



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES

TOPIC - REVENUES BUSINESS PLAN 2008/09 ONWARDS

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel(s) (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer: Gill Cranswick, Tel: 01962 848 190, Email: gcranswick@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator:

Frances Maloney, Tel: 01962 848 155, Email: fmaloney@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

Approval is sought to the detailed Business Plan for this Division. The Business Plan sets out the key tasks that the Division will undertake over the coming five years, with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Resourced and Timed) targets (both through actions and performance indicators) by which progress will be measured and monitored. The Plan also gives additional information about the role of the Division, the resources allocated to it (in terms of both staff and budgets) and the key risks that are being addressed through its work.

Key actions to be undertaken in this Division are:

1. Considering the options for shared service provision with Test Valley Borough Council and other Hampshire authorities
2. Implementing legislative changes (Local Housing Allowance) for the Benefits Service
3. Supporting the set up and launch of Local Access Points
4. Implementing a solution for mobile working for the Benefits Service

The Head of Division is satisfied that the actions put forward in this Business Plan will work towards the Council's corporate objectives, as set out in the Corporate Strategy 2008-13 or otherwise ensure that the Council meets the statutory obligations place on it by central Government. Other than where indicated, these actions can be achieved within the

resources available. Plans are in place, or will be developed, to ensure that targets shown for key performance indicators can be achieved in the timescale shown.

DECISION

That the Business Plan for the Revenues Division be approved as attached at Appendix A.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Business Plans form an important part of the Council's performance management process as they set out the key actions for the coming year. The Business Plan put forward for adoption sets out the actions that will best help the Council achieve its corporate objectives and meet its statutory obligations within the resources available to it, as far as can be seen in the light of current circumstances. While alternative approaches would be possible in many parts of the Plan, the actions being recommended are believed to give best value to the authority.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

The Resources Scrutiny Panel has been consulted on this Business Plan and raised the following issues:

Members requested clarification on the level of resources needed for Key Priority 1, 'Consider the options for shared service provision with Test Valley Borough Council'. The Head of Revenues provided further information and no changes were made to the Business Plan.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

None

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

Councillor Frederick Allgood – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Revenues Business Plan 2008 – 2011

1. Brief Description of the Service and its Purpose

- Administering Housing and Council Tax Benefits
- Investigating fraudulent benefit claims
- Billing and recovery of Council Tax and Business Rates
- Providing payroll, car fleet management, cashiering, debt collection and supplier payment services

2. Links between Council strategic priorities and services

<i>Strategic priority</i>	<i>Departmental responsibility</i>
Economic Prosperity	Ensuring that Business Rates accounts are processed quickly and accurately and that customers are supported with any payment difficulties that they are experiencing. Implementing the Council's discretionary rate relief policies. Supporting the City centre Business Improvement District projects. Processing Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims quickly and accurately to support customers who need help in meeting their housing expenses.
High Quality Environment	Reducing the need for travel by facilitating home working, providing home visits to customers and by encouraging electronic methods of payment and service delivery. Implementing aspects of the work travel plan, most notably in connection with the Council's car fleet and car schemes.
Safe and Strong Communities	Supporting Local Access Points and providing advice to benefits customers in the community. Visiting customers in their homes to help with benefits and Council Tax enquiries. Implementing the Council's discretionary relief policy for sports clubs and organisations that provide recreational facilities or education and training opportunities.
Efficient & Effective Council	Dealing promptly with enquiries about Council Tax bills and providing support for customers with payment difficulties. Providing a Cash Office service for customers who prefer to pay their rent and council tax in person.

