

## AUDIT COMMISSION INSPECTION

Recommendation	Update	Implementation date	How will we measure success?	Expected completion date	Responsible Officer	Expected outcome
<b>Improve the service delivered to customers by: -</b>						
<b>1)</b> Publicising more effectively service standards that will allow customers to understand what they can expect when they get in touch with the Service	Agreed – 48 hour assessments to be advertised in reception via poster. Further advertising of 48 hr assessing to be done with HA's and other organisations via word of mouth and liaison meetings. This advertising will include an update of how long assessments are taking without this option	End of September 2010	Feedback from customers and partner organisations gathered via liaison meetings and customer surveys	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improved communication	Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson	Reduction in new claims processing times from 23 days to under 19 days consistently
<b>2)</b> Involving customers and partners in setting the standards	Agreed – liaison meetings held with all partner organisations. These meetings to be used to involve all in setting standards	October 2010	Feedback from customers and partner organisations gathered via liaison meetings and customer surveys	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improved communication	Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson	Improved communication
<b>3)</b> Better analysing the service received by customers, for instance waiting times	Agreed – Feedback form amended to include length of time waiting. Analysis to be done into waiting times from responses	October 2010	Feedback from customers and partner organisations gathered via liaison meetings and customer surveys	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improved communication	Team Leader	Improved service standards reducing waiting times etc

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<p>4) Reporting performance against those standards to customers and partners, making clear to customers the service offered at different times</p>	<p>Agreed - Poster formulated advertising what level of standards customers can expect. Performance to be reported via reception and liaison meetings with partners</p>	<p>End of September 2010</p>	<p>Feedback from customers and partner organisations gathered via liaison meetings and customer surveys</p>	<p>March/April 2011 to demonstrate improved communication</p>	<p>Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson</p>	<p>Keeping customers and partners informed of progress and standards to be expected</p>
<p><b>Improve access to the Service and make sure the Service is meeting the needs of all of its customers by: -</b></p>						
<p>5) Processing new claims and changes of circumstance consistently quickly</p>	<p>Agreed – new claims and changes in circs has been significantly reduced from the statistics that were used to inform inspection.</p> <p>For example: Days to process new claims: - April – 45.09 May – 35.42 June – 24.55 July – 24.11 August – 21.63 Sept – 23.73 October – 20</p> <p>Days to process changes in circs reduced from 20.59 days to 5.94</p> <p>Percentage of claims processed within 14 days increased from 62.27% to 94%</p>	<p>Ongoing – this is always a priority for the benefit service</p> <p>Lean service reviews commenced August 2010</p>	<p>The constant improving of PI's for both new claims and changes in circumstances.</p> <p>Target of 19 days and 5 days (coc's) to be hit consistently</p>	<p>March/April 2011 to demonstrate consistent PI's</p>	<p>Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson and Team Leaders</p>	<p>Reduction in new claims processing times from 23 days to under 19 days consistently</p> <p>Reduction in changes in circumstances from 6 days to under 5 consistently</p>

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<b>6)</b> Providing a phone service which is responsive To customer demand	<p>Agreed – resources have been redirected to phone lines. New rota of work has been allocated to ensure missed calls are kept to a minimum. For example: -</p> <p>Calls answered            April – 76.9%            May – 80.7%            June – 76.8%            July – 72.2%            August – 93.1%            Sept – 97.6%</p>	End of September 2010	Reduction in abandoned calls	Target of 5% abandoned calls to be achieved by March/April 2011	Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson and Performance Development Officer	Reducing abandoned calls from 28% (July figures) to 5% of total calls received
<b>7)</b> Improving the quality of benefit award letters	<p>Agreed – project underway to redo notification letters that will make them more user friendly. This is being done via liaison meetings and user forums</p>	Project underway August 2010 –	Feedback from customers and partner organisations gathered via liaison meetings and customer surveys	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improved communication	Mark Simpson and Lucy Pomatto	Improved feedback from customers and partner organisations
<b>8)</b> Managing and promoting Discretionary Housing Payments more effectively	<p>Agreed – liaison work to be done with income and welfare team to promote. Closer liaison with partner organisations</p>	November 2010	<p>Increased take up of DHP's and greater awareness of service available. Feedback from partner organisations and customers from liaison</p> <p>Annual comparison of amount committed</p>	March/April 2011	Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson	Reduction in amount returned to DWP at the end of year to below 10%

