

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 NOVEMBER 2015

ARREARS UPDATE – HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

BACKGROUND

Members have been regularly informed of progress and action on tackling rent arrears and are aware of the challenges currently facing the Council in securing regular rent payments. This information report provides an update on performance at Angus-wide level and local Community Housing Team level.

If, as a result of continuing rent arrears, the Council has to take action and evict, tenants concerned may present themselves to the Council as homeless. Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, the Council would be required to provide them with temporary accommodation whilst their homelessness application is assessed. The Council seek to conduct an assessment as early as possible and People Directorate is fully informed of progress, including steps taken to avert any eviction. Angus Council, however, remain committed to providing support with rent payment but if not utilised by tenants, the Council must ultimately enforce the tenancy conditions agreed through the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement; making it clear that rent payment is a priority and failure to keep up rent payments will result in utilisation of the full range of sanctions available to the Council

CURRENT RENT ARREARS

The Divisional performance on current rent arrears at week 27 (28 September 2015) is at **7.56%**, which is a slight decrease from the **7.57%** previously reported to Committee in 29 June 2015. This decrease is welcomed, but in line with trends from previous reports from this time of year. There are fewer arrears as a result of the housing benefit size criteria restriction for working age claimants. This reduction in cases and arrears can be as a result of many factors such as tenants moving, taking in lodgers or coming off housing benefit.

Table 1 provides details of our performance at week 27 (28 September 2015) for current rent arrears levels. The levels have decreased since previously reported to Committee. Efforts are ongoing to pursue outstanding monies and since April 2015 there have been over 10989 actions taken including over 3494 visits to tenants or ex tenants. Since April 2015, 138 court actions have been taken. There have been 46 cases, where the Council have been awarded a decree by the Court since April 2015.

The Division are continuing to take strong action against tenants for non-payment and some tenants have been evicted. Approximately 22% of decrees obtained have ended with an eviction.

Housing benefit of £247,016.98 was paid to tenants in week 27 and this has increased from £239,324.72, which was paid in week 14 at last time of reporting. These are very much snapshot figures.

Table 1 – Current Tenant Arrears by Community Housing Team

Week Number	Bandings for Rent Arrears	No of cases	Balance Amount Arbroath, Carnoustie and Monifieth CHT Area	No of cases	Balance Amount Forfar and Kirriemuir CHT Area	No of cases	Balance Amount Montrose and Brechin CHT Area	No of cases	Balance Amount Dispersed Accommodation	Total Number of Cases	Total Arrears
(23 March 2015) Week 52)	>3000	2	£6,461.09	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	1	£3,730.44	3	£10,191.53
	2000 to 3000	15	£35,950.57	4	£8,742.63	3	£7,516.76	0	£0.00	22	£52,209.96
	1000 to 2000	146	£201,563.04	58	£79,850.24	29	£35,742.98	7	£10,076.58	240	£327,232.84
	500 to 1000	178	£130,875.83	134	£96,079.96	114	£82,085.20	11	£7,376.42	437	£316,417.41
	250 to 500	158	£56,637.17	133	£47,943.03	128	£45,540.14	16	£5,867.74	435	£155,988.08
	<250	538	£44,684.82	363	£36,743.87	362	£31,975.39	41	£5,025.44	1304	£118,429.52
		1037	£476,172.52	692	£269,359.73	636	£202,860.47	76	£32,076.62	2441	£980,469.34
(29 June 2015) Week 14	>3000	2	£7,778.91	0	0	1	£3,411.24	1	£4,892.66	4	£16,082.81
	2000 to 3000	22	£51,301.48	3	£6,538.75	2	£5,055.60	1	£2,789.83	28	£65,685.66
	1000 to 2000	123	£170,357.72	51	£67,736.44	38	£49,768.99	7	£9,868.80	219	£297,731.95
	500 to 1000	187	£137,475.16	122	£88,416.23	111	£77,698.69	9	£6,665.03	429	£310,255.11
	250 to 500	157	£58,369.75	128	£45,088.97	130	£46,987.11	17	£5,694.12	432	£156,139.95
	<250	558	£47,530.43	437	£40,124.75	364	£34,475.34	33	£4,460.80	1392	£126,591.32
		1049	£472,813.45	741	£247,905.14	646	£217,396.97	68	£34,371.24	2504	£972,486.80
(28 September 2015) Week 27	>3000	2	£7,640.53	0	£0.00	0	£0.00	3	£12,400.27	5	£20,040.80
	2000 to 3000	17	£38,870.91	5	£11,144.91	3	£7,428.81	3	£7,068.71	28	£64,513.34
	1000 to 2000	124	£170,446.27	46	£60,206.40	49	£62,095.65	8	£11,906.00	227	£304,654.32
	500 to 1000	184	£131,192.16	135	£92,336.55	104	£72,861.17	14	£11,184.18	437	£307,574.06
	250 to 500	170	£61,921.08	134	£48,162.02	122	£43,927.88	20	£7,344.39	446	£161,355.37
	<250	603	£51,761.23	404	£34,873.66	372	£36,137.61	40	£5,459.66	1419	£128,232.16
		1100	£461,832.18	724	£246,723.54	650	£222,451.12	88	£55,363.21	2562	£986,370.05

Table 2 summarises the movement in the arrears values and number of cases over the period for both current and former tenants.

