

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

THURSDAY, 13 July 2023

PRESENT: Councillor: A. Lenny (Cabinet Member).

The following officers were in attendance:

A Thomas, Revenue Services Manager
S. Jones, Tenancy Support Lead
K. Thomas, Democratic Services Officer

Virtual Meeting - 10.00 - 10.50 am

1. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

2. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE DECISION RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH MAY 2023

RESOLVED that the decision record for the meeting held on the 18th May 2023 be signed as a correct record.

3. REPORTS NOT FOR PUBLICATION

RESOLVED pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation)(Wales) Order 2007 that the following items were not for publication as the reports contained exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

4. FORMER TENANT DEBT WRITE-OFF

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute no. 3 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 12 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act).

The public interest test in this matter related to the fact that the report included personal data relating to former council tenants, including details of their rent arrears. The publication of individual rents is unwarranted and outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information therein as disclosure would be an unwarranted and excessive intrusion into the private and family lives of the individuals concerned.

The Cabinet Member considered a report prepared in accordance with the Council's Procedure Rules, providing the current position on current and former tenant debt and seeking the write-off of those debts in excess of £1,500.

The Cabinet Member noted the cases outlined in the report and considered the individual reports for each of the current and former tenants detailing the reasons why write-off was being sought which included personal circumstances.

RESOLVED that the current and former tenant debt arrears detailed within the report be written-off as irrecoverable.

5. IRRECOVERABLE ACCOUNTS - HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute 4 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act).

The public interest in maintaining the exemption referred to above outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information contained within the report as disclosure has the potential to have a disproportionate effect upon the individuals concerned and was not necessary for any of the purposes specified in the Data Protection Act 2018

The Cabinet Member considered a report which contained a schedule of housing benefit over-payment accounts which had been identified as being irrecoverable. Recovery procedures, where appropriate, had been exhausted and there was no likelihood of payment being secured. It was therefore considered appropriate to write-off those accounts against the Authority's prudent bad debt provision for Housing Benefit overpayments.

RESOLVED that the accounts detailed within the report be written-off as irrecoverable.

6. COUNCIL TAX - DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNTS

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute 4 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act).

The public interest test in this matter related to applications for the discretionary reduction of Council Tax and that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption under paragraph 14 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information contained within the report as disclosure had the potential to have a disproportionate effect upon the individuals concerned and was not necessary for any of the purposes specified in the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Cabinet Member considered a report detailing applications received for discretionary reduction of Council Tax.

It was noted that regulations had been introduced with effect from April 2004 giving local authorities discretionary powers to grant locally determined Council Tax discounts or reductions, over and above existing statutory reductions. While delegated authority was granted to the Head of Financial Services to determine applications falling within specific criteria, applications falling outside those criteria were to be determined by the Cabinet Member for Resources:

RESOLVED:

- 5.1 that the awards detailed in Appendix A to the report be approved and that delegated authority be granted to the Revenue Services Manager to approve the reduction, removal or increase the award if there was a future change in circumstances;
- 5.2 That application reference numbers 60400061-6, 60332021-5 and 60415766-0 be granted in the sums detailed in the report.
- 5.3 That the sum owed in respect of reference number 60409283-7 in respect of the period 4.4.22 – 14.8.22 be written off.

7. IRRECOVERABLE ACCOUNTS - NON-DOMESTIC RATES

Following the application of the public interest test it was **RESOLVED** pursuant to the Act referred to in minute 3 above not to publicise the content of the report as it contained exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act).

The public interest test in this matter related to applications for the the writing off of irrecoverable Non Domestic Rates and that in all the circumstances of the cases the public interest in maintaining the above exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information contained within the report as disclosure had the potential to have a disproportionate effect upon the individuals concerned and was not necessary for any of the purposes specified in the Data Protection Act 2018.

The Cabinet Member considered a report which contained details of accounts which had been identified as being irrecoverable. Recovery procedures, where appropriate, had been exhausted and there was no likelihood of payment being secured. It was therefore considered appropriate to write-off those accounts.

RESOLVED that the arrears detailed within the report be written-off as irrecoverable.

CABINET MEMBER

DATE