

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Portfolio Holder for Strategic Finance and Democratic Services
and the Assistant Director Finance (s151 Officer)

To: CABINET 13 January 2015

(Author: Mark Woolerton – Recovery & Support Supervisor)

Subject: Write Offs

Purpose: To recommend writing off irrecoverable debts

Recommendation(s):

a) 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 at least two working days ahead of the scheduled meeting.

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 This report reviews irrecoverable debts over £1,050 which require Cabinet approval for write off. A summary of these debts is shown in the table below and they total £33,115.40.

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	2,827.09	-	7,225.20	1,335.48	-	11,387.77
1,500 - 2,000	3,859.47	-	1,744.28	1,751.19	-	7,354.94
Over 2,000	2,365.70	3,390.59	8,616.40	-	-	14,372.69
Total	9,052.26	3,390.59	17,585.88	3,086.67	-	33,115.40

Value	Council Tax £	Business Rates £	Accounts Receivable £	Former Tenant Arrears £	Housing Benefit Overpayments £	TOTAL £
2013/14 Total written off in that year	57,044.07	71,854.45	61,866.39	33,363.01	12,403.28	236,531.20
2014/15 Previously approved write offs	53,534.73	59,711.31	50,333.13	9,509.27	16,711.03	189,799.47
Write offs included in this report	9,052.26	3,390.59	17,585.88	3,086.67	-	33,115.40
2014/15 Total written off in this year so far	62,586.99 or 0.17% of 2014/15 collectable debit	63,101.90 or 0.24% of 2014/15 collectable debit	67,919.01	12,595.94	16,711.03 or 1.6% of repayable overpayments	222,914.87

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
- Appendix E – Housing Benefit Overpayments

1.4 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 Not to approve the recommendation.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS AND TIMELINES**

4.1 Not applicable

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 **Carbon Footprint & Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 The possible implications have been considered and there are none.

5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

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

5.2.2 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]).

5.2.3 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 The possible implications have been considered and there are none.

5.4 **Crime and Disorder**

5.4.1 The possible implications have been considered and there are none.

5.5 **Equality and Diversity & Human Rights**

5.5.1 The possible implications have been considered and there are none.

5.6 **Financial**

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

5.7 **Risk Management**

5.7.1 The possible existence of actual or potential implications has been considered and there are none.

5.8 **Staffing**

5.8.1 The possible existence of actual or potential implications have been considered and there are none.

Background papers: None

Lead Contact Officer

Name: Mark Woolerton
Direct line: 01775 764631
Email: mark.woolerton@cpbs.com

Key Decision – No

Confidential 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