Blackwell Parish Council	
Debt Management Policy	
Date approved:	**Review Date:**

Introduction

This policy outlines Blackwell Parish Council's procedures for dealing with late payments and outstanding accounts (bad debts) in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.4. (Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.)

Credit Control

Hire of any of the community centres for one-off events requires payment at least five working days before the date of the hire order for the booking to take place.

Invoices are raised at the end of each month for:

- Regular hirers

Invoices are raised annually for:

- Payments due for football leases
- For the Allotment Association rent and water supply

Invoices are raised on an ad hoc basis for:

- Adverts in the parish newsletter

Preferred method of payment is by bank transfer to the appropriate bank account. Cash or Cheques can also be presented in person at the parish office.

Means of recovering/managing debt

One month overdue – a copy of the statement shall be sent with the next invoice and the e-mail shall remind the customer of the later payment and request that it be paid within the next seven days.

Two months overdue – a further reminder statement be sent out and followed up with a phone call.

Three months overdue (90 days) – a final reminder be sent out, which will include withdrawing services and information on any other actions the council wishes to take – see below.

If invoices remain outstanding after 90 days, they shall be reported to either the Finance & HR Committee or Parish Council, depending upon which is most appropriate at the time for consideration.

In the first instance, where an individual or organisation is behind in payments, they shall be contacted separately to the above statement to discuss the following options:

- Payment of outstanding invoices in agreed increments
- Information (for relevant parish community groups) on how to apply for grants to cover the
- cost of room hire
- room hire to be paid for up front until the debt is cleared

In cases where no agreement on repayment of debt can be reached, the decision can be made at the relevant meeting that customers with outstanding accounts shall be passed to a registered debt collector following a final seven day warning.

The cost of recover shall be weighed against the amount owed and the likelihood of success.

Ir**recoverable debt**

The council recognises that where a debt is irrecoverable, prompt and regular write off of such debts is good practice.

The Council will seek to minimise the cost of write-offs by talking all necessary action to recover what is due.

Any debts to be written off will be reported to the Finance & HR Committee/full council and lust fall into one of the following categories

- small balances/overpayments
- deceased or untraceable liable parties
- balances are uneconomical to pursue
- recovery procedures are exhausted
- customer formally insolvent / bankrupt / in liquidation / in administrative receivership
- not in the council's or public interest to purse further
- insufficient evidence to justify legal action

The write off schedule will contain the following specific information for each case:

- customer name
- invoice number or reference
- date of invoice
- amount of dent
- reason for write off
- recovery history
- date of write off
- authorisation of write off.

To be reviewed annually.

This policy is fully supported by the members of Blackwell Parish Council	
Signed by	Chairman, Blackwell Parish Council
Date	