

APPENDIX 1

Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Project Group on Water Rates Arrears Evictions

Group Members :	Councillors Gordon Simmons (Lead Member), Helen Elliott, Anthony Hill, Jenny Flood, Keith Miles, David Stone, Denise Hawksworth
Subject to be reviewed: (the issue)	How Chesterfield Borough Council deals with Tenants Water Rates charges and any arrears
Reason for the Review / Terms of Reference: (why are we doing this)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To review the Council's contract with the Water Authority, which has not been revised for some time to see if it adequately compensates the Council for any arrears; the costs of collecting the water rates and the arrears.2. To review the process for collecting the water rates payments from housing tenants, and related matters.3. To review the Policy for dealing with arrears and its impact on evictions
How the review aligns with the Council's priorities and vision:	Corporate Plan Aim 3: A place where everyone has fair access to a decent and affordable home.
Aims and Objectives of the Review: (what do we want to achieve / what will success look like) - consider Equalities issues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To help provide affordable homes.- To avoid unnecessary evictions for the non-payment of water rates.- To review the contract with Severn Trent Water Authority to establish whether it is financially viable to continue collecting payments on its behalf, and to identify costs incurred for collecting.- Identify what support the Council has for people in difficulty.- Consider whether water meters should be advised for any properties.- Consider issues around charging for sewage and surface water.

	- To re-examine some decisions made by Scrutiny on this issue
Method of Review: (how the work will be undertaken)	Interviews Meetings Desk top research Housing Officers/Tenant support Executive Member for Housing interview Representative from Severn-Trent Water interview
Research & Evidence: (information that needs to be gathered)	- Existing contract agreement with Severn Trent Water - Statistics/figures regarding cost and benefit of contract / service received. - Statistics regarding the number of evictions due to water rates only - Web research - Appeals and Regulatory Committee documents including the policy dated June 2011 - information from Law Centre and Citizens Advice Bureau
Witnesses : (who to invite, information and answers needed)	Executive Member for Housing Executive Member for Customers and Communities Housing Service Managers / Officers Revenues Service Head of Finance Head of Business Transformation Interim Business Transformation Manager, Scott Webster Housing Tenant support staff
Group Meetings & Site Visits:	Not applicable
Resource Requirements: (what resources will be used)	Councillor and officer time
Project Start Date:	27th June, 2013
Scrutiny Project / Report Completion Date (Group to agree final report)	Spring 2014 – Original date Revised date – 10th December 2013
Scrutiny Report to Scrutiny Committee on : (<i>allow for public notice period</i>)	1. Progress update to Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 7th November, 2013 2. Report to Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 16th January, 2014 and to Overview and Policy Scrutiny Forum on 30th January, 2014

Cabinet Reporting Deadlines <i>(allow for WBR / Executive Member)</i>	Cabinet considered the new contract on 19th November 2013
Scrutiny Report to Cabinet on : <i>(allow for Public notice period)</i>	