

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 2 January 2014

Public Authority: North Somerset Council
Address: Town Hall
Walliscote Grove Road
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1UJ

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. On 8 October 2012 the complainant requested a copy of a report by KMPG about North Somerset Council's (the Council's) strategic service delivery partnership with Agilisys. The Council provided the complainant with the 'Final Summary Report' but redacted a small portion of it in the basis of section 43(2) of FOIA. The complainant also requested a copy of the 'Final Detailed Report'. The Council argued that this version of the report was exempt from disclosure on the basis of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c) of FOIA. It also sought to rely on this exemption in relation to information withheld in relation to a further request the complainant submitted on 18 January 2013 concerning draft versions of the report and correspondence exchanged between the Council and KMPG.
2. The Commissioner has reached the following conclusions:
3. The information redacted from the 'Final Summary Report' is not exempt from disclosure on the basis of section 43(2).
4. The Commissioner has concluded that the 'Final Detailed Report' is not exempt from disclosure on the basis of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c).
5. The remaining information falling within the scope of the request of 18 January 2013 is exempt from disclosure on the basis of section 36(2)(b)(ii) and in all the circumstances the public interest favours maintaining the exemption.

6. The Commissioner requires the public authority to take the following steps to ensure compliance with the legislation.
 - Provide the complainant with an unredacted copy of the 'Final Summary Report'.
 - Provide the complainant with a copy of the 'Final Detailed Report'.
7. The public authority must take these steps within 35 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of the Act and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

Request and response

8. On 8 October 2012 the complainant wrote to the Council and requested information in the following terms:

'Please provide me with a copy of the Review Report of the Agilisys Support Services Contract carried out by KPMG'.¹
9. The Council responded on 5 November 2012 and provided a copy of the report entitled 'Final Summary Report' and explained that a small amount of information had been redacted on the basis of section 43(2) of FOIA. The Council indicated that disclosure of the redacted material could harm the commercial interests of Agilisys.
10. The complainant contacted the Council on 6 November 2012 and asked for an internal review to be carried out into the application of section 43(2). He also asked to be provided with a copy of the 'Full Report' rather than just the summary version.
11. The Council contacted the complainant on 16 November 2012 and explained that it recognised the confusion caused by the title of the document provided, i.e. 'Summary Report', however this was in fact the 'full report' that the Council received from KMPG. This was because the

¹ In October 2010 the Council entered into a strategic service delivery partnership with Agilisys to provide support services across a range of disciplines such as finance, HR and ICT. The ten year contract is worth approximately £10.4 million each year. The Council commissioned KMPG to review its support services contract with Agilisys 15 months after the contract began.

review was undertaken on the basis that KPMG would provide verbal feedback whilst onsite and then a short written report summarising their findings.

12. The complainant contacted the Council again on 22 November 2012 in order to confirm that he wished the internal review to consider the failure to provide him with a copy of the 'full report' as he was reliably informed that this existed.
13. The Council informed the complainant of the outcome of the internal review on 19 December 2012. In relation to the ground of complaint concerning the failure to provide the 'full report', the Council explained that;

'A number of earlier drafts of the KPMG report were provided to the Council as part of the report clearance and quality assurance process. These included some inaccuracies and misinterpretations and as a consequence the council asked KPMG to provide a final report in shortened form in order to remove the offending inaccuracies and interpretations. The report disclosed is the final report provided in the summarised style requested.'

14. With regard to the application of section 43(2), the internal review concluded that this had been applied correctly.
15. The complainant then submitted the following request to the Council on 18 January 2013:

'Thank you for your letter of 19 December 2012 concerning the above request for information relating to the independent review of the Agilisys support services contract carried out by KPMG.

