

HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT

| STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---------------|--|
| BV CODE | INDICATOR | TARGET | DEFINITION |
| BVPI76 | Security: whether the LA has a written and pro-active strategy for combating fraud and error which embraces specified initiatives including those sponsored by the Department of Social Security, which is communicated regularly to all staff - Yes/No. | Local | <p><u>APPENDIX A</u></p> <p>This indicator will be satisfied where, by 31st March 2001, the LA has in place a written security strategy which commits it, as a minimum, to undertaking two of the following sets of activities and the initiatives specified therein are observably in use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) operating the Verification Framework and the external auditor has confirmed in the annual audit certificate that the LA is complying with the Framework; (ii) operating a policy for prosecution which details the circumstances in which cases would be considered for prosecution or for the application of other sanctions, and which is observably complied with; (iii) operating at least 3 of the following initiatives which are observably in use: Royal Mail's service to return re-directed benefit mail; the Housing Benefit Matching Service; a National Service Level Agreement with the Benefits Agency; a Fraud Service Level Agreement with the Benefits Agency. <p>The strategy will be judged to be regularly communicated to staff where: all staff hold an up-to-date copy of the LA's current strategy; and a copy of the strategy is issued to new staff and its use and purpose is explained to them as part of their induction.</p> <p>Further guidance on this indicator is set out in The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Guide for 2000/2001 produced by DSS.</p> |
| Comment: | The Council will have a written security strategy in place by 31 st March 2001. | | |

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| COST/EFFICIENCY | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------|--|
| BV CODE | INDICATOR | TARGET | DEFINITION |
| BVPI77 | The average cost of handling an HB or CTB claim, taking into account differences in the types of claim received. | Local | <p>This indicator is based on the costs which local authorities report they incur to administer Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. Information on these costs will be taken from DETR General Fund Services Revenue Account returns (for RO4). The relevant cells in the 1998/99 form were line 15, columns (3) and (7) and line 17, columns (3) and (7).</p> <p>In order to make reported costs more directly comparable, they will be weighted by caseload mix and claim characteristics and turnover using statistical data held by DSS. This will mirror the approach currently used by the DSS in distributing direct grant administration subsidy to LAs and help ensure that performance against the indicator reflects real differences in the costs incurred by local authorities which stem from the number and characteristics of the claims they handle.</p> <p>The Government is concerned that differences in local accounting practice may also affect reported costs for benefit administration. DSS is currently undertaking research to establish more clearly the reasons for these inconsistencies. The Government will consider issuing further guidance to local authorities in early 2000 in the light of the outcome of that research.</p> |
| Comment: | Targets cannot be set until the Government releases further guidance later in the year. | | |
| SERVICE DELIVERY OUTCOME | | | |
| BV CODE | INDICATOR | TARGET | DEFINITION |
| BVPI78a | Speed of processing: a) Average time for processing new claims. | Local | This indicator measures the average processing time taken across all new claims for which the date of determination is within the period being reported on. The time for each claim is measured from the date of receipt of the claim to the date of full determination, i.e. the first determination that does not relate to a payment on account. |
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| Comment: | This is a new indicator using data for the last six months of 1999/2000. Warwick District Council Target 1999/2000: 50 days; 2000/20001: 48 days | | |
| BVPI78b | Speed of processing: b) Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstance. | Local | This indicator measures the average processing time taken across all written notifications of changes which require a re-determination for which the date of re-determination is within the period being reported on. The meaning of re-determination is limited to those cases where notifications affect the person's right to benefit; or the amount of their benefit entitlement; or their right to receive payment of benefit. |
| Comment: | This is a new indicator from 2000/2001 for which targets are not required until 2001/2002. | | |
| BVPI78c | Speed of processing: c) Percentage of renewal claims processed on time. | Local | This indicator measures the number of renewal claims determined before the end of the existing benefit period as a percentage across all renewal claims for which the date of determination is within the period being reported on. |
| Comment: | This was a previous Audit Commission Performance Indicator for which historical and comparative information is available. 1997/98; Warwick District Council 97%; English Districts Upper Quartile 98%; 1998/99 Warwick District Council 99%; 1999/2000 97%; 2000/2001 98%. | | |
| SERVICE DELIVERY OUTCOME | | | |
| BV CODE | INDICATOR | TARGET | DEFINITION |
| BVPI79a | Accuracy of processing: a) Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available to the determination, for a sample of cases checked post-determination. | Local | This indicator measures the percentage of cases within a random sample for which the calculation of benefit is found to be correct. The sample size for each local authority will be determined by DSS based on the latest available caseload data. Further guidance on sample sizes and the random selection of cases will be issued to authorities in early 2000. |
| Comment: | Targets cannot be set until the Government releases further guidance later in the year. | | |
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| BVPI79b | Accuracy of processing: b) The percentage of recoverable overpayments (excluding Council Tax Benefit) that were recovered in the year. | Local | This indicator measures the value of cash recovered during the period being reported on as a percentage of the value of recoverable overpayments identified by the local authority on or after 1 st April 2000. |
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| Comment: | This is a new indicator from 1999/2000. Warwick District Council Target 1999/2000 90%; 2000/2001 92% | | |
| QUALITY AND FAIR ACCESS | | | |
| BV CODE | INDICATOR | TARGET | DEFINITION |
| BVPI80 | User satisfaction survey covering issues of accessibility, staffing issues (helpfulness etc.) and communications/information (understandability etc.). | Local | <p>Percentage stating that they strongly agree/agree with each of the following statements (only calculated for those that have used these services):</p> <p>Overall I am satisfied with the facilities to get in touch with the Benefits Office Overall I am satisfied with the service in the actual office Overall I am satisfied with the telephone service Overall I am satisfied with the staff in the benefits office Overall I am satisfied with the clarity and understandability of the forms, leaflets and letters Overall I am satisfied with the amount of time it took them to tell me whether my claim was successful</p> <p>For each of the above the data should be presented for: Overall satisfaction of all respondents; Satisfaction of those whose claim was successful; Satisfaction of those whose claim was not successful.</p> <p>An indicator measuring customers' views of three key aspects of service delivery:</p> <p>Access: (e.g. access to the office; ease of travel to offices, opening hours, condition of the waiting area, waiting times, privacy; access by telephone: availability of direct lines, waiting time to answer, waiting on hold, being 'passed around')</p> |

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| | | | <p>Staff (e.g. one named contact, politeness, helpfulness)</p> <p>Communications/Information (e.g. clarity - spoken and written (including benefit notifications), adequacy and timeliness of information, ease of completing new and renewal claim forms).</p> |
| Comment: | A user satisfaction survey will be carried out during 2000/2001 covering these issues. | | |