

Bolsover District Council

Benefit Service: Summary of current performance

Overall, we found that Bolsover District Council's Benefits service is providing a **Fair** performance. Bolsover District Council's performance demonstrates a number of strengths. These include having:

- explicit strategic policies and objectives drawn directly from the Benefits service vision statement
- a well established system of performance monitoring through the operation of 4 Performance Management Groups
- an administration that delivers quick and accurate decisions on HB and CTB claims with performance consistently better than Standard
- a benefits claim form that has been awarded the Crystal Mark and conforms to the standard of the Department's HCTB1 form
- launched a Work-Life balance initiative to extend the opening hours of the Benefits service
- participated in a benefit take-up exercise with The Pension Service
- post opening procedures which ensure an efficient and secure postal receipt service
- a commitment to joint working with the Department's Counter-Fraud Investigation Service.

However, there are some areas where Bolsover District Council needs to develop further to fully meet the Department's Performance Standards framework. These include:

- developing an action plan designed to meet the full range of Performance Standards that includes specific timescales for achievement
- introducing a risk management process for all types of claims which at least meets the minimum standards of the Department's Verification Framework
- reviewing management checking procedures for assessment work and counter-fraud cases to ensure the integrity and security of benefit process is monitored
- introducing a specific business plan for counter-fraud activity which includes the financial targets it expects to achieve from the application of sanctions.

How BFI's current performance assessment informs the Audit Commission's overall assessment is described [here](#).