

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Corporate Services

Corporate and Efficient Governance Committee: 22 December 2010

Subject : Housing and Council Tax Benefit Overpayment Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to Committee a housing and council tax benefit overpayment policy for the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 The risk assessment carried out by Audit Scotland in December 2008 highlighted the lack of a housing and council tax overpayment policy as a risk to the efficient administration of the Council's benefit service.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1 A draft policy was issued to strategic partners for consultation including Registered Social Landlords, Welfare Rights, Housing Services, Citizens Advice Bureau and the Independent Resource Centre.
- 3.2 A final version of the housing and council tax overpayment policy and policy impact assessment are attached as appendices to this report.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1 There are no personnel issues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Council's ability to deliver services which meet the needs of its citizens depends heavily on its success in collecting revenues.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 The Council has a fiduciary duty to collect all sums due to it. A housing and council tax benefit overpayment policy will seek to ensure the Council operates in a fair, equal and objective way when recovering debts.

7. Equalities Impact

An equality impact screening was carried out and there were no positive or negative impacts identified for any equality groups. This is an internal policy which affects all users and it will be published in an accessible format as set out in corporate guidelines.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** The introduction of a housing and council tax benefit overpayment policy will seek to ensure the Council operates in a proper manner when recovering debts.
- 8.2** Members are asked to approve the attached housing and council tax overpayment policy.

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Date: 29 November 2010

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Appendix: Housing and Council Tax Benefit Overpayment Policy
Summary Report Proforma

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All Wards