

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:

What are your rules to leaking information to the media? Can I have a copy? Have your top politicians leaked confidential reports?

ANSWER:

In terms of rules regarding "leaking" of information to the media, all initial contact with the media should generally go via our Press Team. This is reflected in specific guidance including our corporate media protocol (attached).

If there was any credible evidence that a Member had leaked information inappropriately to the media then it would be a matter for the Standards Committee to decide whether this was a possible breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and if so to have the matter investigated.

We also have specific codes of conduct and rules relating to access to and provision of information. Specifically Part 4B of our constitution covers this and specific protocols are outlined in part 5. A copy of our existing constitution can be found via the following link <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/councillors-democracy-and-elections/our-constitution>

Finally our employee code of conduct, section 9 covers staff contact with the media. Specifically it sets out:

Information on the Councils activities should not be given to the media unless you are authorised by your manager or requested by the Council's Communications Unit to do so. The Communication Unit must be told of information you give to the media. You must report any dealings you have with representatives of the media about Council activities to that Unit immediately. If the matter you are dealing with is sensitive or contentious, you should speak to a member of the Communications Unit before releasing any information. The purpose of this is not to restrict information but to avoid errors. It is important that the information we give is consistent and follows corporate policies.

Trade Union representatives may speak to the press in their role as representatives. They must, however make it clear in what capacity they are speaking and where they are privileged to confidential information, must abide by the confidentiality rules.

Please let me have copies of every cabinet Member E Mail sent to Leicester Mercury political reporters from November 2011 to the present day.

We attach copies of emails sent from Cabinet Members to the Leicester Mercury, between 1st November 2011 and the 3rd February 2012. Personal information has been blacked out of these emails, including names, addresses, telephone numbers and personal opinions. We are withholding that information since we consider that to be an absolute exemption under section 40(2) (personal data), and this therefore constitutes a refusal under section 17 of the Freedom of information Act 2000.

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

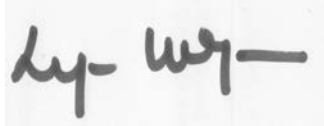
Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

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 on a light-colored background. The signature appears to be 'Lynn Wyeth' written in a cursive, slightly stylized font. The first part 'Lynn' is written with a large 'L' and 'y', and 'Wyeth' follows with a horizontal line at the end.

Lynn Wyeth
Information Governance Manager