

Your council tax

2013-2014

Including Hampshire Police Authority policing budget and priorities

A message from Councillor David Pugh

Leader of the Isle of Wight Council

In setting this year's budget, we have been very mindful that the current economic climate remains difficult for many Islanders.

That's why the budget addresses two main themes - helping Island Households and Supporting the Local Economy.

Though freezing Council Tax for a third successive year, the budget nevertheless invests in key areas – such as adult social care and keeping children safe – while supporting other schemes that will improve the lives of residents and businesses.

Steps to help Island households include:

- once again freezing council tax;
- giving households flexibility to make council tax payments over 12 months as opposed to the customary ten;
- supporting several initiatives to reduce energy costs including the Big Green Deal and Big Wight Switch collective energy switch;
- freezing parking charges for a fifth year;
- establishing a £350,000 local assistance scheme to support residents in genuine financial hardship;
- making housing accessible and affordable to those in need including a First Time Buyer Fund helping people

onto the property ladder and a new housing allocations policy rewarding residents who contribute to the community;

- providing £60,000 to support the community bus initiative.

Initiatives supporting the economy include:

- continuing the award-winning pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programmes that have helped nearly 100 young residents;
- a careers and jobs fair in the autumn following an event last year attended by 500 young people;
- continued support of the Solent Ocean Energy Centre test and demonstration facility for tidal power devices planned for the seabed off St Catherine's which could create 600 Solent jobs;
- investing £3 million to ensure rural areas receive superfast broadband;
- supporting Visit Isle of Wight by £340,000 a year.

We continue to reduce costs and since 2010/11, £14 million has been found from staffing budgets. In 2012/13 over 90 percent of required savings came from back office functions and this year all savings will come from this area.

Contacting the Isle of Wight Council

Website: www.iwight.com

It is possible to **find out about, pay for, report on, comment on** or **complain about** a service through the A to Z of services on our website.

Phone: contact centre 01983 821000

For information on any council-related service, telephone our contact centre where an advisor will deal with your enquiry.

- Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm
- Saturday, 9am to 1pm

For enquiries regarding the following services, please dial:

Automated payments	0207 1381970
Building control	01983 823580
Business rates	01983 823920
Children's and young people's services	01983 823455
Council tax	01983 823901
Highways	01983 823777
Housing benefits	01983 823950
Housing services	01983 823040
Parking services	01983 823714
Planning	01983 823552
Registrars	01983 823233
Waste collection	01983 823777

Face to face

If you need to visit us for assistance with your enquiries, the council's Help Centre is available. For opening times and further information on where you can visit please call **01983 821000** or refer to our website.

Email: customer.services@iow.gov.uk

Your guide to the council's budget

The Isle of Wight Council believes it is important to provide you with information about your council tax bill.

The following pages give you details of the council's budget for 2013-2014 and explains how your council tax bill is calculated.

If you would like more information about the Isle of Wight Council and its services, please contact us in one of the following ways:

Telephone: (01983) 821000

Email: customer.services@iow.gov.uk

Website: www.iwight.com

Extra spending by the council
£5,067,000

Increased investment in key priorities
£3,600,000

Net cost of maintaining existing service levels
£1,467,000

Net Government grant changes
£4,800,000

Spending changes

The Isle of Wight Council plans to spend £316.1 million in 2013-2014 on providing services for Islanders.

After deducting grants and income of £182.9 million, the net budget is £133.2 million. This is £1.014 million higher than the 2012-2013 budget.

Budget gap

The budget gap will be funded during 2013-14 in the ways shown below.

Management and business infrastructure costs

£5,346,000

Increased income generation

£521,000

Savings from realigned services

£1,700,000

Total savings and increased income

£7,567,000

New homes bonus and health grant

£1,286,000

Factors which offset budget gap

£8,853,000

Net budget increase

£1,014,000

Where the money comes from

The money the council uses to provide services comes from sources including:

- business rates;
- revenue support grant (RSG);
- the council tax, freeze grant and Localised Council Tax support scheme grants;
- government grants for specific services and projects;
- dedicated schools' grant;
- income from charging and contributions for certain services;

A Dedicated Schools' Grant*

23.2% (£73,511,000)

B Council Tax and 2013/14 Council Tax Freeze Grant

19.4% (£61,312,000)

