

Record of Officer's Decision

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

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| Date of Decision: | 19 th September 2024 |
| Decision Maker (Officer): | Richard Barrett – Assistant Director (Finance & IT) |
| Authority for Delegated Decision (Cabinet/Committee Decision or Scheme of Delegation – provide reference): | <p>Part 3, Schedule 3 – Responsibility for Executive Functions delegated to Officers paragraph 4.3 (1) – the Corporate Director has delegated authority to discharge executive functions within their respective service areas (Part 3.38). All delegations are subject to consultation where considered appropriate in the circumstances (paragraph 4.3 (4)(ii) – Part 3.39).</p> <p>The Assistant Director (Finance & IT) has delegated authority to discharge executive functions within the respective service areas (Part3.39)</p> |
| Identify which Portfolio Holder(s)/Committee Chairman consulted? | Portfolio Holder not consulted |
| Ward Member(s) consulted? | N/A |
| Is it a Key Decision? | No |
| Is it subject to call-in? | No |
| Decision Made: | To enter a Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the DWP controlling access to the information held by them. |
| Reason for Decision (if a report was produced to support the Decision, refer to or attach it): | To ensure continued access to the data held by the DWP that supports the Council's role in assessing and completing claims such as "housing benefit & local council tax support" claims. |

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| <p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p> | <p>Without the agreement the Council will not have access to the DWP's platform for the data necessary to carry out housing benefit claims, and which will increase the lead time for completing claims that will have an impact on customers, and residents.</p> <p>The DWP make payment to the Council to perform certain tasks through the access provided so that if access were to be lost to the Council, then there would be a financial impact.</p> <p>Losing access to the DWP's systems would also have a further financial impact as we would have to contact customers direct for any information to complete HB/CTR claims. That would lead to an increase in costs including postage, stationary and staff time. Having information direct from the DWP also assists in the prevention of fraud.</p> <p>In addition agreeing the MOU continues to provide those who have a legal gateway to Northgate with that access enabling them to see data which may have been received from the DWP.</p> <p>As a system sponsor we mitigate risk to the system as a whole by ensuring that any staff member with access to Northgate has the relevant BPSS check carried out as required within the MOU.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Details of any Alternative Options Considered and rejected (together with reasons):</p> | <p>Without the MOU agreement there are no alternatives to sharing data with the DWP. The only other route to ascertain the information would be direct from the customer.</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Details of any declarations of interest (by Portfolio Holder/Committee Chairman who was consulted by the officer, which related to the decision)</p> <p>If relevant, a note of the dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer:</p> | <p>N/A</p> | | | | | | |
| <p>Reason Decision, or supporting Report, is not published:</p> | <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="576 1738 635 1809"></td> <td data-bbox="635 1738 1382 1809">Not applicable – Decision [and report] to be published</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="576 1809 1382 1883" style="text-align: center;">If Report is not to be published – tick one of the following boxes:</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="576 1883 635 1964"></td> <td data-bbox="635 1883 1382 1964">The report supporting the Decision contains confidential information</td> </tr> </table> | | Not applicable – Decision [and report] to be published | If Report is not to be published – tick one of the following boxes: | | | The report supporting the Decision contains confidential information |
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| | The report supporting the Decision contains confidential information | | | | | | |

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| <p><i>Tick one or more of the specific exemptions,</i></p> <p><u>and</u></p> <p><i>Give more information in the final box with regards to why the exemption applies and outweighs the public interest test (which is in favour of disclosure).</i></p> | | The Report supporting the Decision falls within an exemption pursuant to Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 Information: |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to an individual |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to reveal the identity of an individual |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating to financial or business affairs of a person or organisation |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to a claim for legal professional privilege in legal proceedings |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reveals that the Council proposes to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or to make an order or direction under any enactment |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime |
| <p><u>And</u> is exempt if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information</p> <p>Reasons: [insert]</p> | | |

Officers

Signed: Title: Revenues & Financial Support Manager

Signed: Title: Asst. Revenues & Financial Support Manager

In consultation with:

Signed: **Portfolio Holder For Housing**

Signed: **Section 151 Officer (if required)**

Signed: **Monitoring Officer (if required)**

Dated: