

Collection of Income -
Council Tax Follow up
Salford City Council

ACTION PLAN

Reference:	SA002-06-2003 AP
Date:	July 2003

Page	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
Income collection policy and standards						
5	R1 Consider including more detail in relation to billing and write-offs in the final policy.	2	Operations Manager	Agreed	The policy document is currently being updated.	August 2003
5	R2 The monthly reports to the Lead Member for Corporate Services should include the volume, value and age of outstanding debt.	2	Operations Manager	Agreed	This will require a programme change by IT Services.	September 2003
5	R3 The Quality and Performance Scrutiny Committee should receive quarterly reports containing the same level of detail as that reported to the Lead Member.	2	Operations Manager	Agreed	The monthly report for the end of each quarter will be referred to the Q & P Scrutiny Committee.	September 2003
Billing and payment						
6	R4 The effectiveness of the latest restructure should be reviewed within six months of its implementation.	2	Operations Manager	Agreed	This is being monitored as an on-going process and some temporary changes have been made to meet service demands. It is proposed to submit a report to Members in the new year, should any of these temporary measures need to be made permanent.	January/ February 2004
6	R5 The recommendations contained in Internal Audit's 2002/2003 review of the Council Tax system should be implemented as intended.	2	Operations Manager/Recovery Manager	Agreed	Some of the issues raised in the Internal Audit report will be addressed on procurement of the replacement Council Tax/Benefits system. Others, which can be dealt with now, will be implemented.	July 2003 until new system goes live

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Recovery and enforcement						
7	R6 Correspondence should be reviewed if it is holding up the issuing of a reminder or summons to ensure that it relates to the arrears overdue.	3	Recovery Manager	Agreed	The current low levels of outstanding workload mean that this is no longer a problem.	N/A
7	R7 Accounts with no recovery action for a set period of time should be reviewed.	3	Recovery Manager	Agreed	A significant amount of work has been done already. The work on the 'worse cases' debtors list is an indication of this.	July 2003 and on-going
7	R8 Correspondence from the Land Registry should be acted upon.	2	Recovery Manager/Council Tax & Benefits Manager	Agreed	An isolated case was identified during the audit and section leaders will remind staff on the need to deal with all items of correspondence.	July 2003
7	R9 Accounts for the same council tax payer should be linked so that the Council is aware of the aggregate position when recovering amounts due.	3	Operations Manager	Agreed	This would require a major change to the existing computer system and it is therefore proposed to add this to the requirements of the replacement system.	April 2005
8	R10 Bailiffs should be asked to pursue the total amount due from a council tax debtor.	3	Recovery Manager	Agreed	Wherever possible all liability orders will be referred to the bailiffs at the same time.	July 2003
8	R11 Review court action procedures to ensure that all the outstanding arrears for the same council tax payer are pursued.	3	Recovery Manager	Agreed	The planned recovery runs for previous year's accounts will rectify this situation.	July 2003 to March 2004

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Recovery and enforcement						
8	R12 Consider using the aggregate debt due per person when producing the top 200 council tax debtors list.	2	Recovery Manager	Agreed	The current system cannot support this approach without major changes. It is proposed to address this with the replacement system.	April 2005
9	R13 Obtain the telephone numbers for account holders or note the reason for this not being possible.	2	Recovery Members	Agreed	These are obtained wherever possible and notes will be placed in the accounts diary where a customer refuses.	July 2003
Bad debt provision and write offs						
11	R14 Continue to write off outstanding debts that are no longer considered viable to collect.	3	Operations Manager/Recovery Manager	Agreed	It is anticipated that write-offs will continue in 2003/04.	July 2003 to March 2004
11	R15 Review the £5 minimum level for automatic write off as this appears to be low.	2	Operations Manager/Recovery Manager	Agreed	It is proposed to review this minimum level during the current financial year.	July 2003 to March 2004