

ROSC – Scrutiny sub-committee

8 December 2015

In Attendance:

A Chesterman
G Michaelides
N Pace
S Roberts

S Hulks

Chairman

It was agreed that Councillor Roberts would be Chairman of the sub-committee.

Background

At a recent Audit meeting, Councillor Roberts had asked about the frequency of use of Enforcement Agents. It transpired that approximately 7,000 enforcement letters were sent out a year and he wanted to know what the cost was and whether it provided Value For Money.

The sub-committee had been set up to gather evidence and data with a view to determining how effective the debt collection process was, the impact on the residents should charges be added to their debt and whether there was a better way to collect debt.

Scoping

A scoping document was prepared which outlined the original scope of the review and the desired outcomes (appended to these notes).

Members discussed various issues which they felt were part of the review and they highlighted the following areas which needed clarification:

1. How much did the use of debt enforcement cost? What was the cost of Enforcement Agents and what income did they generate?
2. How many occasions did Enforcement Agents attend homes?
3. What would be the cost to a resident if enforcement action was taken?
4. Was it correct that businesses were not charged costs where individuals were?
5. At what level of debt would enforcement be instigated?
6. How many letters were sent to customers?
7. Were there other methods of collecting payment that could be adopted?
8. How much did the Council write off in council tax debt?
9. Which officers are responsible for each part of the debt collection process
10. Who would keep the charges that were levied – would it be the court, the council or the agents?

Questions were prepared taking into account these issues and these were sent to the Client Support Manager for a response.

The next meeting of the sub-committee to be confirmed.