

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Council Tax Benefit changes

Your request for information has now been considered and the Council's response to your questions is shown below.

You asked:

1. How many people are paying a) increased council tax or b) council tax for the first time since April this year as a result of the change from a national council tax benefit scheme to a localised council tax support scheme?

a) 11,296 b) 16,654

2. On average, how much more were the following classes of individual billed for Council taxes for the whole of this financial year: those paying a) increased council tax or b) council tax for the first time since April this year as a result of the change from a national council tax benefit scheme to a localised council tax support scheme?

For questions 2 through to 7:

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for local government is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending more than 18 hours in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We estimate it will take over 1000 hours to process your request. Allowing 3 minutes to check each of the 27,950 individual claimants details.

This is therefore a Refusal Notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act, because under the provisions of section 12.1 of the Act, the Council estimates that to comply with your request in its current form will exceed the appropriate limit.

The legislation allows you to use the information supplied for your own personal use. Please be aware that any commercial or other use, for example publication, sale, or redistribution may be a breach of copyright under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 as amended unless you obtain the copyright holder's prior permission.

The amount of Council Tax for those paying for the first time is £197.85 based on a band A property with at least 2 adults

3. On average, how much more were the following classes of individual billed for Council taxes for the whole of this financial year: (a) registered carers, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

The amount of Council Tax for those paying for the first time is £148.39 based on a band A property with a single parent as the only adult

4. Of those people paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many were in arrears, including a breakdown of how many of these are (a) a registered carer, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

For those paying Council Tax for the first time, 11,197 first reminders have been sent between 1st April and 30th November 2013 but this does not denote that all these payers are still in arrears.

5. Of those paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many have had a summons issued against them since April 1 2013, including a breakdown of how many of these are (a) a registered carer, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

For those paying Council Tax for the first time, 5,975 summonses in total have been sent between 1st April and 30th November 2013

6. Of those paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many have had a Liability Order issued against them since April 1 2013, including a breakdown of how many of these are (a) a registered carer, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

For those paying Council Tax for the first time, 4,773 liability orders have been obtained between 1st April and 30th November 2013.

7. Of those paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many people have you instructed bailiffs to recover money from since April 1 2013, including a breakdown of how many of these are (a) a registered carer, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

For those paying Council Tax for the first time, no cases have been referred to bailiffs.

8. Of those paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, for how many have you applied for a Committal Warrant since April 1 2013, including a breakdown of how many of these are (a) a registered carer, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

None

9. Of those paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, have any individuals been sentenced to detention in prison, including a breakdown of how many of these are (a) a registered carer, (b) someone in receipt of disability-related benefits, (c) in receipt of a War Disablement Pension, (d) a War Widow's or Widower's pension, (e) a single parent or (f) in work

None

Not all the information that is supplied which is covered by copyright will be the Council's copyright, for example it may be the copyright of a government department or another Council. You should seek either the Council's consent or their consent as appropriate. The Council is willing to advise you of any such potential issues on request. In order to make a request to re-use the information please contact the Information Governance Manager using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

**Information Governance Manager
Information and Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG**
e-mail: info.requests@leicester.gov.uk

Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

**Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700**
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please be aware that the Information Commissioner does not normally consider appeals or complaints until the internal appeals and complaints processes of the public authority which is answering the request have been exhausted. You are therefore advised to complain or appeal to the Information Governance Manager before contacting the Commissioner.