

Homelessness Performance Update and Performance Forward Plan

SUMMARY

- 1.1 In May 2015, the Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board took over responsibilities for monitoring performance and discussing general performance issues as and when they may arise. The Board also has powers to determine whether further action should be taken to resolve issues through performance surgeries or further reviews and reporting to the topic specific Scrutiny Boards.
- 1.2 The Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board play a key role in the Council's performance framework through regular performance review and challenge of improvement plans.
- 1.3 On 8th December 2015 the Board received a report outlining the challenges the City was facing due to an increased call on statutory homelessness services.
- 1.4 On 6th September 2016 the Board requested an update on the current position with a particular emphasis on the following council scorecard indicators:
- YA&H PM03 (N1 156) (DH) Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation.
- YA&H PM06 (DH) Number of homelessness acceptances.
- 1.5 This report updates the board on the national and local context for homelessness and includes trend analysis for approaches, acceptances, preventions and the use of temporary accommodation to give a fuller picture of needs and activity in the city.
- 1.6 The number of homelessness approaches and people eligible for the full rehousing duty continued to rise during 2015/16. This was due to a wide variety of factors such as:
- Loss of assured short hold tenancies
 - Loss of accommodation with family / friends
 - Higher incidence of domestic abuse.
 - Lower threshold for assessing vulnerability (Kanu, Johnson and Hotak Supreme Court ruling March 2015)

Approaches rose from 264 in 2011/12 to 744 in 2015/16.

Acceptances rose from 167 in 2011/12 to 377 in 2015/16.

- 1.6 During the first quarter of 2016/17, this upward trend has intensified, with approaches now projected to hit 1200 and acceptances 500 by the year end.
- 1.7 Overall the issues are complex and represent a significant challenge for the authority.
- 1.8 There is no quick fix to reduce the numbers of homeless people, particularly given local authority spending cuts and welfare reforms. In the current context it is clear that co-ordinated partnership working will be essential in tackling some of the underlying causes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To discuss any performance issues raised by the Board for possible inclusion on the Forward Plan for Performance as shown in Appendix 2 and make any other amendments to the plan as necessary.
- 2.2 To discuss performance around the area of homelessness as presented and make any relevant comments or recommendations.
- 2.3 To consider the national and local context of homelessness performance indicators, and the interconnected areas of Homeless Approaches, Homeless Preventions, Homeless Acceptances and Availability of Housing.
- 2.4 To support the actions being taken to address unprecedented demands in the area of homelessness.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure robust performance monitoring and challenge, enabling the Corporate Scrutiny and Governance Board to take remedial or further investigative action supporting improvements in priority areas.
- 3.2 To allow the Board to discuss specific issues around performance and make relevant comments, recommendations and suggestions for future actions to resolve issues around performance.
- 3.3 To consider and understand the factors contributing to the increase in homelessness and corresponding reduction in turnover of stock.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 National Context

The issues affecting homelessness are well documented by charities such as Crisis and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation:

- Housing supply has not kept pace with demand for many decades. **In total, just over 140,000 new houses were supplied in 2013-14, with a similar number for 2015/16**, well below the estimated 250,000 required to keep up with demand*.

