



CABINET – 15TH NOVEMBER, 2023

PUBLIC INTEREST TEST - EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE OF DOCUMENTS SCHEDULE 12A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

SUBJECT: WRITE-OFF DEBTS OVER £20,000 – BUSINESS RATE ARREARS FOR LTD COMPANIES

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER

I have considered grounds for exemption of information contained in the report referred to above and make the following recommendations to the Proper Officer:-

EXEMPTIONS APPLYING TO THE REPORT:

Paragraph 14 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

FACTORS IN FAVOUR OF DISCLOSURE:

There is public interest in the way that a council makes decisions on writing off national non-domestic rate (NNDR) debts .

PREJUDICE WHICH WOULD RESULT IF THE INFORMATION WERE DISCLOSED:

The report contains financial information relating to 2 companies that have ceased trading and been dissolved and the amounts owing to the council in NNDR.

MY VIEW ON THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST IS AS FOLLOWS:

My view on the Public Interest Test is that whilst there is public interest in the way the council writes off NNDR debt when a company is dissolved, the report contains financial details of what each company owed the council in unpaid NNDR. The council has a procedure for writing off NNDR debt that is publicly available and the total figure of debt write-off is reported to scrutiny committee twice per year.

On that basis I feel that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Members are asked to consider these factors when determining the public interest test, which they must decide when considering whether to exclude the press and public from this part of the meeting.

RECOMMENDED DECISION ON EXEMPTION FROM DISCLOSURE:

On that basis I feel that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, and that the report should be exempt.



Signed:

Dated: 1.11.23

Post: **Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer**

I accept the recommendation made above.



Signed:

Proper Officer

Date: 1.11.23.