



Further to your information request FOI/EIR 22/23-378 please find your question and our response below.

Request:

For the period 2013/14 - 2021/2022

1) How many households were in Council Tax arrears each year?

Of these:

1a) How many households were in Council Tax arrears relating to earlier years?

1b) How many households were in Council Tax arrears relating to in year?

2) Of the households in Council Tax Arrears, how many households contained or were:

2a) Someone above the state pension age?

2b) Someone sick or disabled/in receipt of incapacity benefit

2c) A lone parent

2d) Someone who is unemployed

2e) In receipt of Universal Credit

2f) In receipt of Universal Credit and Council Tax Reduction

3) What is the value of Council Tax Arrears relating to earlier years before write-offs in the current year?

4) What is the value of Council Tax arrears written off in year relating to the previous year only?

5) What is the value of Council Tax arrears relating to earlier years?

6) What is the total value of Council Tax arrears for all previous years as of 31st March post write offs?

Of these:

6b) What is the total value of Council Tax arrears in respect of the previous year only?

6c) What is the total value of Council Tax arrears in respect of earlier years?

7) What is the total value of Council Tax not collected in the current year?

8) What is the total value of Council Tax written off in year relating to the current year?

9) What is the total value of Council Tax arrears in respect of the current year outstanding as of 31st March?

10) What is the total value of Council Tax arrears as of 31st March?

11) What is the net change in value in arrears outstanding as of 31st March?

12) What is the total value of court and administration costs relating to Council Tax arrears for the respective year?

Response:

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows a public authority to refuse a request if the cost of providing the information to the applicant would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004:

"12 Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority 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 Regulations provide that the appropriate limit to be applied to requests received by local authorities is £450 (equivalent to 2.5 days of work). In estimating the cost of complying with a request for information,

an authority can only take into account any reasonable costs incurred in:

- “(a) determining whether it holds the information,*
- (b) locating the information, or a document which may contain the information,*
- (c) retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information, and*
- (d) extracting the information from a document containing it”.*

For the purposes of the estimate the costs of performing these activities should be estimated at a rate of £25 per hour.

The information that you have requested is not held in an easily accessible format by the Council. We believe that it would take a considerable amount of time to extract and collate the information requested. We would need to ask a large number of officers and managers to check their records to determine whether they hold any information falling within the scope of your request. Taking into account the likely costs of searching the records and the number of people that would need to be involved, we believe that the cost of complying with your request would far exceed the appropriate limit of £450.

As a result, we are refusing your request under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This concludes your request FOI/EIR 22/23-378

If information has been refused please treat this as a Refusal Notice for the purposes of the Act.

If you disagree with our decision or are otherwise unhappy with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you may approach foi@eastcambs.gov.uk and request a review. A request for review must be made in no more than 40 working days from the date of this email.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right under s50 of the Freedom of Information Act to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF.