

CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
COUNCIL

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 001577  
Date            16 October 2017

### ***Ensuring Customers are not Subject to Unnecessary Recovery Action, Additional Costs or Hardship***

#### **Request:**

A council taxpayer who owes more than just the current year's liability runs the risk of incurring additional recovery costs through a further application for a liability order if payments which are intended for the current year's liability are allocated by the council's computer to the previous year's liability. This would most likely happen where a non specific payment is made and the computer software is set to automatically allocate these payments to the oldest year's debt.

Councils computer systems have the necessary flexibility to be set to allow non specific payments to be allocated to the arrears or the current year's liability.

I understand that the majority of billing authorities have their computer software set to ensure that their customers are not subject to unnecessary recovery action, additional costs or hardship, i.e. so non specific payments are allocated to the current year's liability.

How does Wolverhampton Council have its computer software set to deal with non specific payments. Current or oldest year's liability?

Our software uses a set of 26 rules to try to match any payment against various combinations of expected amounts. If a payment fails to match all 26 rules it will be allocated to the current year's liability.