded)	4 (4 unfounded)	21 (7 unfounded)	10 (9 unfounded)	6 (3 unfounded)	3 (2 unfounded)	4 (3 unfounded)	3 (1 unfounded)	4 (0 unfounded)
Pensions	7 (2 unfounded)	3 (2 unfounded)	4 (2 unfounded)	4 (1 unfounded)	2	4 (2 unfounded)	2 (1 unfounded)	4 (2 unfounded)	8 (5 unfounded)	9 (4 unfounded)
Payroll	4	9 (2 unfounded)	5 (2 unfounded)	9 (7 unfounded)	4 (2 unfounded)	1 (1 unfounded)	0	3 (2 unfounded)	3 (3 unfounded)	0
Cashiers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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