

**Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery Action Plan – 2018/19**

Action No.	Action Needed	Responsible Person	Action	Completion Date	Review Date	Comments
1	Expression of interest to be issued to staff	Benefits Team Leader (BTL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email to all Housing Benefit Officers with expression of interest details – start date 18 June 2018, after HDD report</li> </ul>	08.05.18	17.05.18	Completed
2	Management Information to be set up and agreed	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BTL to speak with Recovery and Systems Team Leaders to ascertain what MI is available on Northgate system</li> </ul>	18.06.18	Weekly for team Monthly for reporting	Completed – MI spreadsheet set up and completed monthly
3	Review of HDD Findings	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HDD report to be reviewed by BTL and R&amp;B Manager to set action plan</li> </ul>	26.05.18	18.06.18 and then weekly	HBOP Plan agreed and implemented
4	Review of Housing Benefit Debt Service project	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Login to online forum to read through the guidance and</li> </ul>	08.06.18	Monthly	Completed

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>experiences of other teams</li> <li>• Check data download table</li> </ul>			
5	Agree working arrangements for HBOP officers	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To liaise with Recovery Team Leader to discuss current working arrangements and processes for sundry debts</li> </ul>	08.06.18	Monthly	Monthly meeting in diaries and taking place
6	Meet with successful HBOP officer	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide a remit of the role and gain input into creation of action plan</li> </ul>	08.06.18	Monthly	Remit of role to be reviewed monthly at 1-1
7	Set up MI spreadsheet	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MI spreadsheet to provide baseline stats as at 31 May 2018</li> <li>• To be completed each month to give comparison figures</li> <li>• MI details to be gathered are further down in the action plan for each stage of debt</li> </ul>	01.06.18	Monthly	Completed

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8	Recovery method flowchart	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To produce a recovery method flowchart which clearly shows preferred recovery method routes (taking into account recommendations from HDD regarding capital, review of methods etc)</li> </ul>	08.06.18	Monthly	To be reviewed monthly to ensure fit for purpose
<b>Creation of overpayments</b>						
9	Understanding the importance of recovery (HDD recommendation 10)	BTL's and Recovery Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication of the work and action plan is needed from the outset at benefit and recovery team meetings.</li> <li>Staff need to understand debt recovery is part of their role and understand the level of debt and importance of recovering this</li> </ul>	30.06.18	Monthly	<p>Complete: BTL and HBOP to attend Team Meetings to speak with staff about the project and the importance of recovery</p> <p>12.07.18 – Meeting with NK staff took place</p> <p>November 2018 – Current position to</p>

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						be highlighted at R&B Management meeting
10	Benefits Officer training	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidence in discussing overpayments with customers</li> <li>Setting appropriate arrangements</li> </ul>	30.06.18	Monthly	Effectiveness of training to be reviewed at team meetings (discussion with staff) along with reviewing relevant stats
11	Review diary dating process (HDD recommendation 2)	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure consistent approach to diary dating including how and when this should be done. Removal of use of outlook? Use of Northgate diary suite?</li> <li>Who should be reviewing the diary date? The Benefits Officer or the HBOP Officer?</li> </ul>	30.06.18	Monthly	<p>Complete: Diary date report to be reviewed by HBOP team to ensure it is being used to full capacity</p> <p>Spreadsheet set up and saved in LINK drive to ensure all staff have access and can review</p>

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12	Consider claimant capital as recovery method  (HDD recommendation 4)	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital to be considered before recovery from ongoing benefit or payment arrangement</li> </ul>	08.06.18		To be included as part of the HBOP recovery flowchart
<b>Overpayments recovered from ongoing Housing Benefit</b>						
13	Monthly management Information (MI) required	BTL / HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed MI required: -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. at this stage</li> <li>Value at this stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	31.05.18	Monthly	Baseline stats for 31.05.18  Each month to be available within 3 working days of 1 <sup>st</sup> of each month
14	Review level of clawback  (HDD recommendation 3)	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process in place to review when a claimant returns to HB where there has been a recovery reduction previously</li> </ul>	08.06.18	Monthly	Clawback for COLC reviewed for May. Issues with BOXI report for NK. Logged with Support Team  Reports all working and being reviewed monthly

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<b>Overpayments at sundry debt and on arrangement</b>						
15	Monthly management Information required	BTL / HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed MI required: -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No. at each stage</li> <li>○ Value at each stage</li> <li>○ No. passed on to next stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	31.05.18	Monthly	<p>Baseline stats for 31.05.18</p> <p>Each month to be available within 3 working days of 1<sup>st</sup> of each month</p>
16	Consider current timeline for reminders (HDD recommendation 1)	HBOP Team	<p>Looking at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing reminders at days 21 and 35</li> <li>• Starting action at day 31</li> </ul>	15.07.18	N/A	BTL to discuss with Recovery Team Leader
17	Passing on of non-arrangement debts to HBOP Recovery team	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process needed as to what point the debt is passed to the HBOP recovery team for next action (such as referral to DWP debt service)</li> </ul>	08.06.18	Monthly	<p>Complete: Process has been agreed and is now in place</p> <p>To be reviewed monthly to ensure these debts are being passed on to next stage</p>

