

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

meeting date: 21 JUNE 2022
 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 7 June 2022:

	£000	£000	2022/23 %	2021/22 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2022		340		
NNDR amounts due	22,028			
Plus costs	1			
Transitional surcharge	0			
Write ons	0			
	22,029			
Less				
- Transitional relief	-26			
- Exemptions	-401			
- Charity, Rural, Community Amateur Sports Clubs Relief	-1,286			
- Small Business Rate Relief	-3,780			
- Nursery Discount, Retail Discount, SSB, Flood Relief, Revaluation 2017, Pub, SSB and Other reliefs	-2,029			
- Interest Due	0			
- Write Offs	-123			
	-7,645	14,384		
Total amount to recover		14,724		
Less cash received to 7 June 2022		-2,629	17.9	18.9
Amount Outstanding		12,095	82.1	81.1

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2022/23 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 31 May 2022 is 18.34% compared with 20.61% at 31 May 2021.

3 COUNCIL TAX

3.1 The following is a collection statement for Council Tax to 7 June 2022:

	£000	£000	2022/23 %	2021/22 %
Balance Outstanding 1 April 2022		1,277		
Council Tax amounts due	58,410			
Plus costs	39			
Transitional relief	1			
Write ons	0			
	58,450			
Less - Exemptions	-804			
- Discounts	-5,062			
- Disabled banding reduction	-67			
- Council Tax Benefit	0			
- Local Council Tax Support plus Hardship	-2,278			
- Write offs	-1			
	-8,212	50,238		
Total amount to recover		51,515		
Less cash received to 7 June 2022		-10,697	20.8	20.6
Amount Outstanding		40,818	79.2	79.4

NB The figures included in the table include not only those charges for 2022/23 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 31 May 2022 is 20.87% compared to 20.55% at 31 May 2021.

4 SUNDRY DEBTORS

4.1 A summary of the sundry debtors account at 10 June 2022 is:

	£000	£000
Amount Outstanding 1 April 2022		1,181
Invoices Raised	1,133	
Plus costs	0	
		1,133
Less credit notes		-123
Total amount to recover		2,191
Less cash received to 10 June 2022		-1,145
Amount outstanding		1,046

Aged Debtors	000s	%
< 30 days	169	16.16
30 - 59 days	67	6.41
60 - 89 days	451	43.12
90 - 119 days	11	1.05
120 - 149 days	3	0.29
150+ days	345	32.98
	1,046	100

4.2 A large proportion of the balance of debt outstanding in the '60-89 days' includes debts raised on an annual basis at the start of the financial year, which are being paid by direct debit on a monthly basis throughout the year. The main balance of debt outstanding for '150+ days' is debt relating to overpaid housing benefit due to reasons including fraud. Recovery action continues on such housing benefit debts, with some being paid by instalments.

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 2021/2022

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 January 2022 – 31 March 2022	Average Performance
5 days	3.09 days	20 days per IRRV

New claims performance

Target for year	Actual Performance 1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022	Top grade 4 for all LA's 2007/08
15 days	24.50 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.
- 6.2 The figures overleaf are from the previous quarter as the latest figures were not available at the time of writing the report.

Performance for the period 1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022:

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.	104.40
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.	10.65
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.	0.09

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

PF22-22/ME/AC
8 June 2022

For further information please ask for Mark Edmondson.