



**Haringey Council**

<b>Report for:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny	<b>Item Number:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	Review of the Council's Debt Policies		
<b>Report Authorised by:</b>	Kevin Bartle – Assistant Director Finance (CFO)		
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	All	<b>Report for Key/Non Key Decisions:</b>	Non-key

## **1. Describe the issue under consideration**

- 1.1. The Overview and Scrutiny committee has previously expressed a wish to be involved in reviewing and commenting on the Council's debt management policies and this report supports that request.
- 1.2. The draft policies attached are still at an early stage of development and, in addition, detailed operational guidance for staff has not been provided pending agreement of the proposed Target Operating Model for debt management activities under the Business Infrastructure Programme.

## **2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

- 2.1. Not applicable.

## **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. That the Committee considers the draft policies attached and provides such comments as they feel necessary.

## **4. Other options considered**

- 4.1. Not applicable.

## **5. Background information**

5.1. The Council's Business Infrastructure Programme (BiP) covers a number of transformational activities designed, amongst other things, to improve the effectiveness of processes; one strand covers debt management activities across the Council.

5.2. Income and debt collection processes are currently undertaken in a number of different service areas of the Council and staff have been working to various individual pieces of operational guidance. One of the key objectives of the BiP programme is that staff will work to a common set of policies which will provide fair and consistent treatment to those that owe the Council money.

5.3. A number of draft policies have been developed taking account of other public sector organisations policies and industry 'best practice'. The attached briefing notes cover three key areas within the debt management function:

- The Council's overall Debt Policy;
- The Council's Policy on 'Severe remedies'; and
- The Council's 'Write-off' Policy

5.4. The Target Operating Model (TOM) for debt management services is in the latter stages of development and these policies will, when approved, form a key component of the way staff will work.

## **6. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer and Financial Implications**

6.1. The attached policies have been developed within the Finance service and no additional comments are required.

## **7. Head of Legal Services and Legal Implications**

7.1. As the policies are currently in draft from specific legal comments have not been included for this report, although legal advice has and will continue to be, sought to inform the policies. Formal legal comments will be included at the time that approval to the policies is requested.

## **8. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments**

8.1. Not applicable at this draft stage.

## **9. Head of Procurement Comments**

9.1. Not applicable.

## **10. Policy Implications**

10.1. Once approved the debt management policies will define the approach that staff take in this area.

## **11. Use of Appendices**

Appendix 1- Draft Debt Policy.

Appendix 2 – Draft Policy on Severe Remedies.

Appendix 3 – Draft Write-off Policy.

## **12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

12.1. Not applicable.