



Committee and Date

Audit Committee
19 September 2012
2pm

Item

7

Public

BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

Responsible Officer Steph Jackson

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1. Summary

The Benefits team are responsible for the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments. This report provides Members with performance monitoring information on the collection of this income for the year to 2011/12.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to consider and endorse, with appropriate comment, the contents of this report.

REPORT

1. The service is responsible for recovering amounts outstanding on invoices raised by the former district councils relating to Housing Benefit overpayments, and for debt due to Shropshire Council for the same reason, which are now recovered separately from the Sundry Debt Service.
2. With regards to Housing Benefit overpayment recovery, the total value of invoices raised in 2011/2012 is: -

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|-------------|---------------|
| Created | £3,543,678.21 |
| Recovered | £2,934,890.37 |
| Written off | £ 208,597.68 |
3. At 31st July 2012 the total amount outstanding, including previous years, was £3.6 million. This compares with £3.7 million at 31st July 2011.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.

The targets seek to increase the number of income collections transacted electronically.

4. Financial Implications

Effective monitoring of outstanding debt will enable early action to be taken to minimise the risk of financial loss to the Council.

5. Background

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit are national welfare benefits administered by the Council for the Department of Work and Pensions. A Complex legal framework is in place to define who is entitled to benefit and to reduce fraud and error in the system. The Benefits Service within the Council has a responsibility to pay the right benefit to the right person at the right time.

6. Additional Information

None

7. Conclusions

Members are asked to note the content of the report.

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| List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information) |
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| N/A |
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| Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) |
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| Gwilym Butler/Tina Woodward, Keith Barrow, Leader of the Council and Brian Williams, Chairman of Audit Committee. |
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| Local Member |
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| N/A |
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| Appendices |
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| N/A |
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