

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:

How much money has your council saved in the last year by cutting frontline services? I would like this broken down into the different areas where cuts were made, like housing, children's services, care homes, nursing homes, refuse collection etc. where possible, with the amount of cuts in each area.

For your information this letter constitutes a refusal notice under Section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because an exemption under Section 21 of the Act is being applied, namely the information is accessible by other means, e.g. the Council Website.

The Council's 2011/12 budget, detailing all cuts to services, can be found using the following link:

<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=81&MIId=3805&Ver=4>

How much money has your council spent on using the services of consultants during the last year, including a breakdown of the companies used, such as IBM, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Deloitte or PR experts, what these consultants were used for, and how much they were paid in each case.

In many of these areas it is difficult for us to differentiate between true consultancy, interim/project management and service suppliers/contractors where services involve highly-specialised activities. Consequently the summary of payments set out in the attached table covers all of these aspects and should not be taken to represent consultancy alone.

The information has been obtained directly from the council's accounting system and includes payments both to organisations and to individuals, however, names of individuals have been redacted in accordance with data protection legislation.

As mentioned above, the list includes payments relating to interim managers, often where we have short-term vacancies for senior or hard to recruit to positions. It also includes the provision of specialist advice and services – for example in relation to the legal and financial aspects of the council's £300m Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and project management costs relating to the recent implementation of the council's job evaluation scheme.

Other payments included are for services where the council no longer provides the function in-house – for example construction materials testing and geometric services and for the delivery of significant time-limited investment programmes arising from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund.

Also shown are contributions to partner organisations for work undertaken by them, usually with a wider remit than just the immediate city. For example the list includes our contribution to an organisation called Prospect Leicestershire – an arm's length countywide economic regeneration body set up by the city and county councils to promote inward investment in the sub-region.

Where possible, a general comment is included next to those payments of significant value. This is not possible in all cases as the sum total of expenditure comprises of over 2,200 individual transactions.

We estimate it will take over 183 hours to process your request. This is calculated on approximately five minutes per case, with a total of 2,200 cases to check.

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 more than 18 hours in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

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 Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG
e-mail: FOIA@leicester.gov.uk

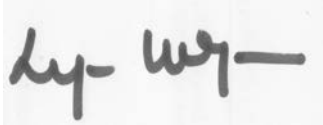
Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn Wyeth', is written on a light-colored rectangular background.

Lynn Wyeth
Information Governance Manager