

REVENUE AND BENEFITS SERVICE PLAN

ITEM 5
OSCPR080606

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Background:

- 1.1 Members will recall that they have been monitoring the Benefits Fraud Inspectorate Action Plan, last deliberated by the Committee in November 2005. Should Members wish to refresh their memories as to the situation at that time, the Plan they considered on 10th November 2005 is available on the web site or by e-mail from scrutiny support.
- 1.2 The remaining actions from that 'edition' of the Benefits Fraud Inspectorate Action Plan have either been completed or incorporated into the new Service Plan for 2006-07, a draft of which is attached. The outstanding actions from the BFI included:
 - a) Review and revise existing practice and help notes into single comprehensive document
 - b) Formal review of work measurement to identify best practice
 - c) Introduction of SLAs to include escalation procedures, identify reporting process and detail remedial action process
 - d) Reviews its current claim form in line with the Department's HBCTB1, controlled release of documentation at appropriate service points to reduce potential for fraud. Ensures that the additional guidance notes are always issued with the form.
 - e) Ensures that its new Benefits IT system provides reports which identify:
 - backlogs of work
 - where delays occur
 - claims not being actioned within prescribed timescales
 - performance, for the team and individual staff.
 - f) Adoption of the Verification Framework and ensures all staff trained.
 - g) Meets its statutory requirement to make referrals to the Rent Officer within 3 days, or as soon as practicable thereafter

Other items were either complete, ongoing or linked to the above.

- 1.3 Members will recall that Service Plans are working documents and are the tool by which each section will achieve its own targets and objectives, contributing to the delivery of the Corporate Plan.
- 1.4 Members will receive a full briefing on the Revenue and Benefits Service Plan for 2006-07 and will have the opportunity for challenge and comment.