

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

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Mr. John O'Callaghan-Williamson
request-423296-0ea99a1c@whatdotheyknow.com

01 November 2017

Dear Mr. O'Callaghan-Williamson

Request for Internal Review (IR) under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) – case 1097288

We have investigated your internal review request which the H&F InTouch team received on 6 September 2017, and passed to H&F's Information Management Team (IMT) on 12 September 2017.

Internal Review outcome

We uphold your complaint as:

- H&F holds further information which should have been included in the response to your request for information (RFI).

We are therefore disclosing the additional information which should have been sent to you, in the following pages, and in the attached document:

- '1097288 – Additional Disclosure'.

On the following pages we have set out:

- details of your internal review request
- the actions we took to investigate this matter
- who you should contact if you are unhappy with our internal review response.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Kelly
Senior Information Management Officer

NOTE: Please contact H&FInTouch@lbhf.gov.uk with all new requests for information, including personal information, or data protection complaints.

Veronica Barella
H&F Interim Chief Information Officer

Details of your internal review request and our investigation

Your internal review request

We have summarised our understanding of your internal review request:

- You sent a request for information (RFI) to H&F on 04 August 2017. The RFI asked for all information relating to the process, policy(ies) and protocol relating to the assessment, criteria, and assessment process relating to the application, assessment and award of (a) designated disabled parking bays, and (b) regular disabled parking bays, both on the public highway and on council housing estates, including:
 - details of any third parties involved i.e. medical practitioners, appeals.
 - an overview of the delegated decision makers involved.
- The RFI response stated that it was providing you with the information which H&F held which was covered by your request, and attached copies of the council's criteria for personalised and standard parking bays, and application forms for these bays.
- You subsequently filed this internal review request, stating that H&F had provided some of the information requested but not all of it. You raised the following queries in relation to information which you say H&F has not provided:
 1. Details of the internal process, protocol etc.
 2. Third parties involved i.e. who undertakes your medical assessments?
 3. Appeal process etc.
 4. "General principals" indicate a summary of a much larger process details of which you haven't provided.
 5. The time frames involved would be key information.
 6. How are staff guided internally or is this just a 'Free for all'?

Copies of your RFI, the council's RFI response, and your internal review request, are **attached**.

Our investigation

We contacted the Transport and Highways service area for their help in investigating your internal review request, as they are responsible for disabled parking bays.

Transport and Highways have confirmed that, in error, not all of the information which they hold, which falls within the scope of your request, was included in the RFI response. The additional information was not included when the RFI response was prepared, because it was thought, in error, that the information you were seeking was the information contained in the council's criteria for personalised and standard parking bays, and the application forms for these bays. We apologise that the additional information held by H&F, was not included in the RFI response.

We have set out in italics below, the numbered queries raised in your internal review request, together with the additional information supplied by Transport and Highways, which falls within the scope of your request.

Your Queries Regarding the RFI Response and H&F Responses

1. *The RFI Response did not include Details of the internal process, protocol etc.*
Information about the policy and procedures relating to applications for disabled parking bays are contained in H&F's Policy for the Provision of Disabled Parking Places and Doctor Parking Places which is available on the H&F website, together with the Cabinet Member decision dated 5 June 2008, on adoption of this policy. This policy is located at:

<http://democracy.lbhf.gov.uk/documents/s1160/CMDDisabled%20andDoctorsBayPolicytcm21-100821.pdf>

I have also **attached** a document labelled 'Internal Process', outlining internal procedures for processing disabled parking bay applications. This document is contained in the attachment labelled '1097288 – Additional Disclosure'.

H&F's website also contains a section containing information about applying for disabled parking bays. The home page for this information is located at:

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/health-and-care/getting-around/disabled-parking-bays>

2. *Third parties involved i.e. who undertakes your medical assessments?*

The assessments are carried out by external occupational therapists. Please see information regarding the assessments in H&F's Policy for the Provision of Disabled Parking Places and Doctor Parking Places (link provided above).

3. *Appeal process etc.*

Information regarding the appeal/internal review process is set out in H&F's Policy for the Provision of Disabled Parking Places and Doctor Parking Places (link provided above). I have **attached**, in the attachment labelled '1097288 – Additional Disclosure', a sample copy of a refusal letter for a disabled parking bay application, which contains details of how to file an appeal.

The appeal process includes a review of the applicant's mobility assessment by a further external occupational therapist. The nature of the assessment is detailed in the **attached** sample letter regarding an appeal outcome.

4. *"General principals" indicate a summary of a much larger process details of which you haven't provided.*

The 'general principles' are based on H&F's Policy for the Provision of Disabled Parking Places and Doctor Parking Places (link provided above).

5. *The time frames involved would be key information.*

As stated in the attached document labelled 'Internal Process', when submitting an application for a disabled parking bay, applicants are required to sign a declaration stating that they understand that a successful application process can take up to five months. The time involved can vary, based on time needed for medical assessments, advertisement of the disabled parking bay proposal, etc.

6. *How are staff guided internally or is this just a 'Free for all'?*

As stated above, the process of handling applications for disabled parking bays is guided by H&F's Policy for the Provision of Disabled Parking Places and Doctor Parking Places (link provided above).

Why did H&F's Information Management Team investigate your internal review request?

H&F's Information Management Team (IMT) investigate complaints that are made to the council about how the council processes requests for information and complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

This includes investigating complaints about:

- whether H&F holds requested information.

What can you do if you aren't happy with the council's response?

You can appeal to the Information Commissioner if you aren't happy with how H&F has handled your internal review request. There is no charge for making an appeal.

You can do this by:

- **Writing** to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
- **Emailing** casework@ico.org.uk
- **Visiting** the ICO's website www.ico.org.uk/concerns/

The ICO are the UK's independent authority set up to uphold information rights in the public interest.

More information about the ICO is available on their website or by calling their helpline: 0303 123 1113.