

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Your request for information has now been considered and the Council's response to your questions is shown below.

You asked:

- a) **How many Benefit Fraudsters have you identified in the last 5 years?**

The council defines Fraudsters for the purpose of this response as those cases that have resulted in a formal sanction such as Formal Caution, Administrative Penalty or Prosecution. This equates to 1,337 cases for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2013.

- b) **Of those individuals how many were prosecuted?**

From the 1,337 sanction cases 512 resulted in a prosecution.

- c) **What is the total outstanding 'debt' to the council resulting from benefit fraud?**

To determine an accurate figure of the total amount over the last five years would require an officer to manually look at some 1,337 cases and determine the amount of overpaid benefit outstanding and as such Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for local government is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 2.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We estimate that it will take us in excess of 2.5 working days to determine appropriate material and locate, retrieve and extract the information in reference to your request. Therefore, your request will not be processed further.

- d) **Of those prosecuted how much money have you recovered?**

Please see the response to question c.

- e) **How much of the 'debt' has the council written off?**

In the financial year 2012/2013 'debt' classified as Fraud following an investigation, totalling £59,120.74 which was being pursued by the Legal Services Division has been written off.

The legislation allows you to use the information supplied for your own personal use. Please be aware that any commercial or other use, for example

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Not all the information that is supplied which is covered by copyright will be the Council's copyright, for example it may be the copyright of a government department or another Council. You should seek either the Council's consent or their consent as appropriate. The Council is willing to advise you of any such potential issues on request. In order to make a request to re-use the information please contact the Information Governance Manager using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

Information Governance Manager
Information and Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG
e-mail: info.requests@leicester.gov.uk

Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please be aware that the Information Commissioner does not normally consider appeals or complaints until the internal appeals and complaints processes of the public authority which is answering the request have been exhausted. You are therefore advised to complain or appeal to the Information Governance Manager before contacting the Commissioner.