In your reply you say 'a number of earlier drafts of the KPMG report were provided to the council as part of the report clearance and quality assurance process'. This is the first time the Council has referred to 'draft' copies of the KPMG report in their correspondence to me. As you know the legislation covers all recorded information that is held by a public authority including drafts, emails, and notes. To assist me in my original request I would be grateful if you would provide me with the following information:

1. *All written communication between the Council and KPMG requesting 'a final summary report in shortened form in order to remove the offending inaccuracies and interpretations'*
2. *A copy of each draft report provided by KPMG*
3. *The date each draft report was sent to the Council*

4. *A copy of all written communication between (i.e. to and from) KPMG and the Council concerning each draft report*
 5. *The date KPMG sent the Council the 'FINAL SUMMARY REPORT'*
 6. *A copy of the accompanying letter, memorandum or email or any other communication from KPMG concerning the 'FINAL SUMMARY REPORT'*
 7. *Copies of the detailed invoices from KPMG concerning the review and report*
 8. *Copies of any subsequent correspondence between the Council and KPMG concerning the review.*
 9. *The name and designation of the Council officer (or officers) who was the point of contact with KPMG for the review and report.'*
16. The Council responded on 26 February 2013 and provided the information sought by request 7. However, the Council explained that the information falling within the scope of the remaining requests was exempt from disclosure on the basis of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c) of FOIA.
 17. The complainant contacted the Council on 1 March 2013 in order to ask for an internal review into the application of these exemptions.
 18. The Council informed the complainant of the outcome of its internal review on 23 March 2013 and provided the information falling within the scope of requests 3, 5 and 9. With regard to request 3 the Council explained that draft reports had been sent on 10 February 2012; 16 February 2012 and 16 April 2012 and with regard to request 5 the 'summary report' was sent on 16 April 2012. The review concluded that the information falling within the scope of the remaining requests was exempt from disclosure on the basis of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c).
 19. Following a further exchange of correspondence, on 25 April 2013 the Council provided the complainant with the front page of each version of the report that it had received from KPMG.

Scope of the case

20. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 12 June 2013 to complain about the way his requests for information had been handled.
21. With regard to the request of 8 October 2012 he disputed the Council's decision to redact part of the 'Final Summary Report' on the basis of section 43(2) of FOIA. He was also dissatisfied with the Council's failure to provide him with a copy of the 'Final Detailed Report' which he believed that the Council did hold.

22. With regard to the request of 18 January 2013, the complainant disputed the Council's reliance on sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c) to withhold the information falling within the scope of the six outstanding requests, i.e. those numbered 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8.

Reasons for decision

Request of 8 October 2012 – redactions to 'Final Summary Report'

23. As noted above the Council redacted a small portion of the version of the 'Final Summary Report' that it provided to the complainant on the basis of section 43(2) of FOIA. This exemption states that:

'Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).'

24. In order for a prejudice based exemption, such as section 43(2) to be engaged the Commissioner believes that three criteria must be met:

- Firstly, the actual harm which the public authority alleges would, or would be likely, to occur if the withheld information was disclosed has to relate to the applicable interests within the relevant exemption;
 - Secondly, the public authority must be able to demonstrate that some causal relationship exists between the potential disclosure of the information being withheld and the prejudice which the exemption is designed to protect. Furthermore, the resultant prejudice which is alleged must be real, actual or of substance; and
 - Thirdly, it is necessary to establish whether the level of likelihood of prejudice being relied upon by the public authority is met – i.e., disclosure 'would be likely' to result in prejudice or disclosure 'would' result in prejudice. In relation to the lower threshold the Commissioner believes that the chance of prejudice occurring must be more than a hypothetical possibility; rather there must be a real and significant risk. With regard to the higher threshold, in the Commissioner's view this places a stronger evidential burden on the public authority to discharge.
25. In relation to the commercial interests of third parties, the Commissioner does not consider it appropriate to take into account speculative arguments which are advanced by public authorities about how prejudice may occur to third parties. Whilst it may not be necessary

to explicitly consult the relevant third party, the Commissioner expects that arguments which are advanced by a public authority should be based on its prior knowledge of the third party's concerns.

The Council's position

26. The Council explained that the report was primarily based on a number of interviews and therefore the content and opinions contained within the report are based on perceptions and not necessarily fact. It noted that the report includes the following caveat provided by KMPG *'We have satisfied ourselves, so far as possible, that the information presented in our report is consistent with information which was made available to us in the course of our work in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. We have not, however, sought to establish the reliability of sources by reference to other evidence'*.
27. The Council explained that as result of discussions between Agilisys' contract manager and the Council's contract manager it was of the opinion that disclosure of redacted information – which was a finding based on perceptions not necessarily fact - would be likely to harm Agilisys' commercial interests as the redacted comment could harm its reputation. The request was submitted at a particularly sensitive period for Agilisys as it was one of the remaining bidders for a contract with another organisation.

