

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

Agenda Item No 19a

meeting date: 26 JANUARY 2016
 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 January 2016:

	£000	£000	2015/16 %	2014/15 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2015		467		
NNDR amounts due	18,814			
Plus costs	5			
Transitional surcharge	-3			
Write ons	21			
	18,837			
Less				
- Transitional relief	14			
- Exemptions	-334			
- Charity, Rural, Community Amateur Sports Clubs Relief	-1,261			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-2,049			
- Retail, Reoccupation, New Build, Discretionary Transitional Relief, and Flood Relief	-614			
- Interest Due	-0			
- Write Offs	-115			
	-4,359	14,478		
Total amount to recover		14,945		
Less cash received to 14 January 2016		-12,947	86.6	85.7
Amount Outstanding		1,998	13.4	14.3

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 31 December 2015 is 87.25% compared with 85.11% at 31 December 2014.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 14 January 2016:

	£000	£000	2015/16 %	2014/15 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2015		651		
Council Tax amounts due	39,201			
Plus costs	68			
Transitional relief	1			
Write ons	1			
	39,271			
Less - Exemptions	-521			
- Discounts	-3,496			
- Disabled banding reduction	-46			
- Council Tax Benefit	42			
- Local Council Tax Support	-1,832			
- Write offs	-8			
	-5,861	33,410		
Total amount to recover		34,061		
Less cash received to 14 January		-29,825	87.6	87.6
Amount Outstanding		4,236	12.4	12.4

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 31 December 2015 is 87.54% compared to 87.45% at 31 December 2014.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 15 January 2016 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2015		554
Invoices Raised	1,651	
Plus costs	3	
		1,654
Less write offs		108
Total amount to recover		2,100
Less cash received to 15 January 2016		1,605
Amount outstanding		495

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	129	26.1
30 - 59 days	6	1.2
60 - 89 days	26	5.2
90 - 119 days	7	1.4
120 - 149 days	17	3.4
150+ days	311	62.7
	496	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 October 2015 – 31 December 2015	Average Performance
9 days	7.64 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

Target for year	Actual Performance	
	1 October 2015 – 31 December 2015	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
23 days	20.5 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 10 October 2015 – 31 December 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.	82.53
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.	22.48
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.	0.07

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

PF5-16/ME/AC
14 January 2016

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.