3. Summary of Progress in 2007/08

Key Service Priorities

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?	Progress Update
1.	Efficient & Effective Council	Consider the options for shared service provision (HIOWA Project)	2007/08	Significant efficiencies identified	Staff resources - 20 days	Head of Revenues	Complete
2.	Efficient & Effective Council	Implement outcomes of Local Taxes BPR	Q1 & 2 2007/08	Efficiencies identified	Staff resources - 20 days	Local Taxes Manager	Complete
3.	Efficient & Effective Council	Implement solution for mobile working in Revenues	2007/08	Successful implementation	Staff resources – 40 days	Benefits Manager	Project timescale amended
4.	Economic Prosperity	Support the City centre & Segensworth Business Improvement District projects	Q3 & 4 2007/08	Completed on target	Staff resources – 30 days preparation. Remainder unknown until final nature of BIDs determined.	Local Taxes Manager	Complete
5.	Legislative requirement	Carry out Equality Impact Assessments – Stage 1	2007/08	Completed on target	Staff resources – 10 days for initial assessment.	Head of Revenues	Corporate review of priorities undertaken. Assessment not required during 07/08.
6.	Efficient & Effective Council	Payroll / HR System – electronic forms	Q2 2007/08	Successful implementation	Staff resources - 30 days	Exchequer Services Manager	No progress

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?	Progress Update
7.	Legislative requirement	Preparation for the introduction of Local Housing Allowance for Benefits Service	Q3 2007/08	Completed on target	Some Gov't funding will be available. Staff resources – 40 days.	Benefits Manager	Complete
8.	Efficient & Effective Council	Review and procure new Financial systems including e-procurement	2007/08 to 2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources – 30 days for review. Additional resources required for implementation.	Exchequer Services Manager	Project timescale amended

Other Tasks and Proposed Developments and Improvements of the Service

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?	Progress Update
1.	Efficient & Effective Council	Upgrade to Payroll module on Selima system	2007/08	Successful upgrade	Staff resources	Exchequer Services Manager	Upgrade not yet required
2.	Support to corporate project	Contribute to liP Reassessment	2007/08	Successful reassessment	Staff resources 20 days	Head of Revenues	No action needed
3.	Support to corporate project	Support the development and maintenance of the Performance Management System	2007/08	Project objectives achieved	Staff resources 15 days	Systems Manager	Complete
4.	Support to corporate project	Contribute to the work of the Peoples Issues Group	2007/08	Group objectives achieved	Staff resources 10 days	Local Taxes Manager	Complete

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?	Progress Update
5.	Support to corporate project	Contribute to the work of the Corporate Equalities Group	2007/08	Group objectives achieved	Staff resources 16 days	Benefits Manager	Complete
6.	Efficient & Effective Council	Review and update Efficiency Strategy	2007/08	Strategy fit for purpose	Staff resources 3 days	Head of Revenues	Complete
7.	Efficient & Effective Council	Review and update the Business Continuity Policy	2007/08	Policy fit for purpose	Staff resources 3 days	Head of Revenues	Complete
8.	Efficient & Effective Council	CIPFA benchmarking for Debtors Service	2007/08	Completed on target	Staff resources 20 days	Exchequer Services Manager	Complete
9.	Efficient & Effective Council	Improve performance targets to measure VFM	2007/08	Completed on target	Staff resources 3 days	Head of Revenues	Some progress, further work to be done
10.	Efficient & Effective Council	Change monthly financial monitoring / reconciliation process in line with Financial Services review of current processes	2007/08	Completed on target	Staff resources 5 days	Head of Revenues	Complete

4. Service Priorities 2008/13

A) Key Service Priorities

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?
1.	Efficient & Effective Council	Consider the options for shared service provision with Test Valley Borough Council	2008/09	Service improvement & efficiencies identified	Staff resources	Head of Revenues
2.	Efficient & Effective Council	Consider the options for joint working with Hampshire Authorities (HIOW Improvement Group)	2008/09	Service improvement & efficiencies identified	Staff resources – 20 days	Head of Revenues
3.	Legislative requirement	Implementation of Local Housing Allowance for Benefits Service	Q1 2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources	Benefits Manager
4.	Safe and Strong Communities	Support the development of on Older People's Wellbeing Action Plan for the District	March 2009	Completed on target	Staff resources – 5 days	Benefits Manager
5.	Safe and Strong Communities	Support the set up and launch of three Local Access Points with WCC and Partner staffing	March 2009	Successful implementation	Staff resources – 10 days	Benefits Manager
6.	Efficient & Effective Council	Implement solution for mobile working for the Benefits Service	Q1- Q3 2008/09	Successful implementation	Staff resources – 40 days	Benefits Manager