The Commissioner's position

28. With regard to the three limb test for engaging a prejudice based exemption set out at paragraph 24, the Commissioner is satisfied that the first limb is clearly met because the nature of the harm envisaged, namely prejudice to the commercial interests of Agilisys, clearly relates to the interests which section 43(2) is designed to protect.
29. With regard to the second limb, the Commissioner is also satisfied that there is a causal link between disclosure of the withheld information and prejudice to Agilisys' commercial interests. This is because it is reasonable to argue that disclosure of information, such as the redacted material, which could lead to a negative inference being drawn as to the Agilisys' performance under the partnership could lead to reputational damage to Agilisys to the extent that its ability to secure further similar contracts may be harmed. Furthermore, the Commissioner is satisfied that the resultant prejudice can be correctly described as one of substance given the value of such contracts.
30. However, in terms of the third limb, the Commissioner is not persuaded that the likelihood of this prejudice occurring is one that is anything more than hypothetical. The Commissioner has reached this conclusion

for two reasons. Firstly, although the redacted information does include some negative comments as to the performance of Agilisys, and the partnership more broadly, the Commissioner would note that the version of the report that has been disclosed also includes a number of similar comments. The Commissioner is not persuaded that there is sufficient distinction between the critical comments that have been disclosed and the nature of the redacted material to justify redacting the withheld information on the basis of section 43(2). If there is indeed a significant difference between the redacted material and the other critical comments in the report, then such a distinction has not been clearly explained to the Commissioner.

31. Secondly, the Commissioner notes that the concerns around the information redacted are because this was not necessarily based on fact but on the perceptions of staff. In the Commissioner's opinion it is important to remember that in disclosing information under FOIA public authorities have the discretion to explain the nature of information and/or provide extra information to help put the information into context. In the particular circumstances of this case, the Commissioner is of the view that in disclosing this redacted information the Council could easily emphasise that the finding is based on staff perceptions. Indeed, it could also emphasise the caveat quoted above which is included in the report itself regarding the reliability or otherwise of any sources. As a consequence, in the Commissioner's opinion, any objective consideration of the redacted material would view this in the broader context and this would arguably reduce the likelihood of damage to Agilisys' reputation.
32. Consequently, the Commissioner does not accept that section 43(2) is engaged. Therefore, the Council must provide the complainant with an unredacted version of the 'Final Summary Report'.

Request for a copy of the 'Final Detailed Report'

33. The Commissioner understands that KMPG provided the Council with four versions of the report: two different 'Draft Reports' on 10 and 16 of February 2012; a 'Final Detailed Report' on 16 April 2012 and a 'Summary Report' on the same day.
34. As part of his investigation, the Commissioner asked the Council to confirm whether it considered any exemptions to apply to the 'Final Detailed Report' and if so, to provide him with details of these exemptions. Alternatively, the Commissioner asked the Council to clarify whether it considered the 'Final Detailed Report' to actually fall within the scope of the 18 January 2013 request and potentially be exempt from disclosure on the basis of section 36.

