



## PRIVACY NOTICE FOR COUNCIL TAX ENERGY REBATE SCHEME

### **What is the purpose of this document?**

Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information.

This privacy notice is issued in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and describes how we collect and use personal information about you in relation to Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme.

The Government announced on 3rd February a package of support to help households with rising energy bills, consisting of two parts;

- A £200 discount on energy bills to be repaid over 5 years, which will be managed by utility companies on the governments behalf; and
- A Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme of £150 for all band A-D properties. This rebate is not re-payable. This will be managed by councils and further details are set out below.

In addition to band A to D households, Hartlepool Borough Council has also decided to extend the rebate to band E properties using discretionary funding provided by the Government.

Residents who receive Local Council Tax Support will qualify for a £150 rebate irrespective of their property band.

Payment will be based on Council Tax records as at 1st April 2022. Over 40,000 households will receive the rebate, the equivalent of 97% of all households in Hartlepool.

The household must be a sole or main residence and a chargeable dwelling in the Council Tax system. Landlords will not receive the rebate.

This notice applies to information we will obtain and hold about you in relation to the administration of the scheme.

We may update this notice at any time.

It is important that you read this notice, together with any other privacy notice we may provide on specific occasions when we are collecting or processing personal information about you, so that you are aware of how and why we are using such information.

## **The Data Protection Legislation**

We will comply with data protection law which includes the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 which states that the personal information we hold about you must be:

1. Used lawfully, fairly and in a transparent way.
2. Collected only for valid purposes that we have clearly explained to you and not used in any way that is incompatible with those purposes.
3. Relevant to the purposes we have told you about and limited only to those purposes.
4. Accurate and kept up to date.
5. Kept only as long as necessary for the purposes we have told you about.
6. Kept securely.

No personal information held by us will be processed unless the requirements of the Data Protection legislation for fair and lawful processing can be met.

### **Who is the Data Controller?**

HBC is a “data controller”. This means that we are responsible for deciding how we hold and use personal information about you. We are required under data protection legislation to notify you of the information contained in this privacy notice.

### **Who is the Data Protection Officer?**

We have appointed a data protection officer (DPO) to oversee compliance with this privacy notice. If you have any questions about this notice or how we handle your personal information, please contact the DPO:

Laura Stones, Legal and Data Protection Officer  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Civic Centre  
Hartlepool  
TS24 8AY

[dataprotection@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@hartlepool.gov.uk)

You have the right to make a complaint at any time to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO), the UK supervisory authority for data protection issues.

## **What kind of information we hold about you?**

### **Personal Information**

Personal data, or personal information, means any information about an individual from which that person can be identified. It does not include data where the identity has been removed (anonymous data).

There are “special categories” of more sensitive personal data which require a higher level of protection.

### **How we use particularly sensitive information**

“Special categories” of particularly sensitive personal information require higher levels of protection. We need to have further justification for collecting, storing and using this type of personal information. We may process special categories of personal information in the following circumstances:

1. In limited circumstances, with your explicit written consent.
2. Where we need to carry out our legal obligations and in line with our data protection policy.
3. Where it is needed in the public interest

Less commonly, we may process this type of information where it is needed in relation to legal claims or where it is needed to protect your interests (or someone else’s interests) and you are not capable of giving your consent, or where you have already made the information public.

## **HBC’s Obligations**

### **What are HBC’s obligations?**

For applicants who are currently paying Council Tax by Direct Debit, the Council will not hold any additional information that is not included within the Council Tax system. This information will be transferred to Ascendant Solutions as the software partner for the rebate scheme, who will process the application. The Council will remain the data controller and will make the payment.

For applicants who are not currently paying Council Tax by Direct Debit, information held on the Council Tax system will be transferred to Ascendant Solutions as the software partner for the rebate scheme. The Council will remain the data controller. We will also collect, store and use the following categories of personal information about you

- Name
- Address

- Contact details (mobile phone numbers and emails will be used to support future collection of Council Tax. You can withdraw your permission at any time.)
- Bank account details

Ascendant Solutions will be the data processor of this information. Bank account details will be verified by TransUnion who will be the data controller for their verification checks.

