

## **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:**

**Could you please supply me with the outcome of the investigation into the halal lamb burgers, which may or may not have contained pork?  
Can you tell me the results of each test on the meat in question, when the test was taken and who conducted it, along with the outcome?  
Can you tell me how the pork/contamination of the meat took place or is believed to have taken place?**

### **ANSWER**

For your information this part of the letter constitutes a refusal notice under Section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because an exemption under Section 30 of the Act is being applied – Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities.

Disclosure of the requested information at this stage could have a significant negative impact on the outcome of the investigation. The Council considers there is a strong public interest in avoiding likely prejudice of such an investigation.

**Can you tell me what action has been taken to ensure this scenario doesn't happen again?**

Leicester City Council uses ESPO's framework contracts for the supply of school food. These are supported by robust quality assurance procedures to monitor the supply chain. It was these routine procedures that identified the initial problem with the Paragon Halal lamb burgers in 2013. Under the terms of the contract, all suppliers are required to have third party accreditation for their food safety and quality management systems in order to supply the city council. Additionally, ESPO – which undertakes procurement on the city council's behalf – conducts regular audits which include traceability checks to ensure meat products can be traced back to their original source. Product samples are independently analysed.

**How often does the council test school food and has this been stepped up in the aftermath of this particular situation?**

ESPO continuously monitors and tests school food. Products are selected for analysis based on inherent risk and the regularity of use. Yes, this was stepped up.

**I believe the company in question (Paragon Foods) is no longer used – please confirm this.**

The city council no longer uses any products sourced from Paragon Foods.

**Can you confirm what steps the council is now taking with regards to this particular situation?**

The city council has established a Food Procurement Board to review food procurement standards, practices and processes.

The board will also ensure that the council implements the recommendations of the Elliott Review into the Integrity and Assurance of the Food Supply Networks which is due to be published in Spring 2014.

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 publication, sale, or redistribution may be a breach of copyright under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 as amended unless you obtain the copyright holder's prior permission.

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 Customer Access  
Leicester City Council  
FREEPOST (LE985/33)  
New Walk Centre  
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG**

e-mail: [info.requests@leicester.gov.uk](mailto: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](http://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.