

**Bolsover District Council****Executive****5<sup>th</sup> March 2018****Arrears – Irrecoverable Items over £2,500****Report of the Portfolio Holder – Efficiency and Business Development**

This report is public

**Purpose of the Report**

- To request the write off of irrecoverable items relating to business rates, council tax and former housing tenants where the individual debt exceeds £2,500 as itemised in the attached schedules.

**1 Report Details**

1.1 The report details the amounts which are recommended for write off:

<b>Ceased To Trade</b>		
No of Accounts	Type of Account	
3	Business Rates	£9,789.46
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,789.46</b>

<b>Deceased</b>		
No of Accounts	Type of Account	
1	Council Tax	£3,247.76
1	Former Housing Tenant	£3,216.90
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£6,464.66</b>

<b>No Trace</b>		
No of Accounts	Type of Account	
2	Council Tax	£2,590.60
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,590.60</b>

1.2 The above schedules are recommending the write off of these outstanding debts. Where a debtor has ceased to trade there is no realistic prospect of recovery. Where debtors have died, checks are made to ascertain if there is any estate or property. Only in cases where there is no estate are the accounts recommended for write off. Where debtors leave properties without forwarding addresses extensive efforts are made to trace them. In addition to departmental checks, statutory undertakers and other agencies are contacted, enquiries made of neighbours and family members, where known. Where it is known that a person has moved to another area, contact is made with the relevant local authority to alert them and request reciprocal information.

## **2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation**

2.1 The report seeks agreement to writing off of outstanding debts in respect of persons who have ceased to trade, are deceased or cannot be traced. The process of writing off debts which are not collectable allows resources to be directed at those elements of outstanding debt where there is greater chance of recovery, while it improves the accuracy of the Council's financial statements in that they no longer detail debt which is effectively irrecoverable.

## **3 Consultation and Equality Impact**

There are no issues concerning consultation or equalities arising directly from this report.

## **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

The only option is not to write off the amounts concerned which for reasons outlined within the report is not considered to be an appropriate course of action.

## **5 Implications**

### **5.1 Finance and Risk Implications**

The costs will be met from the provision for doubtful debts that has been agreed as part of the Council's budget.

### **5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection**

There are no issues arising directly from this report.

### **5.3 Human Resources Implications**

There are no issues arising directly from this report.

## 6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That approval is given to write off the irrecoverable items including costs amounting to £18,844.72 with the proviso that should any of the debts become collectable the amounts be re-debited.

## 7 Decision Information

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>  A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:  BDC: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/>  Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/>  NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000 <input type="checkbox"/>  Capital - £250,000 <input type="checkbox"/>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies</p>	No
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b>  (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
<p><b>District Wards Affected</b></p>	N/A
<p><b>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</b></p>	Strategic Organisational Development - Continually improving our organisation

## 8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Business Rates – Amounts for Write Off – Ceased To Trade
2	Council Tax - Amounts for Write Off – Deceased
3	Council Tax – Amounts for Write Off – No trace
4	Irrecoverable Rents - Deceased
<p><b>Background Papers</b> (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)</p>	
<p><b>Report Author</b></p>	
<p><b>Contact Number</b></p>	
<p>Billing and Recovery Manager  Assistant Director – Finance, Revenues &amp; Benefits</p>	<p>2432  7658</p>