Revenues and Benefits Privacy Notice

Our core data protection obligations and commitments are set out in the Council's Corporate Privacy Notice and on our website at Data Protection – Privacy Notice.

This notice provides additional privacy information for individuals who engage with the Revenues & Benefits Service (previously known as Exchequer Services)

Purpose(s)

We collect and process your personal information for the following purpose(s):

- To assess and collect Council Tax, Business Rates and sundry debts;
- To assess eligibility for and administer Housing Benefit and Council Tax support;
- To assess eligibility for and administer grant schemes, including but not limited to, the Council Tax Energy Rebate Grant;
- To assess and administer repayments relating to Council Tax and Business Rate overpayments;
- To resolve queries and complaints made about the service;
- To collect debts owed to us;
- For crime prevention or detection of fraud, including the use of data-matching initiatives designed to protect public funds;
- To ensure safe systems of work for staff visiting/meeting with customers, for example in their homes;
- To prepare aggregated data and statistics which may be shared with internal and external stakeholders and for research. Where possible this will be done using depersonalised (anonymised or pseudonymised) data;
- For consultation purposes, in connection with the administration of Council Tax and Benefits (as required under Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992).
- To provide a telephony and web chat service to deal with your enquiries and provide advice and support with Council Tax, Business Rates, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support and sundry debts.

We use Amazon Connect when you call our service or interact with our webchat. This helps us improve how your enquiry is handled, by:

- quickly answering common questions
- providing us with call analysis information to help improve the service we provide

We do this in the interests of offering a good service to our customers and to protect public funds.

Categories of Personal Data

- Name;
- Date of Birth;

- Age;
- Address (current and forwarding);
- Contact details (email address, telephone number(s));
- National Insurance Number;
- Household composition (including dependents);
- Student status/education provider;
- Benefits information;
- Business information;
- Employment or self-employment information;
- Bank account information;
- Financial information (savings, capital, assets, income, expenditure, debt, insolvency, bankruptcy etc.);
- Tenancy and landlord details;
- Property information;
- Fees for Residential Homes and providers;
- Care provision and provider details; and
- Name and address of person acting on their behalf or Power of Attorney;
- Information provided by third parties such as Welfare Rights, CAB, Appeals Tribunals, GPs, Hospitals.

Special Category Data

We may also collect special category personal data that may include:

- Physical and mental Health data (for example, any disabilities, illnesses, mental health problems) insofar as it relates eligibility for benefits; and
- Racial or ethnic origin.

Legal Basis for Processing

We collect and use your personal information because:

- It is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation or statutory function of the Council under GDPR Article 6(1)(c). Such legal obligations and statutory functions are as set out in, but not limited to:
    - Local Government Finance Act 1992;
    - The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- It is necessary under GDPR Article 6(1)(e) for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Council (data controller); or
- You have given your consent under GDPR Article 6(1)(a).

If you fail to provide certain information when requested, we may not be able to adequately carry out the purposes set out above.

We also collect special category data as set out above and our lawful basis is GDPR Article 9(2)(b) for the purposes of carrying out the obligations and exercising specific rights of the controller or of the data subject in the field of employment, social security and social protection law.

We will use your personal data in accordance with law enforcement purposes, as set out in Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018 ('the 2018 Act').

The term ‘law enforcement purposes’ relates to the prevention, investigation, detection or prosecution of criminal offences, or the execution of criminal penalties (including the safeguarding against, and the prevention of, threats to public security.)

We may need to process sensitive personal data for law enforcement purposes, where it relates to a pressing social need, which cannot reasonably be achieved through less intrusive means. Such processing will only take place if either one of the law enforcement purposes set out in the 2018 Act is satisfied, or you have given your consent.

Where has your personal information come from?

We will obtain your information from:

- Yourself;
- Housing Providers;
- Landlords and/or their managing agents;
- Credit reference agencies;
- Central Government departments (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Land Registry, HMRC).
- Office of the Public Guardian (OPG);
- Companies who provide services on our behalf;
- Enforcement agents (Baillifs);
- Greater Manchester Police (or other relevant Police forces);
- HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS);
- Other Services within the Council;
- Other Local Authorities.