C Business Rate Retention Scheme

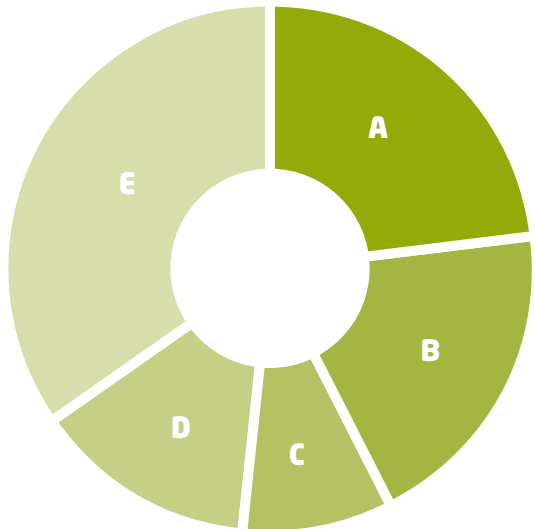
9.1% (£28,627,000)

D Revenue Support grant

13.6% (£43,031,000)

E Fees, charges, contributions and other grants

34.7% (£109,629,000)



*Provisional figure pending confirmation from the Department for Education.

Investing in the future

In addition to its day to day spending, the council also plans to invest £27 million in projects which support its key priorities including:

Housing – in addition to continuing to offer disabled facilities grants (£1.3million) and working with developers to develop affordable housing (£1.2million), the council is also planning to commit £1 million to the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme which in partnership with lenders will support first time buyers in the housing market.

Superfast broadband – the council has set aside £3 million over two years which has been matched by a further £3 million from the Government to rollout superfast broadband.

SEEDA land sites – £1 million has been set aside to assist in meeting infrastructure requirements to encourage early development.

SOEC – £1 million has been allocated to secure the licences and permissions to develop the first phase of the Solent Ocean Energy Centre and attract private investment in future years.

Heritage Strategy - £3.5 million has been allocated over two years to fund the development of suitable accommodation for the island's heritage collections.

Fire – continuing investment of £1 million in new fire vehicles and appliances.

Approximately £15 million of this investment programme will be funded from government grants and sale of assets. Prudential borrowing will be used where necessary to augment these resources.

At 31 March 2012 our total net borrowings were £125.6 million.

Council workforce

At the end of December 2012 the council employed the equivalent of 3,640 full time posts (3,337 permanent and 303 temporary). This compares with the equivalent of 3,520 full time posts (3,251 permanent and 269 temporary) at 31 December 2011. This increase is due to 153 additional schools based staff offset by a reduction on other staff of 33.

Where the money will go in 2013-14

	This year £'000	Last year £'000
Adult social services	63,496	60,467
Housing services ¹	61,752	76,098
Schools budgets ²	81,721	87,431
LEA budget ³	12,952	16,220
Children's services	19,484	19,201
Fire service	7,628	7,369
Environmental services	2,380	2,155
Community safety	3,647	4,247
Street & beach cleansing	2,019	2,027
Waste management	9,543	9,390
Highways including PFI	9,335	10,576
Car parking ⁴	1,804	2,083
Street lighting	938	956
Public transport support	5,935	6,356
Planning and development control	3,218	3,964
Recreation & sport	4,114	4,116

	This year £'000	Last year £'000
Parks & open spaces	1,703	2,164
Economic & tourism development ⁵	1,144	1,223
Cultural, leisure & libraries	3,934	3,878
Public health ⁵	5,922	2,850
One-off initiatives in 2012-13 (waste & economy/tourism) ⁶	0	2,050
Other services	8,099	8,919
Other financing	5,342	4,610
Gross Expenditure	316,110	338,350
Less: Income ¹	-182,866	-206,120
Net budget requirement	133,244	132,230
RSG & Business Rate Retention Scheme ¹	-71,658	-58,771
Freeze grant & transitional grant	-996	-1,798
Collection Fund deficit	108	158
Council Tax Requirement¹	60,698	71,819

¹ The new Localised Council Tax Support scheme starts on 1 April 2013. Due to the way that the scheme is funded there has been a reduction in Housing services expenditure, a reduction in subsidy included on the income line and an increase in grant within the Revenue Support Grant (RSG)/Business Rate Retention Scheme. The Council Tax Requirement has also reduced as a result of a lower tax base. The 2012-13 budget has been adjusted to allow a proper comparison following significant changes to other grant funding arrangements.

² The reduction in the schools' budget reflects the funding arrangements for newly created academy schools which receive their funding direct from the Department for Education.

³ The reduction in the LEA budget reflects the lower overhead costs resulting from having fewer Local Authority controlled schools following re-organisation and the creation of academy schools.

