



12 January 2022

Dear Local Authority Civil Enforcement Forum Secretariat,

### **Council Tax Liability Order Refunds**

We are writing to notify you of the Ministry of Justice's plans for discharging our outstanding liability owed to local authorities in relation to overcharged magistrate court fees paid for council tax liability orders applied for between April 2014 and July 2018.

By way of background, following a review conducted by Ministry of Justice officials in 2018, it was identified that these court fees were inadvertently set above the cost of service. During the above period the relevant fee was set at £3 whereas the cost to HMCTS to process the application was 50p – resulting in a £2.50 overcharge that now needs to be refunded. Since this issue was identified we have been undertaking a detailed analysis of our fee payment records, to calculate what each member should be entitled to including any interest subsequently accrued.

In order to be able to discharge our duty in this regard, we are now seeking your assistance to help disseminate information to your members, so we can identify the right contacts in each organisation/authority in order to discuss with them any refund we may owe.

We would be extremely grateful if you can help notify your members of this issue and ask the relevant department in each local authority who may be affected by this issue to contact us at the following email address **Civil\_Refunds@justice.gov.uk**

To expedite the process of making payments, it would be helpful if local authorities can also provide the following information when they make contact with us, so we can set them up on our internal payment system in advance:

- Payee Name
- Primary Address
- Primary Contact and remittance Email Address
- CPID Reference
- VAT Registration Number
- Duns Number
- Bank or Building Society Name
- Account Name

- Account Number
- Sort Code

As soon as we have identified the right contact in each local authority to liaise with, we will formally write to each payee to confirm their entitled refund amount. If the payee disagrees or has any questions, they will have the opportunity to raise them with the Department at this stage and bring any supporting evidence to our attention.

Once an agreement is reached, we plan to automatically provide the entitled refund by payment transfer via our internal payment systems at the earliest possible opportunity.

If you have any questions or concerns on this matter or would like additional information, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

Yours faithfully,

FEES POLICY TEAM