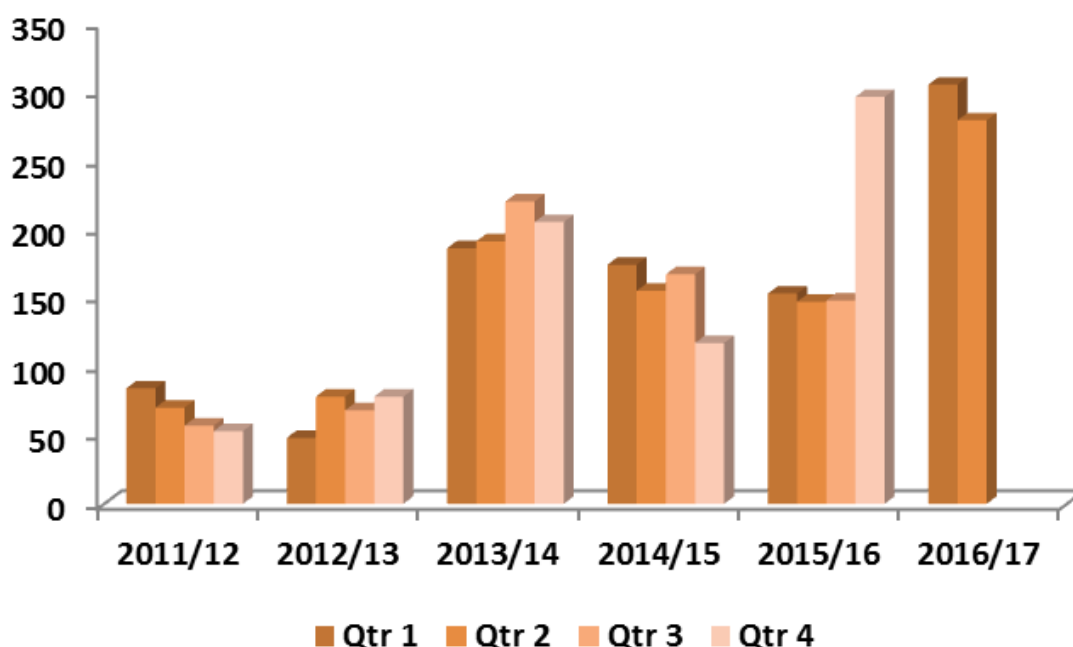
- The welfare and social housing systems have traditionally acted as a buffer between unemployment, poverty and homelessness. **Well documented** reductions in central government support to local authorities are coupled with reducing support and funding streams to other statutory agencies and those in the voluntary and community sector. In particular, reductions in Housing Related Support (HRS) are believed to have a direct impact on the levels of homelessness. Overall Housing Benefit has been **cut by around £7bn**.
- **Homelessness has risen already** and the housing shortage combined with welfare changes mean that all forms of homelessness are likely to increase further despite signs of a recovering economy. In 2015, 114,770 people in England made a homelessness application, a 29 per cent rise since 2009/10*.

*For further info, see CRISIS [Briefing on key homelessness facts and statistics-England](#)

- Homelessness acceptances are increasing nationally. There has been a 10% increase nationally when comparing the period April – June 2015 with April –June 2016*. This compares with a 38% increase in homelessness acceptances for the same period of time in Derby. (*Homeless Link Data).

4.2 Homelessness Approaches

People approaching the Local Authority as homeless peaked in the last quarter of 2016 and continue to rise.



4.3

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Total
2011/12	84	70	57	53	264
2012/13	48	78	68	78	272
2013/14	186	191	220	205	802
2014/15	174	155	167	117	613
2015/16	153	147	148	296	744
2016/17	305	279			

4.4 Financial pressures have seen the Housing Related Support programme budget reduce from circa £9.4 million in 2012-13 to £1.4 million. The number of supported housing providers, and their available accommodation, has subsequently reduced in Derby from around 25 providers to 4. Further Housing Related Support budget cuts are included in the Council's medium term financial plan (MTFP) from April 2017.

4.5 Reasons for Non Acceptance

Not everyone that approaches the Local Authority as homeless is owed a statutory rehousing duty. Some who are deemed to have no priority need are limited to receiving advice and assistance only, others who are deemed intentionally homeless are limited to temporary accommodation, advice and assistance, but not a main housing duty.