⁴ Car parking is expenditure on the service; income is included in the income line.

⁵ Responsibility for Public health services will transfer from the Department of Health on 1 April 2013. The figure in 2012-13 relates to the Substance Misuse budget which was previously included under Adult Social Services. All expenditure is being funded from a specific grant, which is included in the income line.

⁶ The one-off initiatives in 2012-13 relate to £1.00 million for the Waste Management strategy, £0.55 million for Economic Improvement, £0.10 million for the Tourism DMO and £0.40 million of Government funded Leader projects, which have now ceased. Economic improvement initiatives in 2013/14 are set out in the capital budget and include the Solent Ocean Energy Centre and superfast broadband.

Four factors that affect what you pay

1 The level of tax set by the Isle of Wight Council

The level of tax set by the council to cover the cost of services it will provide in 2013-14 is unchanged from 2012-13. By setting a zero increase the council will receive a grant equivalent to a one per cent increase.

2 The property band you are in

The value of your property, on 1 April 1991, will have been assessed by the independent listing officer, a central government agent. Your property will then have been placed in one of eight bands – your bill will show which one.

Want to appeal against your property banding?

Further information about this is provided on page 12 & 13 of this booklet.

3 The level of spending set independently by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire

The element of council tax that relates to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire will increase by 3.4 per cent in 2013-14, equivalent to 9p per week more for a band C taxpayer.

4 Charges for local services

Your bill includes an amount towards the cost of the town or parish council for the area in which you live.

Band	Value of property 1 April 1991	Proportion of band D	Council tax (IW Council element)
A	Up to £40,000	6/9	859.87 716.56*
B	£40,001 to £52,000	7/9	1,003.18
C	£52,001 to £68,000	8/9	1,146.49
D	£68,001 to £88,000	9/9	1,289.80
E	£88,001 to £120,000	11/9	1,576.42
F	£120,001 to £160,000	13/9	1,863.04
G	£160,001 to £320,000	15/9	2,149.67
H	Over £320,000	18/9	2,579.60

* Disabled reduction

Council, police, parishes and towns

This table shows the combined costs for a band D council tax payer. The figures include the Isle of Wight Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Island's town and parish councils.

	£ per band D	£ Total 2013-2014	£ Total 2012-2013		£ per band D	£ Total 2013-2014	£ Total 2012-2013
Isle of Wight Council	1,289.80	60,697,988	71,818,644	Lake	19.61	29,476	37,500
Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire	151.25	7,117,825	8,143,493	Nettlestone & Seaview	17.23	29,020	29,070
Parish/town councils				Newchurch	13.43	12,951	14,880
Arreton	18.53	6,797	7,172	Newport	16.36	108,367	126,678
Bembridge	58.12	112,020	117,000	Niton & Whitwell	14.71	12,863	14,200
Brading	82.20	56,777	68,570	Northwood	16.35	13,503	14,000
Brighstone	23.91	18,551	20,179	Rookley	24.08	5,566	6,130
Calbourne	34.29	12,404	12,000	Ryde	38.14	266,898	331,100
Chale	30.71	6,535	8,600	Sandown	62.65	128,500	122,000
Chillerton & Gatcombe	38.07	6,769	7,530	Shalfleet	37.07	25,316	27,849
Cowes	21.44	81,821	86,700	Shanklin	39.33	120,792	145,898
East Cowes	36.01	75,784	85,000	Shorwell	17.91	5,289	6,000
Fishbourne	34.00	13,741	8,638	St Helens	37.10	19,190	21,650
Freshwater	50.03	109,959	104,140	Totland	37.27	44,778	48,735
Godshill	23.74	12,639	14,500	Ventnor	55.04	125,437	135,000
Gurnard	41.14	30,552	32,000	Whippingham	39.34	12,000	10,750
Havenstreet & Ashey	22.12	6,816	7,778	Wootton Bridge	45.42	59,101	65,000
				Wroxall	17.21	9,315	10,870
				Yarmouth	44.89	21,982	22,350

The 2013-14 precept amounts for the Isle of Wight Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Parish and Town Councils are shown net of Government Grant received relating to the Localised Council Tax Support scheme.

The council is required to show costs in this table as they affect band D council taxpayers. In accordance with government guidelines we are required to detail parish or town council precepts exceeding £140,000. This is shown in the table below:

	Gross spend	Income	Reserve movement	Budget requirement 2013-2014	Budget requirement 2012-2013
Ryde Town Council	£375,650	-£82,102	-£26,650	£266,898	£331,100

Commentary by individual parish or town councils in respect of their budget for 2013-14 is provided in appropriate parish communications such as newsletters or websites.



