



Benefits Division Improvement Plan 2010/11

Version 2 – April 2010

Area/Aim	Progress	What success will look like	Timeline
<p>Plan for and implement the new IT system – maintaining service standards throughout the project and developing new ways of working focused on efficiency, improving performance and access to our services</p>	<p>Contracts signed after procurement process – 26/2/10</p>	<p>Successful conversion and go live in February or May 2010. Performance levels maintained so that no “backlog” exists at go live – successful project management.</p> <p>Assessment roles redesigned – avoiding double handling – improving efficiency and value for money</p> <p>Full integration with Victoria Forms enabling effective access to services at Life Centres, through partners and on the telephone. Overpayment recovery process redesigned to increase ownership of the debt – enabling effective debt analysis and monitoring</p>	<p>Contracts signed 26/02/10 Project Teams established – March 2010.</p> <p>BPR and conversion work starts – April 2010</p> <p>Go live on Northgate and new ways of working implemented¹ 6 June 2011</p>

¹ Version 2 April 2010

		<p>Local Authority Error & Delay Overpayments reduced by Northgate's ability to automatically update, suspend or terminate claims from ETD output, Council Housing Vacations & rent increases, and rent increases from Registered Social Landlord Rents. In many situations no overpayment to recover</p> <p>Second phase completed – use of Northgate mobile enabling mobile workers to use the technology to speed up the transfer of information from customers into Northgate</p>	
<p>Improve processing times across new claims and changes in circumstances and monitor the effectiveness of our pre assessment work and our customers experience</p>	<p>Current processing times reducing from September 2009 to March 2010 New claims 28 to 22 Changes 15 to 14 NI181 20 to 18</p>	<p>New targets set to challenge the service after go live on Northgate for NI 181, new claims and change events</p> <p>Processing efficiency improved through Northgate's ability to automatically update, suspend or terminate claims from ETD output, Council Housing Vacations & rent increases, and rent increases from Registered Social Landlord Rents</p>	<p>Existing targets met by go live.</p> <p>New targets established and met through better performance management.</p>
<p>Improving access to our benefits in partnership with Victoria Forms by piloting and rolling out telephone claims, assisted claims at access points and self service</p>	<p>Pilots on assisted claims at Life Centres starting – March 2010</p> <p>Pilots on telephone claims starting – March 2010</p>	<p>Assisted claims and self service available at all Life Centres</p> <p>Self service on the web available</p>	<p>Roll out at Life Centres – March 2010 to March 2011</p> <p>Assisted claims available at all other access points – March 2011</p>

		<p>Telephone claims is the established way of accessing HB/CTB via the call centre – December 2010</p> <p>Change of circumstances e forms available at all access points and changes reported via the contact centre taken by phone using the technology to gather the information.</p>	<p>Full service for telephone claims – telephone claims is the routine way of accessing HB/CTB via the call centre – December 2010</p> <p>Self service available on the web – September 2010</p>
<p>Improving efficiencies in processing our claims in partnership with Victoria Forms</p>	<p>Pilots on assisted claims at Life Centres starting – March 2010</p> <p>Pilots on telephone claims starting – March 2010</p>	<p>All access areas able to integrate fully with Northgate – gathering data and pre populating the core system with claim data for validation and accurate and speedy payment</p> <p>More accurate benefit claims through the use of the intelligent software of the e claim product</p> <p>Software's ability to skip form sections and pages dependant on earlier answers has made the completion and submission process quicker and easier for customers & staff</p> <p>Customers provided with instant and accurate requests for outstanding information. Staff resources saved as no longer need to do this</p> <p>Claims and changes processed faster an more efficiently and</p>	<p>Roll out at Life Centres – March 2010 to March 2011</p> <p>Assisted claims available at all other access points – March 2011</p> <p>Full service for telephone claims – telephone claims is the routine way of accessing HB/CTB via the call centre – December 2010</p> <p>Self service available on the web – September 2010</p>

		measured through Civica processes and Northgate	
Continue to work with the council in the Customer Transformation programme delivering effective links between the front and back office	Benefits call centre established in September 2008. Job descriptions redesigned.	Maintain current levels of resolution and advice given at the first point of contact by phone. Avoidable contact minimised through analysis of the types of contact generated by the service. Extension of services delivered by contact centre staff at the first point of contact.	Using CRM and Northgate to deliver additional access to services through the Benefits contact centre.
Carry out a further customer survey in 2010 based on the existing 2009 survey to benchmark progress and to establish if progress has been made to improve weaker areas identified in 2009	Customer Engagement Group established in January 2010 to analyse strengths and weaknesses in the 2009 survey. Initial action plan has been written. The group is reporting through to Senior Managers with recommendations for improvement.	Able to measure an impact when recommendations from the Customer Engagement Group have been implemented Increased satisfaction levels against the seven key areas measured	Action plan developed and agreed by March 2010 and recommendations prioritised and implemented during 2010. Survey sent out October 2010 Results by January 2011
Improve Performance Management	Civica reports enable work load management on a daily basis	Team Leaders performance monitoring using Northgate modules – weekly performance monitoring at team and individual level embedded	Current performance management through Northgate ongoing. Northgate performance management modules in place by Go live in February 2010
Take the lead in continuously developing our links with strategic partners for example Wigan and Leigh Housing (re-establish the SLA), Job Centre Plus (JCP) and the Pension Service (TPS)	Current SLA arrangements in place with JCP and TPS New partnership agreement with Housing Strategy signed March 2010	Customers benefit directly from closer and more effective joint work done by the Council with it's main strategic partners	Embedded into the delivery of the service
Gain the Customer Service	Successfully retained Charter	Benefits Division is awarded the	Preparations for the assessment

Excellence Award (CES)	Mark in November 2009 and had the initial assessment against CSE	Customer Service Excellence	March to November 2010. Inspection November 2010
Submission to Audit Commission of accurate Subsidy return & data	Contracts signed after procurement process – 26/2/10 for Northgate's Revenues & Benefits core system	Subsidy maximised through accurate data and non-qualification of submission Remove the potential for LA Error Overpayment threshold penalties - Northgate's ability to minimise the values and volumes of these through automated processing	Forms returned in respect of 2011/12 and thereafter
Improve Take Up	Take Up Strategy in place – April 2010	Take up activity measurable and results in additional take up across a range of benefits Better informed take up work through the use of demographic data from Wisdom informed by benefits data being included	Strategy in place from April 2010 Results and activity monitored throughout 2010/11
Value for Money (VFM)	Northgate top ten enhancements identified	Northgate automation of some aspects of processing increasing efficiencies Northgate bill / benefits combined postings – daily – realises savings Efficiencies of e forms – reduces cost of inviting claims and improves efficiencies Maximise subsidy / prevent loss through increased subsidy assurance on Northgate	VFM forms part of the IT Project plan - April 2010 to February 2011 Efficiencies realised through the roll out of the e form at access points during 2010

