

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:

- 1. What was the total cost of administering the blue badge service in the last financial or calendar year for which figures are available, excluding any payments for assessments by Occupational Therapists (please note the time period this relates to)?**

ANSWER:

The Council does not hold information identifying the total cost of administering the blue badge service over any single year, or other, period. Staff from several sectors of the Council undertake work to administer the blue badge service - as described below:-

- The council has a small administrative team which processes all applications received under the 'discretionary' criteria of the scheme, applications submitted on-line, and any applications it receives direct. This team is part of a wider Business Support team in Adult Social Care where all staff work flexibly on a range of tasks to ensure that all of the wider team's functions are carried out.
- The Council's Customer Service Centres all make a major contribution to the administration of the blue badge service, including the full processing of applications received from people who are eligible for a badge under the 'automatic' criteria of the scheme, providing assistance to people who are in need of help to complete their application form etc.

The costs of the blue badge team, as described in a) above, the purchase of specific equipment for the team, and the fees paid to the national Blue Badge Improvement Service for the production of a badge are the only identifiable costs which are directly attributable to the administration of the blue badge service. These are shown in the table below.

Blue Badge Admin Costs April 1st 2012 to March 31st 2013	
Cost of Badge production (BBIS) N.B. The basic cost is £4.60 per badge, but on occasion additional processing or postage charges are incurred, including those badges 'fast tracked' for persons who are terminally ill.	£21,533

Staffing Costs	
<u>1 x Team Leader</u>	
1 x Admin. & Business Support Officer (B)	
1 x Admin & Business Support Officer (C)	
1 x Admin & Business Support Officer (D)	
N.B. The above are only those administrative staff whose principal duties are the administration of the blue badge scheme; plus the cost of a Team Leader, which we believe is representative of the cost of the management time spent on this service at present.	£88,709
Interpreter Costs	£300
Ad hoc equipment purchased (scanners)	£386
	£110,928

Furthermore, many of our administrative costs are absorbed within centralised budgets, and are therefore not identifiable as costs incurred in the administration of the blue badge scheme. For example, the postage, stationery and printing costs incurred by the blue badge section are met from centralised budgets within Adult Social Care.

On the basis that the information requested is not held in full, this is a refusal notice; the Council does not hold this information. Therefore this letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

2. How many phone calls in relation to blue badge administration were received in the same period as detailed in Q1

During the period 1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013, the Council's telephone Contact Centre received 1,815 telephone calls in respect of blue badges. Information identifying the number of incoming calls received by the blue badge administrative team (please see 1a above) is not held and cannot be identified owing to the constraints of the telephone system at the office premises concerned.

On the basis that the information requested is not held in full, this is a refusal notice; the Council does not hold this information. Therefore this letter acts as a refusal notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because, in accordance with section 1.1 of the Act, this information is not held by Leicester City Council.

3. How many blue badge applications were processed in the same period as detailed in Q1. Please break this down by successful and unsuccessful applications.

Please find below a breakdown of the number of blue badge applications processed in the period 1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013.

Badges Processed 1st April 2012 - 31st March 2013	
Issued	4623
Refused	207
Total	4830

The figures provided account for the number of badges issued and refused, as requested. However, in addition, we would have received and processed some applications that neither resulted in a badge being issued or refused. For example, some applications are withdrawn by the applicant after submission, some applications are incomplete when they are submitted, and remain incomplete despite attempts to contact the applicant about their application.

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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: FOIA@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.