

Housing and Council Tax Benefit Service Performance

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Commission consider the performance of the Housing and Council Tax Benefit service as at 30 June 2006 and forward any comments to the cabinet.
- 1.2 That the Commission consider whether regular performance reports should continue to be produced to review progress of the Housing Benefits Service.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members of the Commission have requested to receive regular performance reports including comparisons with other unitary authorities. This report identifies progress made since the last report to the Community Regeneration Commission on 6 December 2005.
- 2.2 Appendix 2 shows that outstanding workload has increased since 21 November 2005, the comparable performance figures shown in our last report of 6 December 2005. This was to be expected due to the resources that we have diverted into our project team that is implementing a new computer software system which went live on 17 July 2006. The table shows we are still actioning changes and cancellations very promptly as a priority, in order to minimise any overpayments to customers. We have plans in place to make use of additional temporary resources to bring our outstanding workload back into line over the coming months.
- 2.3 Housing benefit administration is a key service within the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment rating and we recently made our annual submission on 30 June 2006 which gave us a self assessment scoring of 3 out of 4 which is a 'good' service rating. We are expecting confirmation of this rating from the Audit Commission in October 2006.
- 2.4 The graph at appendix 3 shows that we processed all new claims received on average within 40 days during financial year 2005/06 which is a nine day improvement on our 2004/05 performance. Our target is to further improve our performance to reach 36 days average by 31 March 2007, which is at national standard.

- 2.5 Further benefits performance indicators are shown in the table at appendix 4. Improvements were made in 2005/06 against three of the performance indicators shown when compared to the previous year, with a slight dip in performance in the 'average number of days to process changes in circumstances' indicator, but this was due to a change in definition for this indicator so we are not comparing like with like. The 'percentage of claims cleared within 14 days of receiving all information from customers' indicator has dipped slightly in quarter one of this year but this is to be expected due to the significant increase in workload that we receive at this time of year.
- 2.6 In line with the Commission's request, a table comparing our performance with 21 other unitary and metropolitan authorities of similar size to Derby for financial year 2005/06 is shown at appendix 5 for five of the key housing benefit indicators which shows the following position:
- a. 14th for processing new claims – up one place since Q1 comparison
 - b. 11th for processing changes of circumstances – up three places since Q1 comparison
 - c. 13th for % of new claims processed within 14 days of receiving all information from customers - down one place since Q1 comparison
 - d. 14th for % of rent allowances paid on time – no change since Q1 comparison
 - e. 15th for % of claims paid accurately - up one place since Q1 comparison

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Analysis of Benefits Workload at 15 August 2005 Appendix 3 – BV78a Average Number of Calendar Days Taken to Process New Claims – Monthly Cumulative Totals Appendix 4 – Performance - Statutory Performance Indicators Appendix 5 – Derby's Performance Compared with other Authorities

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising from this report.

Legal

2. The Council has a statutory duty to provide a Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Service under the provisions of the Social Security Act 1986.

Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Our benefits take up strategy is aimed at encouraging all low income households to apply for council tax and housing and benefit with specific targeting of pensioners, low earners and black and minority ethnic communities.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The Council's Corporate Plan 2006/09 recognises the importance of a high quality and performing Benefits Service in helping meet its priorities of 'improving the quality of life in Derby's neighbourhoods' and 'delivering excellent services, performance and value for money'.
This report identifies progress we are making in the Benefits Service to help achieve these priorities.

