FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 522/19

Dear Sir/Madam

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

Request / Response:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we would like to request the following information.

1. The number of times between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019, 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
   b. Parking
   c. Housing Benefit overpayments
   d. Business Rates
   e. Commercial Rents
   f. Any other debt types, including any other overpayments

   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.

   Answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debt Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council Tax</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Benefit Overpayments</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Rates</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Rents</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Debt Types</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

   Answer: Yes, Citizens Advice Bureau
3. Have you adopted the Standard Financial Statement (or Common Financial Statement) as a tool for objectively assessing income and expenditure as part of your collections process? (Yes/No)

Answer:
Yes

4. Do you have a formal policy in place for dealing with residents in vulnerable circumstances as part of your collections process? (Yes/No)

Answer:
Yes

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

Answer:
No

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

Answer:
Yes

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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
Business Support Team
Rutland County Council