



## **IMPORTANT GUIDANCE NOTES - COUNCIL TAX**

### **Why have I been sent a Summons?**

It has been issued because, according to the Council's records, you have not paid your Council Tax as required.

### **Can I still pay and stop any further action being taken against me?**

Yes - if the Council receives the **total due**, as shown on the summons, by the close of business on the day before the court hearing, no further action will be taken. Please note the total due already includes the costs for the issue of a summons.

### **What will happen if I don't pay before the Court Hearing?**

If the Court is satisfied that the amount shown is payable by you, it will issue a liability order. At this stage additional costs will be added to your account - please refer to [richmondshire.gov.uk](http://richmondshire.gov.uk) for current details. Please note: the Magistrates will not discuss settlement of your account, unless you wish to defend against the Council's application it will not be necessary for you to attend court.

**Should you wish to defend the Council's application make sure that you arrive at court at least 15 minutes before the hearing time, to allow for a short interview with a member of the Council's Local Taxation Team.**

### **Can I make an arrangement to pay over a longer period?**

Yes - if you are unable to pay the total due before the court hearing the Council may consider an arrangement to pay over a mutually acceptable period. Despite this the Council will still apply for a liability order but will not execute the order other than by issuing a Liability Order Questionnaire. The amount payable will therefore include both summons and liability order costs. Please note that confirmation of any payment arrangement will be dependent upon the return of the completed Liability Order Questionnaire.

**There is no need to attend Court to make an arrangement - contact a member of the Local Taxation Team on 01748 901069 to discuss your account.**

Providing you continue to pay your arrangement as agreed no further action will be taken. If, however, you fail to pay as agreed the Council will enforce the liability order.

Once a liability order has been granted the Council has the power to recover the outstanding amount from you without further recourse to the court (except for committal/bankruptcy proceedings). This includes taking payments direct from your wages or making deductions from your Income Support/Jobseekers Allowance. The Council may also instruct enforcement agents to recover the debt, which could include the removal and selling of goods from your home. Any additional costs incurred through this action will be borne by you.

### **I don't believe the charge is correct - what should I do?**

If you believe you should not be liable for Council Tax, or that the amount due is incorrect, please contact the Local Taxation Team at Mercury House, Station Road, Richmond; (01748) 829100; or [local.taxation@richmondshire.gov.uk](mailto:local.taxation@richmondshire.gov.uk).

### **What if I have appealed against my Council Tax?**

You must still pay the amount outstanding even if you have made an appeal. If your appeal is successful, any overpayment will be either refunded to you or offset against your remaining charges. Payment will not prejudice your appeal in any way.

**Continued overleaf...**

## Where and how can I make payment?

**By calling:** 0845 078 1191 - using a debit or credit card

**Online:** richmondshire.gov.uk - using a debit or credit card

**In person:** at one of the Council's Community Offices - locations and opening times can be found on richmondshire.gov.uk

Cheques should be made payable to Richmondshire District Council - post-dated cheques will not be accepted.

The Court will not accept payment.

**For more information visit richmondshire.gov.uk**

If you have any queries about the issuing of this summons or the court hearing either consult the Citizens Advice Bureau or a solicitor.

## Are you entitled to help?

If you are having problems paying your council tax you could be eligible for council tax exemption, discount or relief - contact local.taxation@richmondshire.gov.uk

If you are on a low income you could be entitled to council tax reduction - contact benefits1@richmondshire.gov.uk

## Free and independent debt advice

Debt advisers will:

- never judge you or make you feel bad about your situation
- always be happy to talk to you - however big or small the problem
- find ways to manage your debts even if you think you have no spare money.

Telephone help is usually available weekdays, evenings and weekends at:

- **Debt Advice Foundation:** national debt advice and education charity offering confidential support to anyone worried about debt 0800 622 6151; debtadvicefoundation.org
- **PayPlan:** provides debt advice and support 0800 280 2816; payplan.com
- **National Debtline:** talk through options and give clear advice on taking control 0808 808 4000; nationaldebtline.org
- **Step Change Debt Charity:** impartial and personalised help 0800 138 1111; strepchange.org

Richmondshire District Council  
Mercury House  
Station Road  
Richmond  
North Yorkshire  
DL10 4JX

Telephone: 01748 829100 Fax: 01748 826186

e-mail: local.taxation@richmondshire.gov.uk.



### Data Protection Act 2018

Please refer to our website richmondshire.gov.uk for more information on your privacy

**This information is available in alternative formats and languages**