



## Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

**John Edwards**  
**UK Information Commissioner**  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
**Wycliffe House, Walter Lane**  
**Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF**

15 April 2024

Dear John,

### **The Committee's Report on Council Tax Collection**

As you may be aware, the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee recently published its Report<sup>1</sup> into *Council Tax Collection*, and received a response from the Government to this Report in February.<sup>2</sup> There are two points in the Government's response which relate to the work of the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), where we would appreciate any further clarification you would be able to provide to us.

Firstly, our Report recommended that an application for Universal Credit should automatically trigger an application for local council tax support.<sup>3</sup> However, in its response to this, the Government said that it did not agree. It told us that this risks creating additional bureaucracy and cost for local authorities, and confusion for council tax payers. The Government did not provide any evidence to support this view.<sup>4</sup>

**Please could you confirm what work the ICO has undertaken in this area which would either support or challenge the Government's view that this risks creating additional bureaucracy and cost for councils and confusion for council tax payers?**

Secondly, we recommended that the Government require the ICO to clarify or raise awareness of the provisions of its data-sharing code of practice.<sup>5</sup> The Government said in response that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has engaged with ICO following the Committee's inquiry and that ICO is currently reflecting on this recommendation.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee, Second Report of Session 2023-24, [Council Tax Collection](#), HC 57

<sup>2</sup> GOV.UK, [Government response to the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee report on Council Tax Collection](#), CP 1018

<sup>3</sup> [Council Tax Collection](#), para 85

<sup>4</sup> [Government response](#), "Data sharing", p.8

<sup>5</sup> [Council Tax Collection](#), para 85

<sup>6</sup> [Government response](#), "Data sharing", p.10



## **Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee**

**Please could you provide us with an update on your reflections on this recommendation to date, and to outline what actions, if any, you plan to take to address this issue?**

**I would be grateful if you could write to the Committee with responses to the above questions by Friday 3 May 2024.**

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clive Betts'.

**Clive Betts MP  
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee**