



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Rental Arrears Recovery

- *Government on track to recover £1 million in rent arrears by the end of this financial year*
- *Another £1.5 million secured by agreements to pay in instalments*
- *120 further appointments scheduled by end January 2017*

A year into the Government's rental arrears recovery strategy, significant inroads continue to be made. By the end of this financial year, the Government expects to have recovered £1 million of the £6,017,341 rent arrears owed in January of 2016: debt that had accumulated over almost 20 years of unchecked rental arrears.

By 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017 the current balance of the arrears had been reduced to £5.18 million. This considerable success has been achieved through a twofold strategy of proactively recovering the existing debt whilst also introducing mechanisms to prevent new arrears being incurred and thereby increasing the debt. Agreements with debtors have also been established to recover a further £1,465,948.69 and payment of this is secured either by standing order or, in the case of public servants, deductions at source from their salaries.

The Housing Department continues to assist and is actively meeting with people in arrears, and thus far have scheduled meetings with a further 120 tenants to take place by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017. These meetings aim to understand the reasons for arrears having accrued, to reach an affordable repayment agreement with tenants who can pay, and to find effective ways to assist those who genuinely can't pay.

The Minister for Housing, the Hon Samantha Sacramento, commented: 'I am very pleased with the arrears strategy to date and the efforts being made by all. It is encouraging to see that in a relatively short period almost £1 million has already been recovered and a further £1.465 million has been secured in agreements in the first year.'

'The Housing Department will continue their hard work to ensure the maximum amount is recovered from those in arrears and to prevent them from accruing further debts. As always the aim of this strategy is to recover debts from those that can pay but have decided not to, and of course assist those who are in genuine hardship'.