Paying for your policing

Police and Crime Commissioner sets his first annual budget

A message from Simon Hayes, Police and Crime Commissioner serving Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

“Government cuts have forced me to raise the policing element of the Council Tax in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for 2013/14. This is the first time in two years the policing element of the council tax has risen, but I have been left with no choice if people want to carry on receiving a top standard of service from their police service.

“Each year of a council tax freeze creates additional financial pressure in the short and medium term. This cannot continue if crime concerns of people in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight are to be addressed. I have therefore agreed a rise of 3.4 per cent, equivalent to 10p a week for a Band D household.

“This rise has been limited by £36m of savings made in the past two years, but the people of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight have told me they want to see a reduction in crime and better service for victims and witnesses. My Police and Crime Plan will set out how this will be done, but Government cutbacks mean I can’t achieve my priorities without raising the policing element of the council tax bill.”

Police funding

The majority of police funding (69 per cent) comes through Government grants, with the remaining 31 per cent coming from the council tax precept. The 2013-14 budget for the Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire Constabulary is £310.3m. It is broken down as follows:

Local policing	£131.3m	43%
Crime, custody and criminal justice	£59.4m	20%
Corporate support	£44.9m	14%
Public services	£22.6m	7%
Operations	£20.0m	6%
General	£12.5m	4%
Tasking and co-ordination	£11.7m	4%
Risk management	£4.2m	1%
Police and Crime Commissioner priorities	£2.0m	1%
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	£1.4m	<1%
Chief Constable and ACPO	£0.3m	<1%

Further Information

Please contact your local council if you have any queries about your council tax bill or council tax support.

For more details about the budget set by the Police and Crime Commissioner, please visit www.hampshire-pcc.gov.uk.
For queries:

Email: opcc@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

Phone: 01962 871595

Post: Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Westgate Chambers, Staple Gardens, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8AW.

Council tax - explanatory notes

This information forms part of your bill

Council tax valuation bands

The council tax helps to pay for local services like policing and rubbish collection. It applies to all domestic properties, including houses, bungalows, flats, maisonettes, mobile homes and houseboats, whether owned or rented.

Each dwelling has been placed in one of eight bands according to its market value on 1 April 1991. The market value range is important, as this decides which council tax band applies. These ranges are fixed by the Government and have not changed since the start of council tax in 1993. The Isle of Wight Council is not responsible for the valuations; these are undertaken by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA).

The valuation band and values are as follows:

- A** Up to £40,000
- B** £40,001 - £52,000
- C** £52,001 - £68,000
- D** £68,001 - £88,000
- E** £88,001 - £120,000
- F** £120,001 - £160,000
- G** £160,001 - £320,000
- H** Over £320,000

Valuation banding proposals

If you are responsible for paying the council tax, or an agent acting on behalf of someone who is, you may make a formal proposal against your council tax band. The circumstances in which you can make a formal proposal are very limited but if you have a genuine concern that your home may be in the wrong band, you should contact your local valuation office and ask to have your band reviewed. The occasions when a challenge by 'proposal' is permitted include the following:

- Property demolished.
- If part of the property has been separately banded but should now be banded as one.
- Physical changes in the locality affecting values .
- Within six months of a band change to your property by the listing officer.

If you think you meet one of the above by which a valid proposal can be made – for example, if you have moved into a property within the last six months and you think the band is wrong you can complete a proposal form online, at www.voa.gov.uk

or in writing to:

Listing Officer,
Valuation Office Agency,
Council Tax West,
Overline House,
Blechynden Terrace,
Southampton
SO15 1GW

Tel: 03000 501501

Fax: 03000 504370

Email ctwest@voa.gsi.gov.uk

Making a proposal does not allow you to withhold payment of your council tax. If your proposal is successful you will be refunded any money you have overpaid.

You can only appeal a VOA decision if your case has been accepted as a valid proposal. An appeal must be lodged with the valuation tribunal within three months of the decision, at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk

Appeals

As well as banding issues you may appeal if:

- you have been billed for council tax but do not believe you are responsible for paying the tax as you do not fall into one of the owner/occupier categories;

- you have claimed a discount or exemption and this has been refused;
- you think any item on your bill has been calculated incorrectly.

