

NNDR Benchmarking Club 2017

IMPORTANT GENERAL GUIDANCE

Guidance and definitions for this questionnaire can be found on the "Guidance" sheet.

Please read the "Guidance" sheet before completing the questionnaire.

Throughout the questionnaire, you can link to the associated definitions and guidance by clicking on the white 'Go to Guidance -->' in the top right corner of each section. To return to the questionnaire please click on the 'Questionnaire' tab at the bottom of the window.

In order to try and reduce the problem we have of identifying zeros from missing key data, this year we have entered '..' in most numeric data entry cells and you will notice that formulae e.g. totals and carry-forwards all show '..' before any data is entered. Only by overwriting all of the '..' in a table will the total be generated so please do not leave any cells as they are.

If the genuine figure is zero then please replace '..' with 0. If the figure is not known/not available, please replace the '..' with na.

Please do not enter any comments or data outside the cells provided or within the return email, as these are processed automatically and your comment will not be seen. If you wish to make any comments, please enter these in the boxes below. Change of contact details should be e-mailed separately to Benchmarking@cipfa.org.

COMMENTS

Please include here any thoughts regarding difficulties completing the questionnaire or other general points about your service that you feel would be of interest to other members. Please do not use these cells to update contact information.

1. SERVICE DELIVERY

Please read the guidance notes on this section.

To what extent is your NDR function outsourced during the period being benchmarked and what percentage of the function was delivered by each method?

(a) IN-HOUSE delivery

% Delivered

(b) OUTSOURCED to a Shared Services Arrangement (SSA)

(with other LA's and / or with other public sector organisations)

% Delivered

Name(s) of SSA partner(s)?	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

(c) OUTSOURCED to an External Contractor

(incl. legal entities partly/wholly owned by your organisation)

% Delivered

Name(s) of External Contractor(s)?	
1	
2	
3	

Total (a) + (b) + (c) % Delivered should be 100%

% Delivered

(d) Comments re your service delivery

2. COSTS

(a) Cost Of Collection (2016/17 Actuals)

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

Actual cost of collecting NNDR for 2016/17 as defined in official returns such as RO, RA, POBE etc. Include client side costs. Exclude costs of collecting Council Tax.

Please use your judgement about treatment of one-off or exceptional costs, to show a fair picture of "going concern" costs. Actual FTE staffing level for NNDR that corresponds to the staff cost, inc. agency staff.

	Staff Number	2016/17 Cost (£'k)	2015/16 Cost (£'k)
Direct Costs			
NNDR Staff (including valuation and visits)	FTE	..	
Customer Contact Centres	FTE	..	
Receiving Payments		..	
Bought-in services		..	
Other Running Costs (net)		..	
Total Direct Cost		..	..
Indirect Costs			
IT Charges		..	
Accommodation Charges		..	
Other Central Charges		..	
Total Indirect Cost		..	..
Outsourcing Costs			
	
Gross Costs (excl. enforcement)			
	
Enforcement Cost or (Surplus)	<i>as per 2(b)</i>	FTE	..
	
Gross Costs (incl. enforcement)			
	FTE	..	..
Allowance for Cost of Collection		..	
Net Costs (incl. enforcement)			
	

(b) Breakdown of Enforcement Costs

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

Costs	2016/17 Cost (£'k)	2015/16 Cost (£'k)
+ In-house Enforcement Agents	..	
+ External Enforcement Agents	..	
+ IT Costs	..	
+ Other Support Costs	..	
+ Fees	..	
Gross Enforcement Costs	..	
Less Income		
- Recovery Income Enforcement Agent Fees		(enter as positive)
	..	
- Other Income		(enter as positive)
	..	
Total Enforcement Income	..	
Net Enforcement Cost or (Surplus)		

3. WORKLOAD

(a) Hereditaments

Please only include properties with live rateable values, as at 2017/18 billing time.

