

**REPORT TO:** FINANCE COMMITTEE - 12 SEPTEMBER 2005

**REPORT ON:** FINANCE REVENUES SERVICE PLAN 2003-2007 - PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2004/2005

**REPORT BY:** DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (FINANCE)

**REPORT NO:** 364-2005

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the performance for 2004/2005 against the performance indicators in the Finance Revenues Service Plan 2003-2007 approved by the Finance Committee on 14 June 2004.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the progress in 2004/2005 towards the performance targets set for each service in the Finance Revenues Service Plan 2003-2007.

**3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 All initiatives introduced to improve performance will be contained within Finance Revenues Revenue Budget for 2005/06.

**4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no direct Local Agenda 21 implications.

**5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct equal opportunity implications.

**6 BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 The Council's Best Value submission to the Scottish Executive on Public Performance Reporting requires an annual report by all departments on the performance indicators in their Service Plans.
- 6.2 The Finance Revenues Service Plan 2003-2007 approved by the Finance Committee on 14 June 2004 indicated performance reporting requirements would be met mainly by an annual report to the Finance Committee.

**7 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION 2004/2005**

- 7.1 The relevant performance information for each performance indicator identified in the Finance Revenues Service Plan has now been tabulated and is enclosed as Appendix I. A brief commentary on initiatives planned to improve performance is provided below.

**7.2 Council Tax Collection**

The Council has set a target of a Council Tax collection rate of 90% in comparison to an actual collection rate of 85.0%. By the end of 2005 the collection rate had increased to 87.1% which means that 42% of the target rate has already been achieved.

### 7.3 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

Average time taken to process new claims improved by 30% on the previous year's figure. Average time taken to process notification of changes of circumstances also improved significantly by 23% on the previous year's figure. The percentage of benefit claims processed within 14 days also improved and the department was successful in obtaining three successful benefit fraud prosecutions during the year.

### 7.4 Non-Domestic Rates Collection

Performance for Non-Domestic Rates improved compared to the previous year. It is anticipated that this service will achieve its target collection rate. Collection rates remain high with little variation from year to year.

## 8 **KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

- 8.1 The Finance Revenues Customer Contact Centre was put in place from April 2004. An indicative figure of the number of telephone calls taken each month is 8,000 and customer enquiries at the three main offices are running at 6,000.
- 8.2 Performance Standards were introduced and a separate Revenues Enquiry team established. A new initiative was put in place to improve the collection of outstanding Council Tax and Poll Tax debt. Staff appraisals were fully implemented during the financial year.

## 9 **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

- 9.1 Preparations have commenced to carry out a complete review over the next eighteen months of the Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions granted to payers. In addition, work will commence in the near future to prepare for the anticipated introduction of the government's Local Housing Allowance Scheme.

## 10 **CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) have been consulted on the contents of this report.

## 11 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The Finance Revenues Service Plan 2003-2007 - Finance Committee - 14 June 2004

**DAVID K DORWARD**  
**DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (FINANCE)**

**6 JULY 2005**

**SERVICE: FINANCE REVENUES**

Performance Indicator	Actual 2003	Actual 2004	Actual 2005	Target 2007
<b>Finance Revenues</b>				
1 <u>Council Tax Collection</u>				
i Percentage of income due from Council Tax that was received during year	85.7%	86.2%	87.1%	90%
ii Percentage of income due from Council Tax that was received for the previous five financial years:				
Previous Year	85.7%	86.2%	87.1%	90.0%
Previous Year +1	89.9%	90.0%	90.1%	90.0%
Previous Year +2	91.8%	91.9%	91.5%	96.0%
Previous Year +3	94.5%	93.0%	92.9%	96.0%
Previous Year +4	95.9%	95.2%	93.7%	96.0%
iii Replying to personal correspondence	N/A	N/A	N/A	80%
iv Percentage of telephone calls answered within 5 minutes	N/A	70%	80%	80%
v Percentage of customers at City Square dealt with within 30 minutes	N/A	50%	80%	80%
2 <u>Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit</u>				
i Average time taken to process New Claims	60 days	82 days	57 days	36 days
ii Average time taken to process Notification of Changes in Circumstances	22 days	26 days	20 days	9 days
iv Percentage of Benefit claims determined within 14 days of receiving all necessary information.	64%	57%	74%	100%
v Successful benefit fraud prosecutions per annum	N/A	0	3	5
3 <u>Non-Domestic Rates Collection</u>				
i Percentage of income due from non-domestic rates that was received during year	96.2%	95.9%	96.4%	97%
ii Percentage of income due from non-domestic rates that was received for the previous five financial years:				
Previous Year	96.2%	95.9%	96.4%	97.0%
Previous Year +1	97.2%	97.9%	98.2%	99.0%
Previous Year +2	97.7%	97.5%	98.1%	99.0%
Previous Year +3	98.7%	98.1%	97.6%	99.0%
Previous Year +4	98.5%	98.8%	98.0%	99.0%