



Reference: FOI-242

**Request:**

Please provide the following for each of the financial years 2019/2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022, and 2022/2023 so far (from the beginning of the current financial year until 15 November 2022):

1. Number of households in council tax arrears
2. The total amount of council tax owed by these households
3. The number of cases of council tax debt passed to bailiffs (note these are also called 'enforcement agents') and the overall amount of council tax which was owed (just in relation to the cases which were passed to bailiffs)
4. Total amount recovered by bailiffs
5. The total amount in bailiff fees and court costs added to these council tax arrears.
6. The names of enforcement agencies employed by the council. (If multiple, please detail % split of cases allocated if the information is available)
7. How much are the fees that can be added on to council tax debts to cover bailiff and court order costs, and how are these calculated? (Is there a percentage or flat fee?)
8. Number of bankruptcy proceedings started against individuals who owe you council tax

**Response:**

1. Liability orders issued:  
2019/20: 15373  
2020/21: 8121  
2021/22: 10035  
2022/23 – date: 6615
2. 2019/20: £3681511.64  
2020/21: £4139228.05  
2021/22: £5211494.70  
2022/23 – date: £6398696.36
3. This information is not held in a format whereby this data can be easily extracted. In excess of 40000 accounts would need to be accessed individually to determine what action had been taken on each account/reference/year. Therefore, this part of the request is refused under s12 (1) Freedom of Information Act 2000, since the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. In assessing the cost of complying, the costs attributable to officer time involved in complying have been considered. Such costs are limited to £450.00 under the Regulations, which equates to eighteen hours of officer time.

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6. No enforcement agencies are employed by the Council for the collection of Council Tax. The Authority has a partnership agreement with Equans which covers various services which are managed/administered on behalf of The Authority, part of which includes debt recovery. As this service is provided for the Council by Equans, which is a private company, it is exempt from the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.
7. The costs applied due to the issue of a summons notice can be £80.00 or £10.00 dependent upon the taxpayers' circumstances. Fees issued by enforcement agents are set and collected as per Taking Control of Goods legislation.
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