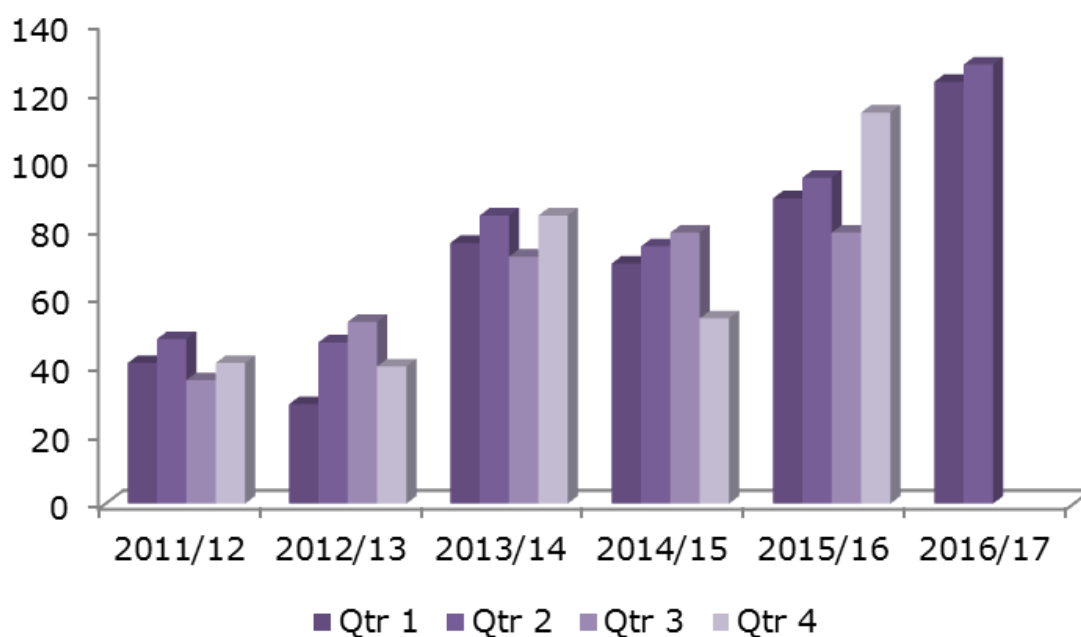
4.6 In 2015/16 out of a total of 744 approaches, 23 households were found to be ineligible, 98 were found to be not homeless, 190 were found to be not in priority need, and a further 56 were found to be intentionally homeless.

4.7 The number of 'not homeless' and 'non priority need' decisions have increased in line with the number of total approaches. There was a peak in the non priority households in the fourth quarter which corresponds with the severe weather provision. The majority of households in this category are singles and many access the No Second Night Out and Night shelter provision with Housing Options conducting a weekly housing surgery. In line with legislation, homeless applications are completed for all approaches although many result in a 'non priority need' decision. It is also a testament to the cooperative working between agencies throughout the year that many are found alternative housing, usually shared, within a very short space of time thus increasing the number of households found to be not homeless as well. However, the increase in approaches, whether households are found to be owed the main housing duty or not, has increased pressure on staff resources due to the statutory duty to make a housing need assessment in all cases, carry out investigations, make interim placements and issue a decision in writing.

4.8 Homelessness Acceptances

Homelessness acceptances have increased steadily since 2013/14, following the reduction in Housing Related support in Derby. As the availability of supported accommodation has reduced, those previously accommodated elsewhere needed to present themselves to the Local Authority for assistance.

This trend had continued with 2015/16 recording the highest level of homelessness acceptances in the past 5 years.



	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Total
2011/12	41	48	36	41	166
2012/13	29	47	53	40	169
2013/14	76	84	72	84	316
2014/15	70	75	79	54	278
2015/16	89	95	79	114	377
2016/17	123	128			

- 4.9 Interestingly the profile of those owed a full rehousing duty by the Local Authority is changing. There has been a substantial increase in acceptances of lone parent households with, or expecting dependent children. This has placed increased pressure on the need for temporary accommodation (much of which is not ideally suitable for families).

- 4.10 Main reasons for accepting full rehousing duty
The main reasons for acceptances are loss of rented or tied accommodation and domestic violence.

Each of these areas shows an upward trajectory when compared to previous years.

***Main reason for loss of last settled home for applicant households found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 Q1&2
Loss of rented or tied accommodation due to termination of assured shorthold tenancy	83 (26%)	84 (30%)	118 (31%)	83 (33%)
Violent breakdown of relationship, involving partner	27 (9%)	27 (10%)	56 (15%)	53 (21%)

4.11 Loss of Privately Rented Accommodation

33% of all households owed a full rehousing duty in 2015/16 presented as homeless due to the loss of an assured short hold tenancy in the private rented sector. This is often because landlords are selling their properties or wish to re-occupy the property themselves or allow family to occupy it. Some landlords are wishing to realise their capital and renting property is not always a profitable concern. Others have the opportunity to charge higher rents than those covered by local housing allowance thus rendering tenancies to benefit claimants unaffordable. This may well be as a result of the economic situation.

4.12 Loss of accommodation due to violent breakdown of relationship

26% of all households owed a main housing duty in the same period presented as homeless due to the violent breakdown of a relationship. The Housing Options Service has responded to an increase in presentations of individuals fleeing domestic violence by diverting existing resources to respond to the problem.

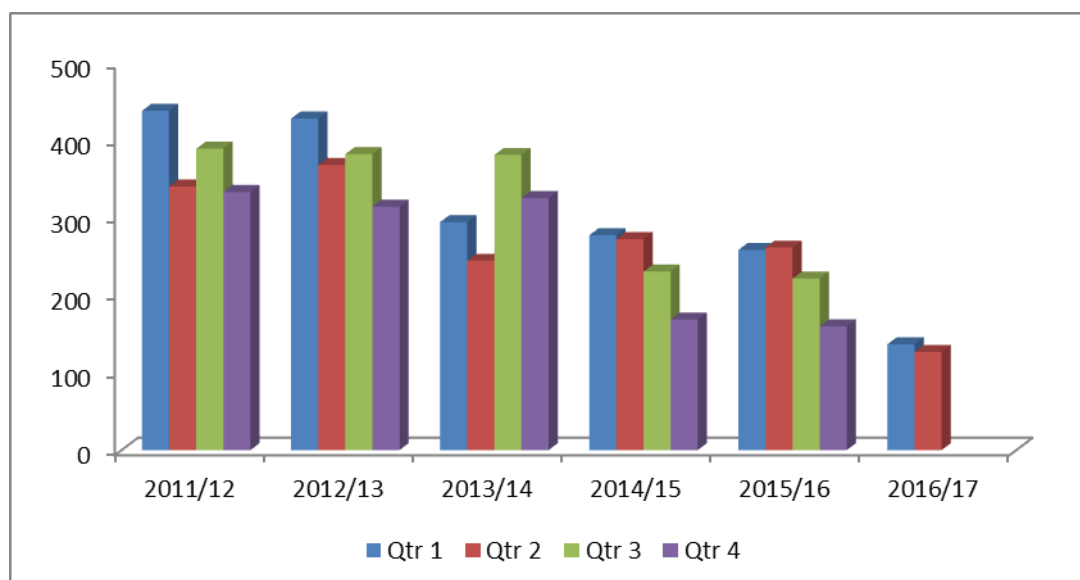
4.13 Homelessness Prevention and relief

The numbers we are able to prevent becoming homeless continues to fall and this is reflected in a reduced target for 2016/17. Changes resulting from the economic downturn and in particular Welfare Reform are impacting detrimentally on many low income groups and those susceptible to homelessness. These changes include reductions in local housing allowance rates, the housing benefit cap, the 'bedroom tax' and the abolition of council tax benefit.

So far this financial year we have prevented 264 households becoming Homeless and we forecast a year end out-turn of 530 households.

The year-end out-turn for 2015/16 was 903 against a target of 1000.

4.14 Number of Homeless Preventions



4.15

	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Total
2011/12	439	341	390	334	1504
2012/13	429	369	383	315	1496
2013/14	295	245	382	326	1248
2014/15	278	273	231	169	951
2015/16	259	262	222	160	903
2016/17	137	127			264

4.16 Our ability to deliver advice and assistance for homeless households and prevent homelessness is critical to managing homelessness acceptances. With the increase in homeless acceptances we are having to divert resources away from preventative work to deal with households in crisis when they are homeless.

4.17 Reducing homelessness remains a challenge in the current economic climate however we attempt to manage this demand pressure through effective use of **temporary accommodation** and **increasing the housing supply** and **affordable housing**.

4.18 Temporary Accommodation

Over the last five years we have managed to minimise the use of temporary accommodation to below 30 families / households at any one time, which is below the national average of 218 households for 2014/15 (excluding London Authorities, the average falls to 62 placements, which Derby remains below).

At the end of 2015/16 we were unable to maintain this position, with 33 households in temporary accommodation on 31/3/2016.

