

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

Agenda Item No 12

meeting date: 27 OCTOBER 2015
 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 14 October 2015:

	£000	£000	2015/16 %	2014/15 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2015		467		
NNDR amounts due	18,504			
Plus costs	3			
Transitional surcharge	-1			
Write ons	19			
	18,525			
Less				
- Transitional relief	14			
- Exemptions	-323			
- Charity, Rural, Former Agricultural Discretionary Relief	-1,077			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-2,001			
- Retail, Reoccupation, New Build, and Discretionary Transitional Relief	-576			
- Interest Due	-0			
- Write Offs	-115			
	-4,078	14,447		
Total amount to recover		14,914		
Less cash received to 14 October		-9,012	60.43	59.64
Amount Outstanding		5,902	39.57	40.36

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2015/16 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 30 September 2015 is 60.47% compared with 57.68% at 30 September 2014.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 14 October 2015:

	£000	£000	2015/16 %	2014/15 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2015		651		
Council Tax amounts due	39,159			
Plus costs	51			
Transitional relief	1			
Write ons	0			
	39,211			
Less - Exemptions	-482			
- Discounts	-3,429			
- Disabled banding reduction	-45			
- Council Tax Benefit	33			
- Local Council Tax Support	-1,844			
- Write offs	-6			
	-5,773	33,438		
Total amount to recover		34,089		
Less cash received to 14 October		-20,190	59.23	59.19
Amount Outstanding		13,899	40.77	40.81

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2015/16 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 2015/16 at 30 September 2015 is 58.91% compared to 58.74% at 30 September 2014.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 16 October 2015 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2015		554
Invoices Raised	1,316	
Plus costs	2	
	1,318	
Less write offs		108
Total amount to recover		1,764
Less cash received to 16 October 2015		1,067
Amount outstanding		697

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	135	19.4
30 - 59 days	62	8.9
60 - 89 days	2	0.3
90 - 119 days	93	13.3
120 - 149 days	19	2.7
150+ days	386	55.4
	697	100

5 HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 The main indicator for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support performance is known as 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 2015/2016

The right time indicator measures the time taken to process HB/CTS 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 July 2015 – 30 September 2015	Average Performance
9 days	9.31 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 July 2015 – 30 September 2015	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
23 days	22.4 days	Under 30 days

6 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

6.1 Overpayment means any amount paid as Housing Benefit when there was no entitlement under the regulations. Performance for the period 1 July 2015 – 30 September 2015:

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.	74.96
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.	16.14
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.	0.67

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 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

PF61-15/ME/AC
15 October 2015

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.