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?
7.	Efficient & Effective Council	Transfer of telephone payments for Council Tax to Customer Service Centre	Q2 2008/09	Seamless transition & improved VFM	Staff resources – 2 days	Local Taxes Manager
8.	Efficient & Effective Council	Transfer of change of home notification for Council Tax customers to Customer Service Centre	Q3 & Q4 2008/09	Seamless transition & improved VFM	Staff resources – 20 days	Local Taxes Manager
9.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the implementation of electronic link from iWorld Northgate system to LLPG	Q2 2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources – to be quantified	Local Taxes Manager
10.	Efficient & Effective Council	Payroll / HR System – introduce an electronic form for mileage reimbursement	2008/09	Successful implementation	Staff resources - 15 days	Exchequer Services Manager
11.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the review and procurement of new Financial Systems including e-procurement	2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources – 5 days for review.	Exchequer Services Manager
12.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the implementation of Electronic Document & Records Management System for Payroll Services	Q2 & Q3 2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources - 30 days plus training	Exchequer Services Manager
13.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the implementation of Electronic Document & Records Management System for Creditors & Debtors Services	Q2 & Q3 2009/10	Completed on target	Staff resources - 30 days plus training	Exchequer Services Manager
14.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the implementation of Electronic Document & Records Management System in Revenues	Q2 – Q4 2009/10	Completed on target	Staff resources - 60 days plus training	Systems Manager

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?
15.	Legislative requirement	Carry out Equality Impact Assessments for the Benefits Service	Q3 & Q4 2009/10	Completed on target	Staff resources – 10 days for initial assessment.	Benefits Manager
16.	Legislative requirement	National Non Domestic Rate Revaluation	2009/11	Completed on target	Staff resources 20 days	Local Taxes Manager
17.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the implementation of new Financial Systems including e-procurement	2009/10	Completed on target	Staff resources – to be quantified	Exchequer Services Manager
18.	Safe and Strong Communities	Benefits take up campaign	2010/11	Increased benefit take up	Staff resources – 30 days	Benefits Manager
19.	Efficient & Effective Council	Account balance information & E billing for local taxes customers	2010/11	Completed on target	Staff resources – to be quantified	Local Taxes Manager

B) Other Service Priorities

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?
1.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the retender of IMT contract	2008/09	Successful retender	Staff resources 5 days	Head of Revenues
2.	Efficient & Effective Council	Improve performance targets to measure VFM	2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources 5 days	Head of Revenues
3.	Support to corporate project	Contribute to liP Reassessment	2008/09	Successful reassessment	Staff resources 20 days	Head of Revenues
4.	Efficient & Effective Council	Review and update the Business Continuity Policy	2008/09	Policy fit for purpose	Staff resources 3 days	Head of Revenues

	Why are we doing this?	What will we do?	When will we do it?	How will we measure our success?	How much time / money will it take?	Who's accountable?
5.	Support to corporate project	Contribute to the work of the Corporate Equalities Group	2008/09	Group objectives achieved	Staff resources 16 days	Benefits Manager
6.	Efficient & Effective Council	Upgrade to Payroll module on Selima system	2008/09	Successful upgrade	Staff resources 5 days	Exchequer Services Manager
7.	Support to corporate project	Contribute to the work of the Peoples Issues Group	2008/09	Group objectives achieved	Staff resources 10 days	Local Taxes Manager
8.	Legislative requirement	Contribute to the update of the Publication Scheme (FOI)	2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources 5 days	Systems Manager
9.	Efficient & Effective Council	Support the upgrade to the iWorld server	Q1&2 2008/09	Completed on target	Staff resources 10 days	Systems Manager
10.	Support to corporate project	Support the development and maintenance of the Performance Management System	2008/09	Project objectives achieved	Staff resources 15 days	Systems Manager

