

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Chief Financial Officer  
to Cabinet  
of 17 June 2025**

---

**Subject: Write-offs: Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Customer Invoicing and Housing Benefit Overpayments**

---

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of Members to write-off Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Housing Benefit Overpayments and Customer Invoicing Accounts in accordance with Council policy.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:**

- 2.1.1 approves the write-off of Council Tax amounting to £63,147.65;**
- 2.1.2 approves the write-off of Non-Domestic Rates amounting to £294,628.33;**
- 2.1.3 approves the write-off of Housing Benefit Overpayments amounting to £11,355.49**
- 2.1.4 notes the write-off of Customer Invoicing amounting to £48,808.04 previously approved by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with Section 7 (FIP10) of the Council's Scheme of Delegation**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Current approved procedures allow for the write-off of Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Customer Invoicing and Housing Benefit Overpayments once all attempts to recover such debts have been exhausted.

**4. Proposals**

**4.1 *Council Tax (Including Water Service charges)***

- 4.1.1 The total amount submitted to Cabinet for write-off for cases above £10,000 is £63,147.65.
- 4.1.2 In addition, write-offs of Council Tax accounts amounting to £308,941.42 in respect of cases under £10,000 have been approved by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with section 7 (FIP10) of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

- 4.1.3 A total of £247,837.32 was approved for write off in 2023/24.
- 4.1.4 Whilst the write-off figures include debt for multiple years it should be noted for context that Council Tax annual bills totalling £96.6m (including water service charges) were issued for the year 2024/25

## 4.2 ***Non-Domestic Rates***

- 4.2.1 The total amount submitted to Cabinet for write-off for cases above £10,000 is £294,628.33.
- 4.2.2 In addition, write-offs of Non-Domestic Rates amounting to £226,096.41 in respect of cases under £10,000 have been approved by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with section 7 (FIP10) of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
- 4.2.3 A total of £540,805.91 was approved for write off in 2023/24.
- 4.2.4 Whilst the write-off figures include debt for multiple years it should be noted for context that Non Domestic Rates annual bills totalling £54.1m were issued for the year 2024/25

## 4.3 ***Housing Benefit Overpayments***

- 4.3.1 The total amount submitted to Cabinet for write-off for cases above £10,000 is £11,355.49.
- 4.3.2 In addition write-offs for Housing Benefit Overpayments amounting to £440,120.78 in respect of cases under £10,000 have been approved by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with section 7 (FIP10) of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
- 4.3.3 A total of £446,934.00 was approved for write off in 2023/24.
- 4.3.4 Whilst the write-off figures include debt for multiple years it should be noted for context that HBO is reducing in value due to DWP migration to Universal Credit. The total value of HBO outstanding is now around £1.6m.

## 4.4 ***Customer Invoicing***

- 4.4.1 There were no cases above £10,000 requiring write-off in 2024/25
- 4.4.2 Write-offs for Customer Invoicing accounts amounting to £48,808.04 in respect of cases under £10,000 have been approved by the Chief Financial Officer in accordance with section 7 (FIP10) of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.
- 4.4.3 A total of £81,280.74 was approved for write off in 2023/24.
- 4.4.4 Whilst the write-off figures include debt for multiple years it should be noted for context that Customer Invoicing bills totalling £48.3m were issued for the year 2024/25

- 4.5 A full list of all write-offs is available for Members' only consideration, on the Elected Members' Portal.
- 4.6 The write-offs are fully provided for in the existing bad debt provision. Members should note, however, that debts will continue to be pursued, where claims have been lodged with the Trustee in relation to debtors in liquidation or subject to sequestration.
- 5. Legal and Procurement Implications**
- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.
- 6. Financial Implications**
- 6.1 The write-offs will be contained within the existing bad debt provision, which will be reviewed to take account of likely levels of bad debt write-offs and the potential for any recovery of debt previously written off. In addition, Non-Domestic Rates income is part of the Council's total revenue funding 'envelope', which is guaranteed by the Scottish Government.
- 7. Human Resources Implications**
- 7.1 Not Applicable.
- 8. Risk**
- 8.1 ***Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***
- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.
- 8.2 ***Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***
- 8.2.1 If the recommendations are rejected there is a risk that additional costs would be incurred to pursue debt recovery with very limited income generated.
- 9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)**
- 9.1 The proposals in this report do not require to be assessed through an Integrated Impact Assessment.
- 10. Sustainable Development Implications**
- 10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.
- 11. Options Appraisal**
- 11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

## 12. Link to Council Plan

- 12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority 4 of the Council Plan: Efficient and effective enabling services.

## 13. Link to Shaping Our Future Council Yes ☐ No ☒

- 13.1 Not applicable.

## 14. Results of Consultation

- 14.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this paper.
- 14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Ian Davis, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and ICT, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

## 15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

- 15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Chief Financial Officer will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such times as the decision is fully implemented:

<i>Implementation</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Managed by</i>
Debt will be written off and systems updated	30 June 2025	Service Lead – Revenues and Benefits

**Background Papers**    [Full list of specific write-offs](#) (Members only)

[Further full list of specific write-offs](#) (Members only)

**Person to Contact**    **Tim Baulk, Chief Financial Officer**  
County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr, KA7 1DR  
Phone 01292 612620  
E-mail [tim.baulk@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.baulk@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

**Nicola Gemmell, Service Lead - Revenues and Benefits**  
County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr, KA7 1DR  
Phone 01292 612592  
E-Mail [Nicola.gemmell@south-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.gemmell@south-ayrshire.gov.uk)

**Date:** 4 June 2025