

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Finance and the Executive Director - Place (S151 Officer)

To: Cabinet - 21 July 2015

(Author: Mark Woolerton (Recovery and Support Team Leader) and Andy Eaman (Investigations Team Leader))

Subject: Write Offs

Purpose: To recommend writing off irrecoverable debts

Recommendation:

That the amounts identified in this report are approved for write off.

NOTE: Please raise any queries that you may have about individual write offs, as included in the Appendices, with Mark Woolerton (Recovery and Support Team Leader) at least two working days ahead of the scheduled meeting.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 This report reviews irrecoverable debts over £1,050 which requires Cabinet approval for write off. A summary of these debts is shown in the table below and they total £23998.69

1.2 The need to write debt off usually arises due to the debtor being untraceable, insolvent, ceased trading with no assets or deceased with insufficient funds in the estate. Where possible all methods of recovery are pursued before making the decision to write off. This can include internal recovery action, use of debt collection agents, external tracing agents and procedures through the Courts.

1.3 A summary of debts requiring approval for write off is given in the following tables.

Value by Debtor £	Council Tax £	Business Rates £	Accounts Receivable £	Former Tenant Arrears £	Housing Benefit Overpayments £	TOTAL £
1,050 - 1,500		1052.13	1,358.44	1303.32		2355.45
1,500 - 2,000		5584.37	3,502.54	1830.60		7414.97
Over 2,000		5691.29	15,629.91	3099.96	5437.02	14228.27
Total		12327.79	20,490.89	6233.88	5437.02	23998.69

Value	Council Tax	Business Rates	Accounts Receivable	Former Tenant Arrears	Housing Benefit Overpayments	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£
2014/15 Total written off in that year	103814.54	69055.53	67,919.01	19597.85	19146.55	211614.47
2015/16 Previously approved write offs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Write offs included in this report	0.00	12327.79	20,490.89	6233.88	5437.02	23998.69
2015/16 Total written off in this year so far	0.00 or 0.00 % of 2015/16 collectable debit	12327.79 or 0.04% of 2015/16 collectable debit	20,490.89	6233.88	5437.02 or 0.46% of repayable overpayments	23998.69

1.4 Details of the individual debts are shown in the confidential appendices as listed below:

- Appendix A – Council Tax;
- Appendix B – Business Rates;
- Appendix C – Accounts Receivable (formerly Sundry Debtors);
- Appendix D – Former Tenant Arrears; and
- Appendix E – Housing Benefit Overpayments.

1.5 All debts approved for write off will be set against the existing bad debt provisions and they can be resurrected in full or in part at any time should new information come to light suggesting that they may be recoverable after all. In every case, we believe that all collection options have been exhausted and that there are now no realistic prospects of recovery.

2.0 OPTIONS

2.1 To approve the recommendation.

2.2 To approve the recommendation with amendments.

2.3 Do nothing.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 All recovery methods available have been considered and where appropriate pursued before making the decision to write off.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

5.2.2 This report has been written in line with the Constitution.

5.2.3 The Appendices to this report are confidential as they include exempt information as described in Schedule 12A Part 1, Paragraph 1 (information relating to any individual), Paragraph 2 (information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual) and Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person [including the authority holding that information]).

5.2.4 The anticipated benefits of publishing information identifying individuals does not outweigh the risks of a data protection breach and it is therefore considered that the information should remain exempt from publication and public meetings.

5.3 **Contracts**

5.3.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.6 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.6.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.7 **Financial**

5.7.1 The proposed write offs will be written off against the existing bad debt provisions.

5.8 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.8.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.9 **Risk Management**

5.9.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.10 **Safeguarding**

5.10.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.11 Staffing

5.11.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no implications

5.12 Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales

5.12.1 The Executive Director - Place (S151 Officer) and Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Finance are both consulted with on the contents of this report. Once approval of this report has been given, debts are able to be written off; that are detailed within the confidential appendices attached to this report.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

The Council has a provision for the write off of debts therefore no wards or communities are directly affected.

Background papers:- None

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: Yes

This report refers to a Discretionary Service

Appendices attached to this report for consideration:

(Please note that the following appendices are not for publication by virtue of Paragraphs 1 (Information relating to any individual), 2 (Information which is likely to reveal the identity of any individual) and 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

Appendix A – Council Tax Write Offs

Appendix B – Business Rate Write Offs

Appendix C – Accounts Receivable (formerly Sundry Debtors) Write Offs

Appendix D – Former Tenant Arrears Write Offs

Appendix E – Housing Benefit Overpayment Write Offs