

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (FINANCE & CUSTOMER SERVICES) SUB COMMITTEE		Subject: LOCAL TAX COLLECTION & BENEFIT UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2008
From: HEAD OF REVENUE SERVICES		
Date: 3 March 2008	Ref:- AC/BC	

1 Introduction

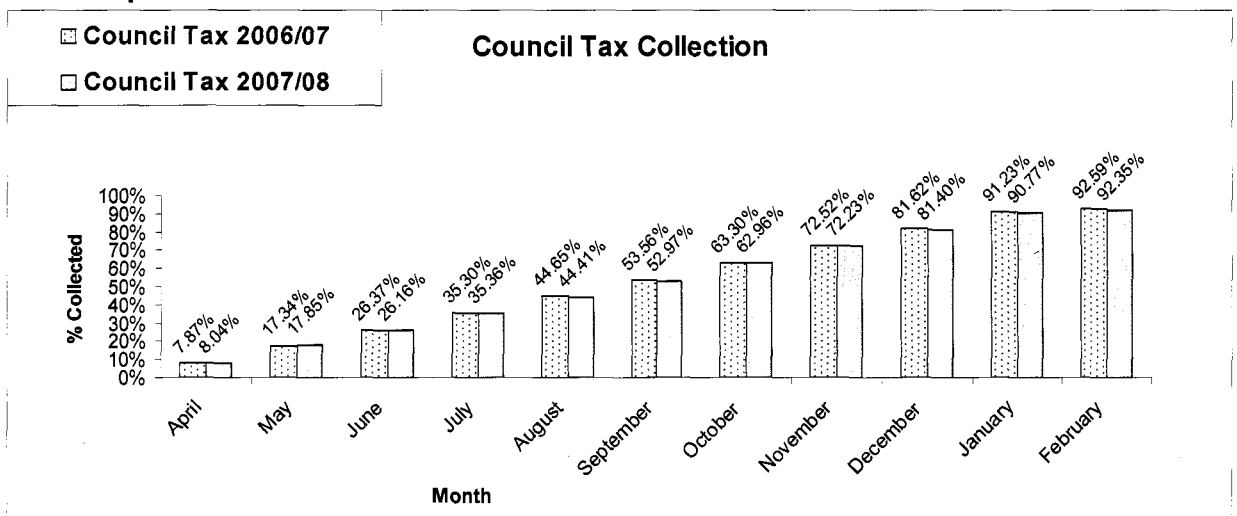
1.1 This report provides an update on Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates Collection and Benefit Administration.

2 Council Tax Performance

2.1 Current Year

Details of the amount of Council Tax collected for the first 11 months of the current year together with collection figures for the same period for the last financial year are shown below (Graph 1). This shows a collection of 92.35% at the end of February 2008 compared with 92.59% for the same period last year, a reduction of 0.24%.

Graph 1

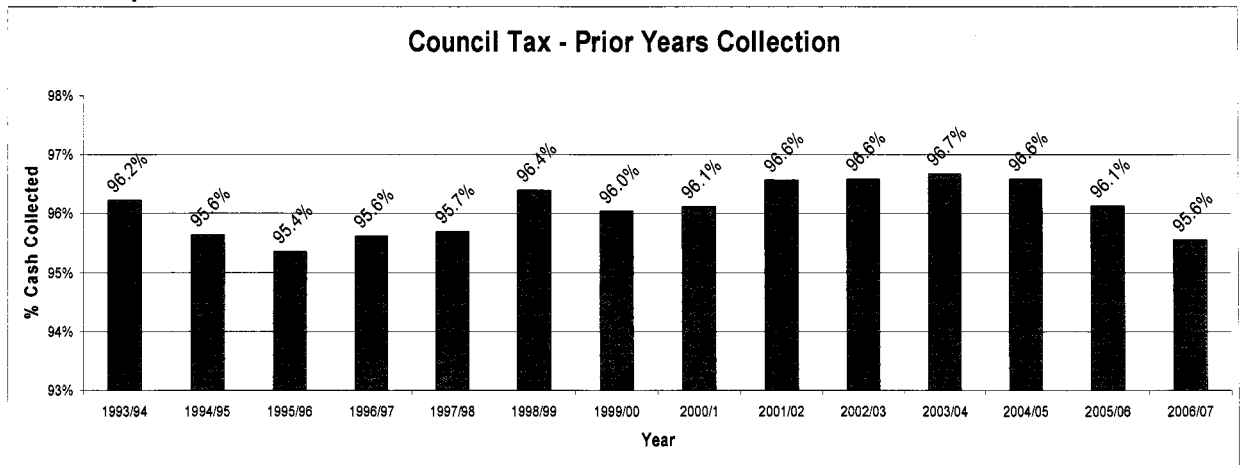


2.2 The delay of 2 months in follow-up arising from the recent appeal case to the Court of Session, as previously reported has contributed to the difference in performance compared to prior years.

