



## WARNING: Offers of Council Tax Reduction

Following an earlier warning that went out on 21 December 2011, Trading Standards would like to **again** alert members to be cautious if receiving a telephone call from anyone offering to help reduce council tax payments.

**Several more residents** have reported receiving a telephone call from a company offering to assist in making a claim to reduce their council tax banding cost. The caller will have 'a patter' they may say they can assist with making a claim as your property is banded incorrectly. They may also claim they can help to reduce your bill if you are the sole occupant. **The fact is that there is no need for assistance as anyone can do this for themselves. Please do not engage with the caller and do not give out any personal details.**

If you feel that the band on your home is wrong, then all you have to do is contact the **Valuation Office Agency** and explain why you think it is incorrect. You will also be asked to confirm that the details held about your home are correct. They will listen to your views and if they agree that the band is wrong, will change it. *Bands can occasionally go up as well as down.*

To have your council tax band checked free of charge, contact the **Valuation Office Agency on 03000 501 501**. Alternatively go to <http://www.direct.gov.uk/> scroll down to **home and community** then click on **council tax** which will then take you to the correct page.

Please report any incidents of a similar nature to Cheshire Police on 101. Alternatively call Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111 where you can pass the information on anonymously or use the 'giving information form' on their website [www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

If you need to report an incident as an emergency please contact the Police on 999.

You can contact your local council to discuss any further issues you may have relating to Council Tax payments

- Warrington Borough Council: 01925 44 33 22
- Halton Borough Council: 0303 333 43 00

**Please pass this information to family members, friends, neighbours and anyone you think maybe vulnerable.**

For general consumer advice please contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 or go to <http://www.direct.gov.uk/>

Go to <http://www.tswarrington.co.uk/> to view or download previous iCAN messages

Email: [Tradingstandards@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:Tradingstandards@warrington.gov.uk)

Promoting fair & safe trading, protecting you

**5 January 2012**