To appeal about these matters, please mark your letter or email 'APPEAL' and send it to:

Isle of Wight Council Offices,
Broadway,
Sandown,
Isle of Wight
PO36 9EA

Email: council.tax@iow.gov.uk

We should respond to your appeal within two months. If you are not satisfied with the response, or you do not get a reply, you may apply to a tribunal to hear your appeal. Certain time limits apply. More details can be found at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk

How to contact us

Tel: 01983 823901

(Lines are open between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday, 9am and 1pm, Saturday).

Email: council.tax@iow.gov.uk

Fax: 01983 823900

Or you can write to the address shown above.

Council tax reductions

Changes to discounts and exemptions from 1 April 2013.

The Local Government Finance Bill 2012 amends the Local Government Finance Act 1992 allowing local discretion over the implementation of certain discounts and charges applied within council tax.

To see the Isle of Wight Council policy for the reductions applying to second home discounts and empty properties visit www.iwight.com – council tax reductions.

Second homes/empty but furnished

Isle of Wight Council has resolved to remove this discount and therefore from 1 April 2013 owners of second homes will pay 100 per cent council tax.

Empty Properties less than six months

Isle of Wight Council has resolved that from 1 April 2013 a 100 per cent discount will apply for the first three months a property becomes empty and unfurnished and thereafter a nil discount will apply from month four onwards. Consequently a full 100 per cent empty property charge will be payable from the fourth month a property becomes empty. If your property is already empty prior to 1 April 2013, entitlement to the 100 per cent discount after this will

depend on the date the property first became unoccupied and substantially unfurnished.

Properties in need of major repair or work/structural alteration to make them habitable

Isle of Wight Council has resolved that provided a property meets the criteria, a 75 per cent discount will apply from 1 April 2013 for a period not exceeding 12 months from the date the criteria was first met.

Premium

Government legislation enables councils to have the discretion to levy up to 50 per cent extra where a property has been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished in excess of two years. Isle of Wight Council has resolved to implement a 50 per cent levy resulting in a charge of 150 per cent from 1 April 2013.

Exempt properties

Council tax is not charged on some properties (known as exempt properties), including empty properties which are:

- owned by charities (this lasts for up to six months);
- annexes (granny flats) which cannot be let separately without breaching planning conditions;
- not allowed to be lived in by law;
- repossessed;

- waiting to be lived in by a minister of religion;
- deceased person's former dwelling (may be exempt for up to six months after probate granted);
- left empty by a bankrupt;
- left empty by students, prisoners, patients in hospitals or care homes, people receiving or providing care elsewhere.

Other exempt properties are:

- homes lived in only by people with severe mental impairment;
- halls of residence;
- homes lived in only by students;
- homes lived in only by persons under 18;
- dwellings which form part of a single property and which are occupied by a dependant relative/relatives of the family living in the rest of the building (eg, properties with an annexe or similar self-contained unit);
- armed forces accommodation, owned by the Ministry of Defence;
- visiting forces accommodation.

For further information visit www.iwight.com – council tax reductions.

Discounts

The full council tax bill assumes that there are two adults (over 18) living

in a property. If only one adult lives in a dwelling (as their main home) the council tax bill will be reduced by 25 per cent. In some cases, even if two adults live in the property you may still qualify for a discount, examples are, if one adult is:

- a full time carer;
- a student, student nurse or foreign language assistant;
- an apprentice;
- suffering from severe mental impairment;
- 18 or 19 years old and still in education;
- over 18 who have child benefit paid for them ;
- a school or college leaver aged under 20;
- student;
- on a youth training scheme;
- long-term resident of hospitals, residential care home or nursing home;
- volunteer care worker;
- providing care for someone they live with;
- a member of religious communities;
- a member of international headquarters, defence organisations and visiting forces;
- in prison or detention (except for non-payment of fines or local taxes);
- staying in hostels or night shelters.

A property will count as someone's main home if it is furnished and it is the only property owned/rented, however if you are contracted to live elsewhere then a reduction may apply.

- You can apply for a 50 per cent discount if you are required to live elsewhere for work; you must also send us full details of where and for whom you work together with a copy of your contract which states that you must live at that address to conduct your employment effectively.
- If your property is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished a 100 per cent discount can apply for a period up to three months, after which a full charge will apply.
- If a property is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished and in need of, or undergoing major repair work to render it habitable, then a 75 per cent discount may apply for a period not exceeding 12 months, after which a full charge will apply.

