

Fraudsters have been phoning victims telling them that they have been placed in the wrong council tax bracket for a number of years and are entitled to a rebate. They normally say that this rebate should be worth about £7,000. Once the victim is convinced, the fraudster tells them that in order to receive the rebate they will need to pay an administration fee in advance. The payment they ask for varies between £60-£350. The victim provides the details and makes the payment, but then is no longer able to make contact with the person they spoke to on the phone. When they phone their council about the rebate and the fact that they are in the wrong tax bracket, the council will confirm that they know nothing about it and that they have been contacted by fraudsters.

The fraudsters have mainly been targeting both male and female victims who are aged 60 and over and live in the Sussex area, but it is likely that the fraudsters will also start to target victims in other areas.

#### Protect Yourself:

- Never respond to unsolicited phone calls.
- Your local council won't ever phone out-of-the-blue to discuss a council tax rebate. If you receive a call of this nature, put the phone down straight away.
- No legitimate organisation will ask you to pay an advanced fee in order to receive money, so never give them your card details.
- If you think you have been a victim of fraud, hang up the phone and wait five minutes to clear the line as fraudsters sometimes keep the line open. Then call your bank or card issuer to report the fraud. Where it is possible use a different phone line to make the phone call.

If you believe that you have been a victim of fraud you can report it online [http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report\\_fraud](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud) or by telephone 0300 123 2040.