

Enforcement Agent Scrutiny

1. Collection – 2015/16

Council Tax	Welwyn (in £000s)	Luton (in £000s)
Collectible Debit	£61,029	£73,332
Amount Collected	£59,855	£71,309
Collection rate	98.1%	97.2%

Business Rates	Welwyn (in £000s)	Luton (in £000s)
Collectible Debit	£60,487	£70,186
Amount Collected	£60,060	£68,846
Collection rate	99.3%	98.1%

Collection – 2014/15

Council Tax	Welwyn (in £000s)	Luton (in £000s)
Collectible Debit	£61,029	£73,332m
Amount Collected	£59,855	£71,309m
Collection rate	98.1%	97.2%

Business Rates	Welwyn (in £000s)	Luton (in £000s)
Collectible Debit	£59,592	£70,007
Amount Collected	£59,087	£68,304
Collection rate	99.2%	97.6%

Arrears Collection – 31 March 2016

Council Tax	Welwyn (in £000s)	Luton (in £000s)
Outstanding Arrears – 1 April 2015	£4,769	£21,868
Gross Arrears payments	£998	£3,514
Collection rate	20.9%	16.07%
Net Arrears payments (less court costs & refunds)	£580	£3,142
Collection rate	12.16%	14.36%

Business Rates	Welwyn (in £000s)	Luton (in £000s)
Outstanding Arrears – 1 April 2015	£642	£11,144
Gross Arrears payments	£481	£1,710
Collection rate	74.92%	15.34%

2. Enforcement Agents – 2015/16

Below are details of the council tax cases sent to the main enforcement agent used by the Council. (This is based on information supplied by the EA)

Cases Sent – 2015/16	5,028	£3,004,943
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Cases returned (absconded, students, requested by the council, value of good won't satisfy the debt) <i>This includes previous years sent to the EA</i>	3,748	2,265,903
Balance Outstanding	1,280	£739,040
Total Payment (including part payment)		£439,689
Total left to collect (excluding arrangements)		£199,912
Total left to collect (under a payment arrangements)		£99,439
Percentage collection success rate		59.49%
Cases paid in full at compliance stage (this excludes £75 compliance fee)	213	£126,135
£75 fees paid in full at compliance stage	212	£15,903
£75 fees part paid at compliance stage	25	£1,436.29
Total £75 fees collected		£17,339
Cases paid in full at enforcement stage (this excludes £235 fees)	478	£257,371
£235 fees paid in full at enforcement stage	234	£131,364
£235 fees part paid at enforcement stage	252	£26,192
Total £235 fees collected		£157,556
Total Enforcement Agent Fees paid		£174,895

Factors to consider

- A council employee turning up on the doorstep with their ID will not be as effective as an external company doing the same.
- There could be financial implications with internal Enforcement Agents collecting less income and not covering the cost of the service.
- We have considerably less income to collect than Luton as our collection rates are higher.
- There are potential issues with our contract with Sopra Steria and the collection targets they have in place. They could complain about the use of an Enforcement Agent who does not help them meet their collection targets.
- There is a lot of work currently out with Enforcement Agents. It would be difficult to call these cases back as a number of them would be under arrangement or are in the process of having action taken on them.
- We have the power to dismiss Enforcement Agents, and individuals within the company, if we are dissatisfied with their conduct and performance. This can be done instantly. This would not be the same if we used council staff or Luton's service. It is not as easy to promptly deal with the unacceptable performance of our own staff.
- There would still be pressure on internal staff to meet the needs and requirements of our residents whilst also achieving collection targets.
- An internal Enforcement Agent service would still need to meet our collection targets.

- There is a tendency for people to complain when we write to them, or visit them, asking for money. This will not change with an internal Enforcement Agent.
- No other Hertfordshire LAs are using internal Enforcement Agents.