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Information Sharing Agreement for the Administration of Debt Management in North and North East Lincolnshire Councils' Local Taxation & Benefits Shared Service



Maintenance and control of this document is undertaken by North and North East Lincolnshire Council.

Tier 3 - Operational Management Information Sharing Agreement

1. Introduction

This Agreement has been developed as a result of the arrangement between North and North East Lincolnshire Councils to work collaboratively to deliver a Local Taxation and Benefits (LT&B) Shared Service.

The Agreement covers the sharing of identifiable confidential & sensitive information between the councils' LT&B teams as detailed in the tier 2 Strategic Purpose Information Sharing Protocol.

The Agreement is supported by the over-arching legal agreement signed by both councils.

2. Legislation

The sharing of information is allowable under the:

- Local Government Act 2000,
- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- Data Protection Act 1998,
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Social Security Regulations 2012 and 2013,
- Social Security Amendment and Prescribed Bodies Regulations 2013 and
- Section 131 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012,

Information will be used and shared for the purposes detailed in the tier 2 Strategic Purpose Information Sharing Protocol.

3. Data Controllers

North and North East Lincolnshire Councils are the data controllers for the purpose of the Data Protection Act. They will not share information about any persons for whom they hold data, with any other agency or organisation unless allowed by law.

Subject access requests will be handled in accordance with the policies of each authority and as required by the Data Protection Act.

4. Information Format

Information will be shared by allowing authorised officers access to the established IT systems in which the information is stored.

Some information may also be shared in electronic documents and files via the Government Secure Intranet email system (GSi). Officers with access to this system have agreed to comply with the security rules of each authority and the Government Secure Intranet Code of Connection (GSi CoCo).

5. Information Security and Confidentiality

Transfers of data between each authority and other agencies or organisations will be limited to when necessary for integrated working or when required by law. Any transfers will be via secure email (GCSX) using password protected or encrypted files and documents.

Data will also be shared across sites using prescribed software and remote connections which are protected against unlawful access.

Requests for access to information from any person about themselves, will be dealt with in accordance with the legislation previously listed and as per the policies of each authority.

The storage of records is subject to the relevant legislation already listed and the records management policies of each authority.

The retention and destruction arrangements for the information held will be subject to the relevant legislation already listed and the retention and disposal standards of each authority.

Requests from third parties will be subject to the relevant legislation. Any information that cannot be shared under this legislation will only be shared with the signed authority of the individual the information relates to, unless it is required to:

- Prevent or detect crime, or
- Protect public funds.

6. Client Consent to Share Information

All sharing of information not allowable under the aforementioned legislation will be subject to the consent of the individual, based on a signed agreement made at the time of application for Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Free School Meals and/or a Community Support Grant or at any other time during the life of the claim. Clients have the right to withdraw this consent at any time.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Access to information will be granted to the appropriate officers within the LT&B service in order for them to process claims and changes to claims, deal with customer queries, and check that claims are assessed correctly.

Only staff who have a have a legitimate need to know the information will be allowed access.

All staff have a contractual obligation to adhere to the legislation relating to confidentiality and information sharing and the information security policies and procedures in place at both councils.


Audit and security checks will be undertaken to ensure that staff do not breach legislation and policies.


8. Monitoring / Review

The Local Taxation and Benefits Technical Support & Development Manager will be responsible for the management and monitoring of information sharing, and all queries relating to this should be directed to them in the first instance.

The Agreement will be reviewed annually or at any point, which may necessitate a change in the Agreement, such as additional signatories or a change to legislation or the Information Sharing Policy within the signatory organisations.

9. Signatories

| North East Lincolnshire Council | |
|--|---|
| Address | Hewson House, Station Road, Brigg, North Lincolnshire, DN20 8XB |
| Responsible Manager | Richard Catlyn |
| Contact Details | <u>Richard.catlyn@northlincs.gov.uk</u> Tel 07730014137 |
| Authorised Signatory/Date |  20/11/14 |

| North Lincolnshire Council | |
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| Address | Civic Offices, Knoll Street, Cleethorpes, North East Lincolnshire, DN35 8LN |
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| Authorised Signatory/Date |  20/11/14 |

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