

Request details – FOI 5184

- 1) In the Council Tax years 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, approximately what percentage of staff members employed by Capita compared with Birmingham City Council staff members personally dealt with Birmingham City Council Tax Accounts that had/have gone into arrears.
- 2) In the Council Tax years 2009/2010 and 2010/2011, how many Birmingham City Council Tax accounts that had gone into arrears resulted in a Liability Order (LO) been granted. Of these that had a LO granted how many were passed on to a Capita staff member(s) that had direct authority and/or input in contributing to the decision that lead to an LO being pursued.
- 3) Again, of these that had an LO granted how many accounts ended up been passed on to Equita Bailiffs for Council Tax recovery. Of these accounts how many were passed on as a result of a Capita staff member(s) having any direct input in the decision making process that eventually lead to the account been passed onto Equita Bailiffs.
- 4) Finally, of these accounts that ended up been passed on to Equita Bailiffs for Council Tax recovery. When the account was requested to be returned to Birmingham City Council, for whatever reason, how many were refused. Of those accounts that were refused, how many were dealt with by a Capita member(s) of staff which had any direct input in the decision making process that lead to the refusal of the account being returned back to Birmingham City Council.

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The majority of Birmingham citizens pay their Council Tax accounts in full and within the prescribed timescales. Birmingham City Council however is conscious of the need to protect the public purse so as not to place undue pressure on any of our citizens. We are also acutely aware of the competing priorities families are facing within this challenging period and therefore Revenue Officers are available to discuss various ways, means and amounts of Council Tax that can comfortably be credited to their accounts.

The billing and collection for Revenues is undertaken by Birmingham City Council employees and those employed at the Call Centre, managed by Service Birmingham (Capita).

It is not possible to provide details in respect of (1) as such statistics are not maintained. All that can be said is that all bills, reminders, final and summonses are issued with the Call Centre telephone number.

On the granting of a liability order a 14 day letter is issued advising that any failure to address the debt will lead to the account being issued to the City's appointed bailiff. The process of referral is an automated one, with no staff being directly involved.

Further accounts may be 'manually' referred to the bailiff, due to defaulting on payment arrangements etc, but these are undertaken by BCC staff or a further automated process.

The numbers of liability orders granted in 2009/10 and 2010/11 (to date) are given below:

2009/10 - 83,581

2010/11 - 67,356

The number of accounts passed to the bailiff in 2009/10 and 2010/11 (to date) is shown below:

2009/10 - 67,275

2010/11 - 60,616

These accounts do not necessarily correlate to the liability orders granted, as some pay, make arrangements raise disputes and so forth before referral. Also other accounts may be sent as described earlier in this response.

The bailiff is instructed to act on behalf of the city. There are no instances where an instruction to return an account to the city can be refused by an officer of Capita.