

## **RENT COLLECTION METHOD**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To appraise Members of the statutory consultation process regarding the introduction of electronic 'swipe card' transactions for rent collection.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 With the Girobank's proposed withdrawal of paper based rent collection methods, with effect from April 2000, it was necessary for the Council to consider alternative methods of collection. The introduction of electronic swipe cards was felt to be the most accurate and appropriate, and also had the support from tenant representatives.

### **3 CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 The statutory consultation process started in December 1999 with an explanatory letter being sent to all tenants asking for their comments, if any, to be submitted to Rochford Housing Services by 31 January 2000. At the time of drafting this report only six responses had been received. Four respondents were positive towards the proposals having experience of swipe cards elsewhere or for other debts; one respondent expressed concern about mixing up cards with that of his parent (for whom he paid rent) and another respondent who said "they were not a card-type person". Reassuring letters have been sent to these two latter respondents to allay their concerns.

### **4 PROGRESS**

- 4.1 The project has now progressed to a further stage of publicity in the new Tenants Newsletter and the Head of Service expects the scheme to be introduced later this month. This is slightly behind target, but well within the time scale for withdrawal of paper based payments.

### **5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Budget provision has been made in the Housing Revenue Account for 1999/2000.

### **6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The legal requirements to consult have now been satisfied.

**7 RECOMMENDATION**

7.1 It is proposed that the Sub-Committee **RESOLVES:**

That the implementation of electronic swipe card methods of rent collection be noted, there being no substantial representation by tenants against the proposal. (HRHM)

Steven Clarkson

Head of Revenue & Housing Management

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**Background Papers:**

Correspondence with Service Provider – Girobank  
Correspondence with Tenant Representatives  
Consultation Letter to Tenants

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