



National Audit Office

The UK's independent public spending
watchdog

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Reference FOI-1664
Date 16 October 2023

Dear

WHISTLEBLOWING DISCLOSURES RECEIVED ABOUT WARRINGTON COUNCIL

Thank you for your email received on 2 October 2023 to the National Audit Office. In your email, you asked us to confirm how many whistleblowing disclosures we have received about Warrington Borough Council in the past four months. Your request has been handled under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Your original request to us has been reproduced under **Annex A** for your reference.

I can confirm after reviewing our records, that we do not hold any information within the scope of your request. We have not received any Whistleblowing disclosures within the past four months regarding Warrington Borough Council.

It may help if I briefly explain that the NAO and the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG), who is the head of the NAO, are both independent of government. Our function is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements of government departments and other government bodies, and to carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which government departments and other public sector bodies utilise their resources. The results of this work are normally reported to Parliament. While we can consider whether public money is spent cost-effectively, the legislation defining our role does not permit us to question government policy objectives nor consider the merits of how public money is spent.

The NAO's role and remit does not extend to auditing, and reviewing whistleblowing disclosures made which relate to individual local bodies such as Warrington Council as they are separately and locally accountable. For concerns raised regarding local councils, the relevant external auditor appointed to the council is the appropriate person to consider these.

Annex B sets out the steps you may wish to take if you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request for information under the FOIA. I am sorry we haven't been able to help answer your request, but I hope the information provided above is useful in understanding the role and remit of the National Audit Office.

Yours sincerely,

NAO FOI Team

157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria, London SW1W 9SP
020 7798 7000 www.nao.org.uk



Cert No. 8835

ISO 14001

Annex A

Your original request for information about Illsley road, Barnsley Council

(Your request is in italic below)

“Dear National Audit Office,

Under the freedom of information act please confirm the number of whistleblower disclosures that the National Audit Office has received about Warrington Borough Council in the past in the past 4 months. I don't expect any details of the whistleblower disclosures, simply just the number of disclosures received.

Please treat this as a formal freedom of information request and respond in a maximum of 20 working days”

Annex B

Statement of Policy

Our policy is to respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as helpfully and promptly as possible, having regard to the principles set out in the Act. I therefore hope you are happy with the way we have handled your request. If you are not, then you should take the following steps.

In the first instance, within 40 working days, write to the National Audit Office Freedom of Information (FOI) Team at FOI.requests@nao.org.uk or by post to:

FOI Team, Green 2, National Audit Office, 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road, London, SW1W 9SP.

The Head of FOI will arrange a review, which will be conducted by a senior member of staff who was not involved in decisions relating to your original request. Once the review has been completed, we will write informing you of the outcome. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The primary way of escalating your concerns to the Information Commissioner is at: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints. Alternatively, you can contact the ICO at [Contact us | ICO](#) or Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF.