



Information Governance Team

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14 November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI559426183

Thank you for your request for information relating to Council Use of Bailiffs/Enforcement Agents.

You have requested the following information:

1. The number of times between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023, or the nearest available twelve-month period, that private bailiffs/enforcement agents have been instructed to enforce debts to the local authority relating to each of the following;

a. Council Tax

10,449

b. Parking

13,721

c. Housing Benefit overpayments

201

d. Business Rates

585

e. Commercial Rents

f. Any other debt types, including any other overpayments.

For Questions 1e and 1f, this is a combined figure of 1

By “private bailiffs/enforcement agents” we mean those who are self-employed or who work for private companies, including as high court enforcement officers. Please include cases where local authority employees have visited a property to enforce a warrant of control.

2. Before seeking a liability order for a resident for Council Tax arrears, do you take any of the following steps? Please indicate the steps you take.

• Assessment of their income and expenditure

No.

• Assessment of whether the resident (or anyone else) in their household is vulnerable

An individual assessment is not completed.

• Referral to your Council Tax Reduction / Support scheme

No, however this information is available on our web pages.

• Referral to income maximisation

No.

• Referral to a free debt advice organisation

No, however this information is available on our web pages.

3. Do you signpost residents to one or more free debt advice agencies as part of your Council Tax collections process? (Yes/No) If so, which charities?

Yes, further details can be found on the following link:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/council-tax-benefits/money-debt-advice-1>

We are therefore not required to disclose the information as per Section 21 of the Act.

4. Have you adopted the Standard Financial Statement as a tool for objectively assessing income and expenditure as part of your Council Tax collections process? (Yes/No)

No.

5. Do you have a formal policy in place for dealing with residents in vulnerable circumstances as part of your collections process for Council Tax arrears? (Yes/No) If so, please may you provide a copy of the policy if it is for public consumption.

Yes, further details can be found on the following link:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/council-tax/problems-paying-council-tax>

We are therefore not required to disclose the information as per Section 21 of the Act.

6. Do you currently have a policy of exempting recipients of Council Tax Support / Reduction from the use of bailiff action? (Yes/No)

No.

7. Have you adopted the Citizens Advice/Local Government Association Council Tax Protocol? (Yes/No)

No.

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance