

Members' Library Service Request Form

Date of Document	13/05/22
Originator	Kenny Christie, Service Manager - Revenues
Originator's Ref (if any)	
Document Title	Bad Debt & Credit Balance Write Offs

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Cabinet

Additional information:

Authorised By	Ellie Dunnet
Designation	Head of Finance
Date	16/05/22

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REPORT TO: Members' Library Service

MEETING DATE:

BY: Executive Director of Council Resources

SUBJECT: Bad Debt and Credit Balance Write Offs

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To notify Members of individual debts, each under £50,000 in value which, for a variety of reasons, could not be collected and have been written off by the Council.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the decision of the Executive Director of Council Resources to write off the unrecoverable debts summarised at Appendix 1.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Executive Director of Council Resources is responsible for the collection of all debt owed to the Council. A regular assessment of the outstanding debt is made and a list of debt that is not considered collectable is prepared. In making this assessment, account is taken of the Council's approved Bad Debt and Credit Balance Write Off Policy.
- 3.2 Write off of individual debts under £50,000 is approved under delegated powers by the Executive Director of Council Resources as the Section 95 Officer of the Council. Debts of over £50,000 require Cabinet approval prior to write off.
- 3.3 Before passing a case for write off consideration, each debt will be pursued using all available recovery methods within the particular category of debt and will usually include attempts to collect by Sheriff Officers or a Debt Collection Agency.

- 3.4 In circumstances where debts become extinguished by law, e.g. as a consequence of prescription, bankruptcy, liquidation, administration or receivership, the Council must write off any outstanding balances with effect from the date on which the legal action/change took place.
- 3.5 In all other circumstances, Council Services will only make a recommendation for write-off when it is considered that it is impossible, impractical or inefficient to collect the debt.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None, the actions taken in this report are in accordance with approved Council policy as set out in Section 3.1.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The report is not applicable to the wellbeing of equalities groups and an Impact Assessment is not required.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - any bad debts are written off against a bad & doubtful debt provision which is reflected within the annual accounts and is used to recognise the value of debts which are deemed to be irrecoverable. This is based on an estimate of income which is unlikely to be realised based on previous experience. The total value of the bad debt provision which was reflected within the 2020/21 accounts was £11.594 million and is reviewed on an annual basis. Scottish Water write offs will be borne by the water authority.
- 6.2 Personnel - none
- 6.3 Other - none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Bad Debt and Credit Balance Write Off Policy – Cabinet 13th March 2018.

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DATE	May 2022

Appendix 1

Bad Debt Written Off

October 2021 – March 2022

	No. of write off accounts	No. of write on accounts	Amount to be written off	Amount to be written on
Council Tax including Scottish Water	101	0	£199,251.54*	£0.00
Business Rates	14	0	£41,824.18	£0.00
Council House Rent - Current Tenants	8	0	£11,623.31	£0.00
Council House Rent - Former Tenants	24	0	£27,612.94	£0.00
Sundry Accounts (inc. VAT)	113	0	£21,642.21**	£0.00
Housing Benefit Overpayments	0	0	£0.00	£0.00
Total	260	0	£301,954.18	£0.00

*The actual amount of Council Tax written off was £199,210.98. The reason for the difference was a Council Tax Reduction amendment between recommendation and actual write off.

**The actual amount of Sundry Accounts written off was £21,413.73. The reason for the difference was due to an invoice amendment between recommendation and actual write off.

Across all areas, £154,966.82 was written off due to sequestration and £22,569.08 was written off due to company liquidation.