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## REVENUES & BENEFITS – POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND ACTION PLANS

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is for Members to consider the current progress of the 10 improvement plans for Revenues and Benefits included in the Divisions Operational Plan. The updated Operational Plan is attached as Appendix 1

### 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Members agreed the full set of policies, procedures and action plans encompassing the whole of the Revenues and Benefits service in October 2006, and also agreed to continue to monitor progress against these on a six monthly basis.
- 2.2 In view of the diverse nature of the portfolio, if Members have any questions on the content they may wish to seek clarification before the meeting from the contact point below.
- 2.3 It is good practice that the Revenues and Benefits team should have full documented procedures that are both supported by Members and are available to stakeholders. An abbreviated set of procedures will be made available through its new website.
- 2.4 The 10 improvement plans, contained from pages 28 to 45 of the attached operational plan form part of the formal 6 monthly Member monitoring process and have been updated so that Members can clearly monitor the performance of the Revenues and Benefits team in meeting its targets. Although there is an improvement plan for the joint working initiative with Chelmsford Borough Council, Members have asked for a separate progress report on this project. It is anticipated that this will be presented in the form of a detailed business case in June 2007.
- 2.5 Members' attention should be particularly drawn to pages 12 and 15 where we have reviewed the targets for new claims and changes of circumstances processing times, which are two key indicators that are heavily scrutinised by the Audit Commission. Members will be aware that our new claims processing time for the year 2006/07 was approximately 31 days. However, because of the continued improvement in performance towards that latter part of the year, officers are confident we can meet a target processing date of 24 days for 2008/09.
- 2.6 With regards to the changes of circumstances target of 13 days for 2007/08 as described on page 15, Members should be aware that this target will mean that Rochford will be within the top 25% of authorities in terms of processing

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times if this is achieved. Our current performance of under 13 days means we are confident that this ambitious target will be met.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Executive Board **RESOLVES** that the updated Policies and action plans be endorsed.

Graham Woolhouse

Corporate Director (External Services)

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#### **Background Papers:-**

None

For further information please contact Scott Logan:-

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If you would like this report in large print, braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.