Privacy Notice – Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment

This notice is provided to explain what information the council needs in order to process housing benefit, council tax reduction and discretionary housing payment claims.

Who is responsible for your information?

All personal information is held and processed by West Lothian Council in accordance with the data protection law.

What information do we need?

West Lothian Council will collect personal information about you, your family and your landlord. This information will include:

- Details about you, your name, address, telephone number, email address, national insurance number, date of birth;
- Details about people living with you, income, allowances, savings and investments including those of your partner or any dependants;
- Other relevant information needed to process your claim, such as your landlord details, bank details.

Why do we need your information?

We need this information to process your claim or enquiry relating to housing benefit, council tax reduction and/or discretionary housing payment. If this information is not provided it may affect our ability to process your enquiry or claim.

Who will we share your information with?

To enable the council to administer housing benefit, council tax reduction and/or discretionary housing payment we will share information where we are required by law with partner organisations, including:

- The Department for Work and Pensions and other Government departments;
- Police Scotland and other United Kingdom police authorities;
- Scottish Government;
- Your Landlord;
- Other Local Authorities.

The council is required by law to participate in National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data matching exercises and council tax and council tax reduction information may be
shared with the Cabinet Office for NFI purposes and will be used for the prevention and detection of fraud.

**How long do we keep your information?**

The council will only keep your information as long as necessary. For the purposes detailed above this is for a maximum of seven years. After this time your information will be securely destroyed.

**Providing accurate information**

It is important that we hold accurate and up to date information about you in order to assess your needs and process your claim. If any of your details have changed, or change in the future, please ensure that you tell us as soon as possible so that we can update your records.

**Automated Decision Making**

Some of the records provided by the Department for Work and Pensions are automatically processed on our processing system. You will be notified of the outcome and a summary of the calculation used in the process.

**Your rights and further information**

You have a number of rights under data protection law, including the right to request your information and to request that the information be amended or, in some circumstances, erased if incorrect.

If you have any questions or concerns about how your information is used, please contact Benefits Section, West Lothian Council, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, EH54 6FF. You can also contact the Data Protection Officer, West Lothian Council, West Lothian Civic Centre, Howden South Road, Livingston, West Lothian, EH54 6FF, email: dpo@westlothian.gov.uk. More information about data protection and how it applies to you, including how you can make a complaint, is available from the Information Commissioner's Office.