

Reference: 14711209
Date: 18 February 2020

Dear Mr Brown

Re: Freedom of Information Act 2000

We write in reference to your Freedom of Information request.

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides two distinct but related rights of access to information which impose corresponding duties on public authorities. These are:

- The duty to inform the applicant whether or not information is held by the authority and, if so,
- The duty to communicate that information to the applicant

We can confirm that the information requested is held by The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham. I have detailed below the information that is being released to you.

1. How many people have their housing benefit paid directly to their landlord? In last year?

3580 claims

*2. What is the Council criteria for having the housing benefit element paid directly to a landlord?
Eg private tenant*

If you are a private tenant we will normally pay Housing Benefit directly to you, rather than to your landlord. We can only pay Housing Benefit directly to your landlord if you are in 8 weeks or more rent arrears, if you are unlikely to pay the rent or have difficulty managing your finances, or if you are considered to be vulnerable.

Internal Review Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request then you have a right under Section 50 of the Act to request an internal review. All such requests must be sent to us within 8 weeks and must clearly state your reference number and your reason for your request for an internal review.

We will respond to your request for an internal review within 20 working days of receipt. Your request for an internal review should be sent by email to foi@lbbd.gov.uk quoting your FOI reference number.

Information Commissioners Office

Should you remain dissatisfied with the final outcome of the internal review then you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner (the "ICO") for an independent review. The ICO is the Government's Independent Body responsible for overseeing the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and The Environmental Information Regulations 2004. Please note the ICO will only review cases that have exhausted the council's internal review procedure. All correspondence to the ICO must quote the council's reference number and your reasons for your appeal. The ICO's contact details are as follows;

The Information Commissioners Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane, Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

More information can be found at the ICO's website at <http://www.ico.org.uk> If you have any further enquiries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us by emailing foi@lbbd.gov.uk

We trust you find the above to be satisfactory but should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

The FOI Team