4.19 At the end of September 2016 we had 54 households in temporary accommodation.

Snapshot	B&B	Hostels	LA or HA housing	Refuges	Total in TA
31/3/2016	10	0	19	4	33
30/9/2016	25	2	21	6	54

4.20 A key component within successfully managing temporary accommodation is limiting the use of **bed and breakfast accommodation**.

4.21 The national average was 22 households at any one time for 2014/15 (when excluding London Authorities the average fell to 11 placements).

- 4.22 The total number of households in temporary accommodation is dependent on 2 factors; the number of households approaching the authority who are actually homeless and the ability to discharge our duties both to those for whom we have a main duty, but also those for whom we have a limited housing duty such as intentionally homeless.
- 4.23 The reduction in the availability of social housing (Derby Homes let 1,323 properties in 2014/15 but only 828 in 2015/16) has had an impact on those becoming homeless and those who are homeless. As mentioned above we are finding it increasingly difficult to prevent homelessness and the inability to house people directly into social housing is one reason for this.
- 4.24 When turnover of social housing was at higher levels, more people threatened with homelessness were able to successfully bid on properties through homefinder, meaning they did not have to access homelessness services, and in particular temporary accommodation.
- 4.25 Low turnover levels in social housing also mean that we are struggling to move people out of temporary accommodation. This in turn creates a need for more and more temporary accommodation as move on becomes further delayed.
- 4.26 Housing Supply and Affordable Housing
- Another way we tackle homelessness is through the provision of **affordable housing** to those on the housing waiting list. This is a challenge locally and nationally. Our new build target was to deliver **700** new homes by 2018/19. The government's recent announcement relating to a mandatory 1% rent reduction for the next 4 years has created a financial pressure on this target and the date by which all homes are delivered is being reviewed. The number of new homes delivered was **282** by March 2016.
- 4.27 We have seen a reduction in the number of social housing properties becoming available to let (natural turnover). The number of properties let by Derby Homes during 2013/14 was 1323, compared to 828 for the same period last year and is at its lowest level since 2008/9. Whilst this is beneficial for the sustainability of our estates it is a problem when trying to manage increased demand for affordable housing.
- 4.28 Any reduction in the supply of affordable housing has a knock on effect to our ability to accommodate homeless households, creating pressures on continued use of temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast placements.
- 4.29 A number of factors may be contributing to this reduction in properties becoming available to let: Derby Homes has strengthened its approach to tenancy sustainment and are recording very high levels of tenancy sustainment. Those that may have failed in their tenancies, resulting in properties being available for re-let, have been minimised. Derby Homes work to support community development and cohesion, the work of Local Area Co-Ordinators and others, coupled with high levels of tenant satisfaction may be reflective of a reducing tenant desire to move.

- 4.30 Some tenants that planned to move to avoid an under-occupation charge, brought about by Welfare Reform, have moved to smaller accommodation, or have given up their accommodation and moved elsewhere which will be reflected to some extent in the normalising of re-let levels. It may be that there is an unwillingness of people to move whilst the impacts of Welfare Reform are evaluated.
- 4.31 Actions we are taking:
- The Homelessness Strategy was refreshed in 2015 and covers the period 2015-2019. With the absence of any resource directly aligned with the strategy, focus is heavily weighted towards partnership engagement.
- Within the strategy, a key component was the creation of a multi-agency Homeless Liaison Forum. This has been achieved and meets quarterly to oversee implementation of the strategy.
- 4.32 We continue to work in partnership with targeted services to support vulnerable people across the city. Projects have included:
- Riverside with 'No Second Night Out' project which targets people sleeping rough and aims to help individuals to access services and support so they do not spend a second night on the streets.
 - 'Ambitions East Midlands', which is focused on those aged 18 – 25 years of age and aims to provide intensive support into suitable housing.
 - 'Healthy Futures' that have been supporting effective hospital discharges and minimising the need for repeat admissions through stable and appropriate housing.
 - 'USDL' (Universal Services offered locally) to support single individuals experiencing financial difficulties.
 - 'Housing Framework' provision for vulnerable children and young people aged 16 and 17 years to support them within agreed temporary accommodation placements and to stop the use of Bed and Breakfast making sure they are safe.
- 4.33 We continue to promote financial inclusion through referrals to Derby Advice. One of the major causes of homelessness is the ending of a tenancy, often triggered by financial issues. Promoting financial inclusion is therefore a key preventative action.
- 4.34 We have been actively working to strengthen the management of all temporary accommodation. We have developed a project lead role within DCC, and have committed additional Derby Homes resources to respond to blockages affecting move on from temporary accommodation into settled accommodation. Focus is on a more intensive case management approach to those accepted as homeless. For example, we are working to minimise the number of refusals of settled accommodation from accepted homeless applicants.

