



UNCLASSIFIED

Resources Directorate

Chris West
Executive Director of Resources
Information Governance Team
Lower Ground Floor
Council House
Earl Street
Coventry
CV1 5RR

Our reference: 20122481
Date: 28th March, 2014

Please contact:
Information Governance
Telephone: 024 7683 3323
Email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

Dear

Thank you for requesting information about collection trends and billing mechanisms, which the Council received on 28th of February, 2014. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("The Act").

You have requested the following information;

I would be grateful if you would supply the information requested in the attached survey.

With regard to questions relating to housing rent, it has been established that the Council does not hold the above information. This is because Coventry City Council transferred its council housing stock to Whitefriars Housing in September 2000.

This transfer also involved movement of responsibility for management of the housing, including repairs and maintenance and crucially, the setting and collection of rents.

The Council relinquished responsibility regarding these matters as part of the transfer. To advise and assist you further, information about Whitefriars and their services can be found on the web site at:

<http://www.whitefriarshousing.co.uk/home>

With regard to the questions regarding Leisure Centre Memberships, it has been established that the Council does not hold the above information.

As the operation of sports facilities is out sourced to external providers, in this instance Coventry Sports Trust and Coventry Sports Foundation, the Council do not have any finance arrangements for the payment of leisure centre memberships. To advise and assist you further, information about Coventry Sports Trust and Coventry Sports Foundation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.coventrysports.co.uk/>

<http://www.covsf.com/>

And finally, with regard to retrospective live accounts, it has been established that the Council does not hold the above information. The Council is only able to provide current information.

Thus, we are unable to provide any information relating to the above, and are informing you as required per Section 1(1) (a) of the Act, which states:

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request".

Please note, under the Re-Use of Public Sector Information 2005 Regulations you are free to use this information for your own use or for the purposes of news reporting.

However, any other type of re-use under the Regulations, for example; publication of the information or circulation to the public, will require permission of the copyright owner and may be subject to terms and conditions. For documents where the copyright does not belong to Coventry City Council you will need to apply separately to the copyright holder.

If you wish to apply to reuse the information you have requested or have any other issues relating to this request please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are unhappy with the outcome or handling of your request you should write to us within 40 working days of the date of this letter:

Information Governance
Council House, Room 21a
Lower Ground Floor
Earl Street, Coventry.
CV1 5RR
infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If having done that you are still dissatisfied, the Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Karyn Wheatley
Information Governance Assistant

Enclosures: Completed Local Government Survey – Collection Trends and Billing

Local Government Survey – Collection trends and billing mechanisms – February 2014

