

## Housing Benefit Action Plan Update

May 2010

Action	Date	Responsible Officer	Comments / Progress
Develop business plan for Revenues & Benefits Service	April 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Develop clear links between the benefits service and the Council's key strategic documents	May 2009	Manager of Exchequer	Revised date Sep 2010 to link in with 2010/11 Corporate Services Plan
Obtain Committee approval for Corporate Debt Policy	December 2008	Manager of Exchequer	Complete
Develop & implement benefit overpayment policy	June 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Revised date October 2010. Draft policy complete, to be issued for consultation
Develop & implement training strategy	April 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Carry out PDP's for all benefits staff	June 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	This timescale is dependent on a corporate roll out of the new scheme
Improve web site to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ability to download benefits application form</li> <li>- provide more information and guidance on the benefits service and advice agencies</li> <li>- provide more information on the Benefits Investigation Team</li> <li>- ability to complete an online fraud referral</li> </ul>	September 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete  Complete  Complete  Revised date of Sep 2010 Fraud referral available to download. Investigating feasibility of online referral
Consider feasibility of facility to complete benefits claim on-line	December 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Comments / Progress</b>
Develop a monitoring and reporting system for performance against customer service standards	October 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Revised date October 2010 A corporate solution to monitoring and reporting performance against customer service standards is being considered
Develop benefits take up strategy	October 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Revised date October 2010. Awareness of housing & council tax benefit has been developed within Revenues & Benefits service and closer links developed with Welfare Rights
Carry out Registered Social Landlord survey. Analyse results and report findings	June 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Survey complete
Analyse trends, patterns and training issues from management checks and report findings to senior management on a regular basis	April 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Include performance management information in the Quarterly Performance Report on appeals & reconsiderations and counter fraud performance including recovery of fraud overpayments	April 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Monitor performance in processing and overpayment recovery and highlight any drop in performance and difficulties to Senior Management	March 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Analyse outcomes of interventions to identify learning & improvement opportunities	August 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Review interventions programme	September 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Analyse appeals & reconsiderations to establish reasons for requests and identify trends and opportunities for learning and improvement	May 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Comments / Progress</b>
Monitor and manage caseload of Benefit Investigation officers	March 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Publish successful prosecutions on the Council's website and in the local press	March 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Include publicity on the Benefits Investigation Team in the Registered Social landlord newsletter and investigate other avenues of publicity	August 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Develop local targets for Benefits Investigation team and include these in QPR	August 2009	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete
Set target for cost per claim 2008/09	Complete	Section Head (Revenues & Benefits)	Complete