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<p><b>9)</b> Analysing satisfaction with the Service of diverse groups, including undertaking equality impact assessments of the Service including telephone and other ways of contacting the Council and ensuring a focus on diverse groups in the new benefit take-up strategy and plan</p>	<p>Agreed to complete EIA on all procedures and policies</p>	<p>End of October 2010</p>	<p>Feedback from diversity groups and partner organisations</p>	<p>March/April 2011 to demonstrate improved communication</p>	<p>Damian Carter</p>	<p>Ensure that all processed and procedures meet required standards</p>
<p><b>10)</b> Completing Equality Impact Assessments for policies and procedures</p>	<p>Agreed – as above</p>	<p>End of September 2010</p>	<p>Completion of all assessments</p>	<p>October 2010</p>	<p>Damian Carter</p>	<p>Ensure that all processed and procedures meet required standards</p>
<p><b>Improve value for money by:-</b></p>						
<p><b>11)</b> Evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of the Service through better benchmarking</p>	<p>Agreed – further benchmarking to be gathered through CIPFA group &amp; progressing with other unitary authorities</p>	<p>End of September 2010</p>	<p>Analysing results gathered from other unitary authorities and services with the same demographics</p>	<p>March/April 2011</p>	<p>Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson/Steph Jackson</p>	<p>Reduction in new claims processing times from 23 days to under 19 days consistently</p> <p>Reduction in changes in circumstances from 6 days to under 5 consistently</p>

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<b>12)</b> Reviewing the pace of implementing systems changes to improve efficiency and customer experience	Agreed – all projects to be reviewed and time scales re – evaluated	End of September 2010	Completion of each project within timescales stated	March/April 2011 for all projects to completed	System Admin Manager	Reduction in new claims processing times from 23 days to under 19 days consistently  Reduction in changes in circumstances from 6 days to under 5 consistently
<b>13)</b> Review opportunities for collaboration and sharing services with other councils	Agreed – Place based budget submission sent to set up prototype integrated worklessness service with key partners. Further investigation to be done into opportunities available	Underway August 2010	Success of place based budget submission	March/April	Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson/Steph Jackson	Improved performance in all targets and set standards
<b>14)</b> Further reducing benefits overpaid	Agreed – proactive work now commenced. Further lean review to be undertaken regarding all overpayment recovery and procedures	Underway August 2010	Reduction in outstanding overpayments  Monthly comparisons	March/April 2011 to gather comparisons and demonstrate improvement	Damian Carter/Tony Snow	Increase in recovered amounts from 70% to 80%
<b>Reduce benefit fraud and error by: -</b>						
<b>15)</b> Developing an improved understanding of the fraud risks of the local area	Agreed - to be investigated as part of strategic planning	End of October 2010	Focused proactive fraud and intervention work resulting in successful sanctions	March/April 2011 to gather comparisons and demonstrate improvement	Damian Carter/Mandy Beever	Increase in sanction levels by 10 to 15% in year

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<b>16)</b> Ensuring the resource allocated to investigate fraud is effectively targeted and maximises the benefits from having an electronic case management system	Agreed – lean service review to be undertaken to identify more efficient ways of working	End of September 2010	Reduction in duplication or non effective procedures therefore increasing capacity of investigators to complete more cases	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improvement	Damian Carter/ Mandy Beever	Increase in sanction levels by 10 to 15% in year
<b>17)</b> Agreeing challenging targets for the Benefits service to prevent, detect and prosecute benefit fraud	Agreed – targets to be revisited	End of September 2010	Achievement of new targets	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improvement	Damian Carter/ Mandy Beever	Increase in sanction levels by 10 to 15% in year
<b>18)</b> Undertaking appropriate proactive counter-fraud drives identified following analysis of caseload and local risk	Agreed - to be investigated as part of strategic planning. Benefit customers mapped on mosaic to improve targeted support	End of October 2010	Increased successful fraud cases from proactive drives	March/April 2011 to demonstrate improvement	Damian Carter/ Mandy Beever	Increase in sanction levels by 10 to 15% in year
<b>19)</b> Improving the accuracy of benefit payments	Agreed – development with being done with individual staff taken from QA results. Training needs analyses to be done with all benefit staff	Ongoing	Reduction in financial errors	Target of 90% correct claims to be achieved by March/April 2011	Daman Carter/ Mark Simpson	To improve the accuracy of claims to 90% currently 86%