

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 17

meeting date: 29 JANUARY 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 10 January 2013:

	£000	£000	2012/13 % to 10 Jan	2011/12 % to 10 Jan
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2012		475		
NNDR amounts due	16,604			
Plus costs	7			
Transitional surcharge	55			
Write ons	12			
	16,678			
Less				
- Transitional relief	-279			
- Exemptions	-468			
- Charity, Rural, Former Agricultural Discretionary Relief	-944			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-1,623			
- Write offs	-82			
- Interest Due	-2			
	-3,398	13,280		
Total amount to recover		13,755		
Less cash received to 10 January		-11,889	86.4	85.5
Amount Outstanding		1,866	13.6	14.5

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2012/13 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 2012 is 86.9% compared with 85.0% at 31 December 2011.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 10 January 2012:

	£000	£000	2012/13 % to 10 Jan	2011/12 % to 10 Jan
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2012		420		
Council Tax amounts due	37,141			
Plus costs	67			
Transitional relief	3			
Write ons	6			
	37,217			
Less - Exemptions	-1,037			
- Discounts	-2,885			
- Disabled banding reduction	-42			
- Council Tax Benefit	-2,239			
- Write offs	-18			
	-6,221	30,996		
Total amount to recover		31,416		
Less cash received to 10 January		-27,621	87.9	87.8
Amount Outstanding		3,795	12.1	12.2

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2012/13 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 2012/13 at 31 December 2012 is 87.7% compared to 88.0% at 31 December 2011.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 18 January 2013 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2012		308
Invoices Raised	1,178	
Plus costs	1	
	1,179	
Less write offs	1	1,178
Total amount to recover		1,486
Less cash received to 18 January 2013		1,165
Amount outstanding		321

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	45	14.02
30 - 59 days	24	7.48
60 - 89 days	20	6.23
90 - 119 days	3	0.93
120 – 149 days	10	3.12
150+ days	219	68.22
	321	100

5 HOUSING BENEFIT PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 The main indicators for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit performance are the National Indicators for Right Benefit and 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 October 2012 to 31 December 2012

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	Average Performance
10 days	11.27 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012

Target for year	Actual Performance	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
20 days	23.58days	Under 30 days

6 HOUSING BENEFIT FRAUD

6.1 The following is a summary of fraud investigations for the period 1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012.

Completed fraud investigations	
1 October 2012 to 31 December 2012	58

Average caseload (YTD)	
2012/2013	2,844

Number of investigations per 1,000 caseload		
2012/2013	588/2,844	20.39

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

2012/2013	
Cautions	1
Administrative penalties	0
Successful prosecutions	0
Total	1

Average caseload (YTD)	
2012/2013	2,844

Number of prosecutions/sanctions per 1,000 caseload		
2012/2013	1/2,844	0.35

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 October 2012 to 31 December 2012.

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.	85.71
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.	21.83
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.	0.26

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

PF62-12/ME/AC
7 November 2012

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson extension 4504.