

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 23 FEBRUARY 2009
REPORT ON: HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT RECOVERY POLICY UPDATE
REPORT BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (FINANCE)
REPORT NO: 129 - 2009

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the previously approved Dundee City Council Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery policy.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee approve the revised to Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery policy.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 Reference is made to Article II of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 9 May 2005 where the Committee approved the Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery policy.

7.0 The updated policy sets out Dundee City Council's commitment to the recovery of Housing Benefit Overpayments as laid down by the Housing Benefit (General) Regulations 1987.

4.3 The Council aims to comply wherever possible with Performance Standards guidance and will look to revising this policy document as and when necessary.

4.4 Details of changes are appended hereto. A copy of the revised policy has been passed to group leaders and depute lord provost.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Risk Management with no major issues.

This report has also been EQIA Screened and has a Low/Nil adverse affect on any of the Equality Groups. This Report does not require a full EQIA but it will be EQIA Screened annually when it is submitted to Committee.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Assistant Chief Executive (Management) and Head of Finance have been consulted on the content of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

DAVID DORWARD
DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (FINANCE)

DATE _____

HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT RECOVERY POLICY - REVISION SUMMARY

- Referencing to regulations updated to The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 throughout policy.

All other changes fall within the area of the policy headed 'How The Council Actions Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery' as follows -

- Section 7 was inserted to emphasise the fact a Housing Benefit overpayment is a high priority debt and must be recovered as quickly as possible.
- Section 8 - Weekly rates of deduction from ongoing benefits up-rated as follows -

Income Support type benefits - £3.05 to £3.25
Non Income Support benefits - £9.15 to £9.75
Fraudulent cases - £12.00 to £12.80

Also inserted an explanation on when the higher rate fraud deduction can be taken

- Section 10 - Methods of Payment section to include all methods available to make payments
- Section 12 - Inclusion of paragraphs to advise that when an Income and Expenditure form completed for arrangements or reduced deduction requests - debtors are expected to review their outgoings (i.e. reduce non priority expenses) to make additional income available

Also stating that such arrangements and reduced deduction cases will be reviewed annually.

- Section 14 - Sequestration section updated to reflect changes to legislations implemented during 2008 and to include information regarding recovery of overpayments when a debtor has been sequestered