

Appendix 1

1. PROGRESS ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Best Value Performance Indicator	Baseline 2000/01	Current 2006/07
Speed of processing new Benefits claims	43 days	29 days
Accuracy of Benefits processing	93.6%	99.0%
Benefit overpayments recovered in-year	52%	75%
New claims processed inside 14 days	83%	94%
Council Tax collection - in-year	97.3%	98.3%
- overall	95.4%	98.0%
NNDR collection - in year	97.6%	98.7%
- overall	95.3%	97.7%
Local Taxation accounts on Direct Debit	60.1%	70.7%

These figures demonstrate a significant improvement in performance in all comparable areas, for which the review process (and the efforts of R&B staff) deserves credit.

2. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2005 TO 2007

2.1 There were many significant achievements during 2003 to 2005 (the first two years of implementing the service improvement plan) and these were reported to the Council Resources Commission in September 2005.

2.2 Key achievements since that time have included:

- ◆ Introduction of pioneering new wireless facilities for Benefits Visiting Officers, linking mobile devices to head office computer systems
- ◆ Design and implementation of new benefit full claim form
- ◆ Improvements to website, including on-line benefit calculator and on-line benefit claim form
- ◆ Successful take-up campaigns, including simplified 3 page claim form for Pensions Service customers
- ◆ Implementation of new corporate Income Management system across the council
- ◆ Updated corporate system for electronic payments from customers (via website, telephone (including automated) and cashiers/reception)
- ◆ Implementation of new debtors system for benefit overpayments

- ◆ Record Local Taxation collection rates, and record Direct Debit usage
- ◆ Successful introduction of bankruptcy proceedings for hard-core local taxation arrears
- ◆ Upgraded document management system (software, operating system, hardware) from own resources
- ◆ Dual screens for staff in Revenues and in Benefits – improved ease of response to customer enquiries and more efficient processing of work (from own resources)
- ◆ New policy on benefit fraud prosecutions and sanctions, including new option of administrative penalties.

This list of achievements, together with the improvements in performance indicators shown above, shows that the Revenues and Benefits service continues to grow on its successes and to move forward strongly. Progress is made more difficult to achieve by legislative changes and software upgrades. However staff turnover is much reduced from previous years, and staff and managers remain committed to their goals with the time and effort put in during each year.

3. **FUTURE PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS 2007 ONWARDS**

- ◆ **Improving Customer Service** including implementing CRM system in Revenues and Benefits to streamline customer relationships, improving telephony facilities and self-service for customers
- ◆ **Improving Customer Access and Locations** including refurbishing substandard Scottsdale House reception & interviewing facilities for customers
- ◆ **Improving Business Processes** by implementing a counter-fraud management system, converting cheque payments to BACS (both in benefits and in revenues), automating statistical returns to the DWP, and considering Local Taxation prosecutions for non-return of information and also charging orders on dwellings to secure collection
- ◆ **Advancing the Government's Agenda for Change** including preparation and implementation of the radical new Local Housing Allowance scheme to replace private sector housing benefits from April 2008.