
RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INTERNAL REVIEW - FOI-7860

1 message

FOI Officer <FOI.Officer@northtyneside.gov.uk>
To: "owen.boswarva@gmail.com" <owen.boswarva@gmail.com>

1 May 2026 at 10:06

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INTERNAL REVIEW

In all further correspondence please quote our reference FOI-7860.

Good morning, Mr Boswarva

The Authority has completed its consideration of your request for an internal review of the decision to issue a refusal notice under section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), vexatious request.

We confirm that, following review, the original decision is upheld.

The justification for this decision is outlined below.

The Authority considers that correspondence with you has reached a point where, regardless of the information disclosed, it is unlikely to lead to an outcome you would regard as satisfactory.

Where a request is made solely or primarily to generate further material to challenge a previous response or to support an anticipated complaint to the Information Commissioner, rather than to seek information for its own substantive value, the ICO's guidance recognises that this may indicate an inappropriate use of the Freedom of Information Act. In this context, the request does not have sufficient independent purpose or value to justify the continued and disproportionate burden placed on the Authority.

Your request (FOI-7860) is explicitly linked to your previous request and correspondence (FOI-7516) and focuses on challenging the Authority's handling of that request rather than seeking information for a genuine or constructive purpose. As such, dealing with this request represents a disproportionate and unjustified burden on the Authority's resources.

The ICO and Tribunal have consistently recognised that a cumulative burden, rather than the cost or scope of a single request in isolation, is a legitimate consideration under section 14(1) (*Craven v IC and DECC* [2012] UKUT 442 (AAC); ICO section 14 guidance).

The continued submission of a "request about a request", rather than progressing a complaint to the ICO following the internal review, represents an attempt to circumvent the statutory complaints framework, which the ICO has accepted as an indicator of vexatiousness in multiple decision notices.

This determination to uphold the decision has therefore been made considering:

- The cumulative burden created by handling your FOI requests and extensive subsequent correspondence
- The repeated unwillingness to accept the outcome of the internal review of the original request (FOI-7516)
- The continued pursuit of "a request about a request", rather than progressing to the ICO, which circumvents the established FOIA complaints process.
- Advice was sought from the ICO on 26 March 2026 in relation to this request.

The Authority has already expended a significant and disproportionate amount of officer time and resources responding to your requests and correspondence.

In response to your comments regarding the Authority's continued engagement in relation to FOI-7516, where no statutory obligation existed, we confirm that this was undertaken in order to be as helpful as possible and in line with our duty under section 16 of FOIA (Advice and Assistance).

Throughout our correspondence, the Authority has sought to support you by responding openly, accurately, and within the parameters of Freedom of Information legislation. Where you remained dissatisfied with the outcome, the appropriate course of action was to escalate the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which always remained available to you.

The Authority therefore maintains that FOI-7860 is vexatious under section 14(1) of the Act and stands by its original response.

This request is now closed. The Authority will not engage in any further correspondence on this matter.

If you remain dissatisfied, you have the right to raise your complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office, which is the appropriate next step.

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ico.org.uk

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Information Governance and Compliance Officer

Information Governance Team

Governance

North Tyneside Council

Tel: (0191) 643 2333*



From: FOI Officer <FOI.Officer@northtyneside.gov.uk>

Sent: 02 April 2026 15:33

To: Owen Boswarva <owen.boswarva@gmail.com>

Subject: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INTERNAL REVIEW - FOI-7860

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INTERNAL REVIEW

In all further correspondence please quote our reference FOI-7860.

Your request for an internal review was received on 01/04/2026 and the Council is dealing with it under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

As required by the Information Commissioner's guidance the Council aims to respond to the internal review no later than 20 working days after receipt. This has been calculated to be 01/05/2026.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards



Information Governance and Compliance Officer

Information Governance Team

Governance

North Tyneside Council

Tel: (0191) 643 2333



From: Owen Boswarva <owen.boswarva@gmail.com>

Sent: 01 April 2026 15:54

To: FOI Officer <FOI.Officer@northtyneside.gov.uk>

Subject: Request for internal review: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - FOI-7860

Dear Information Governance and Compliance Officer,

Thank you for your email below, which I have understood to be a response to the "meta-request" that I submitted to the Council on 24 March 2026 (your reference FOI-7860). That request was mainly for information related to the handling of my previous information requests submitted on 2 February 2026 (your reference FOI-7516).

I have understood that the Council is refusing to comply with my new request for information on the basis that the request is vexatious within the meaning of section 14 of the FOI Act.

This is a request for an internal review of the Council's handling of my new request reference FOI-7860. Please consider in particular the following points.

The Council has conflated my new request with correspondence from my previous requests (reference FOI-7860), which it has listed and which it characterises as burdensome:

"When considered together, these contacts form a continuing attempt to revisit matters that have already been addressed through the FOI process.

"The cumulative impact of this pattern has created a significant and ongoing burden on the Authority's resources. The correspondence demonstrates a level of persistence focused on challenging the handling and outcome of your previous FOI request, rather than seeking new information that the Authority holds."

In my view the volume of correspondence listed by the Council is not at all unusual, given that my requests of 2 February 2026 covered both access to information (handled under the FOI Act) and re-use of information (handled under the RPSI regulations), that the requested information was of a technical nature and subject to third-party intellectual property rights, and that an internal review was carried out by the Council.

It is clear from reading the correspondence that all communications were iterative rather than repetitive, and necessary to resolve issues with the Council's handling of my requests. For example the Council's internal review led to disclosure of information that was withheld in the Council's original response, and the exchange of emails on 23 March 2026 culminated in clarification of the Council's permission for re-use of that information.

