

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY PANEL – 19TH FEBRUARY 2019

Item 08 Additional information provided by the Head of Landlord Services

A) Scrutiny Resolution - Minute 42.3 (PSP 22nd January 2019)

RESOLVED that the General Fund and HRA Revenue monitoring report to be submitted to the Panel at its meeting to be held on 19th February 2019, includes additional information in 'Table C – Current Tenant Arrears - Dwellings only' to highlight the age of the cumulative debt;

Reason: The Panel wished to understand the age of the debt shown in Table C regarding the current tenant arrears and whether the debt had cumulated over a long period of time, particularly for those over £2000.

B) Information - Age of Debt

Table 1 - Categories of Debt (below) shows the average age of debt (all tenants in arrears) by arrears band (position at 05/02/2019).

Rent Arrears Band	Number of Tenancies	Amount Owed £	Average Age of Debt (years)
Less than £150	860	£ 55,597	0.29
£150 - £300	252	£ 54,588	0.96
£300 - £450	163	£ 60,251	1.39
£450 - £600	131	£ 68,634	1.45
£600 - £750	72	£ 48,473	1.44
£750 - £900	66	£ 54,754	1.62
£900 - £1200	78	£ 79,928	1.80
£1200 - £2000	59	£ 89,296	1.89
£2000 +	24	£ 57,273	2.61
Total	1705	£ 568,793	1.49

Table 1 - Categories of Debt

Cases over £2000

There are 25 cases (position at 04/02/2019) with a rent debt of over £2,000.

The average age of the debt (i.e. since the rent account was last clear) is three years. The average debt is £2492.89.

The age of the oldest debt is 13.9 years. The tenant owes £2158.46. A court order is in place.

The age of the youngest debt is 0.7 years. The tenant owes £2456.3. The Council is awaiting an eviction date from the courts.

The age of the highest debt is 1.3 years. The tenant owes £3566.65. The Council has served a notice to quit.

All cases have been subject to a legal notice or court order. *Table 2 - Legal Action Summary* (below) provides a summary of the action taken on each account.

Legal Status	Count
Court order	16
Awaiting eviction date	3
Notice of Seeking Possession served	1
ASB possession action	1
Court hearing 14/03/2019	1
Court of Protection Issue	1
Notice to Quit Served	1
Outright possession order obtained	1
Grand Total	25

Table 2 - Legal Action Summary

Notes

- a) Where a tenant is on a low income, and a suspended possession order is obtained by the Council, the courts typically make an order for the current rent plus a small amount to be paid weekly off the arrears. That latter amount is currently set by the courts at £3.70 per week. Debts subject to an order of this nature may take years to reduce to a 0 balance.
- b) The courts can adjourn hearings and suspend warrants of eviction on similar terms to those outlined at note a (above). So whilst a suspended possession order may be broken by the tenant, and their arrears increase, an eviction may not follow despite the Council requesting a warrant of eviction from the courts.