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18	Telephone rota (HDD recommendation 5)	Recovery Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider putting a telephone rota in place, for example half a day at a time so debt officer time dealing with debt recovery is not as highly impacted</li> </ul>	31.07.18	N/A	
<b>Overpayments over 4 months old and where there is no arrangement</b>						
19	Monthly management Information required	BTL / HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed MI required: -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. at this stage</li> <li>Value at this stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	31.05.18	Monthly	<p>Baseline stats for 31.05.18</p> <p>Each month to be available within 3 working days of 1<sup>st</sup> of each month</p>
20	Existing overpayments over 4 months old with no action: Removal of these overpayments from sundry team	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be removed from the recovery team and brought into the HBOP team</li> </ul>	08.06.18	N/A	Actioned – HBOP team working on these cases

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21	Existing overpayments over 4 months old with no action: Review of status of recovery	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of recovery stage to be reviewed</li> <li>• Appropriate action to be undertaken – arrangement / debt service or write off                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Detailed MI required: -                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No. at this stage</li> <li>▪ Value at this stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	31.07.18	Monthly for new cases	<p>Prioritised cases over £2000 where no recovery in place</p> <p>Completed: 20.07.18 – prioritised cases where a debt is o/s from 12/13</p>
22	Use of DWP Debt Service Project	BTL / HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These debts to be reviewed and passed to DWP Debt service project for potential recovery from earnings</li> <li>• Detailed MI required: -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No. at this stage</li> <li>○ Value at this stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	30.06.18	Monthly	<p>Cases for July included all cases for NK and COLC where an overpayment was created 12/13 and there had been no payments received towards the o/s debt in the last 4 months. <b>247</b> cases for COLC and <b>111</b> for NK</p>



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23	Looking at highest and oldest debt MI  (HDD recommendation 7)	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted review of these cases</li> </ul>	31.07.18	Monthly	458 cases identified and sent to DWP
<b>Write Offs</b>						
24	Monthly management Information required	BTL / HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed MI required: -                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. at this stage</li> <li>Value at this stage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	31.05.18	Monthly	<p>Baseline stats for 31.05.18</p> <p>Each month to be available within 3 working days of 1<sup>st</sup> of each month</p>
25	Review of write off process for COL and NKDC	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure process is correct and agreed by all parties</li> </ul>	31.05.18		Complete: Process reviewed and all agreed
26	Review NKDC write off of OP's created £10 and under (where only recovery is invoice) – uneconomical to recover	BTL / R&B Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To meet with NKDC Finance to agree process</li> </ul>	31.07.18		Complete: NKDC have agreed for automatic write off of these debts
<b>Management Information (MI)</b>						

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27	MI to be collated monthly	BTL / HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MI as above to be collated on a spreadsheet for easy monthly comparison</li> </ul>	31.05.18	Monthly	<p>Baseline stats for 31.05.18</p> <p>Each month to be available within 3 working days of 1<sup>st</sup> of each month</p>
28	Management Information (MI) to be readily available (HDD recommendation 6)	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that team leaders and senior recovery staff are able to analyse and understand the MI to manage debt recovery performance</li> <li>Feedback to HBOP officers – providing update on performance, looking at ‘issue’ areas</li> <li>Feedback to team members – providing update on actions taken and outcomes</li> </ul>	01.07.18	Monthly	<p>Baseline and June stats to be available 1 July 2018</p> <p>Monthly stats to be available within 3 working days of 1<sup>st</sup> of each month</p>

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<b>HBOP Team and their role</b>						
29	Collaboration between Benefits / Recovery Officers and the HBOP Team  (HDD recommendation 11)	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bi-monthly meetings where achievements can be shared and areas for improvements can be discussed</li> <li>• This can be led by the HBOP Project Manager</li> </ul>	01.07.18	Bi-Monthly	Meetings taking place with BTL, HBOP and Recovery Team
30	Direct Recovery from ongoing Benefit	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lincoln and NK reports to be worked on monthly</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Monthly	Reports all working and being reviewed monthly
31	Newly created Invoices	Recovery Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All invoices up to 4 months old to be dealt with by Recovery Team</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Monthly	To be reviewed each month to ensure nothing of 4 months old is with recovery team
32	HB Debt Service	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BTL and HBOP team to work together to identify cases for the Debt Service</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Monthly	BTL to send the data via Data Hub on the 14 <sup>th</sup> of each month. Responses to be received back

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BTL to work with Support Team to provide the data each month</li> </ul>			on 21 <sup>st</sup> of each month
33	Write Off's - Current	BTL/Recovery Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BTL'S to deal with Write Off's</li> <li>Recovery Team Leader to deal with Write Off's for those cases at invoice and that are under 4 months old</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Monthly	Complete: Different process at each site – differences identified and all involved have agreed to the process
34	Write Off's – HBOP Project	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lincoln – Spreadsheet completed by HBOP Team, Write Off form completed, signed by HoS, overpayment written off Northgate by Lincoln Benefit team leader, HBOP Team notified and spreadsheet updated</li> <li>NK – Spreadsheet completed by HBOP</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Complete: Spreadsheet to be sent to MCW for authorisation

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			Team, Write Off form completed, signed by HoS, data sent to NK Team Leader to seek approval from Tina @ NK, overpayment written off Northgate by NK Benefit team leader, HBOP Team notified and spreadsheet updated			
35	Review of old debtors from Civica system	HBOP Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review cases from old Debtor system</li> </ul>	Ongoing	01.09.18	1378 invoices to be reviewed. 674 cases completed.
36	To set up designated telephone number for the public to call	BTL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speak to IT to set up number</li> <li>Review letters and update contact information</li> </ul>	01.07.18		Complete: Designated phone number, 3371, set up