35. The Council has provided the Commissioner with a copy of the 'Final Detailed Report' and has explained that it was considered to fall within the scope of 18 January request and thus be exempt from disclosure on the basis of section 36.
36. Having considered the nature of version of the report carefully, the Commissioner is not persuaded that it falls within the scope of 18 January 2013 request. Rather, the Commissioner is view that the 'Final Detailed Report' falls within the scope of the complainant's 8 October 2012 request. The Commissioner's reasoning for this depends on whether the 'Final Detailed Report' constitutes a draft of the report or not.
37. As explained above, the Commissioner understands that KMPG provided two draft versions of its report to the Council on 10 and 16 February 2012. KMPG then provided, on 16 April 2012, the 'Final Detailed Report'. It also, apparently on the same date, provided a 'Summary Report'. As the Commissioner understands it this version of the report was meant to be exactly what the title implies, i.e. a summary version of the final report. Furthermore, the Commissioner understands that the reason why the Council commissioned a summary version of the report, in addition to the 'Final Detailed Report,' was not to remove any inaccuracies as the Council's response to the complainant of 19 December 2012 implied, but to ensure that it had a version of the report suitable for broader distribution. (The purpose of the drafts exchanged in February it would appear was to remove any inaccuracies.)
38. Consequently, on balance, the Commissioner is of the view that the 'Final Detailed Report' is not a draft version of the report; for completeness, nor would he accept that the 'Summary Report' could be considered a draft. This is a key point because the only versions of the report that the request of 18 January 2013 asks for are 'draft' versions of the report. As the Commissioner is of the view that the 'Final Detailed Report' is not a draft version of the report it follows that it cannot fall within the scope of the 18 January 2013 request. In contrast, in the Commissioner's opinion the complainant was quite clear in his correspondence regarding his 8 October 2012 request that he did not just want to be provided with the 'Summary Report' but also the 'Final Detailed Report'.
39. Although the Commissioner has concluded that the 'Final Detailed Report' does not fall within the scope of 18 January 2013 request, the Commissioner has nevertheless considered whether it is exempt from disclosure on the basis of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c), these being the exemptions the Council cited to withhold all of the remaining information it considered to fall within the scope of that request.

40. These exemptions state that:

'(2) Information to which this section applies is exempt information if, in the reasonable opinion of a qualified person, disclosure of the information under this Act...

(b) would, or would be likely to, inhibit...

...(ii)the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation, or

(c) would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely otherwise to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.'

41. In this case the Chief Executive of the Council provided the qualified opinion in relation to the application of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c). The Commissioner is satisfied that the Chief Executive of the Council is a qualified person for the purposes of section 36.
42. The qualified person argued that both exemptions were engaged at the lower threshold, i.e. that disclosure 'would be likely' to result in the prejudicial consequences each exemption was designed to protect.
43. In determining whether these exemptions are engaged the Commissioner must determine whether the qualified person's opinion was a reasonable one. In doing so the Commissioner has considered all of the relevant factors including:
- Whether the prejudice relates to the specific subsection of section 36(2) that is being claimed. If the prejudice or inhibition envisaged is not related to the specific subsection the opinion is unlikely to be reasonable.
 - The nature of the information and the timing of the request, for example, whether the request concerns an important ongoing issue on which there needs to be a free and frank exchange of views or provision of advice.
 - The qualified person's knowledge of, or involvement in, the issue.
44. Further, in determining whether the opinion is a reasonable one, the Commissioner takes the approach that if the opinion is in accordance with reason and not irrational or absurd – in short, if it is an opinion that a reasonable person could hold – then it is reasonable. This is not the same as saying that it is the only reasonable opinion that could be held on the subject. The qualified person's opinion is not rendered unreasonable simply because other people may have come to a different (and equally reasonable) conclusion. It is only not reasonable if it is an opinion that no reasonable person in the qualified person's position

could hold. The qualified person's opinion does not have to be the most reasonable opinion that could be held; it only has to be a reasonable opinion.

45. The qualified person argued that section 36(2)(b)(ii) was engaged because those providing information to further and future review of contracts – of which there was a continuing schedule - would be likely to take a less candid and less self-critical approach, which would result in less meaningful reviews and outcomes, if this information was disclosed.
46. The qualified person argued that section 36(2)(c) was engaged because disclosure would result in already stretched resources having to be diverted to deal with arguments over the relevance and accuracy of draft findings when the review outcomes and recommendations had already been received and acted upon.
47. In the particular circumstances of this case, the Commissioner is not prepared to accept that the qualified person's opinion, in relation to the 'Final Detailed Report', is a reasonable one. The Commissioner has reached this conclusion because he considers the opinion to be fundamentally flawed in respect of this particular document. This is on the basis that the opinion was given on the understanding that the 'Final Detailed Report' fell within the scope of 18 January 2013 request. This was on the apparent presumption that the document in question was a draft version of the report. For the reasons discussed above, the Commissioner does not accept that the 'Final Detailed Report' is a draft version of the report (and by default does not fall within the scope of the request of 18 January 2013). Consequently, the Commissioner is not satisfied that the opinion can be considered to be a reasonable one in respect of the 'Final Detailed Report' because the opinion was given on the assumption that the report was a draft version when in fact it was not. The 'Final Detailed Report' is therefore not exempt from disclosure on the basis of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c).

