

To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 29 January 2020

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Housing Benefit Overpayments: Accounts for write-off

1. Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with Financial Regulation 3.5.10 a report regarding the write-off for sums over £10,000 due must be submitted to the Finance and Resources Policy Board.
- 1.2 The debt recovery process involves extensive effort by the Council and its collection agents to locate the debtor and recover the debt. During this process a stage can be reached when it is recognised that the recovery of the sums is no longer viable, and it is prudent to write-off the recovery of the outstanding liability.
- 1.3 The Council has already pursued each of the debts summarised on the attached Appendix through its follow up cycle and it is considered prudent to write-off the outstanding balance.
- 1.4 The approval for the write-off will enable the Council to prudently reflect within the financial accounts an accurate representation of the collectable debt. The Council continues to monitor the accounts and, where the circumstances of the debtor alter, will instigate further recovery action as appropriate. The level of write-off will be contained within the Council's bad debt provision.
- 1.5 An analysis of the debt proposed for write-off highlighting the reason why collection is deemed irrecoverable is shown in table 1 below:

Table 1

Housing Benefit Overpayments		
Reason	No. Debtors	Value
Sequestrated	4	£24,589.90
Trust Deed	2	£7,058.07
Total	6	£31,647.97

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Board is asked to authorise the write-off of £31,647.97 as detailed above.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There has been adequate provision made for these bad debts.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community Planning** – None
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – None
8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** - None
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **Climate Risk** - None

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Appendix

Name	Period of Overpayment	Reason	Amount
Debtor 1 (Cross refer with additional reports: Council tax: accounts for write off, Housing benefit: Accounts for write off and Sundry debtors: Accounts for Write off)	19/08/2013 to 19/11/2017	Trust Deed	£3,896.96
Debtor 2 (Cross refer with additional reports: Council tax: accounts for write off.	28/09/2013 to 27/10/2013	Sequestrated	£265.89
Debtor 4 (Cross refer with additional report: Council tax: accounts for write off.	16/04/2012 to 17/03/2019	Sequestrated	£18,229.20
Debtor 5 (Cross refer with additional report: Council tax: accounts for write off.	04/08/2014 to 29/07/2018	Trust Deed	£3,161.11
Debtor 6 (Cross refer with additional report: Council tax: accounts for write off.	01/03/2012 to 29/04/2012	Sequestrated	£85.21
Debtor 10 (Cross refer with additional report: Council tax: accounts for write off.	17/04/2004 to 19/11/2006	Sequestrated	£6,009.60
Total			£31,647.97