

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

Agenda Item No 14

meeting date: 25 OCTOBER 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 12 October 2016:

	£000	£000	2016/17 %	2015/16 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2016		575		
NNDR amounts due	19,233			
Plus costs	2			
Transitional surcharge	0			
Write ons	49			
	19,284			
Less				
- Transitional relief	3			
- Exemptions	-369			
- Charity, Rural, Community Amateur Sports Clubs Relief	-1,106			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-2,050			
- Retail, Reoccupation, New Build, Discretionary Transitional Relief, and Flood Relief	-40			
- Interest Due	-0			
- Write Offs	-157			
	-3,719	15,565		
Total amount to recover		16,140		
Less cash received to 12 October 2016		-9,481	58.7	60.3
Amount Outstanding		6,659	41.3	39.7

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2016/17 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 2016 is 58.38% compared with 60.47% at 30 September 2015.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 12 October 2016:

	£000	£000	2016/17 %	2015/16 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2016		787		
Council Tax amounts due	41,195			
Plus costs	45			
Transitional relief	0			
Write ons	3			
	41,243			
Less - Exemptions	-475			
- Discounts	-3,705			
- Disabled banding reduction	-46			
- Council Tax Benefit	12			
- Local Council Tax Support	-1,811			
- Write offs	-9			
	-6,034	35,209		
Total amount to recover		35,996		
Less cash received to 12 October 2016		-21,168	58.8	59.1
Amount Outstanding		14,828	41.2	40.9

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2016/17 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 30 September 2016 is 58.68% compared to 58.91% at 30 September 2015.

4 BUSINESS RATES REVALUATION 2017 AND THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSULTATION ON TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 A report was taken to the Budget Working Group on 12 October 2016 outlining the impact of Revaluation 2017 and the Government's consultation on transitional arrangements.

4.2 Budget Working Group requested that a response be sent to the consultation supporting option 2 on the grounds that more medium sized businesses will benefit from reductions in rates sooner than option 1.

4.3 Further information about the consultation exercise can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/business-rates-revaluation-2017>

5 SUNDRY DEBTORS

5.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 14 October 2016 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2016		478
Invoices Raised	1,510	
Plus costs	1	
		1,511
Less write offs		0
Total amount to recover		1,989
Less cash received to 14 October 2016		1,350
Amount outstanding		639

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	120	19
30 - 59 days	36	6
60 - 89 days	36	6
90 - 119 days	15	2
120 - 149 days	5	1
150+ days	427	67
	639	100

6 HOUSING BENEFIT AND COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT PERFORMANCE

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 We obviously consider it very important to monitor benefit fraud and also overpayment data.

Housing Benefit Right Time Indicator 2016/2017

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 2016 –30 September 2016	Average Performance
10 days	7.49 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 July 2016 –30 September 2016	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
23 days	17.9 days	Under 30 days

7 HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

7.1 Overpayment means any amount paid as Housing Benefit when there was no entitlement under the regulations. Performance for the period 1 July 2016 – 30 September 2016:

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.	168.87
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.	22.57
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.	0.08

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

PF60-16/ME/AC
13 October 2016

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.