Relief for people with disabilities

If your household includes a person with a disability and they use a wheelchair at home or need an extra bathroom or room adapted to meet their special needs they may be entitled to an adjustment to the council tax

valuation band. The room or the wheelchair must also be essential or of major importance to the disabled person's wellbeing, due to the nature and extent of their disability.

The relief is granted by charging council tax based on the next lowest band. Even if your household is in band A, you will still get a reduction.

Application forms for 'disabled relief' are available on www.iwight.com by searching council tax under A-Z council services.

Discounts have been granted based on existing council tax records and will be shown on the front of your bill. If you have not been allowed a discount but think you are entitled to one, you should contact us. If you believe you have been allowed a discount you are not entitled to **you must tell us within a period of 21 days of this belief** or you may have to pay a £70 penalty. For more information visit www.iwight.com or contact the council tax office on 01983 823901.

Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, inserted by section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003

This gave councils new powers to create their own discounts and exemptions, including powers to grant relief on a

case by case basis of between one and 100 per cent. Any discount given has to be met by the council.

The council has the power to agree discounts but is not obliged to do so as council tax is a tax related to property and not directly to the provision of any specific services. Any specific application for discount is referred to the cabinet member for resources, under his/her delegated authority, and he/she decides on the merits of the case.

How to pay your council tax

Paying by Direct Debit

Collecting local taxation by direct debit is much cheaper for the council as it saves substantial administrative time and expense, such savings free more council funds for providing local services.

We offer a choice of payment dates – **1st, 10th or 20th** of the month and half-yearly (**two instalments 1 April and 1 September**). visit www.iwight.com/online and select “apply online” to download a Direct Debit instruction for completion or contact the Council Tax Office on **01983 823901**.

You can now pay council tax over twelve monthly instalments from April 2013 to March 2014 inclusive. To request this now go to **www.iwight.com/iwforms/12instalments**.

Any delay means your request may not allow sufficient time to start the new instalment plan in time for 2013/14.

Privacy notice

The Isle of Wight Council as data controller will process your personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The personal details provided by you may be shared with other departments within the council for the recovery of any debts, for providing assistance in relation to tenancies, blue badge applications, maximising claimants' income bringing empty properties back into use and to identify persons responsible for business rates and/or council tax. The departments include council tax, benefits, parking services, business rates, electoral registration, housing services, supporting people, blue badge team, community services financial assessment and sundry debts (including housing benefit overpayments).

The council may also be required to disclose personal information to third parties (such as the police or Department for Work and Pensions) for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime or apprehending or prosecuting offenders.

The council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers, and to this end may use council tax information for the prevention and detection of fraud. It may also share this information

with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.

The council is required under section 6 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 to participate in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercise. Council tax data will be provided to the Audit Commission for NFI and will be used for cross-system and cross-authority comparison with other relevant organisations' data for the prevention and detection of fraud.

Local council tax support

From 1 April 2013 council tax benefit has been replaced with local council tax support. Those people receiving council tax benefit in March 2013 were automatically assessed to determine if they qualify for the new local council tax support.

If you are in receipt of income support, jobseekers allowance, employment support allowance, pension credits, other state benefit or low income, you may qualify for local council tax support. If your joint capital e.g. savings or investments, exceeds £16,000 you are unlikely to qualify for support from the main scheme, unless you receive

pension credit (guarantee element). Any application form for local council tax support should be returned without delay to avoid loss of support as entitlement is normally considered from the Monday following the date a claim is received.

From 1 April 2013 anyone making a claim via the Department for Works and Pensions will also need to contact the local council to claim local council tax support if they are liable to pay council tax.

Second adult rebate

This is a form of local council tax support that is only available to those who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit or to student households. This may be available to council tax payers who share their home with someone on a low income but who do not have a partner or a paying lodger. It may be payable even if the council tax payer has a high income themselves and would not normally qualify for any benefits or local council tax support.

Application forms and further advice on local council tax support are available from www.iwight.com or contact the benefit office, **Tel 01983 823950** or email: **housing.benefit@iow.gov.uk**

Please note:

If you are eligible for housing benefit

but are not entitled to local council tax support, you are responsible for making a further claim for local council tax support if your income reduces and you may become entitled to some assistance. As local council tax support is normally considered from the Monday following the date a claim is received you must request a new application for local council tax support immediately.

