

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION
-------------

Agenda Item No 17

meeting date: 16 NOVEMBER 2010  
 title: REVENUES AND BENEFITS GENERAL REPORT  
 submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES  
 principal author: MARK EDMONDSON

### 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform committee of debts outstanding for business rates, council tax and sundry debtors. Also to update committee on Benefits Performance, including Benefits Fraud investigations, Prosecutions and Sanctions.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

❖ **Council Ambitions/Community Objectives/Corporate Priorities**

Without the revenue collected from rates, council tax and sundry debtors we would be unable to meet the Council's ambitions, objectives and priorities.

### 2 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES (NNDR)

2.1 The following is a collection statement to 1 November 2010:

	£000	£000	2010/11 % to 1 Nov	2009/10 % to 1 Nov
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2010		383		
NNDR amounts due	14,494			
Plus costs	4			
Transitional surcharge	319			
Write ons	7			
	<b>14,824</b>			
Less				
- Transitional relief	-1,081			
- Exemptions	-565			
- Charity, Rural, Former Agricultural Discretionary Relief	-698			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-881			
- Write offs	-109			
- Interest Due	-10			
	<b>-3,344</b>	11,480		
<b>Total amount to recover</b>		<b>11,863</b>		
Less cash received to 8 Sept		-8,101	68.3	66.6
<b>Amount Outstanding</b>		<b>3,762</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>33.4</b>

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2010/11 but also those relating to previous years, but we are required to report to the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) our in year collection rate. This figure is published and is used to compare our performance with other local authorities. On this measure our current in year collection rate at 31 October 2010 is 70.1% compared with 67.6% at 31 October 2009.

### 3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 1 November 2010:

	£000	£000	2010/11 % to 1 Nov	2009/10 % to 1 Nov
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2010		403		
Council Tax amounts due	36,842			
Plus costs	31			
Transitional relief	4			
Write ons	2			
	<b>36,879</b>			
Less - Exemptions	-902			
- Discounts	-2,853			
- Disabled banding reduction	-45			
- Council Tax Benefit	-2,256			
- Write offs	-18			
	<b>-6,074</b>	30,805		
<b>Total amount to recover</b>		<b>31,208</b>		
Less cash received to 8 Sept		-21,464	68.8	49.6
<b>Amount Outstanding</b>		<b>9,744</b>	<b>31.2</b>	<b>50.4</b>

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2010/11 but also those relating to previous years, but we are required to report our in year collection rate to the DCLG. This figure is published by them and is used to compare our performance against other local authorities. On this measure our current in year collection rate at 31 October 2010 is 69.2% compared to 69.1% at 31 October 2009.

## 5 SUNDRY DEBTORS

5.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 8 November 2010 is:

	£000	%
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2010	392	
Invoices Raised	883	
	<b>1,275</b>	<b>100</b>
Less Paid	<b>915</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Total Outstanding</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>28</b>

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	93	25.83
30 - 59 days	6	1.67
60 - 89 days	24	6.67
90 - 119 days	13	3.61
120 – 149 days	4	1.11
150+ days	220	61.11
	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

## 6 HOUSING BENEFIT – PERFORMANCE

6.1 The main indicators for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit performance are the National Indicators for Right Benefit and Right Time. The benefit section also report on Local Performance Indicator's that have been set within the department for Benefit fraud and Overpayments.

The Department of Work and Pensions does not require Local Authorities (LA's) to report on any other Performance Measures but encourages them to monitor their own performance locally.

We obviously consider it very important to monitor benefit fraud and also overpayment data.

### 6.2 HOUSING BENEFIT RIGHT TIME INDICATOR 2010/2011

*Right time indicator of period 1 July 2010 – 30 September 2010*

The right time indicator measures the time taken to process HB/CTB new claims and change events; this includes changes in circumstances, interventions, fraud referrals and prints generated by the benefit department.

Target for year	Actual Performance	Average Performance
12 days	9.13 days	20 days per IRRV

*Performance for new claims for period 1 July 2010 – 30 September 2010*

Target for year	Actual Performance	Top Grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
20 days	18.79 days	Under 30 days

7 HOUSING BENEFIT FRAUD

7.1 The following is summary of fraud investigation for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 September 2010.

Completed fraud investigations		Average caseload (YTD)	
1.07.2010 – 30.09.2010	46	2010/2011	2,759

Number of investigations per 1,000 caseload		
2010/2011	46/2,759	16.67

7.2 *Number of Housing/Council Tax Benefit Prosecutions and Sanctions per 1,000 caseload*

The following is a summary of fraud prosecutions and sanctions for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 September 2010.

2010/2011		Average caseload (YTD)	
Cautions	2	2010/2011	2,759
Administrative penalties	0		
Successful prosecutions	0		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>		

Number of prosecutions/sanctions per 1,000 caseload		
2009/2010	2/2,759	0.72

7.3 Ribble Valley Borough Council has brought two formal cautions for benefit fraud during the period 1 July 2010 to 30 September 2010.

All the above offences were a result of failing to report a change in their circumstances promptly. These have created overpayments in Housing/Council Tax benefit for £1,909.86.

8 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

8.1 Overpayment means any amount paid as Housing Benefit when there was no entitlement under the regulations. The performance for the period 1 July 2010 to 30 September 2010 is as follows:

Performance Measure	%
The amount of Housing Benefit (HB) overpayments recovered during the period being reported on as a percentage of HB overpayments deemed recoverable during that period.	105.73

Performance Measure	%
The amount of Housing Benefit (HB) overpayments recovered during the period as a percentage of the total amount of HB overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the financial year plus amount of HB overpayments identified during the period.	34.26
The amount of Housing Benefit (HB) overpayments written off during the period as a percentage of the total amount of HB overpayment debt outstanding at the start of the financial year, plus amount of HB overpayments identified during the period.	0.00

9 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

9.1 Note the continuing progress that we make in collecting these debts, and the performance of our Housing Benefit Section remains excellent.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS MANAGER

PF55-10/ME/AC  
4 November 2010