

What happens to my appeal at the Valuation Tribunal?

The Tribunal will consider your appeal to ensure that it is within their jurisdiction. If it is not within their jurisdiction the Tribunal will write to you explaining their intention to strike the appeal out.

If the appeal is within the Tribunals jurisdiction your appeal will be registered and then listed for a hearing. You will be sent a notice saying when and where the hearing will be.

More information is available on their website:

www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/your-appeal-type/council-tax/council-tax-reduction/

During this time you may want to continue to discuss your case with the Council and you may want to refer to the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme policy on your Councils website.

The Council will send you and the Valuation Tribunal a copy of the evidence the Council will be asking for the Tribunal to hear about your case.

Nearer the hearing date the Valuation Tribunal will contact you to see if you are coming to the hearing. It is helpful if you come to the hearing to answer any questions the panel has. However, the Valuation Tribunal is able to make arrangements to hear the appeal in your absence. The Valuation Tribunal will provide more detail about the hearing when they send you a hearing notice.

You may be told the Tribunal's decision at the hearing or they aim to send you the decision in writing within one month of the hearing. A copy of the decision will also be sent to the Council. The Council must follow the Tribunal's decision.

Who to contact

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact your local Benefits Office.

Telephone: **0345 034 4569**

Email: **svpp@poole.gov.uk**

Postal address: **Stour Valley & Poole Partnership, PO Box 722, Poole, BH15 2YE**

You may get Independent Advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau;

To speak to an assessor at Dorset Adviceline please phone **0344 245 1291** (using a landline calls are charged at 5p per minute from mobile networks this can be considerably more), this line is open Monday to Friday 10am-4pm.

Stour Valley & Poole Partnership

Council Tax Support Appeal Procedure

Every effort has been made to ensure the details given in this leaflet are correct but the information should not be treated as an authoritative statement of the regulations.

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Council Tax Support Appeal Procedure

When should I appeal?

You should appeal after you have asked for the Council Tax Support decision you disagree with to be reconsidered by the Council.

To request a reconsideration of a Council Tax Support decision you must write to the Benefits Service explaining why you disagree with the Council Tax Support decision. Your written request must clearly state why you disagree with the decision. We will look again at the decision. We will consider your views, look at your representations and decide if the original decision is correct. We will then advise you of the outcome by letter. This letter should be sent to you within two months of receiving your request for the Council Tax Support decision to be reconsidered. The letter will either confirm the original decision of the Council or will amend it.

Please read this letter carefully as it will explain the decision. It will also explain your rights to appeal.

If you disagree with a Council Tax Benefit decision, please refer to the leaflet 'Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit Appeal Procedure'.

What can I do if I still do not agree with the decision?

If you are not happy with the Council's reply, you can appeal to the Valuation Tribunal. The Valuation Tribunal is an independent body. The law states that your appeal must be made within two months of the date of the Council's reply.

Before appealing you may wish to seek further independent advice.

If the Council has not replied to your letter requesting a reconsideration of the decision within two months, you can appeal to the Valuation Tribunal as long as not more than four months has passed since you wrote to the Council.

What is the role of the Valuation Tribunal for resolving disputes?

- It must apply the rules of the Council Tax Support scheme
- The Valuation Tribunal can only consider an appeal against the amount of Council Tax you have to pay for the following reasons;

You think that, under the rules of the Council Tax Support scheme, the Council should have given you a reduction on the Council Tax you have to pay, or

You think the amount of Council Tax Support the Council has given you under the Council Tax Support scheme is not correct.

The Valuation Tribunal cannot consider an appeal about the rules that the Council has put in place in the Council Tax Support scheme, only about how the rules have been applied to your case.

How do I appeal?

You can complete an appeal form on-line at: www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk/your-appeal-type/council-tax/council-tax-reduction/

What is the Valuation Tribunal?

The Valuation Tribunal is an independent appeals tribunal, funded by Parliament to handle Council Tax and Rating appeals in England. It has no connection with the Council or the Valuation Office Agency. It provides a free service and local hearings. It will decide if the Council's decision is right or wrong. The Valuation Tribunal panel will consider all the issues relevant to the decision and consider why you think the decision is wrong.

The Tribunal aims to be as informal as possible, but as a judicial body its hearings are in public (unless there are exceptional grounds for the hearing to be in private) and structured and there is therefore some formality in the proceedings.

You may present your own case or be represented or assisted by someone else. There are no fees to be paid and the service is entirely free. The Valuation Tribunal cannot pay anyone's expenses or order anyone to pay the costs or expenses of the other side, whatever the outcome of the appeal. You can ask the Tribunal for the appeal to be heard without the need for you to attend a hearing.

The Valuation Tribunal may strike out an appeal which is outside the Tribunal's jurisdiction or where there is no reasonable prospect of the appeal succeeding. An appeal would be considered outside of the tribunal's jurisdiction where the appeal is a challenge to the Council's Council Tax Support scheme rather than to the application of that scheme to your Council Tax Support decision.