

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 10

meeting date: 11 JUNE 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 31 May 2013:

	£000	£000	2013/14 % to 31 May	2012/13 % to 13 May
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2013		357		
NNDR amounts due	17,334			
Plus costs	0			
Transitional surcharge	13			
Write ons	5			
	17,352			
Less				
- Transitional relief	-131			
- Exemptions	-336			
- Charity, Rural, Former Agricultural Discretionary Relief	-930			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-1,691			
- Write offs	-1			
- Interest Due	0			
	-3,089	14,263		
Total amount to recover		14,620		
Less cash received to 31 May		-2,975	20.3	20.4
Amount Outstanding		11,645	79.7	79.6

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2013/14 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 May 2013 is 20.8% compared with 21.4% at 31 May 2012.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 31 May 2013:

	£000	£000	2013/14 % to 31 May	2012/13 % to 31 May
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2013		486		
Council Tax amounts due	37,005			
Plus costs	4			
Transitional relief	0			
Write ons	1			
	37,010			
Less - Exemptions	-454			
- Discounts	-3,375			
- Disabled banding reduction	-42			
- Council Tax Benefit	21			
- Local Council Tax Support	-2,097			
- Write offs	-4			
	-5,951	31,059		
Total amount to recover		31,545		
Less cash received to 31 May		-6,483	20.6	20.5
Amount Outstanding		25,062	79.4	79.5

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2013/14 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 2013/14 at 31 May 2013 is 20.9% compared to 20.9% at 31 May 2012.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 3 June 2013 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2013		330
Invoices Raised	583	
Plus costs	1	
	584	
Less write offs	0	584
Total amount to recover		914
Less cash received to 3 June 2013		300
Amount outstanding		614

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	156	25.41
30 - 59 days	48	7.82
60 - 89 days	187	30.46
90 - 119 days	40	6.51
120 - 149 days	5	0.81
150+ days	178	28.99
	614	100

5 HOUSING BENEFIT PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 The main indicators for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit performance are the National Indicators for 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 January 2013 – 31 March 2013

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 1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013	Average Performance
10 days	5.99 days	20 days per IRRV

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	Average Performance
10 days	10.33 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
20 days	23.04 days	Under 30 days

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
20 days	22.61 days	Under 30 days

6 HOUSING BENEFIT FRAUD

6.1 The following is a summary of fraud investigations for the period 1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013.

Number of Housing/Council Tax Benefit fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload

Completed fraud investigations		Average caseload
1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013	42	2,848
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	268	2,866

Number of investigations per 1,000 caseload		
1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013	42/2,848	14.74
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	268/2,866	93.51

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

1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013	
Cautions	0
Administrative penalties	0
Successful prosecutions	1
Total	1

Average caseload	
2012/2013	2,848

Number of prosecutions/sanctions per 1,000 caseload		
1 January 2013 – 31 March 2013	1/2,848	0.35
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	2/2,866	0.70

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 January 2013 – 31 March 2013.

Performance Measure	1.1.13 to 31.3.13 %	1.4.12 to 31.03.13 %
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.	65.34	76.93
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.	21.19	44.57
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.	0.23	1.30

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

PF29-13/ME/AC
29 May 2013

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.