

Information Governance Appeals Notice

This document outlines the appeals process that services users can exercise if unhappy with the way in which a request for information has been handled. This document covers requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004, and Data Protection legislation.

Appeals regarding Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Requests

If you are dissatisfied in the way in which the Council has responded to your request for information under the FOI Act or EIR then you may request that the Council conducts a statutory *Internal Review*. You may wish to request such a review if you:

- are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled,
- do not agree with an exemption that has been applied to the information you have requested,
- believe that not all of the information has been provided to you.

Upon receipt the Information Governance Manager will appoint an officer to handle your complaint. Where possible the appointed officer will not have had any involvement in your original request. The reviewing officer will then examine your original request and the response that was sent to you and decide whether the Council responded to your request appropriately according to legislative requirements. The reviewing officer will also decide whether to uphold or overturn decisions to withhold information.

The Council will conduct FOI and EIR Internal Reviews *within 20 Working Days*.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to an Internal Review, you may appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (see page 3).

Appeals regarding Subject Access Requests (SAR) and other Data Protection requests or concerns

If you are dissatisfied in the way in which the Council has responded to your Subject Access Request or other Data Protection request/concern then you may request that the Council conducts an *Internal Review*. Unlike with the FOI/EIR process this is *not* a statutory requirement but is instead a stage that the Council has chosen to adopt. You may wish to request such a review if you:

- are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled,
- do not agree with an exemption that has been applied to the information you have requested,
- believe that not all of the information has been provided to you.

Upon receipt the Information Governance Team will appoint an officer to handle your complaint. Where possible the appointed officer will not have had any involvement in your original request. The reviewing officer will then examine your original request and the response that was sent to you and decide whether the Council responded to your request appropriately according to legislative requirements. The reviewing officer will also decide whether to uphold or overturn decisions to withhold information.

The Council will conduct Data Protection Internal Reviews within 30 Calendar Days.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to an Internal Review, you may appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (see page 3).

How to Request an Internal Review

To request an Internal Review, you should contact the Information Governance Team on the below contact details:

Information Governance Team
North Yorkshire Council
County Hall
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8AL
Email: infogov@northyorks.gov.uk
Telephone: 01904 552848

When requesting an Internal Review, you should supply the following information:

- Your name (so that we can identify you and your request)
- Your contact details (so that we can contact you with our response)
- Request reference number (this should have been provided to you when the Council responded to your original request)
- Reasons why you are dissatisfied with the response to your request

The Information Governance Office will acknowledge your request for an internal review within 5 working days and advise you of timescales for responding.

Please be aware that Internal Reviews will not usually be conducted if 2 Calendar Months have passed since your request was responded to.

After the Council has considered your appeal

If, following the completion of an internal review, you remain dissatisfied with the way in which the Council has handled your request then you may appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO is the UK's Freedom of Information and Data Protection Regulator.

You can do this via the ICO's website:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

ICO helpline: 0303 123 1113.

Normal opening hours are Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm (excluding bank holidays).

If you are dissatisfied with the ICO's response to your complaint, then you may be able to take your complaint to the information tribunal. The ICO will give you details about this when they issue their decision notice.