Who will we share your information with?

- Housing Providers;
- Landlords and/or their managing agents;
- Credit reference agencies;
- Central Government departments (e.g. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Land Registry, HMRC).
- Office of the Public Guardian (OPG);
- Companies who provide services on our behalf;
- Enforcement agents (Baillifs);
- Insolvency Practitioners and Solicitors
- Greater Manchester Police (or other relevant Police forces);
- National Fraud Initiative (NFI);
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG)/Integrated Care Systems (ICS);
- Members of Parliament, Cabinet Members and Councillors;
- Rent Office;
- Software suppliers providing solutions to our services to improve debt collection, uptake of benefits, financial assessment and improved communication methods;
- Utility providers;
- Banks;

- TransUnion, or other Credit reference agencies;
- Pension providers;
- Ombudsman and regulatory bodies;
- Valuation Office Agency;
- Office for National Statistics (ONS); and
- Third parties under contract to support the public functions, powers and obligations placed on the Council and set out in law; including, but is not limited to, the maintenance of Rating Lists.

In order to administer the Council Tax Energy Bill Rebate applications, we are required to validate your bank account details, and need to share relevant information you have given us in your application with TransUnion. This will be used to ensure your rebate payment is paid to the correct bank account and to help prevent fraud. This is not a credit check and will not impact your credit rating, however, a search footprint retained by TransUnion will show that an identity check has been performed. For more information on how TransUnion may use your data, please visit https://www.transunion.co.uk/legal-information/privacy-centre.

How long we will keep your data for and why?

We will only retain information for as long as it is required by us or other regulatory bodies in order to comply with legal and regulatory requirements or for other operational reasons.

Call recordings and webchats will be kept for 6 months and securely deleted thereafter. This ensures that any subsequent investigations can be completed. Relevant data relating to your request for service or query will be input onto our line of business system (e.g. a query about Council Tax, Council Tax Support or Housing Benefit) and retained in line with the periods set out in our retention schedule.

Transferring data outside the European Economic Area (EEA)

Your information is not processed outside of the European Economic Area.

Your rights

The information you provided will be managed as required by Data Protection law.

You have the right to:

- receive a copy of your call or web chat
- request that the call recording or web chat be deleted if you believe the Council is processing it for longer than is necessary

Amazon Connect will not make important decisions about you, it is only used to improve how your query is handled by the Council

Information about exercising your rights can be found on the council's website Exercising Your Individual Rights.

To find out more about how these rights apply in particular circumstances, please refer to our Guide to exercising you Rights or alternatively visit the Information Commissioner's web site

at https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individualrights/

Security

We use appropriate technical, organisational and administrative security measures to protect any information we hold in our records from loss, misuse, and unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration and destruction. We have written procedures and policies which are regularly audited, and the audits are reviewed at senior level.

Data Protection Officer

If you have any questions or concerns about how we use your personal information, please contact the Data Protection Officer at information.governance@tameside.gov.uk or by calling 0161 342 8355.

Automated Decisions

Whilst the Council uses Artificial Intelligence in the Amazon Connect telephony and web chat tool, all the decisions we make about you involve human intervention.

No automated decisions are made within our service or our processing of your data, except in the case of the Council Tax Energy Bill Rebate.

Under the Council Tax Energy Bill Rebate, Automated Decision Making (ADM) will take place for any person who is eligible under the main scheme (band A-D property) who pays their Council Tax by Direct Debit, as an automated check will be run to confirm the liable person's name matches the name on the bank account the Direct Debit originates from. If they match, the rebate will be paid automatically. Only bank account checks are undertaken for existing Direct Debit payers.

Bank account and ID checks will be undertaken for anyone applying under the main scheme (band A-D property) who does **not** pay by Direct Debit and for all applicants to the discretionary scheme. Where those criteria are satisfied, payment will be processed automatically. Where the automated checks are not satisfied, TMBC staff will review the application and work with the applicant to resolve in order to make payment.

No profiling (automated processing of personal data to evaluate certain conditions about an individual) takes place throughout this process.

Updates

We may update or revise this Privacy Notice at any time so please refer to the version published on our website for the most up to date details on our Data Protection page.