Fraud Hotline: 01983 823969 – If you know someone who is fraudulently claiming local council tax support or housing benefit please call our hotline, your call will be dealt with confidentially. Email: benefit.fraud@iow.gov.uk

Your rights

The council wishes to give the best possible service and hopes to resolve your concerns quickly, if you have a complaint about council services please make it to the council department concerned. If we cannot deal with your concerns ourselves, or if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your complaint, you can talk to the local government ombudsman advice team on 0300 061 0614 or go to their website at www.lgo.org.uk. Alternatively you can write to:

The Local Government Ombudsman,
PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH

Non-domestic rates explained

Non-domestic rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Under the business rates retention arrangements introduced from 1 April 2013, authorities keep a proportion of the business rates paid locally. This provides a direct financial incentive for authorities to work with local businesses to create a favourable local environment for growth since authorities will benefit from growth in business rates revenues. The money, together with revenue from council tax payers, revenue support grant provided by the Government and certain other sums, is used to pay for the services provided by your local authority and other local authorities in your area. Further information about the business rates system, including transitional and other reliefs, may be obtained at www.gov.uk

Rateable value

Apart from properties that are exempt from business rates, each non-domestic property has a rateable value which is set by the valuation officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of Her Majesty's Revenue and

Customs. They draw up and maintain a full list of all rateable values, available on their website at www.voa.gov.uk.

The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of the bill. This broadly represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for on the open market on a particular date. For the revaluation that came into effect on 1 April 2010, this date was set as 1 April 2008.

The valuation officer may alter the value if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can appeal against the value shown in the list if they believe it is wrong. Further information about the grounds on which appeals may be made and the process for doing so can be found on the VOA website or from your local valuation office.

National non-domestic rating multiplier

The local authority works out the business rates bill by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate multiplier. There are two multipliers; the standard non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier. The

former is higher to pay for small business rate relief. Except in the City of London where special arrangements apply, the Government sets the multipliers for each financial year for the whole of England according to formulae set by legislation. Between revaluations the multipliers change each year in line with inflation and to take account of the cost of small business rate relief. In the year of revaluation the multipliers are rebased to account for overall changes to total rateable value and to ensure that the revaluation does not raise extra money for Government. The current multipliers are shown on the front of your bill.

Revaluation 2010 and transitional arrangements

All rateable values are generally reassessed every five years at a general revaluation to ensure bills paid by any one ratepayer reflect changes over time in the value of their property relative to others. The current rating list is based on the 2010 revaluation. Subject to royal assent being granted to the Growth and Infrastructure Bill, the next revaluation will be postponed until 2017 to provide greater stability for businesses to encourage economic growth. Five-yearly revaluations will continue from 2017. Revaluation does not raise extra money for Government.

The Government's written ministerial statement on the postponement can be found at the following link:

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm121112/wmstext/121112m0001.htm

For those ratepayers who would otherwise have seen significant increases in their rates liability, the Government has put in place a £2 billion transitional relief scheme to limit and phase in changes in rate bills as a result of the 2010 revaluation. To help pay for the limits on increases in bills, there were also limits on reductions in bills. Under the transition scheme, limits continue to apply to yearly increases and decreases until the full amount is due (rateable value times the appropriate multiplier). The scheme applies only to the bill based on a property at the time of the revaluation. If there are any changes to the property after 1 April 2010, transitional arrangements will not normally apply to the part of a bill that relates to any increase in rateable value due to those changes. Changes to your bill as a result of other reasons (such as because of changes to the amount of small business rate relief) are not covered by the transitional arrangements.

The transitional arrangements are

applied automatically and are shown on the front of this bill.

More information on revaluation 2010 can be found at www.voa.gov.uk.

Unoccupied property rating

Business rates will not be payable in the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain industrial properties. After this period rates are payable in full unless the unoccupied property rate has been reduced by the Government by order. In most cases the unoccupied property rate is zero for properties owned by charities and community amateur sports clubs. In addition, there are a number of exemptions from the unoccupied property rate. Full details on exemptions can be obtained from the local authority. If the unoccupied property rate for the financial year has been reduced by order, it will be shown on the front of the bill.

The Government is introducing a new temporary measure for unoccupied new builds from October 2013. Unoccupied new builds will be exempt from unoccupied property rates for up to 18 months (up to state aid limits) where the property comes on to the list between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016. The 18 month period includes the

initial three or six month exemption and so properties may, if unoccupied, be exempt from nondomestic rates for up to an extra 15 or 12 months.