Appendix 2

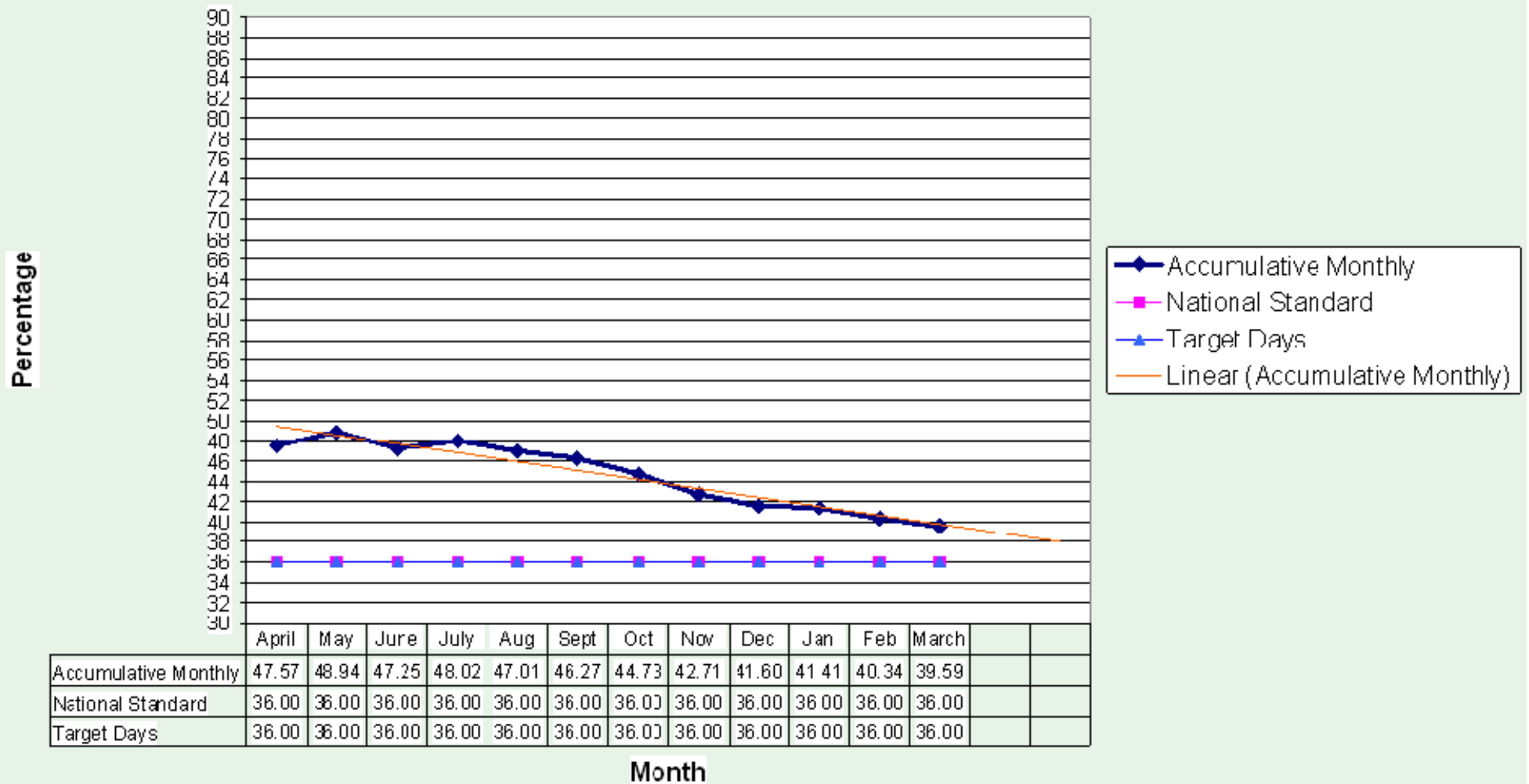
Analysis of Benefits Workload Position at 30 June 2006

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Position at 21 Nov 05 (including claims awaiting to be processed and pending)	Comparable position at 30-Jun	Awaiting to be processed at 30-Jun	Pended awaiting more information 30-Jun	Average weekly claims received 30-Jun	Number of weeks work outstanding 30-Jun	Number of weeks work outstanding excluding work pending awaiting further information 30-Jun
New Claims	1202	1539	849	690	306	5 weeks	2.8 weeks
High Risk Reviews	371	1074	891	191	232	4.6 weeks	3.8 weeks
Sub total of claims	1573	2613	1740	881	538		
Change of Circumstances	210	206	53	153	850	up to date	up to date
Cancellations	280	340	57	283	371	up to date	up to date
TOTAL	2063	3159	1850	1317	1759		

Note

Pended claims are those where we have begun to process the claims but we are awaiting more information from the customer before we can process.

