



## 1. Council tax arrears

- a. What is the total value (£) of council tax arrears currently held by the authority? £27,790,402.77
- b. How many individual accounts are currently in council tax arrears? 122,207

- c. How many council tax accounts were referred to enforcement agents (e.g. bailiffs) in the last 24 months?

We do not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format, as such the information you have requested is exempt under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 12(1) states that:

“A public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.”

The appropriate limit for local authorities is £450, which by law is calculated at a rate of £25 per hour, giving a maximum of 18 hours of work.

Please note that the figures we hold are recorded by number of Liability Orders issued, not by the number of Council Tax accounts. A single account may have multiple Liability Orders, so totals do not represent the number of accounts referred to enforcement. Additionally, some Liability Orders may appear more than once where they were issued to an enforcement agent, returned, and later re-referred, resulting in duplicate counts.

To determine the true number of Council Tax accounts referred to enforcement agents in the last 24 months, each relevant council tax account would need to be manually checked.

### **Estimated time required:**

154,000 accounts × 2 minutes = 308,000 minutes = 5,133.33 hours.

This significantly exceeds the 18-hour statutory limit.

For this reason, the Council is not obliged to comply with your request under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as the cost of locating and extracting the information would exceed the appropriate limit.

## 2. Support to Victim-Survivors of Domestic Abuse

- a. In the last 24 months, how many residents experiencing domestic abuse has the council supported with debt-related relief or support (e.g. council tax reductions, payment plans, discretionary hardship payments, write-offs)? [Data not recorded](#)
- b. Does the authority record or monitor whether a resident requesting debt relief has experienced domestic abuse? If so, how many such cases have been recorded in the last 24 months? [Data not recorded](#)

## 3. Debt Recovery and Domestic Abuse Policies

- a. Does the authority have any policies, procedures, or guidance documents that refer to domestic abuse as a consideration in debt recovery processes (including enforcement, recovery pauses, or alternative arrangements)? Please provide a copy or link. [Debt Recovery Policy](#)
- b. Does the authority have any policies, procedures, or guidance that include domestic abuse as a factor in determining eligibility for council tax write-offs or reductions under Section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992? [Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy](#)

## 4. Discretionary Write-Off Monitoring

- a. Does the authority monitor or record the use of discretionary council tax write-offs granted under Section 13A(1)(c)? [Yes](#)
- b. If yes: How many discretionary council tax write-off requests were:  
i. received and  
ii. approved and  
iii. not approved in the last 24 months? [Received: 0](#)  
[Approved: 0](#)  
[Not approved: 0](#)
- Please note: Discretionary reductions granted under Section 13A(1)(c) are not classed as write-offs. They are discretionary reliefs that reduce or fully cover a customer's council tax liability, rather than writing off an outstanding balance.
- Within the period stated, we approved 333 discretionary awards under Section 13A(1)(c).
- c. In how many of those (i) received (ii) approved and (iii) not approved cases was domestic abuse recorded as a contributing factor or reason for the request? [Data not recorded](#)
- d. Does the authority monitor and record the decision maker and decision-making time scale for council tax write offs? If yes:  
i. Who was the decision maker for these cases and  
ii. what was the average time taken to make a decision and [No](#)

- iii. were individuals given a written explanation when a request is refused?

## 5. Approaches to Other Public Sector Debts

- a. Does the authority have policies or guidance in place relating to recovery of other public sector debts (e.g. housing arrears, benefit overpayments, social care charges)? **Yes**
- b. Do any of these policies explicitly reference domestic abuse as a relevant factor in debt recovery or relief decisions? **Yes**
- c. Please provide copies or links to these policies. [Debt Recovery Policy](#)

## 6. Enforcement Agents

- a. Are external enforcement agents used for council tax recovery? If yes, please provide the name(s) of current suppliers. **Rundles & Co. Ltd, Marston Holdings and Bristow & Sutor.**
- b. Did your procurement or process for selection of external enforcement agents consider vulnerability in relation to domestic abuse? **No**
- c. Do your contracts with these suppliers set out requirements on vulnerability in relation to domestic abuse? **Yes**
- d. Do you share vulnerability relating to domestic abuse with enforcement agents, and if so under what policy or data sharing agreement? Please provide copy of the applicable data sharing agreement, if available. **No**

## 7. Training and practice

- a. Are your staff required to undertake training that include identifying signs of domestic abuse? **No**
- b. Are your staff required to undertake training that includes identifying signs of economic abuse? **No**