	Number of hereditaments	Rateable value of hereditaments £'m
Total hereditaments
Occupied hereditaments
of which partially occupied s44(A)
Empty hereditaments (including exempt)
of which exempt
Properties paying by internal transfer, ie. the LA is the ratepayer.	..	

(b) Reliefs

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

Please provide a breakdown of all reliefs as at 2017/18 initial billing, not just new cases.

			No. of Cases
Mandatory:	Charitable occupation	s43(5 & 6A)	..
	Community Amateur Sports Clubs	s43(5 & 6B)	..
	Rural Rate Relief	s43(6A & 6B)	..
	Small business relief	s43(4B)	..
	- of which relief where a 2nd property occupied	s31	..
Discretionary:	Charitable occupation top up	s47(2A)	..
	Community Amateur Sports Clubs	s47(2B)	..
	Non-profit making bodies	s47(2B & C)	..
	Rural Shops etc.	s47(3A)	..
	Small Rural Businesses	s47(3B)	..
	Other Rate Payers (localism schemes)	s47	..
Discretionary Reliefs (s31 Grant):	New Empty Properties		..
	"Long Term Empty" Properties		..
What is your estimated gross cost of discretionary relief in 2017/18 (NNDR1 - Line 37)?			£'k
			..
		No. of Cases	Value £'k
Number of Hardship Relief cases (s49) as at 2017/18 initial billing		..	..

What were the actual costs of discretionary reliefs (including Hardship Relief) in 2016/17?

		£'k
+ Gross cost of discretionary relief		..
- Less NNDR pool funding		..
= Net cost of discretionary reliefs to LA		..
		No. Received
Discretionary relief applications in 2016/17 (incl. s31)		..
Discretionary relief applications in 2016/17 (s31 only)		..
		No. Refused
		..

(c) Inspections

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

An inspection relates to an individual property, not a building or ratepayer. Count inspections for all purposes. Count the number of inspections (so if a property is inspected twice, this counts as 2).

	NNDR Staff	Other LA staff	Bought-in / Outsourced Staff	Total
Number of inspections made in 2016/17
FTE staff time spent on spent on inspection work 2016/17
How often are empty properties inspected? (number of times per annum)				..

(d) Changes to Valuation Lists

(i) 2016/17 actuals; please show number of amendments to list based on your schedules received (not number of schedules). Count splits (e.g. 1 to 3) as 1+3 = 4 updates.

What was the number of updates by VO to:
 2010 list
 Previous lists
 Valuation certificates
 Total

No.
..
..
..
..
..

What was the number of billing authority reports raised?

..

Do you use electronic lists of planning applications and building control inspections to the valuation office?

- Select -

Do you issue completion notices?

- Select -

If yes, how many were issued in 2016/17?

..

(ii) 2016/17 RV Appeals

1.4.2016 Brought forward
 Added in 2016/17
 Cleared in 2016/17
 31.3.2017 Carried forward

Ratable values of hereditaments £'k	No. of Appeals
..	..
..	..
..	..
..	..

NB: Enter all figures as positives.

(e) Other Workload Measures

Go to Guidance -->

How many cases of the following did you have in 2016/17 (relating to any year)?

Refunds
 Interest Cases
 Write-offs
 FOI enquiries
 Data Protection enquiries
 Registered complaints/ombudsman inquiries referred

No.
..
..
..
..
..
..
..

No. upheld

..

(f) Reviews

How frequently and using what method(s) do you review the following?

	Frequency	Date of last review (dd/mm/yyyy)	Method
Reliefs	-Mandatory	..	- Select -
	-Discretionary	..	- Select -
Chargeable empty properties	- Select -	..	- Select -
Empty exempt properties	- Select -	..	- Select -

(g) BIDS

How many BIDS arrangements do you have?
 How many of these are 'cross boundary'?

No.
..
..

What was the annual debit raised from BIDS in 2016/17?
 What was the annual debit raised from BIDS at 2017/18 billing time?

£k
..
..

What was the amount collected from BIDS in 2016/17?

..

What software do you use for collecting this charge?
 If other, please overwrite.

- Select -

Version
..

Please name the improvements / key objectives for your current BIDs (e.g. extra safety/security, cleansing, environmental measures).

--

(h) Business Rate Supplements

Do you charge a business rate supplement (inc. crossrail)?

- Select -

If yes, please give details:

4. BILLING, RECOVERY AND ENFORCEMENT

(a) Demands

Go to Guidance -->

2016/17 actuals

	No.	Of which: e-billed
Number of annual bills
Number of new demands or amended bills
Total number of demands & adjustment notices

(b) Timing

Go to Guidance -->

2017/18 tax year, enter dates as dd/mm/yyyy

On what date was:

	Date
NNDR bills issued	..
The first instalment due (Direct Debit)	..
The first instalment due (other payment types)	..

(c) Reminders & Notices

2016/17 actuals relating to all tax years and including non-statutory notices if any

In 2016/17 what was the number of

Statutory reminders	No.
Reminders	..
Final Notices	..
Total	..

Please show total even if you cannot split reminders from final notices.

Non-statutory reminders	Option available	No.
-Emailed	- Select -	..
-Mailed	- Select -	..
-SMS	- Select -	..

In 2016/17 what was the frequency of billing per week? (1- 5)

Days per week
..

Average number of working days between instalment date & reminders being issued?

Working days
..

Average number of working days between instalment date & final notices being issued?

..

Internal daily limits of reminders sent out

..

Internal daily limits of final notices sent out

..

How many cases of the following did you have, in 2016/17, relating to all tax years?

	No.
Summonses issued	..
Special arrangements before Liability Order granted	..
Liability Orders granted	..
Special arrangements after Liability Order granted	..
Referrals to enforcement agents/collectors	..
Committal summonses	..
Committal orders - sentence suspended	..
Committal orders - sentence imposed	..
Arrest warrants obtained - with bail	..
Arrest warrants obtained - without bail	..
Security for unpaid rates	..
Statutory Demands issued	..
- petitions commenced	..
- bankruptcies obtained	..
- insolvencies obtained	..

Number of court days used

Court booking time

Please name the enforcement agents you have used in 2016/17

Please name the debt collection agencies you have used in 2016/17

How long is your compliance stage?

Do you have a central/corporate debt recovery team?

(e) Collection by Enforcement Agents

Collection statistics re collection made in 2016/17:

	All
Business Rates Debit re 2016/17	Number
Number of cases issued	..
	£'k
Total Business Rates Debit passed	..
Total Business Rates Debit collected	..
	Number
Number paid in full	..

(f) Charges

(i) What are the costs charged to individual ratepayers (2017/18) for the following:
Unit charge per case, not total income received. Include fees paid to court.

	£
Issue of summons	..
Issue of liability order	..
Combined total	..
Committal (charge for issue of committal summons only)	..
	£
Committal Summons	..
Warrants with bail	..
Warrants without bail	..
Do you have a minimum balance below which a summons is not issued?	- Select -
Do you have a balance below which a lower rate of charges apply?	- Select -

(ii) Do you supply a breakdown of "costs" to the court clerk?

	Date
When were the "costs" last reviewed?	..
When were the "costs" last amended?	..
	Date
Have your "costs" been challenged?	- Select -
Is your cost calculation available online?	- Select -

(g) Court Procedures guidance

Do you provide the following?

Own Staff Training	- Select -
Magistrates Briefing	- Select -
Prepare guidance notes for Magistrates	- Select -

5. 2016/17 COLLECTION

(a) % Cumulative In-Year Collection by Quarter

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

What was the cumulative in year collection of 2016/17 debit by quarter (excl. collection costs)?

	Total NNDR % collected	2015/16 % collected
Before April
April - June
April - September
April - December
April - March

(b) In Year Collection Targets

What are your in year collection targets?

	2016/17	2017/18
Total %

(c) Overall Collection Account (excl. Costs)

Please provide a breakdown of your overall collection account

	Prior Years Debits £'k	2016/17 Debits £'k	Collection Account Movements £'k
Balance brought forward 1/4/16 (excl. costs)	..		..
Net adjustments to prior years debits (not including write-offs)	(+/-) ..		..
Net collectable debit for 2016/17	[QRC4 Row 1]	..	..
Amounts written-off in 2016/17	..	..	..
Amounts collected in 2015/16 re 2016/17 debit	[QRC4 Row 2]	..	..
Amounts collected in 2016/17 re prior years debit	[QRC4 Row 6]	..	..
Amounts collected in 2016/17 re 2016/17 debit	[QRC4 Row 3]	..	..
Balance brought forward 31/3/17 (excl. costs)			..
Amounts collected in 2016/17 re 2017/18 debit	[QRC4 Row 7]	..	
Total amount collected in 2016/17 re all years	[QRC4 Row 8]	..	[Row 8 = Row 6 + Row 3 + Row7]

(d) Costs (with respect to all years' costs)

	£'k
Costs raised during 2016/17	..
Costs collected during 2016/17	..

(e) Prior Year's Collection - In Year

For the following years, what was the level of each years debit that was collected in-year?

	%
2011/12	..
2012/13	..
2013/14	..
2014/15	..
2015/16	..

(f) Prior Years' Collection - Cumulative to 31/3/2017

Please detail the amount of prior years' debit up to 31/03/2017

	Adjusted Net debit £'k	Amount Collected £'k	Amount Written Off £'k	Balance Outstanding £'k	Number of Accounts Outstanding	% Collection
2011/12
2012/13
2013/14
2014/15
2015/16

6. METHODS OF PAYMENT

(a) Main Methods of Payment (Number of Payments)

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

Best estimate/actuals for 2016/17

Please give a breakdown of the number of payments by:

	£'k	No. of Payments
Cash
Cheque
Sub total Cash/Cheque (by post & over the counter)
Debit & credit card (by phone and over the counter)
Direct Debit - AUDDIS & manual
Payment outlets (PO, AllPay, PayPoint, PayZone etc.)
Internet payments (LA website)
Automated telephone (ATP)
Bank credits (including online banking)
Other*
Total

Please specify other methods of payment

(b) Further Analysis - Direct Debit

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

	2016/17 %	2017/18 %
Percentage of all accounts who had agreed to pay by DD at main billing time.
At main billing time:		2017/18 %
Percentage of all accounts with DD Instalment Frequency		
10 monthly payments		..
12 monthly payments		..
Other frequency		..
How many dates per month are available for monthly DD payments?		..
How do you set up direct debit mandates?		
Phone		- Select -
Online		- Select -
Forms/Post		- Select -

(c) Further Analysis - Payment by Instalments (non-DD)

[Go to Guidance -->](#)

	% of Accounts	% of Net Collectable Debit
Percentage of all accounts with Instalment Frequency		
10 monthly payments (non-DD)
12 monthly payments (non-DD)
Other frequency (non-DD)

(d) Credit-Cards

Do you accept credit cards?	- Select -
What is your recharge to a customer for a payment of £100 by credit card? (If you do not charge please overwrite with 0.)	£ ..
What were your total credit card recharges to customers in 2016/17	£ ..
What were your total credit card costs in 2016/17	£ ..

7. CUSTOMER CONTACT

(a) Contactable Hours		Go to Guidance -->		
How many hours a week are you able to answer NNDR queries in detail for the following?				
	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	
Personal Callers	..	..	..
Phone Calls	..	..	..
(b) Phone Calls, Mail, Emails (2016/17 Actuals)		Go to Guidance -->		
	Direct to NNDR staff	Direct to contact centre		
How many items of mail did you receive in 2016/2017?	..	..
How many emails did you receive in 2016/2017?	..	..
How many phone calls were offered in 2016/2017?	..	..
Of these how many were referred to the back office?	..	..
Of phone calls offered, how many were answered?	..	..
Of phone calls offered, how many were abandoned?	..	..
What was the average resolution time?	..	..
(c) Response Times				
What was the average response time to queries received via mail and email (excluding acknowledgements)?			No. of working days	
Mail			..	
Email			..	
(d) Contact/Call Centres				
<i>Specifically referring to all NNDR queries direct to office/contact centre</i>				
Do you have a corporate contact centre handling:	Phone calls?		- Select -	
	Personal visits?		- Select -	
If you answered yes to either of the above, how do they deal with the following types of enquiry?				
	Calls	Visit		
Billing Enquiries	- Select -	- Select -		
Valuation Enquiries	- Select -	- Select -		
Exemptions & Reliefs	- Select -	- Select -		
Occupancy Changes	- Select -	- Select -		
Payment Arrangements	- Select -	- Select -		
Enforcement Agent Enquiries	- Select -	- Select -		
Take Payments	- Select -	- Select -		
Does the contact centre have staff dedicated to NNDR enquires?			- Select -	
(e) Further Information - Visits				
What was the total number of NNDR enquiry visits to contact/call centres?		No.	..	
Of these how many were referred to the back office?			..	
What was the total number of NNDR enquiries received directly by the NNDR section?		No.	..	

8. STAFFING & SERVICE STRUCTURE

(a) Staff Grading		Go to Guidance -->
What is the pay structure of your NNDR team? (Please see guidance on how to treat part-timers)		FTE Staff at 31/03/2017
under £15,000		..
£15-20,000		..
£20-25,000		..
£25-30,000		..
£30-40,000		..
over £40,000		..
Total FTE		..
(b) Agency Staff		Go to Guidance -->
For members for whom this is a material cost. How many FTE agency staff do you have? (as included in 2a)		FTE Staff ..
What was the total cost in 2016/17 of agency staff?		£'k ..
What was the average cost per hour for agency processing staff?		£ ..
(c) Sickness Absence		Go to Guidance -->
What is your best estimate for the average number of days per FTE in the last 12 months?		Days
Long-term sick		..
Short-term sick		..
Total sickness		..
(d) Staff Turnover		
What was the turnover of permanent staff in the NNDR section during the last 12 months?		FTE
Number of Staff FTE at 31st March 2016		..
Numbers leaving the organisation 2016/17		..
Numbers joining the organisation 2016/17		..
Number of Staff FTE at 31st March 2017 (as per 2a)	as per 2 (a) <input type="text"/>	..
(e) Employment Status		
Please provide the estimated proportion of staff cost 2016/17:		%
Permanent staff - normal hours		..
Permanent staff - overtime		..
Fixed Term / Contract staff / Agency staff (including zero hours staff)		..
		These should total 100%
		..
(f) Homeworking		
If you have homeworkers please split the NNDR Staff FTE between office & home based staff.		FTE
Office Based		..
Home Based		..
Total Staff	as per 2 (a) <input type="text"/>	..
(g) Mobile Staff		
Do you make use of tracker devices? E.g. Mobile phone/GPS for the safety of your staff		- Select -
If yes, what system do you use?		- Please Enter -
(h) Staff - Conflict of interest		
Do you maintain a register of "connected parties" to NNDR staff?		- Select -
E.g. relatives, landlords, business partner etc.		
If yes, how frequently do you review this register?		- Select -

(i) Service Structure

Who does the head of service responsible for NNDR report to?

Which department/directorate is the NNDR service in?

(j) Structure & Pay Scales

This question is to help members understand each others' structures. As this data is considered confidential by some please respect the confidentiality of this data.

Job Title	FTE	Salary Bands (£'k)		Notes
		Min	Max	

Describe anything about the way your section is structured that may be considered unusual/of special interest.

