

## REQUEST AND RESPONSE

Does the council pursue council tax arrears (i.e. enforcement action against non-payment, over and above initial warning letters) via in-house staff, or is it outsourced to an external provider/contractor (e.g. debt collection agency)?

The Enforcement of Liability Orders by a Bailiff is outsourced

Part A:

1. Please provide the name of the contractor(s)  
Collect Services Ltd
2. Please provide the start and end date of the contract(s)  
April 1997 and has been extended by letters of agreement since then
3. Please outline whether each contract is specifically and solely for pursuit and collection of council tax arrears  
It also included Non-Domestic Rates
4. The payments made to each contractor, each financial year since 2010/11, for pursuit and collection of council tax arrears. If the council does not hold this information, it is asked to seek this information from the contractor(s) under the terms of the FOI Act  
There is no cost to the Council
5. Please provide details of the contractual payment mechanism for pursuit and collection of council tax arrears under each contract – essentially, does the council pay the contractor a guaranteed/fixed lump sum, or is the contractor paid per case pursued, or paid per case pursued resulting in payment or prosecution, or another model/hybrid? What are the standard payment amounts under the payment mechanism?  
See item 5
6. Does each contractor pay its debt collection staff and/or bailiffs a commission based on successful pursuit and collection of council tax arrears? If the council does not hold this information, it is asked to seek this information from the contractor(s) under the terms of the FOI Act  
No
7. Is the council currently either (a) tendering or planning to tender for a new provider to pursue council tax arrears; or (b) discussing variations to the existing contracts in advance of financial year 2013/14 (if so, what variations are under consideration)?  
No plans to Tender or vary contract.
8. Please list any performance targets relating to pursuit and collection of council tax arrears, contained within each contract  
None
9. Whether each contractor sub-contracts part of its work to pursue and collect council tax arrears, and if so, the names of those sub-contractors. If the council does not hold this information, it is asked to seek this information from the contractor(s) under the terms of the FOI Act  
There is no sun-contracting
10. How many households in council tax arrears did the council refer to each contractor in each financial year since 2010/11? If possible, please provide the number of referrals, thereby including where the same household was referred more than once in a year  
2010/2011 2638  
2011/2012 2875  
2012/2013 1647 (as at end Oct 12)
11. Either through its own records and monitoring, or via arrangements in place with contractors, does the council have figures (estimated or average figures will suffice) for the cost of pursuing a council tax arrears case to (a) a liability order; nil as the income from costs pays for the cost of pursuing a case to liability order stage (b) repossession; We do

not have the power to repossess and (c) prosecution? we do not prosecute If the council cannot access such specific figures, more general figures will suffice. If possible, please provide gross cost figures, disregarding the value of any arrears pursued.