

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - localisation and cuts to the council tax benefits system by DCLG

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. Of those people paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many people in total were in arrears as of 21/1/14? If possible, would you also break this down and tell me 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) in receipt of a War Widow's or Widower's pension.

For questions 2 through to 4:

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.

For those paying Council Tax for the first time, 11,891 first reminders have been sent between 1st April and 21st January 2014 but this does not denote that all these payers are still in arrears.

3. Of those people paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many people in total have had a summons issued against as of 21/1/14? If possible, would you also break this down and tell me 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) in receipt of a War Widow's or Widower's pension.

For those paying Council Tax for the first time, 6,408 summonses in total have been sent between 1st April and 21st January 2014.

4. Of those people paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many people in total have you instructed bailiffs to recover money from as of 21/1/14? If possible, would you also break this down and tell me 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) in receipt of a War Widow's or Widower's pension.

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

5. Of those people paying increased council tax or council tax for the first time, how many people in total have you applied for a Committal Warrant as of 21/1/14?

None

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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.