

To: Cabinet

Date: 21 June 2023

Report/Comments of: Scrutiny Committee

Title: Scrutiny feedback on the Income Collection and Debt Management Progress Update report

SUMMARY OF REPORT CONSIDERED	
Report Title:	Income Collection and Debt Management – Progress Update
Purpose/Description of Report:	To provide Members with an update on debts relating to council house rents, garage rents and sundry debts.
Key Decision:	No
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Cllr R Child, Scrutiny Committee Chairman
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Cllr R de Burle, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources

1. Introduction and Overview

The Scrutiny Committee met on 18 April 2023 to consider a report on the management of debt owed to the Council.

The report provided a progress update on debts relating to council house rents, garage rents and sundry debts. The update was requested by Members following the consideration of the debt management update report at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 January 2023.

2. Summary of Feedback/Recommendations for Cabinet Consideration

- A Member welcomed the progress made in recovering outstanding debt, especially considering some tenants find paying their debt very difficult due to low incomes or only receiving benefit payments, coupled with the impact of the increase in the cost of living.
- It was suggested that weekly direct debits could be offered to make it more convenient for some tenants to pay off debt. Officers agreed with

the principle of weekly direct debits as rent is charged weekly and accepted that in doing so would make the service more flexible and supportive.

- In relation to garage rent arrears, the overall debt has been reduced by 11% since January. A comment was made that if the tenant has had a warning, then the Tenancy Services Manager should take the garage off the tenant if arrears persist and then the tenant should be prevented from renting another garage, this option is included in the income management policy.

Written by: Scrutiny Committee Chairman in consultation with Members of the Scrutiny Committee