Name of Authority **Coventry City Council**

Part A – Direct Debit

		Council Tax	Housing Rent	Sundry Debtors	Business Rates	Benefit Overpayments	Leisure Centre Memberships
Q1	What is the Service User Number (SUN) ?	971908	N/A	97-16-11	971715	971908	N/A
Q2	What is the percentage of live accounts marked to pay by Direct Debit? Where possible this should be the percentage of those customers who would normally make a payment that are paying by direct debit. Accounts exempt from making a payment should be excluded from the calculation. Where a different calculation is used, please specify.						
a	As at main billing 2014?	61	N/A	18	45	N/A	N/A
b	As at 1 st April 2013?	Not available	N/A	Not available	Not available	N/A	N/A
c	As at 1 st April 2012?	Not available	N/A	Not available	Not available	N/A	N/A
d	As at 1 st April 2011?	Not available	N/A	Not available	Not available	N/A	N/A
e	As at 1 st April 2010?	Not available	N/A	Not available	Not available	N/A	N/A
Q3	What choice of payment dates do you offer customers? (i.e. 1st, 5th, 15th, 25th etc)	1, 10, 17, 24, last day	N/A	Any date, DD file is run twice a week	1st	5th	N/A
Q4	What choice of payment frequency do you offer customers?						
a	Weekly		N/A	X			N/A
b	Fortnightly		N/A	X			N/A
c	4 weekly		N/A	X			N/A
d	Monthly	X	N/A	X	X	X	N/A
e	quarterly		N/A	X			N/A
f	Half-Yearly		N/A	X			N/A
g	Yearly		N/A	X			N/A
h	Other (please specify)		N/A				N/A
Q5	Do you operate AUDDIS?	Yes	N/A	No	Yes	No	N/A
Q6	Do you offer Paperless Direct Debit?						
a	By Phone?	Yes	N/A	No	Yes	No	N/A
b	Online?	Yes	N/A	No	Yes	No	N/A
Q7	What incentives do you offer to customers for paying by Direct Debit? i.e. Discounts, prize draws, additional payment dates, etc	None					
Q8	What marketing material will you be sending with annual bills for the year 2014/15 to encourage Direct Debit take-up? Please attach PDF examples where possible	None					
Q9	Are you aware of Bacs' free marketing consultancy service ?	No					
Q10	Have you carried out any propensity or attitudinal surveys to help you reach those customers not currently paying by Direct Debit?	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
Q11	How many Direct Debit transactions have you collected to date during the financial year 2013/14?	673,661	N/A	16,169	27,231	131	N/A
Q12	How many were returned unpaid during 2013/14?	8,804	N/A	407	265	37	N/A
Q13	What percentage of unpaid direct debits in 2013/14 were 'refer to payer'?	Not recorded	N/A	14.00%	Not recorded	24.00%	N/A
Q14	What action does your authority take when receiving a 'refer to payer' unpaid item?						
a	Cancel the direct debit immediately	No	N/A	Yes	No	No	N/A
b	try to re-collect on a different payment date within the month	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
c	try to re-collect with the following months payment	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
d	Ask the customer to pay the missing instalment by other means but keep the account on direct debit	No	N/A	Yes	No	No	N/A
e	Other (please specify)		N/A				N/A
Q15	How many indemnity requests have you received to date in 2013/14?	25	N/A	6	5	0	N/A

Q16	Do you use SMS Text messaging to remind customers of direct debit payments / advise of changes to amounts / dates ?	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
Part B – Other Payment Options							
		Council Tax	Housing Rent	Sundry Debtors	Business Rates	Benefit Overpayments	Leisure Centre Memberships
Q17	Can customers pay online?	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Q18	Can customers pay via an automated telephone system?	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Q19	Can customers pay by a mobile phone app managed by the authority?	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
Q20	If yes, what is the app?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Q21	Can customers pay at a third party locations?						
a	Post Office?	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
b	Payzone?	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
c	Paypoint?	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
d	Other (please specify)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		Yes / No					
Q22	Does the authority still manage a cash office or payment centre?	Yes					
Q23	Does the authority still allow payment by cheque?	Yes					
Q24	Approximately how many cheques did you process for payments in 2013/14?	26788					
Q25	What percentage of Council Tax payments were made by cheque in 2013/14?	46%					
Part C – Online Billing and Customer Access							
		Council Tax	Housing Rent	Sundry Debtors	Business Rates	Benefit Overpayments	Leisure Centre Memberships
Q26	Can customers login to an online account to see their account details such as balance, instalment plan, payments made etc?	Yes	N/A	No	Yes	Yes	N/A
Q27	If yes, who provides your online account solution software?	Capita					
Q28	Do you provide electronic billing?	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	No	N/A
Q29	If yes, do you						
a	send a copy of the bill by email,	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	No	N/A
b	send a link to the bill	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
c	advise customers to check their online account	No	N/A	No	No	No	N/A
Q30	Who provides your e-billing solution?	Capita					
Part D – Housing Benefits							
Q31	What percentage of housing benefit claims are paid through Direct Credit ?	Number					
a	As at main billing 2014	99.96%					
b	As at 1 st April 2013	Not available					
c	As at 1 st April 2012	Not available					
d	As at 1 st April 2011	Not available					
e	As at 1 st April 2010	Not available					
Part E – General							
Q32	With whom does the authority hold its primary bank account?	HSBC					
Q33	Who provides the authority's Bacs processing software?	First Capital					
Q34	Does the authority, acting as a Bureau, provide Bacs processing on behalf on any other organisation?	No					
Q35	Who provides the authority's Income Management and Funds Distributions solutions?	Agresso (Unit 4)					
Q36	Who is the person responsible for Income Collection?						
a	Name	Chris West					
b	Position	Executive Director, Resources					
c	Telephone number	0500 834 333					
d	email	chris.west@coventry.gov.uk					