2.3 To enable us to improve performance over the reduced recovery period, Recovery Notices have been issued during December 2007 to January 2008, to ensure that the maximum amount is recovered prior to 31st March 2008.

2.4 Prior Years Cumulative Collection – Graph 2 shows the percentage of cumulative cash collected for recovery of Council Tax for each prior year from the initial year of liability to the current date. As shown all 14 years now exceed 95% and indeed 9 are in excess of 96%.

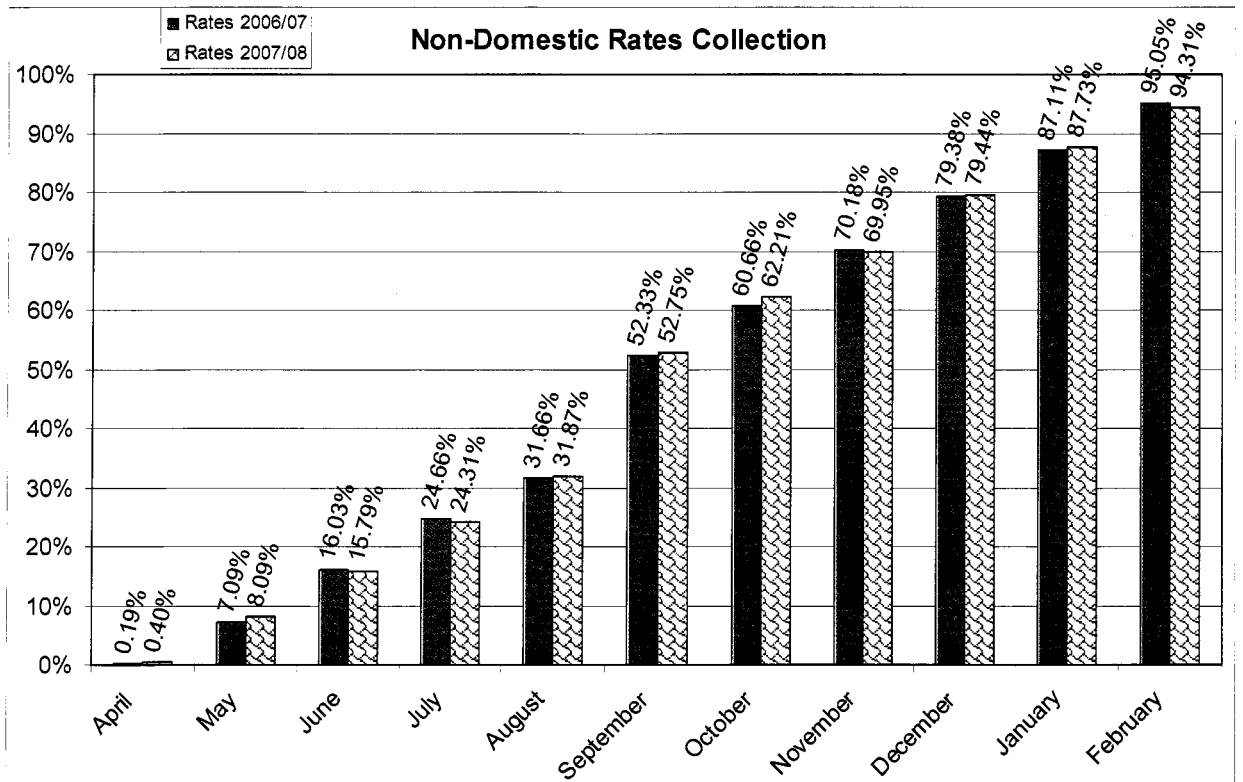
Graph 2



3 Non Domestic Rates Performance

3.1 Graph 3 indicates that recovery up to February 2008 is 94.31% which is 0.74% less than February 2007.

Graph 3



4 Benefits Performance

4.1 New Claims – All new claims have been processed between April 2007 – January 2008 in an average time of 17 days which exceeds our target average of 18.

- 4.2 Change of circumstances – All changes of circumstances on existing claims over the period April 2007 January 2008, have been processed within 7 days which exceeds the 9 days average of the best 25% of Authorities in the UK.
- 4.3 Accuracy – During the period April 2007 – January 2008, our processing accuracy has been 99%.
- 4.4 The DWP are introducing two new performance measures with effect from 1 April 08, the 'Right Time Indicator' and the 'Right Benefit Indicator' and they will replace the existing Benefit Performance Measures.
- 4.5 The 'Right Time Indicator' integrates both new claims and change of circumstances processing times and will be used as an indication of our ability to timeously deal with all Benefit amendments.
- 4.6 The 'Right Benefit Indicator' will establish the total number of Benefit reductions annually and is designed to allow the Council to decide how to reduce fraud and error in their caseload.

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to note the report.



Head of Revenue Services

Members wishing further information please contact Mr Brian Cook, Head of Revenue Services, Tel:- 01698 – 403929.