



21 August 2017

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 1004/17

Dear Sir/Madam

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is provided below.

Request & Response:

I am writing to make an open government request for information to support a research project connected with council tax arrears. The research project is a joint initiative between PayPlan (a free-to-client debt advice company) and the Institute of Money Advisers (the professional body for debt advice in England, Wales and Northern Ireland). We are conducting the research for report that will be published at the end of this year. The report will have three broad objectives:

- a) To give debt advisers accurate and up to date information about imprisonment for council tax debt to help them advise their clients.
- b) To help PayPlan and the IMA develop a constructive dialogue with policy makers about imprisonment for debt.
- c) To develop constructive proposals for the court system and for local authorities on collecting council tax arrears.

We are asking for information over about two specific years – 2012/13 and 2016/17. We have chosen these years because we think that they will give us a broad overview of the recent trends.

1. Against how many people did you commence committal proceedings with regard to unpaid council tax in 2012/13 and 2016/17?

Answer: The Council did not commence any committal proceedings with regard to unpaid council tax in 2012/13 or 2016/17.

2. What was the outcome of the council tax committal proceedings identified in question 1 for 2012/13 and 2016/17?
 - a) How many people were committed to prison for non-payment of council tax for 2012/13 and 2016/17?
 - b) What was the overall total number of days served in prison by all of the people committed to prison for non-payment of council tax owed to the local authority for



2012/13 and 2016/17?

c) How many people were subject to a suspended committal order for 2012/13 and 2016/17?

d) How many people subject to a suspended committal order in this year were subsequently committed to prison because they did not comply with the terms of the suspended order for 2012/13 and 2016/17?

e) In how many cases did the people subject to a committal order clear the debt and avoid imprisonment for 2012/13 and 2016/17?

f) In how many cases did the people subject to a committal order and imprisoned clear the debt and so reduced their prison term for 2012/13 and 2016/17?

g) In how many cases did people subject to a suspended committal order maintain the required payments for the duration of the order or to date for 2012/13 and 2016/17?

Answer: Not applicable

3. What was the total amount of council tax arrears owed by people subject to council tax committal proceedings in 2012/13 and 2016/17 when the proceedings commenced?

Answer: Not applicable

4. What was the total amount of council tax arrears remitted by the local authority in 2012/13 and 2016/17?

Answer: Not applicable

5. What was the total amount of council tax arrears remitted by the magistrates' court for your local authority in 2012/13 and 2016/17?

Answer: Not applicable

6. What was the total cost the local authority of all committal proceedings for non-payment of council tax in 2012/13 and 2017/18? Please explain how you have calculated this.

Answer: Not applicable

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You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700

Yours faithfully

FOI Administrator
Corporate Support Team, Rutland County Council