

A summons has been issued by a Magistrates Court because you have not paid your Business Rates in accordance with your bill instalments and reminders. You have now lost the right to pay by instalments and the full amount, plus costs, is now due. If this leaflet does not answer your questions please contact us.

Do I have to attend court?

No – this summons is a notice that the Council has applied for a Liability Order in your name/company name. The hearing is a block application for many accounts at the same time and is not for you as an individual or business.

What happens at the court hearing?

The Council will make a block application to the court to grant liability orders on all outstanding Business Rates accounts. ***Your name is not read out and it will not appear in the local paper.*** If you decide to attend, there will be Council officers there to talk to beforehand about your payment options.

What is a liability order?

A liability order confirms that you are the correct named person(s) or company on this account and it gives the Council further powers to recover the outstanding amounts from you.

How can I stop any further action?

If you pay the outstanding money in full, plus the costs of this summons, a liability order will not be requested and no further action will be taken. You must do this before the hearing date.

Can I make a payment arrangement?

Yes, and we encourage you to contact us to do so. We have set a provisional payment plan up for you and all you have to do is agree to it. If you make these payments on time, no further action will be taken.

I am not liable at this address, what are my options?

If you believe that a mistake has been made or your circumstances have changed then please contact us as soon as possible. The Council makes all efforts to issue summonses correctly but occasionally mistakes are made and we can only fix it if you tell us.

What happens next?

At the hearing, the court will grant a liability order which gives the Council further powers to recover the debt from you using other methods. We prefer to make a payment arrangement with you but if you do not do this,

we have several options available to us. The main recovery options are:

Enforcement agencies or bailiffs – your account will be sent to a bailiff who will contact you directly and may visit your premises. There may be additional costs to pay.

Commence Insolvency proceedings – this action would both seek to wind up your company and put it into liquidation or make you bankrupt if you are a sole trader.

Commence committal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for non-payment which may result in a term of imprisonment being granted by the Magistrates.

Further information regarding bankruptcy can be found at www.insolvency.gov.uk

What if I cannot afford the payments?

Many people fall into debt at some point in their lives and we aim to make affordable payment plans to help you. We encourage you to talk to us as soon as possible about your payments and options. Talking to us now may prevent any further action being taken.

I am happy with the payment plan you have suggested, what do I need to do?

To agree to the payment plan, please contact us by telephone or email. If you contact us before your account is sent to an enforcement agent, we can normally make a flexible arrangement with you and can help you decide which payment method is best for you.

How can I make payments?

There are several ways to pay your Business Rates:

- By Direct Debit – go on line or call us
- Using your barcoded bill at any Post Office or PayPoint
- Online at www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk
- Over the phone by calling 01254 389 178 (automated) or 01254 388 111

Payments are not made to the Court Clerks.

Where can I get money management advice?

Money Advice Service – 0300 500 5000
www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

National Debt Helpline – 0808 808 4000
www.nationaldebtline.org

Debt Advice Foundation – 0800 043 4050
www.debtadvicefoundation.org

Business Debtline – 0800 197 6026
www.businessdebtline.org

Contact Us

We are available Monday –Friday 9am to 5pm
(Wednesdays from 10am)

www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/businessrates

Telephone: 01254 388 111

Email: enquiries@hyndburnbc.gov.uk

Face to face appointments are available, please call or email us to book.

Write to us at Accrington Town Hall, Broadway
Offices, Accrington, BB5 1EZ



Your Business Rates Summons Explained