



Audit and Assurance Committee

Date of Meeting	29 August 2023
Subject	Recoveries and Recharge Highlight Report – Quarter 1 2023-24
Agenda No.	5
Prepared By	[REDACTED]
Purpose	Monitor

Background

1.1 The attached report details key highlights of activities undertaken by Social Security Scotland's Recoveries and Recharge Team throughout Quarter 1 of the 2023 -24.

Key Points

2.1 Key highlights are shared in the first part of the report.

Conclusion/ Recommendation

3.1 The Committee is asked to review and comment on progress made during Quarter 1 of 2023-24.

3.2 The Committee is also invited to comment on the format and content of this first shorter highlight report, which will be produced at the end of Quarters 1 and 3 in our annual reporting cycle. Mid-year and annual reports will be produced at the end of Quarters 2 and 4 respectively.

Key Highlights

- Repayment plans were agreed with 143 clients during Quarter 1 – this represents 21% of all recoverable overpayments referred to the team. It is a 23% reduction by volume in comparison with the preceding quarter.
- Anticipated progress to develop processes within the Redetermination and Appeals service which would enable us to begin using enforced deductions from ongoing benefit awards as a debt recovery method [REDACTED] – at present we have identified 302 debt clients who have not engaged and are in receipt of an ongoing benefit award which could be used to enforce recovery of debt.
- Maintaining stable staff headcount continues to be challenging, with a number of colleagues leaving the team on promotion during the Quarter, and new additions to the team requiring onboarding support.



Performance Information

Inbound Payments

A total of 757 inbound payments with a total sum of £33,216 were receipted against benefit overpayment debts. On recharge of Funeral Support Payment awards from estates, 121 payments with a total sum of £56,758 were received from executors – giving a total sum of £89,975 of inbound payments reconciled and receipted by the team.

[REDACTED TABLE]

[REDACTED TABLE]

Whilst there has been a significant drop in the number of referrals to recharge estates, the number of inbound payments has almost tripled. The decrease in the volume of referrals was anticipated, due to a change to Funeral Support Payment operational guidance clarifying situations when assets of the deceased should be deducted from the initial award value. This will reduce demand for recharge work.

[REDACTED TABLE]

The Recoveries team saw a decrease in both the volume and value of write off referrals for Best Start Foods during Quarter 1 – however this indicates a return to ‘normal’ levels after a spike in demand was experienced in the preceding quarter.