

# **Adur District Council**

## **Benefit Service: Summary of current performance**

Overall, we found that Adur District Council's Benefit service is currently providing a **fair** performance. Adur District Council's current performance demonstrates a number of strengths. These include:

- a benefits service plan with clear aims and objectives linked to a 5 year priority plan supporting strategic objectives
- the production of management information
- sustained improvement over the last 2 years in benefit processing performance with new claims processing now exceeding standard
- performance in claims processing accuracy has met standard in the 6 monthly period from September 2002 to March 2003
- a strong and innovative commitment to training and development recognised by achievement of Investors in People status in Corporate Services
- a claim form that meets the standards set out in the BFI model
- full compliance with the Verification Framework process from March 2000
- a motivated and committed workforce
- a commitment to detection and deterrence of fraud through sanctions and prosecutions
- effective liaison with Jobcentre plus and The Pensions Service.

However there are some areas where Adur District Council needs to develop further to fully meet the Performance Standards. These include:

- reviewing policies and procedures to reflect the Security Against Fraud and Error Scheme and the Verification Framework
- developing a fraud business plan to include resource allocations, targets and a planned programme of activity
- the creation of a landlord forum
- reviewing its policies and procedures for the recovery of overpayments
- deploying an internal audit programme tailored to the needs of the benefits service
- implementing management checks to give assurance that post opening procedures are adhered to
- introducing an annual IT assessment supported by a Security Policy.