**BV78a Average (Calendar) Days Taken to Process New Claims -
Monthly Cumulative Totals**



Housing Benefits Service – Performance Management – Statutory Performance Indicators

Indicator	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Actual	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Q1	Comment
BVPI 78a – average number of days to process a new claim	79 Target 65 days	55 Target 55 days	49 Target 46 days	40 Target 36 days	38 Target 36 days	Actual performance in 05/06 was on average 9 days better than previous year. We continue to improve into Q1 of 06/07 and we have set ourselves the Department of Works and Pensions national performance target of 36 days for this year
BVPI 78b – average number of days to process a change of circumstances claim	21 Target 18 days	14 Target 17 days	10 Target 13 days	15 Target 13 days	14 Target 15 days	Actual performance in 05/06 was on average 5 days worse than previous year however the criteria for measuring this performance indicator changed and we are not therefore comparing like with like. Target for 06/07 has been adjusted accordingly
BVPI 79a – accuracy of outputs	94% Target 92%	96.4 Target 97%	94% Target 97.5%	97% Target 98%	Not available Target 98%	Actual performance in 05/06 showed an improvement of 3%. Our quality checking procedures are now much more robust allowing us to set the same target in 06/07
% claims cleared within 14 days of receiving all the information	64% Target 90%	74% Target 90%	77% Target 90%	84% Target 92%	76% Target 92%	Actual performance in 05/06 showed a 7% improvement. Performance has dropped slightly in Q1 of 06/07 due to significant increase in workload which was expected

Revenues & Benefits Performance Statistics

IPF Nearest Neighbours	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing new							
	2001/2002 Annual	2002/2003 Annual	2003/2004 Annual	2004/2005 Annual	2005/2006 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Tameside	21.52	23	27	24	23	24	22	21
Darlington	53.3*	44	35	35	25	20	20	24
Bradford	53*	36	37	36	24	25	25	24
Rotherham	33.24	31	31	29	26	26	28	26
Dudley	44.71	34	28	22	20	24	29	27
Stockton-on-Tees	73.2	49	53	61	38	29	27	28
Peterborough	48.3	40	43	39	37	31	28	29
Sandwell	60.47	87	80	48	34	29	29	29
Kirklees	106.49*	135	60	42	34	28	27	31
Plymouth	81*	66	50	41	39	33	32	31
Wolverhampton	41.55	34	42	34	35	35	34	32
Bolton	53	45	42	40	33	33	35	32
Telford & Wrekin	60	59	33	35	27	34	35	32
Derby	79	79	54	50	47	45	33	33
Leeds	31*	41	34	No data	50	51	40	33
Wakefield	59	69	82	48	47	45	41	35
Oldham	35	36	35	36	39	38	39	36
Coventry	76.6*	75	59	59	53	63	53	42
Rochdale	39.26	33	26	38	54	54	51	45
Stoke-on-Trent	70.98	65	No data	65	112	79	67	54
Walsall	35.79	38	46	69	55	72	72	90

Key:

* = This data has been marked as qualified by the Auditors

Revenues & Benefits Performance Statistics

IPF Nearest Neighbours	Speed of Processing: Average time for processing changes of circumstances							
	2001/2002 Annual	2002/2003 Annual	2003/2004 Annual	2004/2005 Annual	2005/2006			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Darlington	10.73	8	8	9	6	7	4	4
Wakefield	27.77	36	37	21	15	42	33	5
Tameside	7.65	9	8	7	7	4	7	8
Stockton-on-Tees	11.4	10	13	8	8	6	7	9
Plymouth	28	39	30	21	10	14	10	9
Kirklees	27.33*	29	11	7	19	14	12	10
Telford & Wrekin	15.5	11	8	8	17	18	13	10
Coventry	67.4	48	16	19	23	23	37	10
Oldham	14	13	11	11	13	14	11	11
Bradford	46	12	11	19	17	18	16	11
Derby	27	21	14	10	18	16	13	12
Peterborough	15.39	12	15	13	12	15	15	16
Rochdale	11.63	11	7	17	14	17	18	16
Rotherham	7.38	7	7	5	19	22	20	16
Dudley	20.96	18	16	11	8	16	24	16
Wolverhampton	12.1	8	9	11	15	17	18	17
Bolton	25	24	25	22	14	15	16	18
Sandwell	80*	19	24	11	40	32	28	23
Leeds	12.42	21	No data	No data	39	33	26	24
Stoke-on-Trent	40.72	41	No data	49	73	65	36	30
Walsall	9.07	14	12	21	26	66	51	79

