

Council Tax Payments

As a result of recent changes in the law North Norfolk District Council will regularly publish information relating to individual councillors who are in council tax arrears.

Information relating to elected members and council tax arrears was previously protected under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts, however following a decision of the Upper Tribunal Administrative Appeals Chamber in March this year it can now be disclosed in the public interest. Prior to the change all such information relating to individual councillors was not published.

North Norfolk District Council believes this is central to the transparency and function of the democratic process.

In 2014/15 the council took action for the following amounts:

- Cllr Roy Reynolds and Cllr Annie Claussen-Reynolds – reminder for £135.12, final reminder £616, summons for £691 and a liability order for £575 - payment arrangement entered into; balance £0.
- Cllr Steven Ward – reminder for £449.99, summons for £807.99, and a liability order for £807.99 – payment arrangement entered into; balance £249.03
- Cllr Andreas Yiasimi – reminder for £162.87, summons for £1,641.87, liability order for £1,641.87 – payment arrangement entered into; balance £0.

In 2015/16 the council took action for the following amounts:

- Cllr Roy Reynolds and Cllr Annie Claussen-Reynolds – reminder £164.39, summons £1634.39, liability order for £1315 – deduction from Member allowances; Balance £0.
- Cllr Steven Ward £588 – reminder £318, summons £588, liability order £588 - payment arrangement entered into; Balance £149.
- Cllr Yiasimi £1,645.53 – reminder £157.53, summons £1,645.53, liability order for £1,645.53 - payment arrangement entered into; balance £0.

In 2016/17 the council took action for the following amount:

- Cllr Roy Reynolds and Cllr Annie Claussen-Reynolds, reminder £169.49, summons £1,684.49 liability order for £1,195 - Balance £1,120. Payment arrangement entered into. (Please note the balance reflects what is owing up to the 31 March 2017, which has been subject to a liability order as at 27 June 2016.)

Regardless of who defaults on Council Tax payments, the Council will not hesitate to take the appropriate action in order to recover money owed to the public purse within that financial year.

There is no preferential treatment.

Councillors have an individual responsibility to be up to date with their payments; it is a matter of accountability and public confidence.

The Council does check prior to its annual budget setting meeting whether there are any councillors who are in arrears with their council tax payments at that time as this affects whether they are able to vote on the budget for that financial year.

Where a councillor is in arrears they would be informed that they were not able to vote at the meeting.

All councillors who attended and voted on the budget setting were up to date in their payments. The recovery procedure followed by NNDC is the same for any tax payer who misses an instalment and is set out in national legislation. Council Tax is an annual charge due on demand, however, legislation requires us to offer all customers a minimum of 10 monthly instalments by which to pay. Legislation also dictates the subsequent process which has to be followed when payment is not made. If an instalment is missed, a reminder notice is issued giving seven days to pay the missed instalment.

If the tax payer fails to pay the missed instalment within those seven days, they forfeit the right to pay that year's charge by instalments and a summons to appear at Court is issued after complaint has been made to the Magistrates Court. At Court, the Magistrates will grant a liability order if they are satisfied that the debt has not been paid.