

Policy Committee – 21st January 2014

COLLECTION FUND NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES SURPLUS/DEFICIT 2013/14



Report of the Corporate Head of Financial Management

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To declare the estimated National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) surplus / (deficit) on the Collection Fund for 2013/14.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are recommended to note that it is estimated that there will be no surplus / (deficit) on the Council's Collection Fund at 31st March 2014 relating to NNDR transactions

3. Background Information

3.1 The Collection Fund records the amount of income collected from NNDR, together with payments on account to central Government, the County Council and Fire and Rescue Authorities and this Authority. The Council is required to declare an estimate of the surplus or deficit that is likely to occur on the Collection Fund at the end of each year in January of that year.

3.2 Under the rates retention scheme, which came into effect on 1 April 2013, local authorities are able to keep a proportion of the business rates that they collect. As a result, authorities now have a direct financial interest in the rates retention system and an incentive to work with their business community to grow local economies.

3.3 Any surplus or deficit relating to NNDR is shared between Central Government, the County Council, the Fire and Rescue Authority and this Council in prescribed proportions under the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013.

3.4 Any surplus or deficit may occur in the Collection Fund if the amounts billed or collection rates are higher or lower than the estimate set at the start of the year on the NNDR1 return.

4. Estimated Surplus for 2013/14

4.1 The Council estimated that it would collect £18.723m of business rates in 2013/14 and based on latest forecasts for rating assessments and appeals and that this is the first year of the new rating regime this estimate is prudent.

4.2 Therefore based on this estimate the surplus / (deficit) on the Collection Fund for 2013/14 relating to NNDR is nil.

4.3 It is not unusual for a variance to be estimated on a collection fund. The ideal situation is for it to break even year on year, but when dealing with figures in excess of £18.7m a surplus / (deficit) could occur.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial and Value for Money Implications

The Council has to take account of its proportion of the estimated surplus / (deficit) in setting the Council Tax for 2014/15

5.2 Legal implications

The calculation of the apportionment of the surplus or deficit is prescribed under the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013.

5.3 Contribution to Council Priorities

The surplus/deficit may impact on the funds available for the Council in setting a balanced budget.

5.4 Risk Management

Failure to achieve a balanced budget in the financial year would have had serious consequences for the Council.

5.5 Equality Impact Assessment

The Council's Equality Impact Assessment Procedure **has been** followed. An Equality Impact Assessment **has not** been completed on the proposals as completion of **Stage 1- Initial Screening** of the Procedure identified that the proposed policy, strategy, procedure or function **does not have** the potential to cause negative impact or discriminate against different groups in the community based on •age • disability •gender • race/ethnicity • religion or religious belief (faith) •sexual orientation, or • rural isolation.

6. Consultations with Others

None

7. Access to Information : Background Documents

Working papers held in financial services

8. Author of the Report

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