

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

Agenda Item No 17

meeting date: 2 APRIL 2019
 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 processing times and overpayment recovery.

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 20 March 2019:

	£000	£000	2018/19 %	2017/18 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2018		585		
NNDR amounts due	20,201			
Plus costs	4			
Transitional surcharge	200			
Write ons	14			
	20,419			
Less				
- Transitional relief	-397			
- Exemptions	-292			
- Charity, Rural, Community Amateur Sports Clubs Relief	-1,142			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-3,072			
- Revaluation 2017, Pub, SSB and Other reliefs	-112			
- Interest Due	0			
- Write Offs	-56			
	-5,071	15,348		
Total amount to recover		15,933		
Less cash received to 20 March 2019		-15,126	94.9	95.2
Amount Outstanding		807	5.1	4.8

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2018/19 but also those relating to previous years, but we are required to report to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) 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 2019 is 96.85% compared with 97.21% at 28 February 2018.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 20 March 2019:

	£000	£000	2018/19 %	2017/18 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2018		948		
Council Tax amounts due	46,467			
Plus costs	85			
Transitional relief	3			
Write ons	3			
	46,558			
Less - Exemptions	-691			
- Discounts	-4,160			
- Disabled banding reduction	-55			
- Council Tax Benefit	6			
- Local Council Tax Support	-1,815			
- Write offs	-24			
	-6,739	39,819		
Total amount to recover		40,767		
Less cash received to 20 March 2019		-39,754	97.5	97.3
Amount Outstanding		1,013	2.5	2.7

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2018/19 but also those relating to previous years, but we are required to report our in year collection rate to the MHCLG. 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 28 February 2019 is 98.35% compared to 98.32% at 28 February 2018.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 25 March 2019 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2018		494
Invoices Raised	3,191	
Plus costs	1	
		3,192
Less write offs		1
Total amount to recover		3,685
Less cash received to 25 March 2019		3,258
Amount outstanding		427

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	95	22
30 - 59 days	14	3
60 - 89 days	7	2
90 - 119 days	1	0
120 - 149 days	7	2
150+ days	303	71
	427	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 overpayment data.

Housing Benefit Right Time Indicator 2018/2019

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 2018 – 31 December 2018	Average Performance
6.9 days	4.96 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 October 2018 – 31 December 2018	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
20 days	15.25 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 October 2018 - 31 December 2018:

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.	93.59
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.	13.28

Performance Measure	%
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.

Mark Edmondson,

HEAD OF REVENUES AND BENEFITS

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

PF16-19/ME/AC
20 March 2019

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.