

## Decision by Portfolio Holder



**Report reference: HSG-013-2016/17**

**Date of report: 10 April 2017**

**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Portfolio: Housing**

**Author: Roger Wilson (Ext 4419) Democratic Services: J Leither**

**Subject: Former Tenant Arrears and Credits – Write-offs**

**Decision:**

1. That, in accordance with Financial Regulations, 3 cases of former tenant arrears over £2,500, amounting to £10,352.25 (for the period January 2017 to March 2017) be written-off; and
2. That should the whereabouts of the former tenants become known (within the limitation period, usually 6 years from when the debt is incurred) the amounts be re-instated.

<b>ADVISORY NOTICE:</b> <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ <del>do not approve</del> (delete as appropriate) the above decision:	
Comments/further action required:	
Signed: Cllr S-A Stavrou	Date: 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2017
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i>  None	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:</i> Yes/No or n/a  N/A
<b>Office use only:</b> Call-in period begins: 21/04/2017	Expiry of Call-in period: 27/04/2017

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to  
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

**Reason for decision:**

Every effort has been made to recover the amounts set out in the report, all of which have been unsuccessful. Furthermore, as former tenant arrears are now included with the current rent arrears figures for performance monitoring, it would be in the interests of the Council for these amounts to be written-off. The Cabinet has previously agreed that former tenant arrears and credits be written-off on a quarterly basis.

<b>Initialled as original copy by Portfolio Holder:</b>
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### Options considered and rejected:

1. That the former tenant arrears set out in the report be written-off and not re-instated (within the limitation period, usually 6 years from when the debt is incurred) should the whereabouts of the former tenants become known.
2. That the former tenants rent arrears set out in the report not be written-off.

### Background Report:

1. Under the Council's Financial Regulations contained within the Constitution (Paragraph 2.10 refers) it is the responsibility of the Director of Communities to agree the write-off of rent arrears and credits of former tenants up to the approved limit of £2,500 in each case and to refer larger sums to the Cabinet. However, under the Constitution, this responsibility can be fulfilled by the Housing Portfolio Holder.

2. Authority is sought to write-off 3 cases of former tenant arrears over £2,500 amounting to £10,352.25 for the period January 2017 to March 2017. The following table shows the case reference numbers, the tenancy termination dates, the amounts written-off and the reason:

<b>Case Ref. Number</b>	<b>Former Tenant Arrears Written-off (£)</b>	<b>Tenancy Termination Date</b>	<b>Reason</b>
1012440071016	4,896.06	14/09/2014	Tenant evicted due to rent arrears. Emails sent to all other Council services seeking a forwarding address with no success. External tracing agent undertook several traces however, cannot find a fixed address.
354210031017	2,762.50	05/10/2014	Tenant evicted due to rent arrears. Emails sent to all other Council services seeking a forwarding address with no success. External tracing agent undertook several traces however, cannot find a fixed address.
514430051018	2,693.69	21/07/2013	Tenant evicted due to rent arrears. Emails sent to all other Council services seeking a forwarding address with no success. External tracing agent undertook several traces however, cannot find a fixed address.
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,352.25</b>		

**Resource Implications:**

Writing off £10,352.25 of former tenant debt in accordance with Financial Regulations.

The provision for bad and doubtful debts for housing rents and related charges for 2017/2018 is £120,000.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

Housing Act 1985

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

None

**Consultation Undertaken:**

None

**Background Papers:**

None

**Key Decision Reference (Y/N):**

No