If you have this structure available in a publicly accessible website, please give the link here:

9. E-GOVERNMENT

E-Government		2016/17 Number
Do you accept relief / exemption claims forms:		
(i)	Online - paper declaration to be signed	- for new claims
		- for change events
(ii)	Online - without signatures	- for new claims
		- for change events
(iii)	Online - with 'electronic signatures'	- for new claims
		- for change events
	If so, do they feed into your DIP system?	- Select -
	If so, do they feed into your NNDR Processing system?	- Select -
	Do you have electronic interfaces with your Planning department?	- Select -
	Do you have electronic interfaces with your Building Control department?	- Select -
	Do you accept change event by phone?	- Select -
	Do you accept new claims by phone?	- Select -
	Do you contact new clients using SMS text?	- Select -
	Do you contact new clients using E-mail?	- Select -
	Please name your e-forms provider, if applicable?	- Please Enter -
	Do you have software implemented to enable E-Billing?	- Select -
	Can NNDR payers view / update their account online?	- Select -

10. IT ARRANGEMENTS

(a) NNDR Systems		
Who provides IT facilities to your NNDR section?	- Select -	
(b) NNDR Software		
What software does your NNDR section use?	- Select -	Version ..
Do you intend to change your system during the next 12 months?	- Select -	
Have you changed you system during the past 12 months?	- Select -	
If changing/changed, which system are you changing to/from?	- Select -	
(c) Document Image Processing/Scanning		
What DIP software do you use?	- Select -	Version ..
Is this software departmental or corporate?	- Select -	
(d) Workflow Systems		
What workflow software do you use?	- Select -	Version ..
Is this software departmental or corporate?	- Select -	
(e) Recovery Software		
Do you use a separate enforcement/recovery software?	- Select -	
If so, what software do you use?	- Select -	Version ..

(f) Rating Analysis Software

Do you use a separate rating analysis software?

- Select -

If so, what software do you use?

- Select -

Version

..

(g) Baseline Personnel Security Standards (BPSS)

When did your organisation achieve compliance in order to be connected to PSN (Public Services Network) or use it to receive PSN services?

- Please Select -

11. TEXT QUESTIONS

(a) Financial Pressures - Customers

Go to Guidance -->

Have you taken any new initiatives in respect to pressures on customers?

(b) Budgetary Pressures

In response to budgetary pressures, what changes in service structures and delivery of services have you made (or plan to make) including shared services and contracting out options?

(c) Criteria for s47 Other Discretionary Relief

Briefly describe your criteria for awarding other discretionary relief in 2017/18. How has this changed from 2016/17? Do you have a local discount "scheme" in place for 2017/18 and how has it changed from 2016/17?

(d) Rates avoidance

(i) What new developments in "rates avoidance" have you experienced?

(ii) What initiatives are you using to minimise "rates avoidance"?

(e) Business Rate Retentions

What issues are you experiencing re following areas of Business Rate Retention?

(i) Enterprise Zone and New Development Deals

(ii) Renewable Energy Schemes

(f) Estimated Change in Rateable Value

What issues did you have in calculating the estimated growth / decline in Rateable Value at line 4 on NNDR1?

(g) FOI Requests

Do you release info on empty properties including credit balances if requested under FOI?

(h) Examples of Good Practice

Please list any examples of good practice your authority has adopted that you are willing to share with the club. Examples of good practice could include cost-saving measures, improvements in the output of the system (e.g. useful reports), improvements in customer service or efficiency savings.

12. Comments/Feedback

With each exercise we seek to improve the quality of guidance and definitions supplied in the questionnaire. Please detail any questions where you felt the guidance was unclear or could be improved.

If you have any comments either about the content or ways we can improve the exercise please enter here.

Next year we will hope to further improve the content included in this year's exercise. If there are any questions or areas of HR that you feel we should add to the exercise please specify below.