

Agenda Item IMD11

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION REFERENCE IMD 2018/11

TITLE	Write off of Non Collectable Business Rates Debt.
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Finance.
DATE AND TIME	Thursday 15 March 2018 at 16.05
WARD	Non Specific
DIRECTOR	Graham Ebers, Director of Corporate Services
REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON	7 March 2018
VENUE	David Hicks 2

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The write off of non-collectable debt ensures that the Council ledgers are accurate and up to date.

The debt to be written off is in respect of business rates. Any debt written off has a financial impact as the council incurs 49% of the loss.

RECOMMENDATION

Agree to write-off the outstanding business rates of £20,210.66 relating to 2015/2016 and £23,250.50 relating to 2016/17, totaling £43,461.16 as unrecoverable.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Anka Limited occupied business premises at Alexandra House, Alexandra Court, Denmark Street, Wokingham for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2017. Anka Limited were issued with a bill for each year, and recovery action was taken, including reminder notices, summonses and liability orders being obtained in accordance with our recovery timetable, and legislation. No payments were received for the business rates. All debt was passed to our enforcement agent for collection but this was unsuccessful

Background

Anka Limited were registered for business rates on the ground floor of a property at Alexandra House, Denmark Street, Wokingham. The principal activity of Anka Limited was a licensed club. We were informed in March 2017 that the company was going through insolvency. The company was dissolved on 2 January 2018 and this has been confirmed with Companies House. When the enforcement agents visited in April 2017 Anka Limited were no longer trading from the premises and attempts to contact the company or the director were unsuccessful.

Analysis of Issues

We have exhausted all possible steps to enforce payment of the outstanding business rates liabilities and the company has now been dissolved. If the debt is not written off it will remain as a bad debt on our records. 49% of the total amount outstanding, £21,295.97 is a loss to the Council, and Central Government funds the remainder. We are likely to exceed our targets for collection on business rates this financial year and therefore I would suggest that the 49% loss could be offset against the expected excess income collected.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	21,295.97	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)			
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications

None identified

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Director – Finance and Resources	None
Monitoring Officer	None
Leader of the Council	None

List of Background Papers

Details from Companies House of company being dissolved

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