5. Resource Implications

A) Financial

2007/08 Revised			Service Activity	2008/09 Estimate			FTEs	Notes
Exp. £000	Income £000	Net £000		Exp. £000	Income £000	Net £000		
899	(126)	773	Council Tax	931	(126)	805	} 45.32 <i>Budget transferred to other costs centres</i>	
228	(192)	36	NNDR	241	(192)	49		
664	(301)	363	Housing Benefit	708	(297)	411		
579	(290)	289	Council Tax Benefit	618	(280)	338		
36	0	36	Verification Framework	0	0	0		
12,710	(12,719)	(9)	Benefits paid	13,855	(13,844)	11		
8,512	(8,459)	53	HRA Rent Rebate	8,938	(8,864)	74		
888	(888)	0	Exchequer	910	(905)	5		7.97
24,516	(22,975)	1,541	Total	26,201	(24,508)	1,693	53.29	

B) Workforce

KEY EXTERNAL DRIVERS	KEY INTERNAL DRIVERS
Efficiencies Government requirements (e.g. KLOE, changes in regulations) Partnerships	Corporate initiatives & projects (health and safety; equality and diversity; risk) Customer service Performance indicators Sickness and absence, including maternity
WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS	
<p>Efficiencies Continued focus on and drive for efficiencies</p> <p>Government Requirements Current structures in place to respond</p> <p>Partnerships Discussions with others as opportunities arise</p> <p>Corporate Initiatives Limited number of staff available; more central support required</p> <p>Customer Service Involvement for staff in Phase 2</p> <p>Performance Indicators Ensuring targets are met</p> <p>Sickness and absence High levels in some areas impacting upon performance and other staff</p>	

6. **Key Performance Indicators**

Ref. No.	What does this show?	Who reports this?	Achieved 2005/06	Achieved 2006/07	Estimate 2007/08	Target 2008/09	Target 2009/10	Target 2012/13
NI180	Changes in HB / CTB entitlements within the year	Head of Revenues				Targets to be set when performance against new indicators is established.		
NI181	Time taken to process HB / CTB new claims and change events	Head of Revenues						
BV8	% Invoices paid on time	Head of Revenues	93.7%	94.93%	93.5%	94%	94.5%	98%
BV9	% Council Tax collected in the year	Head of Revenues	98.3%	98.5%	98.55%	98.6%	98.65%	98.7%
BV10	% Business Rates collected in the year	Head of Revenues	99.1%	99.17%	99.2%	99.3%	99.36%	99.4%
BV76d	Housing Benefit Security - Number of prosecutions and sanctions per 1000 caseload	Head of Revenues	5.71	5.37	6.25	*6.25	*6.25	*6.25
BV76a	Housing Benefit Security - Number of claimants visited per 1000 caseload	Head of Revenues	347	479	**200	Not to be retained as key performance indicators after 2007/08.		
BV76b	Housing Benefit Security - Number of investigators per 1000 caseload	Head of Revenues	0.38	0.4	0.4			
BV76c	Housing Benefit Security - Number of investigations per 1000 caseload	Head of Revenues	57.48	96.3	114			
BV78a	Average time to process new claims	Head of Revenues	25.16 days	17.77 days	16.5			
BV78b	Average time to process benefit change of circumstances	Head of Revenues	16.3 days	7.83 days	7.7			
BV79c	% Benefit cases processed correctly	Head of Revenues	96.8%	98.6%	99			

*Target to remain the same as several of the sanctions for 2007/08 were achieved by joint working with the DWP. 3 experienced members of DWP staff will be leaving in the next month or so and this will have an impact on our performance.

**Reduction due to change in legislation relating to visiting requirements and different duties undertaken by the Visiting Officers to assist with maternity leave.

7. Proposals for Consultation

What Research or consultation do we intend to carry out	How will we be doing it?	When will we be doing it?	How will we use the results?
Customer satisfaction with the Business Rates Service	Questionnaire included with annual bills	April 2009	Compare to previous consultation exercises and identify areas for improvement.
Customer satisfaction with the Benefits Service	Questionnaire	Q2 & 3 2009	Compare to previous consultation exercises and identify areas for improvement.
Customer satisfaction with the Council Tax Service	Questionnaire included with bills	Q3 2010	Compare to previous consultation exercises and identify areas for improvement.

8. Key elements of risk management

No risks identified with a major or catastrophic impact and a likelihood of occurrence of probable or certain.