

22 September 2026

Dear

Claim Handling (27199) INTERNAL REVIEW

I have now concluded my review with sincere apologies this has taken longer than was at first anticipated. In your email of 9 August 2026 you sought a review of the decision by Planning Directorate as follows:

Further to your email of 4 August 2026, I write to request that you make an internal review of your decision not to provide the information I requested under The Freedom of Information Act sent to you on 9 July 2026.

In reviewing that decision, I have considered the email exchanges between you and Planning Directorate and discussed with the officer responsible for preparing the material for release to you.

Your original request was for:

Please provide details of all who have dealt with this Claim (i.e. officers, committees, FirstMinister?) and who made the decisions outlined in the email response from [redacted] to date.

You received two email responses on 4 August, the first at 08.52 provided a substantive answer to your original request which provided the numbers of staff who had dealt with your claim. The second email, sent later that morning at 11.37 included a detailed note explaining the detailed legal basis on which the decision to withhold the information was made.

Having reviewed your request, considered the material and tested the legal basis on which the names of the individuals have been withheld, I agree with the decision, except in relation to one of the officials concerned.

One of the officials who considered your correspondence was Neil Hemington, the Chief Planner. As a member of the senior civil service, the official has a reduced expectancy of privacy and therefore on undertaking the balancing test for this individual I consider the release of information is warranted, contrary to the balancing undertaken for the other officials, as set out in Annex 1 of the reply.

I apologise for this error in the response to your request.

Next steps

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Reg Kilpatrick / Tracey Breheny
(Job Share) Director, Local Government and Planning