Request of 18 January 2013

48. Following his decision in respect of the application of sections 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c) to the 'Final Detailed Report' the Commissioner has gone on to consider whether these exemptions provide a basis to withhold the remaining information held by the Council. This information effectively consists of two types of information. Firstly, emails exchanged between the Council and KMPG about draft versions of the report (with some of the emails including attachments of annotated versions of the draft reports); and secondly, draft versions of the reports themselves.

49. With regard to the reasonableness of the opinion in respect of section 36(2)(b)(ii), the Commissioner notes that the withheld emails constitute candid and frank exchanges of views that were clearly exchanged with expectation that they would be treated confidentially. Similarly, there would appear to be an expectation – on the part of the Council and KMPG– that draft copies of the report would not be disclosed before the Council’s comments had been taken into account. Furthermore, at the time of the request the Commissioner recognises that the email exchanges and draft versions of these reports were less than a less year old. Taking these factors into account the Commissioner is satisfied that it was reasonable for the qualified person to find that disclosure of the withheld information, in particular the various emails exchanges discussing the content of the draft reports, would have been likely to result in a ‘chilling effect’ and thus potentially inhibit the contributions from individuals during future review processes. This is especially true in relation to comments from Council officials about draft reports of future reviews.
50. Having found that section 36(2)(b)(ii) is engaged (and indeed as discussed below, that the public interest favours maintaining that exemption), the Commissioner does not need to determine whether section 36(2)(c) is also engaged. However, for completeness, the Commissioner also accepts that the opinion in relation to section 36(2)(c) is also a reasonable one. The Commissioner has reached this conclusion given that the performance of the partnership to date has understandably been the focus of staff and union interest and indeed has generated a number of stories in the local media. Against this context, the Commissioner accepts that if frank email exchanges, and indeed, moreover the draft reports themselves, were disclosed in January 2013 – nearly a year after the final report was delivered – then it is reasonable to argue that the Council is likely to face challenges on draft aspects of the report. Furthermore, the Commissioner accepts that dealing with these challenges is likely to divert the Council from its core functions, not least, the effective operation of the partnership itself.

Public interest test

51. Section 36 is a qualified exemption and therefore the Commissioner must consider whether in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining either of the exemptions cited outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The Commissioner has initially considered the public interest in relation to section 36(2)(b)(ii).

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosing the information

52. The complainant emphasised that the value of the Council’s contract with Agilisys exceeded £100m and he noted that KMPG were contracted

to carry out an independent review of the performance of this partnership. He argued that it was in the public interest to disclose the withheld information in order to reveal the nature of the changes the Council had sought in relation to the draft reports and the reasons for those changes. The complainant argued that there was an important public interest in showing that the Council had in fact carried out a comprehensive, independent and thorough review of the contract.

Public interest arguments in favour of maintaining the exemption

53. The Council argued that there was a clear public interest in future reviews and reports into its contracts being as accurate as possible. Such accuracy would be directly and negatively affected by disclosure of the withheld information as it would lead to Council officers being less free and frank during any future review process.
54. The Council also suggested that the public interest in understanding the nature and outcome of the review had been met by the disclosure of the redacted version of the final summary report.