Partly occupied property relief

A ratepayer is liable for the full non-domestic rate whether a property is wholly occupied or only partly occupied. Where a property is partly occupied for a short time, the local authority has discretion in certain cases to award relief in respect of the unoccupied part. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

Small business rate relief

Ratepayers who are not entitled to another mandatory relief or are liable for unoccupied property rates and occupy a property with a rateable value which does not exceed £17,999 outside London or £25,499 in London will have their bill calculated using the lower small business non-domestic rating multiplier, rather than the national non domestic rating multiplier.

In addition, generally, if the sole or main property is shown on the rating list with a rateable value which does not exceed £12,000, the ratepayer will receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property of up to a

maximum of 50 per cent for a property with a rateable value of not more than £6,000. However, until 31 March 2014 the Government has doubled the usual level of relief.

This percentage reduction (relief) is only available to ratepayers who occupy either:

- a) one property; or
- b) one main property and other additional properties providing those additional properties each have a rateable value which does not exceed £2,599.

The rateable value of the property mentioned in (a), or the aggregate rateable value of all the properties mentioned in (b), must not exceed £17,999 outside London or £25,499 in London on each day for which relief is being sought. If the rateable value, or aggregate rateable value, increases above those levels, relief will cease from the day of the increase.

An application for small business rate relief is not required. Where a ratepayer meets the eligibility criteria and has not received the relief they should contact their local authority. Provided the ratepayer continues to satisfy the conditions for relief which apply at the relevant time as regards the

property and the ratepayer, they will automatically continue to receive relief in each new valuation period.

Certain changes in circumstances will need to be notified to the local authority by a ratepayer who is in receipt of relief (other changes will be picked up by the local authority). The changes which must be notified are-

- a) **The ratepayer taking up occupation of an additional property; and**
- b) **An increase in the rateable value of a property occupied by the ratepayer in an area other than the area of the local authority which granted the relief.**

Charity and community amateur sports club (CASC) relief

Charities and registered community amateur sports clubs are entitled to 80 per cent relief where the property is occupied by the charity or the club, and is wholly or mainly used for the charitable purposes of the charity (or of that and other charities), or for the purposes of the club (or of that and other clubs).

The local authority has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill. Full

details can be obtained from the local authority by contacting the business rates section on (01983) 823920.

Local discounts

Local authorities have a general power to grant discretionary local discounts. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

Hardship relief

The local authority has discretion to give hardship relief in specific circumstances. Full details can be obtained from the local authority.

Rate relief for businesses in rural areas

Certain types of properties in a rural settlement with a population below 3,000 may be entitled to relief. The property must be the only general store, the only post office or a food shop and have a rateable value of less than £8,500, or the only public house or the only petrol station and have a rateable value of less than £12,500. The property has to be occupied. An eligible ratepayer is entitled to relief at 50 per cent of the full charge whilst the local authority also has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill.

Full details can be obtained from the

local authority.

Cancellation of backdated rates liability

The Government has put in place regulations to allow for the cancellation of certain backdated business rates liabilities. The relevant regulations, the Non-Domestic Rating (Cancellation of Backdated Liabilities) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/ 537), can be found on the www.legislation.gov.uk website.

Information on the type of backdated rates liability that can be cancelled is available with the business rates information letter titled 'Cancellation of Backdated Rates':

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8187/Business_Rates_Information_Letter_4-2012.pdf

Rating advisers

Ratepayers do not have to be represented in discussions about their rateable value or their rates bill. Appeals against rateable values can be made free of charge. However, ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be aware that members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS, website www.rics.org.uk) and the Institute of Revenues Rating and

Valuation (IRRV, website www.irrv.org.uk) are qualified and are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public from misconduct. Before you employ a rating adviser, you should check they have the necessary knowledge and expertise, as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Take great care and, if necessary, seek further advice before entering into any contract.

Information supplied with demand notices

Information relating to the relevant and previous financial years in regard to the gross expenditure of the local authority is available at www.iwight.com – Financial Management.

A hard copy is available on request by writing to the council or tel: 01983 823920.

How to pay your business rates

Paying by direct debit

Collecting local taxation by direct debit is much cheaper for the council as it saves substantial administrative time and expense, such savings free more council funds for providing local services.

We offer a choice of payment dates – **first, 10th or 20th** of the month and **half-yearly (two instalments 1 April and 1 September)**. Go to www.iwight.com/online and select 'apply online' to download a direct debit instruction for completion or contact the business rates office on 01983 823920.



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This publication is available on request in large print, audiotape or Braille and in other languages. For further details please contact the Isle of Wight Council on (01983) 821000 (Typetalk available)