- 4.35 We are actively briefing the Cabinet member for Urban Renewal on the benefits of a Private Rented Sector Final Officer scheme, which would allow the Council to discharge its rehousing duty into the private sector. This is particularly important due to the reduced turnover of social housing.
- 4.36 Colleagues within Strategic Housing are pursuing acquisitions to help alleviate both demand for temporary accommodation and settled accommodation.
- 4.37 We have formulated a restructure of Housing Options and Allocations which will better respond to the changing needs and priorities of the service. We have also been working with Council colleagues to identify opportunities to maintain existing levels of resource within the Housing Options Service, whilst enabling some further identified MTFP savings to be achieved. Discussions regarding TUPE of Housing Options staff to Derby Homes will need to be concluded before these areas can be progressed, and are subject to a Cabinet report, scheduled for December 2016.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Mazer Hussain, Group Accountant DCC Maria Murphy, Director of Derby Homes Director of Strategic Services and Organisational Development
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Clare Harrison (Democratic Services) 01332 643648 clare.harrison@derby.gov.uk , Heather Greenan (Performance) 01332 643462 heather.greenan@derby.gov.uk , or Clare Mehrbani (Head of Housing Management and Housing Options) None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Forward Plan for Performance 2016/17

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 None directly arising from this report

Legal

- 2.1 None directly arising from this report.

Personnel

- 3.1 None directly arising from this report.

IT

- 4.1 None directly arising from this report.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Effective scrutiny benefits all Derby people and the very nature of the Board ensures that it looks in depth at equality in all its investigations.
- 5.2 Many homeless people have protected characteristics covered under the Equality Act and we need to look at people's individual needs in any support we provide and in any initiatives we decide to do.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 There are no Health and Safety implications as a direct result of this report.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None directly arising from this report.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 None directly arising from this report.

Risk Management and Safeguarding

- 9.1 None directly arising from the content of this report

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 Our aim is to work together towards achieving our partnership vision of Derby 2030: safe, strong and ambitious city.
- 10.2 The development of a co-ordinated homelessness strategy is essential to ensure Derby is a place where people are safe and where the vulnerable are put first and supported.

Corporate Scrutiny & Governance Board - Forward Plan for Performance 2016/17

The performance forward plan is focused on indicators within the Council Scorecard 2016/17. Members can identify items for discussion and review throughout the year. The plan will be subject to regular review.

Meeting	Items	Format	Lead officer
8 November 2016	Q2 Performance report (covering period July to September 2016 and mid-year review of targets)	Cabinet Report	Heather Greenan
	Update on homelessness	Presentation	Clare Mehrbani
6 December 2016	Food safety / regulatory services	Presentation	John Tomlinson
	Complaints and customer feedback	Report	Bernard Fenton
17 January 2017	Adult social care – residential admissions / safeguarding	Presentation	Perveez Sadiq / Kirsty Everson
	Update on CYP Performance Surgeries – Social Care	Report	Sarah Walker / Maureen Darbon
7 February 2017	Q3 Performance report (covering period October to December 2016)	Cabinet Report	Heather Greenan
	Staff health and wellbeing	Presentation	David Cox / Wendy Johnson
14 March 2017	New Homes	Presentation	Ian Fullagar / Andrew McNeil
	Health and wellbeing	Report	Cate Edwynn
11 April 2017	Council Scorecard for 2017/18	Cabinet Report	Heather Greenan
	Council Tax and Business Rate collection	Presentation	John Massey