Contrary to the Council's claim, I have not attempted to "revisit matters that have already been addressed through the FOI process." Following the outcome of the Council's internal review I clearly recognised that my next option was to make a complaint to the ICO, and that in the meantime the Council was under no obligation to correspond further with regard to my requests of 2 February 2026 (reference FOI-7516).

My new request of 24 March 2026 (reference FOI-7860) does not duplicate in any way my earlier access request – it is not "subsequent identical or substantially similar" within the meaning of section 14. The information in scope of my new request is mostly recent and should be readily available within the Council, if held. Handling of my new request is unlikely to be administratively burdensome.

As my new request is mainly for information related to the handling of my previous requests, there may of course be some overlap in subject matter. It is possible some of the information, if disclosed, could assist me in making a complaint to the ICO related to my previous requests. However, the submission of a new information request for that purpose is an entirely normal and proper use of the FOI Act.

I draw the Council's attention to the ICO's guidance on requests about previous information requests (meta requests): <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/requests-about-previous-information-requests-meta-requests/>. The ICO advises in that guidance that "you should only consider refusing a meta request as vexatious if you can point to specific evidence that the request will cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress on its own merits."

Thank you for your attention to this request for an internal review.

Kind regards,

Owen Boswarva

Contact details

e-mail: owen.boswarva@gmail.com

telephone: [REDACTED]

address: [REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **FOI Officer** <FOI.Officer@northynteside.gov.uk>

Date: Wed, 1 Apr 2026 at 14:20

Subject: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - FOI-7860

To: Owen Boswarva <owen.boswarva@gmail.com>

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In all further correspondence please quote our reference FOI-7860.

Your request for information under the above legislation has now been considered. Please see response below:

Response:

After reviewing your request, the Authority has decided to refuse it under **Section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000**, on the grounds that the request is vexatious.

The pattern and volume of your recent emails, place a disproportionate and unreasonable burden on the Council's resources. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) recognises that Section 14(1) may be applied where a requester submits overlapping or repetitive requests that have the effect of harassing the authority or causing unjustified disruption.

The decision is based on your recent correspondence for which a timeline of the email correspondence has been noted below for reference:

The original request (FOI-7516) was received:

02/02/2026 Initial request received (FOI-7516).

10/02/2026 Response disclosed to advise exempt in answer to this request under section 21 as the information requested is publicly available through the VOA Lookup Service.

A request for an internal review (IR) received:

10/02/2026 Internal Review (IR) requested for FOI-7516.

17/02/2026 IR response disclosed for FOI-7516. The Authority provided the available information in electronic format as requested.

Further email communications on the internal review response for FOI-7516 received:

17/02/2026 Correspondence received in relation to the information disclosed in the Internal Review Response for FOI-7516. These were in relation to further queries about the UPRNs (Unique Property Reference Numbers) and the re-use request.

05/03/2026 Response disclosed to the queries/Issues raised on the Internal Review Response for FOI-7516. Section 43 (2) applied for information would prejudice the commercial interests of both GeoPlace and Ordnance Survey.

05/03/2026 Correspondence received in relation to the information disclosed in the Internal Review Response for FOI-7516. These were again in relation to the UPRNs (Unique Property Reference Numbers) and the re-use request.

23/03/2026 Follow up correspondence received to chase the re-use request information for FOI-7516.

23/03/2026 Response to the Open Government Licence v3.0 request disclosed and link to the North Tyneside council webpage included.

23/03/2026 Correspondence received with enquiries about the information disclosed for the Open Government Licence v3.0 for FOI-7516.

23/03/2026 Response to Open Government Licence v3.0 query raised disclosed.

23/03/2026 Correspondence received with further enquiries about the information disclosed for the Open Government Licence v3.0 for FOI-7516.

23/03/2026 Response to Open Government Licence v3.0 query raised disclosed.

23/03/2026 Response to queries raised in relation to the UPRN's disclosed. The Authority stands by its original response to the IR.

24/03/2026 Correspondence received on information disclosed in the IR for FOI-7516 in relation to the UPRNs (Unique Property Reference Numbers).

24/03/2026 Response to queries raised for the IR for FOI-7516 in relation to the UPRN's disclosed and referred to ICO.

A new FOI request (FOI 7860) received on the same subject:

24/03/2026 A new FOI request received seeking internal emails, metadata, and handling notes relating to the earlier request (FOI 7516).

When considered together, these contacts form a continuing attempt to revisit matters that have already been addressed through the FOI process.

The cumulative impact of this pattern has created a significant and ongoing burden on the Authority's resources. The correspondence demonstrates a level of persistence focused on challenging the handling and outcome of your previous FOI request, rather than seeking new information that the Authority holds.

If you are not happy with the process or the information disclosed once an internal review has been completed, the appropriate route for raising any further concerns is to contact the Information Commissioner's Office.

The authority has been transparent throughout this process, completed the necessary due diligence, and released all information that we are able to provide.

For these reasons and considering the overall context and history of correspondence, the Authority considers that Section 14(1) applies in this instance.

Please note that an anonymised copy of this response may be published in our Disclosure Log where appropriate.

This is a record of responses to completed requests for information that the Council has received and dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004. The Disclosure Log is available online at the following address:

[Disclosure log | North Tyneside Council](#)

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I trust that this information answers your request, but if you have any further requests, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are unhappy with the way the Council has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. Please contact the Information Governance Team no later than 40 working days after the date of this letter, after which time we will consider the matter closed.

Information Governance

North Tyneside Council

Quadrant

The Silverlink North

Cobalt Business Park

North Tyneside

NE27 0BY

e-mail foi.officer@northtyneside.gov.uk

Further information is also available from the Information Commissioner at:

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

www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Kind regards

Information Governance and Compliance Officer

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