Balance of the public interest test

55. In considering complaints regarding section 36, where the Commissioner finds that the qualified person's opinion was reasonable, he will consider the weight of that opinion in applying the public interest test. This means that the Commissioner accepts that a reasonable opinion has been expressed that prejudice or inhibition would, or would be likely to, occur but he will go on to consider the severity, extent and frequency of that prejudice or inhibition in forming his own assessment of whether the public interest test dictates disclosure.
56. With regard to attributing weight to chilling effect arguments, the Commissioner recognises public officials are expected to be robust and impartial when giving advice and information. They should not be easily deterred from expressing their views by the possibility of future disclosure. Nonetheless, chilling effect arguments cannot be dismissed out of hand. If the decision making which is the subject of the requested information is still live, the Commissioner accepts that arguments about a chilling effect on those ongoing discussions are likely to carry significant weight. Arguments about the effect on closely related decisions or policies may also carry weight. However, once the decision making in question is finalised, the arguments become more and more speculative as time passes. It will be difficult to make convincing arguments about a generalised chilling effect on all future discussions.
57. In this case the Commissioner recognises that at the time of the 18 January 2013 request KMPG's review of the contract with Agilisys had

clearly been completed and thus it could not be argued that there was a need for an ongoing exchange of views in relation to this particular contract review. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is satisfied that the chilling effect argument envisaged by the Council needs to be given significant weight. The Commissioner has reached this conclusion for the following reasons:

58. Firstly, the nature of the exchanges concerning the drafts is clearly direct and frank in nature. Consequently, the Commissioner is persuaded that disclosure would be very likely to lead officials who offer advice and information in similar scenarios in the future to be less candid. Secondly, although KMPG's review of the contract was complete by the date of this request, in the Commissioner's view the fact that the information was less than a year old adds credence to the argument that disclosure of such information could lead to future discussions being inhibited. In other words, in the Commissioner's view it is logical to argue that those who had exchanged such recent communications about the content of the draft reports would still expect them, to be kept confidential. Thirdly, in the Commissioner's view it is important to remember that by its very nature the contract review required Council officers to undertake some element of self-reflection, and where necessary self-criticism, as to their role within the performance of the partnership. Similarly, where necessary, the process also involved officers commenting on the performance of colleagues. In the Commissioner's opinion it is reasonable to argue that staff will be less candid in the future if information concerning either their own self critical comments, or comments critical of colleagues were disclosed. Fourthly, the Commissioner is conscious that this review was not an isolated one; rather there was a series of future contract reviews planned. In the Commissioner's opinion the fact that such reviews will take place – be it in relation to this contract or others – means that the potential for such a chilling effect to take place clearly increases.
59. Furthermore, not only does the Commissioner believe that the chilling effect argument needs to be given notable weight, in the circumstances of this case he also accepts that it is logical for the Council to argue that the consequences of such a chilling effect would undermine the effectiveness of future contract reviews in the manner it suggests. That is to say, the Commissioner accepts that the effectiveness of such reviews are dependent on the candour of Council officials both during interviews with the respective outside auditor and in commenting on the accuracy of the content of any draft findings.
60. With regard to the arguments in favour of disclosure, the Commissioner recognises that the performance of the Council's partnership with Agilisys is clearly one that is of significant interest not only to Council employees but also residents who are served by the Council. The

Commissioner therefore accepts that there is a clear public interest in the disclosure of withheld information to aid understanding about the nature of the review undertaken by KMPG. However, in the Commissioner's opinion the disclosure of the redacted version of the 'Final Summary Report' allows the public to have a reasonably sound understanding of the nature and findings of the review. Although disclosure of the withheld information would inevitably provide some insight into the Council's comments regarding the draft versions of the report, the degree to which such a disclosure would genuinely add to the public's understanding of the review process is arguably limited. The Commissioner's notes the complainant's concerns about the independence of the review. However, in the Commissioner's opinion nothing within the withheld information would lead to the impartiality of KMPG's findings to be questioned.

61. In conclusion the Commissioner has found that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. In reaching this finding the Commissioner has placed particular weight on the fact that consequences of disclosure risk undermining the effectiveness of future contract reviews. He has also taken into account the fact that the Council has published the 'Final Summary Report' albeit with a minor redaction. This is not to dismiss the potential benefits of disclosing the withheld information but to give greater weight to the negative impact of disclosure.
62. In light of this decision, the Commissioner has not gone on to consider the balance of the public interest in relation to section 36(2)(c).

Right of appeal

63. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)
GRC & GRP Tribunals,
PO Box 9300,
LEICESTER,
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504

Fax: 0116 249 4253

Email: GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

64. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
65. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

Alexander Ganotis
Group Manager – Complaints Resolution
Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF