

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Strategic Lead - Resources****Corporate Services Committee: 21 August 2019**

Subject: Corporate Debt Policy**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval of the revised corporate debt policy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee approve the attached revised corporate debt policy.

3. Background

- 3.1 The current corporate debt policy was approved by Corporate Services Committee on 13 May 2015 to ensure effective recovery and control of all revenue debt owed to the Council by using a holistic approach to recovery. With the full rollout of Universal Credit and the ongoing improvements to the Council's processes around billing and payments, this policy requires to be updated and reviewed.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1 The draft revised corporate debt policy document is attached as Appendix 1. The policy aims to ensure effective recovery and control of all debt owed to the Council. It ensures that debt recovery methods are holistic, flexible and take into account the needs of individual households.
- 4.2 The main changes to the policy since the previous iteration are:
- i. Reference to Universal Credit (UC) as the Council went live with full UC rollout in November 2018; and
 - ii. Reference to improvements to billing processes by allowing service users to set up payment plans underpinned by annual bills where feasible and an improved range of payments options.

5. People Implications

- 5.1 There are no people implications.

6. Financial & Procurement Implications

6.1 The Council's ability to deliver services which meet the needs of its citizens and current financial constraints experienced by the Council depends heavily on the success in collecting revenues. This policy reinforces the importance of revenue collection.

6.2 There is no procurement impact of this policy

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 The collection of charges made by the Council is important in terms of the financial sustainability of the Council and the revised policy aims to support the ongoing collection of charges in an efficient manner.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 No issues were identified in a screening for potential equality impact of this policy.

9. Consultation

9.1 Consultation has taken place with Customer & Community, Working4U, Housing, Finance and Legal Services.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 Sound financial practice and budgetary control are imperative to assist with the governance of the Council and supports officers of the Council in achieving the five strategic priorities of the Council's Strategic Plan. This report forms part of the financial governance of the Council.

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Date: 1 August 2019

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Appendix: Draft Updated Corporate Debt Policy

Background Papers: Equalities Impact Assessment Screening

Wards affected:

All Council wards

