



Reference: FOI-356

North Tyneside Council

Request:

I would like to make a freedom of information request utilising my rights under The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requesting information on the Council's use of DCAs as details of your contract do not seem to appear on the NEPO portal.

I would be grateful if you could furnish me with the following pieces of information:

1. Which DCAs have been utilised by North Tyneside Council in the past 3 years?
2. When were the contracts for these agencies signed and when did/do they expire?
3. How much has the Council paid for the services of DCAs in the past 3 years?
4. How many individual accounts (individual debtors) were handed over to these agencies?
5. Pursuant to item 4, what was the total amount of debt handed to DCAs?
6. Pursuant to item 5, of the debt handed over, how much was recovered by these agencies? (I understand that this figure may not be precise as some debt may be subject to a repayment plan, but happy to receive the information/estimates you have)
7. If DCAs acting on behalf of the Council are required to report fees levied against debtors/constituents of the Council and if so, how much have been charged in compliance/enforcement fees in the past 3 years

Response:

1. North Tyneside Council has a partnership agreement with Equans which covers various services which are managed/administered on behalf of North Tyneside Council, part of which includes debt recovery.

Debt recovery can use enforcement agencies, but this information is business/contract sensitive between Equans and any enforcement agencies and is not available. No enforcement agencies are employed by the Authority for the collection of Council Tax, but Equans will use enforcement agencies to assist with the collection.

In addition, the Authority has utilised Rossendales and Marston Holdings on an adhoc basis where necessary.

2. The Authority does not have any contracts with DCAs.

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3. The Authority has spent a total of £7019.99 over the last 3 financial years (19/20, 20/21, 21/22)
4. This information is not held in an extractable format and in excess of 40,000 accounts would have to be accessed individually to determine what action had been taken on each account/reference/year to provide this information. 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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Fees issued by enforcement agents are set and collected as per Taking Control of Goods legislation.

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Date: 19/01/2023

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