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Revenues & Benefits Performance Statistics

IPF Nearest Neighbours	Accuracy of processing :% of cases calculated accurately							
	2001/2002 Annual	2002/2003 Annual	2003/2004 Annual	2004/2005 Annual	2005/2006 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Darlington	90.76%	96	97	99	99	100	99	100
Plymouth	97.00%	99	98	99	99	100	99	100
Wakefield	92.40%	94	97	96	97	95	98	100
Rotherham	97%*	99	100	96	100	100	100	99
Dudley	98.80%	99	98	99	98	98	100	99
Kirklees	97.80%	96	99	99	100	100	99	99
Tameside	97.60%	98	99	98	98	100	98	99
Oldham	99.80%	100	99	99	98	98	98	99
Wolverhampton	95.20%	96	89	98	98	98	98	99
Bolton	98.00%	99	98	98	98	98	97	99
Bradford	98.00%	99	98	99	98	100	99	98
Peterborough	97.80%	99	99	99	No data	No data	99	98
Telford & Wrekin	90.30%	91	98	99	98	98	98	98
Sandwell	92.60%	93	96	95	98	97	98	98
Derby	85.20%	94	96	94	97	97	96	98
Rochdale	95.53%*	97	98	No data	96	97	96	98
Walsall	98.20%	99	98	97	98	100	97	98
Leeds	91.30%	95	97	98	98	98	98	97
Coventry	86.19%	89	91	94	99	94	98	97
Stockton-on-Tees	94.40%	97	No data	96	96	96	97	93
Stoke-on-Trent	88.83%*	96	No data	No data	94	90	91	90

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Revenues & Benefits Performance Statistics

IPF Nearest Neighbours	% of new claims decided within 14 days							
	2001/2002 Annual	2002/2003 Annual	2003/2004 Annual	2004/2005 Annual	2005/2006 Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Rotherham		81	82	97	96	91	95	97
Kirklees		40	82	85	87	92	92	94
Darlington		79	79	79	92	96	96	93
Tameside		91	87	93	94	93	94	93
Wolverhampton		80	75	87	84	86	83	93
Dudley		67	83	90	92	77	82	92
Bradford		90	90	88	96	91	92	91
Telford & Wrekin		81	88	87	89	79	84	91
Sandwell		44	49	79	86	88	87	90
Peterborough		73	72	78	82	90	89	89
Plymouth		53	76	83	66	86	86	87
Stockton-on-Tees		84	78	79	86	85	94	86
Derby		60	74	77	74	75	87	84
Bolton		61	69	No data	85	82	No data	83
Coventry		48	56	45	55	61	61	76
Rochdale		86	83	67	67	70	67	74
Leeds		49	64	No data	66	59	66	72
Oldham		72	77	81	70	77	72	70
Wakefield		47	45	59	61	62	52	67
Stoke-on-Trent		2	No data	62	49	57	79	62
Walsall		91	75	64	65	32	43	49

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Revenues & Benefits Performance Statistics

IPF Nearest Neighbours	% of new Rent Allowance claims paid on time						
	2001/2002 Annual	2002/2003 Annual	2003/2004 Annual	2004/2005			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Bradford		89	91	80	89	92	95
Rotherham		81	79	88	85	92	90
Peterborough		80	81	No data	100	92	89
Dudley		68	62	66	66	83	87
Wolverhampton		80	68	74	86	90	86
Kirklees		42	79	67	81	87	84
Bolton		65	66	84	100	96	83
Tameside		91	82	66	70	92	83
Telford & Wrekin		79	86	81	84	80	81
Sandwell		41	62	66	67	81	81
Plymouth		47	69	72	72	78	73
Darlington		76	76	71	64	68	65
Stockton-on-Tees		75	65	47	62	78	65
Derby		No data	No data	52	50	57	60
Stoke-on-Trent		3	No data	No data	No data	No data	55
Leeds		No data	No data	97	No data	No data	50
Walsall		79	61	41	42	47	48
Rochdale		82	70	53	54	57	39
Oldham		29	33	68	52	46	34
Coventry		42	50	50	48	28	16
Wakefield		50	48	52	62	No data	No data

Key:

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Figures highlighted in red have been changed since last published on the internet

Source:

www.dwp.gov.uk (2002-2003 and 2003-2004)