



AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Rent Payments and impact of cash office closure in April 09
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Audit Committee Meeting Date:	27 th September 2010
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Housing
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor Beardsworth

1. Purpose

1.1 To inform Audit Committee of the current level of rent arrears and the effect or otherwise of the closure of area cash offices in April 2009

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Committee note the contents of the report

2.2 There are no identifiable issues around the collection of rent that can be attributed to the closure of the Cash offices

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 A decision was taken to close the three remaining cash payment facilities at the Guildhall , Weston Favell and Kingsthorpe housing office in April 2009.

3.1.2 Alternative payment methods were introduced to increase the number of paypoints available to tenants along with the introduction of Direct Debit payments for Rents

- 3.1.3 Prior to closure around £180,000 rental payments were made at the available cash offices
- 3.1.4 Post closure there are in the region of £120,000 payments made at the available paypoints
- 3.1.5 In excess of 1000 tenants are now paying by direct debit.
- 3.1.6 Payments can also be made visa the Councils website and over the telephone

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 The number of locations that payments can be made now stands at 101 across the Borough, thus greatly increasing the availability of such paypoints for all tenants across the Borough.
- 3.2.2 Payments can be made at these locations outside of the traditional Monday to Friday 9-5 normal working
- 3.2.3 Direct debit payment dates are available on 4 dates during the month again increasing choice and flexibility for the tenant
- 3.2.4 Total arrears at the end of August 2010, were at the lowest level against available records (April 2003- present day)
- 3.2.5 Total arrears were £50,000 lower against the corresponding point last year
- 3.2.6 In month collection has exceeded the comparable month last year each month in the current year 2010-11
- 3.2.7 The number of tenants paying by direct debit has increased from 643 in April 2009 to 1009 in August 2010
- 3.2.8 A recent survey of those tenants in arrears found 74% were very or fairly satisfied with methods of payment available and just 35 fairly or very dissatisfied.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 None

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 None

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 None

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 None

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 None

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 None

4.6 Other Implications

4.6.1 None

5. Background Papers

5.1 None

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