### **How is your personal information collected?**

We collect personal information via an online application form, in person or via a telephone application.

### **How we will use information about you?**

We will only use your personal information when the law allows us to. Most commonly, we will use your personal information in the following circumstances:

- (a) where** the processing is necessary for us to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law namely the distribution of rebates under the Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme (PUBLIC TASK)

The Council may use data from Council Tax Rebate Scheme Payment applications for wider benefit and fraud investigations to prevent and detect fraud. We will do so, **where** the processing is necessary for us to perform a task in the public interest or for our official functions, and the task or function has a clear basis in law (PUBLIC TASK) namely the:

- Local Government Finance Act 1992 and 2012
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Social Security Contribution & Benefits Act 1992
- Fraud Act 2006
- National Fraud Initiative

We may also use your personal information in the following situations, which are likely to be rare:

- (b) where** the processing is necessary to protect someone's life. (VITAL INTERESTS)

### **Situations in which we will use your personal information**

We need all the categories of information in the list above (see ***What kind of information we hold about you?*** above) primarily to allow us to administer any financial payment under the

## Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme.

The situations in which we will process your personal information are listed below.

<b>Reason for Processing</b>	<b>Legal Basis e.g. Public Task/Contract etc.</b>
To deliver the rebate scheme	Public Task
To process payments for the rebate scheme	Public Task
To prevent and detect crime (Fraud)	Public Task

Some of the above grounds for processing will overlap and there may be more than one ground which justifies our use of your personal information.

### **What if I don't want to provide personal information?**

If you fail to provide certain information when requested, we may not be able to make the required payment. In this instance the rebate will be offset against current year Council Tax liability (or arrears).

### **Change of purpose**

We will only use your personal information for the purposes for which we collected it, unless we reasonably consider that we need to use it for another reason and that reason is compatible with the original purpose. If we need to use your personal information for an unrelated purpose, we will notify you and we will explain the legal basis which allows us to do so.

Please note that we may process your personal information without your knowledge or consent, in compliance with the above rules, where this is required or permitted by law.

### **Does HBC need your consent?**

We do not need your consent if we use special categories of your personal information in accordance with our written policy to carry out our legal obligations or exercise specific rights as required by law. In limited circumstances, we may approach you for your written consent to allow us to process certain particularly sensitive data. If we do so, we will provide you with full details of the information that we would like and the reason we need it, so that you can carefully consider whether you wish to consent.

You will not be subject to decisions that will have a significant impact on you based solely on automated decision-making, unless we have a lawful basis for doing so and we have notified you.

We do not envisage that any decisions will be taken about you using automated means, however we will notify you in writing if this position changes.

### **Data Sharing**

We will have to share your data with third parties, including third-party service providers and other entities in the group.

We require third parties to respect the security of your data and to treat it in accordance with the law.

We will not transfer your personal information outside the UK.

### **Why might you share my personal information with third parties?**

We will share your personal information with third parties where required by law or where it is necessary to allow payment of the funds. Examples of the organisations we may need to share information with are:

NEC Software Solutions UK

Ascendant Solutions Limited

TransUnion

HMRC

Department for Work and Pensions

National Fraud Initiative

We may also use your personal data for benefit accuracy checks, and when making a payment under the scheme, we will validate bank account details to ensure they align with the applicant, for anti-fraud purposes.

We may also use your information for wider benefit and fraud investigations to prevent and detect fraud.

We may also use your data to assist with future collection of Council Tax.

### **Which third-parties process my personal information?**

"Third parties" includes third-party service providers (including contractors and designated agents). The following third-parties process personal information about you for the following purposes:

NEC Software Solutions UK (The Council's ICT provider, who may have access to systems on occasions where there is a fault)

Ascendant Solutions Limited (the software provider for the Rebate Scheme)

TransUnion (for bank account verification and matching)

Lloyds Bank (Faster Payments System)

### **How secure is my information with third-party service providers?**

All our third-party service providers are required to take appropriate security measures to protect your personal information in line with our policies. We do not allow our third-party service providers to use your personal data for their own purposes. We only permit them to process your personal data for specified purposes and in accordance with our instructions.

