

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 16

meeting date: 26 MARCH 2013
 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 13 March 2013:

	£000	£000	2012/13 % to 13 March	2011/12 % to 13 March
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2012		475		
NNDR amounts due	16,625			
Plus costs	10			
Transitional surcharge	55			
Write ons	17			
	16,707			
Less				
- Transitional relief	-276			
- Exemptions	-470			
- Charity, Rural, Former Agricultural Discretionary Relief	-950			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-1,655			
- Write offs	-132			
- Interest Due	-2			
	-3,485	13,222		
Total amount to recover		13,697		
Less cash received to 13 March		-13,183	96.2	95.7
Amount Outstanding		514	3.8	4.3

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2012/13 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 28 February 2013 is 97.9% compared with 96.8% at 29 February 2012.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 13 March 2013:

	£000	£000	2012/13 % to 13 March	2011/12 % to 13 March
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2012		420		
Council Tax amounts due	37,115			
Plus costs	89			
Transitional relief	3			
Write ons	6			
	37,213			
Less - Exemptions	-1,071			
- Discounts	-2,893			
- Disabled banding reduction	-43			
- Council Tax Benefit	-2,243			
- Write offs	-22			
	-6,272	30,941		
Total amount to recover		31,416		
Less cash received to 13 March		-30,821	98.3	98.3
Amount Outstanding		595	1.7	1.7

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2012/13 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 for 2012/13 at 28 February 2013 is 98.8% compared to 98.7% at 29 February 2012.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 15 March 2013 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2012		308
Invoices Raised	1,433	
Plus costs	2	
	1,435	
Less write offs	1	1,434
Total amount to recover		1,742
Less cash received to 15 March 2013		1,387
Amount outstanding		355

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	122	34.37
30 - 59 days	16	4.51
60 - 89 days	5	1.41
90 - 119 days	14	3.94
120+ days	198	55.77
	355	100

5 HOUSING BENEFIT PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 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 Indicators that have been set within the department for benefit fraud and overpayments.
- 5.2 The Department for 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.
- 5.3 We obviously consider it very important to monitor benefit fraud and also overpayment data.

Housing Benefit Right Time Indicator 2012/2013

1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012

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
10 days	11.27 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012

Target for year	Actual Performance	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
20 days	23.58days	Under 30 days

6 HOUSING BENEFIT FRAUD

6.1 The following is a summary of fraud investigations for the period 1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012.

Completed fraud investigations	
1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012	58

Average caseload (YTD)	
2012/2013	2,844

Number of investigations per 1,000 caseload		
2012/2013	588/2,844	20.39

Number of Housing/Council Tax Benefit prosecutions and sanctions per 1,000 caseload

2012/2013	
Cautions	1
Administrative penalties	0
Successful prosecutions	0
Total	1

Average caseload (YTD)	
2012/2013	2,844

Number of prosecutions/sanctions per 1,000 caseload		
2012/2013	1/2,844	0.35

7 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

7.1 Overpayment means any amount paid as Housing Benefit when there was no entitlement under the regulations. The performance for the period 1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012.

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.	85.71
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.	21.83
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.	0.26

8 CONCLUSION

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

HEAD OF REVENUES AND BENEFITS

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

PF22-13/ME/AC

14 March 2013

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.