

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting:	20 th July 2011
Subject:	Debt Recovery Process Challenge Panel scope
Responsible Officer:	Alex Dewsnap Divisional Director, Partnership Development and Performance
Scrutiny Lead Member area:	Cllr Jerry Miles, Corporate Effectiveness Policy Lead Member Cllr Tony Ferrari, Corporate Effectiveness Performance Lead Member
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix One: Scope for Debt Recovery Process Challenge Panel Scope

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report accompanies the scope for the Debt Recovery Process Challenge Panel

Recommendations:

Councillors are asked to:

- Consider and agree the scope for the challenge panel.

Section 2 – Report

Background

This project derives from the considerations of the Corporate Effectiveness Lead scrutiny councillors who were concerned that the council's application of its debt recovery procedures appeared to be having an adverse impact on our more vulnerable residents. Initial analysis undertaken by the Lead Councillors suggested that the council's policy on debt recovery is no more rigorously applied than other London boroughs but anecdotal evidence suggests that uniform application of the policy may be resulting in a disproportionately adverse impact on a small number of vulnerable residents. The aim of this panel therefore, is to identify the scope for the development of a more sensitive application of the policy in specifically identified circumstances.

During the lead councillors' consideration of the issue, it became apparent that there are a number of debt recovery processes operating across the council and therefore the panel also wishes to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of co-ordinating these different processes.

At its scoping meeting on 5th July, the group nominated Councillor Tony Ferrari to chair the project.

Financial Implications

The costs of delivering this project will be met from within existing resources.

Performance Issues

The panel will wish to have regard to the need to maintain high council tax collection rates.

Environmental Impact

There are no environmental impact issues associated with this review.

Risk Management Implications

There are none specific to this report.

Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? Yes () No ()

The review itself will not have any equalities implications. However, the findings and recommendations of the review may support the service to identify any potentially adverse impacts of its debt recovery processes

Corporate Priorities

This review will contribute to the delivery of the following corporate priority:

- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required for this report.

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Lynne Margetts, Service Manager, Scrutiny. 020 8420 9387

Background Papers: None