

# Service Delivery Plan 2011/12 Revenues and Benefits Unit



## The Council's Values

- People
- Pride
- Place

## Priorities for the city

**Helping residents reach their full potential in education and employment**

**Creating neighbourhoods where people choose to live and stay**

**Working with communities to encourage mutual respect**

**Driving the city's economic growth**

### Service Overview - what we do:

The Unit delivers two main services for the Council: Revenues collection and Benefits administration.

The Revenues Service is responsible for billing and collecting all Council Tax and Business Rates due from Manchester residents and businesses. The money we collect directly funds Council services.

The Benefits Service assesses entitlement and makes payments for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Education Benefits to those on low incomes.

<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>218,500 properties</b>
<b>Business Rates</b>	<b>22,870 properties</b>
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>76,500 claimants</b>

### Our Priorities:

- Provide fast, accurate and efficient services that are good value for money, meet the Council's aims and follow recognised best practice.
- Improve the accuracy and speed of Benefits processing and Council Tax and Business Rates administration.
- Collect the maximum amount of Council Tax and Business Rates owed to the Council.
- Deal with all incoming work in accordance with corporate standards.
- Extend customer self service options and maintain close links with Contact Manchester and the Customer Service Centre.
- Reduce fraud by using effective processes to prevent, detect and investigate fraud. We will also punish those people who commit fraud.
- Work with partners and customers to promote in-work benefits and to assist Manchester residents to reach their full potential in employment.
- Continue to involve customers, partners and stakeholders in developing the service and improving our performance.
- Work with our customers and stakeholders to keep claim and account details accurate and up to date.

### The year ahead:

<b>Benefits administration</b>	
Average days to process new claims	25 days
Average days to process changes of circumstances	12 days
Accuracy of processing	99%
Amount of benefit overpayments recovered	£4.3M
<b>Council Tax collection</b>	
% of Council Tax collected in year	92.5%
Amount of Council Tax and costs collected in the year including benefits.	£170M
Amount of Council Tax arrears and costs collected in the year.	£7M
<b>Business Rates collection</b>	
% of Business Rates collected in year	98%

- Introduce and manage the transition of the changes to Benefits legislation.
- Pilot locally based benefits assessment.
- Implement the DWP's Atlas project to capture and process increased numbers of customers' changes in circumstances
- Improve Council Tax collection levels in the city centre ward.
- Work with the Directorate for Adults to recover and reduce their debt outstanding by £1.2M.
- Undertake review of Council Tax single person discounts.

## Priorities for the Council over the next year

**Focus on 0-5 year olds**

**Reducing the number of people who are out of work**

**Focus on neighbourhoods**

**Developing our workforce so that we can deliver high quality services**

**Reducing carbon emissions**

**Managing performance to make sure we deliver our objectives**