## **Data Security**

We have put in place measures to protect the security of your information. Details of these measures are available upon request.

Third parties will only process your personal information on our instructions and where they have agreed to treat the information confidentially and to keep it secure.

We have put in place appropriate security measures to prevent your personal information from being accidentally lost, used or accessed in an unauthorised way, altered or disclosed. In addition, we limit access to your personal information to those employees, agents, contractors and other third parties who have a business need to know. They will only process your personal information on our instructions and they are subject to a duty of confidentiality. Details of these measures may be obtained from the Data Protection Officer.

We have put in place procedures to deal with any suspected data security breach and will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected breach where we are legally required to do so.

## **Data Retention**

### **How long will you use my information for?**

We will only retain your personal information for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes we collected it for, including for the purposes of satisfying any legal, accounting, or reporting requirements. Details of retention periods for different aspects of your personal information are available in our retention policy which is available from [www.hartlepool.gov.uk/retention-schedules](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/retention-schedules). To determine the appropriate retention period for personal data, we consider the amount, nature, and sensitivity of the personal data, the potential risk of harm from unauthorised use or disclosure of your personal data, the purposes for which we process your personal data and whether we can achieve those purposes through other means, and the applicable legal requirements.

In some circumstances we may anonymise your personal information so that it can no longer be associated with you, in which case we may use such information without further notice to you.

## **Rights of Access, Correction, Erasure and restriction**

### **Your duty to inform us of changes**

It is important that the personal information we hold about you is accurate and current. Please keep us informed if your personal information changes during your working relationship with us.

## **Your rights in connection with personal information**

Under certain circumstances, by law you have the right to:

- **Request access** to your personal information (commonly known as a “data subject access request”). This enables you to receive a copy of the personal information we hold about you and to check that we are lawfully processing it.
- **Request correction** of the personal information that we hold about you. This enables you to have any incomplete or inaccurate information we hold about you corrected.
- **Request erasure** of your personal information. This enables you to ask us to delete or remove personal information where there is no good reason for us continuing to process it. You also have the right to ask us to delete or remove your personal information where you have exercised your right to object to processing (see below).
- **Object to processing** of your personal information where we are relying on a legitimate interest (or those of a third party) and there is something about your particular situation which makes you want to object to processing on this ground. You also have the right to object where we are processing your personal information for direct marketing purposes.
- **Request the restriction of processing** of your personal information. This enables you to ask us to suspend the processing of personal information about you, for example if you want us to establish its accuracy or the reason for processing it.
- **Request the transfer** of your personal information to another party.

If you want to review, verify, correct or request erasure of your personal information, object to the processing of your personal data, or request that we transfer a copy of your personal information to another party, please contact the Data Protection Officer in writing.

For further information on your rights please visit: [www.hartlepool.gov.uk/GDPR](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/GDPR)

### **No fee usually required**

You will not have to pay a fee to access your personal information (or to exercise any of the other rights). However, we may charge a reasonable fee for photocopying.

### **What we may need from you**

We may need to request specific information from you to help us confirm your identity and ensure your right to access the information (or to exercise any of your other rights). This is another appropriate security measure to ensure that personal information is not disclosed to any person who has no right to receive it.

### **Right to withdraw consent**

In the limited circumstances where you may have provided your consent to the collection, processing and transfer of your personal information for a specific purpose, you have the right



to withdraw your consent for that specific processing at any time. To withdraw your consent, please contact the Data Protection Officer. Once we have received notification that you have withdrawn your consent, we will no longer process your information for the purpose or purposes you originally agreed to, unless we have another legitimate basis for doing so in law.

### **Changes to this Privacy Notice**

We reserve the right to update this privacy notice at any time, and we will provide you with a new privacy notice when we make any substantial updates. We may also notify you in other ways from time to time about the processing of your personal information.

**If you have any questions about this privacy notice, please contact the DPO.**