Arrears Summary		Current Tenants	Former Tenants	Totals	Movement Increase/ Decrease
Week 52 (23 March 2015)	Arrears Value	£980,469.34	£934,052.41	£1,914,521.75	-£45,845.67
	No. Of Cases	2441	2260	4701	-286
Week 14 (29 June 2015)	Arrears Value	£972,486.80	£1,015,244.34	£1,987,731.14	£73,209.39
	No. Of Cases	2504	2411	4915	214
Week 27 (28 September 2015)	Arrears Value	£986,370.05	£1,080,275.68	£2,066,645.73	£78,914.59
	No. Of Cases	2562	2518	5080	165

Housing Benefit Size Criteria Restriction for Working Age Claimants

This can fluctuate depending upon changes of tenant's circumstances. Work is ongoing to produce overall information which will be added to the welfare reform section of the Corporate Intranet. This will show discretionary housing payments, welfare fund payments, cases affected and ongoing arrears balances.

Table 3 summarises the tenants affected by the Housing Benefit Size Criteria Restriction for Working Age Claimants, shown by levels of current arrears. As a comparison, figures are shown for the last year.

Arrears Summary	Number of Tenants Affected	Tenants in Arrears	Amount outstanding	Movement Increase /(Decrease)
Week 14 (30 June 2014)	488	196	£109,821.26	£12,602.74
Week 27 (29 September 2014)*	529	253	£97,325.02	(£12,496.24)
Week 40 (28 December 2014)	534	256	£98,743.47	£1,418.45
Week 52 (23 March 2015)	519	237	£104,305.04	£5,561.57
Week 14 (29 June 2015)	525	237	£95,530.92	(£8774.12)
Week 27 (28 September 2015)	497	222	£75,654.91	(£19,876.01)

*Information exchange between Housing and Revenues and Benefit Divisions are allowing more accurate information to be reported in Week 27, week 40 and week 52 in 2015.

FORMER TENANTS ARREARS

Table 4, below summarises Former Tenants Arrears, showing the position since 6 July 2015 to 4 October 2015.

These have increased since the last report to Committee and this is reflected in the tables below. Since former tenants arrears were last reported to Committee, 23 tenancies have been abandoned and these tenancies had outstanding arrears of £15,601.40. This can make collection difficult e.g. no addresses to enable pursuit of arrears. Again, these cases can be nearing the final stages in the arrears recovery processes and tenants leaving prior to being evicted. There have also been 5 tenancies terminated with arrears of £1,911.17 where tenants were deceased.

8 tenants have been evicted since the last report to Committee, with arrears totalling £13,890.17.

Contact for further information:
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Table 4 – Angus Council Former Tenant Arrears.

Week No.	Bandings	Number of cases	Balance Amount Former tenants	Number of cases	Balance Amount Former Dispersed tenants accommodation	Number of cases	Balance Amount Former Temporary tenants accommodation	Number of cases	Total of former tenant arrears
(23 March 2015) Week 52	>3000	9	£31,016.06	6	£26,239.85	1	£4,564.49	16	£61,820.40
	2000 to 3000	31	£74,103.76	7	£17,277.31	3	£6,597.88	41	£97,978.95
	1000 to 2000	144	£199,838.72	43	£60,072.11	28	£39,086.02	215	£298,996.85
	500 to 1000	139	£100,370.48	94	£67,437.45	60	£41,274.88	293	£209,082.81
	250 to 500	169	£60,405.00	110	£39,655.10	128	£45,307.88	407	£145,367.98
	<250	462	£46,289.45	324	£28,697.95	502	£45,818.02	1288	£120,805.42
	Sum:	954	£512,023.47	584	£239,379.77	722	£182,649.17	2260	£934,052.41
(29 June 2015) Week 14	>3000	10	£34,378.88	6	£26,239.85	1	£4,564.49	17	£65,183.22
	2000 to 3000	39	£91,914.55	8	£19,875.25	3	£6,597.88	50	£118,387.68
	1000 to 2000	160	£220,478.48	47	£66,075.79	28	£38,818.39	235	£325,372.66
	500 to 1000	151	£107,216.78	103	£73,403.47	60	£41,274.88	314	£221,895.13
	250 to 500	178	£64,341.83	125	£44,617.93	126	£44,654.71	429	£153,614.47
	<250	508	£52,156.15	355	£32,629.21	503	£46,005.82	1366	£130,791.18
	Sum:	1046	£570,486.67	644	£262,841.50	721	£181,916.17	2411	£1,015,244.34
(28 September 2015) Week 27	>3000	10	£34,378.88	6	£26,239.85	1	£4,564.49	17	£65,183.22
	2000 to 3000	46	£109,188.35	10	£24,650.54	3	£6,597.88	59	£140,436.77
	1000 to 2000	170	£233,985.83	50	£70,796.97	29	£40,009.18	249	£344,791.98
	500 to 1000	166	£118,861.77	104	£73,803.99	60	£41,274.88	330	£233,940.64
	250 to 500	188	£68,007.00	135	£47,560.07	126	£44,634.71	449	£160,201.78
	<250	536	£54,623.42	376	£35,440.08	502	£45,657.79	1414	£135,721.29
	Sum:	1116	£619,045.25	681	£278,491.50	721	£182,738.93	2518	£1,080,275.68