

**Report for:** Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**Title:** Council Tax collection, Support for Residents & the role of Enforcement Agents

**Report authorised by:** Kari Manovitch (AD Customer Services)

**Lead Officer:** Andrew Mackie (Revenues Manager)

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non-Key Decision:** Non-Key Decision

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1 This report is to respond to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's request for information about how the Council deals with debt, including the use of Enforcement Agents, and what support we offer people to alleviate debt.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee note the contents of Appendix 1.

**3. Reasons for decision**

- 3.1 N/a.

**4. Alternative options considered**

- 4.1 N/a

**5. Background information**

- 5.1 As a billing authority, the London Borough of Haringey is responsible for the Levy, Collection and Recovery of Council Tax and Business Rates.
- 5.2 The amount of Council Tax due to Haringey for 2024/25 is £181m and it's higher next year. As the council's budget for 2025/26 shows, there is currently unsustainable pressure on the council's finances with a shortfall of £67.4m before savings are made for 2025/26. Therefore, it remains imperative that all avenues to collect these taxes are used by the Council, to fund vital services for the residents of Haringey.
- 5.3 The Council's Ethical Debt Collection Policy approved in 2021 put in place a number of important changes to how the council engages with residents to try and prevent payment defaults and debt, and to offer support to those who are struggling financially. One key change was to protect our lowest-income and

most vulnerable residents from referral to Enforcement Agents. This has removed thousands of residents from referral since 2021.

5.3 Appendix 1 provides details of the following:

- Council Tax collection performance
- Council tax facts and figures
- Our Ethical Debt Policy commitments
- Additional measures to support residents introduced in the last year
- Support offered in our Reminder and Summons letters
- Haringey's collection processes
- Financial support team impact
- The Here to Help campaign
- Income maximisation team impact
- The role of Enforcement Agents
- Ensuring ethical behaviour by Enforcement Agents
- Enforcement Agents practice across London
- Why we have rejected an inhouse Enforcement Agents model

**6. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes**

The collection of Council Tax and Business Rates is the foundation of much of the council's service delivery and CDP commitments.

Tackling inequalities is a central objective for everything we do and drives the Ethical Debt Policy and the council's welfare and financial support work.

**7. Carbon and Climate Change**

N/a

**8. Statutory Officers comments**

This report provides an update for OSC to note and is not seeking a decision. Therefore, there are no implications for council finances, procurement, legal, governance or equalities arising from the contents of this report.

**9. Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Presentation on Council Tax collection, Support for Residents & the Role of Enforcement Agents.

**10. Background papers**

Haringey Ethical Debt Reduction Policy:

[Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 9th February, 2021, 6.30 pm | Haringey Council \(Public Pack\) Agenda Document for Cabinet, 09/02/2021 18:30](#)