

**Agenda Item No:** -

**Report to:** Audit Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 26 September 2011

**Report Title:** Chief Auditor's Summary Audit and Risk Report

**Report By:** Tom Davies  
Chief Auditor

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### **Purpose of Report**

To inform the Audit Committee of recent audit findings of the Non-Domestic Rates audit report.

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### **Recommendation(s)**

**1. That the Audit Committee accepts the report**

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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

To monitor levels of control in the organisation.

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**Summary Reports**  
**Report to Audit Committee**  
**Non-Domestic Rates**  
**(September 2011)**

**Audit Conclusion**

**Overall Audit Assessment: A – Good.**

Controls are in place and work effectively. There are no significant audit concerns. There are no high recommendations made.

**Key Findings**

- The Non-Domestic Rating system is administered effectively and efficiently.
- A Council Contact Centre is actively being implemented which should improve the workload of the Local Taxation staff and further increase efficiency.
- The process of internal payments requires review to increase efficiency of performance targets for collection rates.
- A reconciliation of composite properties between Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax needs to be carried out.

**Management Response**

We agree the findings and have put in place an action plan to address the 2 recommendations made.

**Summary Reports**  
**Report to Audit Committee**

**Non-Domestic Rates**

**(September 2011)**

**Summary of Recommendations**

**Priority classifications**

High = Fundamental System Weakness - Action is Essential

Medium = Potential Control Weakness - Action Required

Low = Advised for Best Practice - these recommendations are given in the Detailed Report only

**Recommendation 1**

**That the composite properties continue to be updated on the system and once this has been completed a full reconciliation between Non Domestic Rates and Council Tax is carried out. Further reconciliations should be regularly completed.**

**Priority: Medium**

Target Date: December 2011

Responsible Officer: Revenues and Benefits Service Manager

Management Comment: Although we are aware of the accepted recommendation to update all of the composite references on the database, it is given a low priority whilst our resources can be better used at present to maximise collection of the rates/council tax.

**Recommendation 2**

**That the process of internal payments is investigated to ascertain if it is possible to use journals rather than physical payments thus reducing officers time, bank charges and improving collection rate targets.**

**Priority: Low**

Target Date: December 2011

Responsible Officer: Revenues and Benefits Service Manager

Management Comment: Accepted. A revised process will be discussed with the Chief Accountant.

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**Wards Affected**

None

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**Area(s) Affected**

None

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**Policy Implications**

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No

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**Background Information**

The detailed internal audit report on:  
Non-Domestic Rates (September 2011)

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**Officer to Contact**

Tom Davies  
tdavies@hastings.gov.uk  
Tel: 01424 451524

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