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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2020

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Please find attached supplementary papers relating to the above meeting, as follows:

Agenda No	Item
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6.	<u>ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES</u> (Pages 3 - 4)
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Any Items referred from other committees will be circulated as soon as they are available.

Please find attached Referral 6h from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the Fair Collection Policy

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**CABINET
28 JANUARY 2020**

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

6h ITEM REFERRED FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 21 JANUARY 2020 – FAIR COLLECTION POLICY

The Committee received a report entitled Fair Collection Policy and Presentation by Penham Excel Ltd.

Mr Alan Wood and Mr Philip Hammonds, Penham Excel, gave a verbal presentation, with the aid of a PowerPoint Presentation, to Members of the Committee in relation their work and role as a civil enforcement agency.

In response to a series of questions raised by Members, the Service Director – Customers and the Revenues Manager along with Mr Wood, Mr Hammonds and Ms Lecia Fraser, North Hertfordshire Citizens Advice, provided the following responses:

- It was felt that the Fair Collection Policy struck the right balance between protecting vulnerable customers as well as ensuring finances were collected;
- Consultation had been carried out with Citizens Advice and the Money Advice Trust;
- Budgeting work was carried out with clients to ensure they were able to keep to the repayment agreement;
- There was a note on all Benefits correspondences that reminded customers to inform the Council if their circumstances were to change;
- The collection of arrears had improved;
- Letters were sent out in advance to customers to inform them that Council Tax arrears would be collected via an Attachment of Earnings; and
- Some customers contact the Council once they have noticed an Attachment of Earnings.

RESOLVED: That the presentation by Penham Excel Ltd be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the Draft Fair Collection Policy be adopted.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To better inform the Committee of the role of Collection Agents in North Hertfordshire; and
- (2) To allow the Committee to comment on the Draft Fair Collection Policy before it is considered by Cabinet.

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