



**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council

Professor Steven Broomhead  
Chief Executive

Ermine Amies,  
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New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH

26<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Our ref: **FOI/CORP/3351**

Dear Ermine Amies,

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – Internal Review**

Thank you for your email dated the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 requesting an internal review of the way in which the Council has handled your Freedom of Information (FOI) request.

Furthermore, please can we apologise for the delay in providing a response to your FOI internal review request.

Your concerns were raised regarding the omission of information requested by yourself and that you couldn't accept that we didn't hold or share information around communications from Stonewall including policy advice on HR policies from Stonewall and requests for awareness raising on the GRA and other matters

An internal review has been held with the appropriate staff and below is the findings to support your request with additional information provided. All questions from the original FOI request have been revisited with the below outcomes.

1. Any application you made in 2019 or 2020 to be a "Stonewall Diversity Champion" or to be included on Stonewalls "Workplace Equality Index," including any attachments or appendices to those applications. Please redact personal details if necessary.

**Answer:** The Council joined the Diversity Champions Programme in 2019 and renewed its membership in 2020. The Council has not submitted an application to the Workplace Equality Index as we were not in a position to due to the reason being that we would not have met all of the criteria and the impact of the pandemic on Council resources in 2020. The criteria was sent to us via email as an attachment from the clients' accounts manager on the 1st April 2020

2. Any feedback you received in 2019 or 2020 from Stonewall in relation to either application or programme.

**Answer:** As a member of the Diversity Champions Programme the Council has access to a dedicated account manager who provides support and advice

on specific LGBT+ matters in Warrington. Access to a wide range of online training, resources and networking opportunities are provided. In detail on the 1<sup>st</sup> April we received an email with the two guides attached for the LGBT network groups

- Setting up a LGBT employee group
- Finding your collective voice

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> April another email was received attaching two reviewed policies with comments inserted by the client account manager.

- Adoption Leave Policy
- Maternity Leave Policy

There were several emails that have been shared and came directly from the client accounts manager. The majority of these contained details of events, training and national LGBTQ+ visibility days and other key equality diversity and inclusion events.

From - 14.5.20 to 12.5.21 we have received 19 emails over 12 month period  
Additionally we have 37 archived emails from 26.3.19 to 7.5.20.

3. Any other communication you have received from Stonewall in 2019 or 2020 unless privileged or otherwise exempt from disclosure (but if you claim privilege or exemption in relation to any material, please say in broad terms what the material is and the basis on which you claim to be entitled to withhold it).

Answer: The Council receives regular newsletters from the Stonewall Account Manager and the national organisation. Information about training events and networking opportunities are also received from Stonewall.

Furthermore we have received emails from Stonewall. These similarly contained Stonewall newsletters, events, training and national LGBTQ+ visibility days and other key equality diversity and inclusion events

From the 14.5.20 to 12.5.21 we received 9 emails in a 12 month period  
Again we have 15 archived emails from 26.3.19 to 7.5.20.

There were two administrators that would receive this detail their job titles are:

- Business Intelligence Officer
- Head of HR and OD

4. Full details of any equality impact assessment you carried out connected with any of these applications (including any equality impact assessment carried out prior to an earlier application of the same kind, if no further assessment was done).

Answer: No equality impact assessment was carried out. Therefore, we do not hold the information as specified within your request.

5. Details of the total amount of money you paid to Stonewall (i) in 2019; (ii) in 2020, whether or not as payment for goods or services.

Answer: The annual membership fee for the Diversity Champions Programme is £2,500. The Council has not paid for any specific goods or services.

6. Whether you intend to continue your membership of any Stonewall scheme in the future, and if so which.

Answer: Since the original response was provided to you, the Council has decided not to review the membership which will expire this month.

We would like to apologise on behalf of the Council regarding the initial response to your FOI request that was provided to you, as we do believe the information provided as part of this review could have been shared with you and this would have hopefully satisfied your original request.

We will make sure the lessons learnt from this request will be shared internally with the teams involved and to ensure improvements can be made in the future.

If, following the outcome of the internal review, you remain dissatisfied with the Council's response to your information request, you have the right under section 50 of the FOIA to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113  
Fax: 01625 545 510  
Email: [enquiries@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ico.gsi.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely,

**FOI Internal Review Team**  
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