

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

**DECISION OF: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CORPORATE SERVICES
WITH ADVICE FROM: SECTION 151 OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SERVICES**



Decision No: CSD143 2021/22

SUBJECT: WRITE OFFS - SUNDRY DEBTS OVER £10K – MARCH 2022

KEY DECISION: Yes

REASON: The council's current debt recovery and write-off policy states that all write off proposals in excess of £10,000 are to be approved by the Executive Member. All Executive Member decisions are key decisions.

BACKGROUND:

Each month the Council reviews the balances held on its sundry debt ledger following an extensive process of recovery related actions. In accordance with the Debt Recovery and Write-Off policy the Council may identify a series of invoices or accounts that have been deemed as unrecoverable for various reasons, and seek to write these off, so that they are no longer retained and showing as debtors within the Council's accounts. Examples of potential write-off categories are noted below;

1. Debt balance is non-material and uneconomical to recover
2. Debt not recoverable as customer has entered bankruptcy proceedings
3. Debt not recoverable as Executor has notified of no money within estate
4. Customer gone away and unable to locate
5. Debt over 6 years old and uneconomical to recover

Four of the accounts within this specific decision relate to the provision of social care related services, unfortunately the council is unable to recover the debt balances for the following reasons;

- two customers have passed away and there are no assets within the estate
- customer has transferred into a care home and has no assets or future income opportunities
- customer has no fixed abode and has no assets

DECISION:

To cease recovery actions associated with these debts and approve write-offs within Agresso for the accounts totalling **£137,197.07**.

REASONS:

All steps within the council's debt recovery policies have been taken and there are no further options available. It is therefore appropriate to write these sums off in accordance with good financial governance principles.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

None - all recovery options have been exhausted prior to the write off requested and recommendations are in line with the Council's debt, recovery and write-off policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Costs £137,197.07

Funding

The write off values have been accounted for in relevant revenue budgets and are also supported through credit loss allowance or bad debt considerations.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

All recovery options have been exhausted

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

CONSULTATION

In consultation with the relevant service managers within social care, debt recovery teams and finance service.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Financial risks have been assessed as part of the Council's integrated financial strategies.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment?

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

N/A

SIGNATORIES:

Decision Maker:



Signed:

Title: Executive Member for Corporate Services

Date: 04 April 2022

With advice from:

Signed: 

Title: Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

Date: 04 April 2022