

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. In the past five financial years how much has your organisation spent on hiring private investigators?

In your answer please detail the following information for each commission:

- Financial year
- Department
- Purpose
- Cost

ANSWER:

Leicester City Council has not hired any private investigators in the last five financial years.

2. In the past five financial years how many times has your council commissioned the following:

Intercepting communications, such as the content of telephone calls, emails or letters

Acquiring communications data – the 'who, when and where' of communications, such as a telephone billing or subscriber details

Conducting covert surveillance, either in private premises or vehicles (intrusive surveillance) or in public places (directed surveillance)

The use of covert human intelligence sources, such as informants or undercover officers

Access to electronic data protected by encryption or passwords

In your answer please detail the following information for each commission:

Financial year

What was commissioned?

Department

Was the work carried out by a permanent council employee, an employee on a short term contract or an outside organisation?

Purpose

Cost

ANSWER:

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.

We estimate it will take 10 hours per year to gather and compile this information per year. Total time required would be over 50 hours of work.

This is therefore a Refusal Notice under section 17.1 of the Freedom of Information Act, because under the provisions of section 12.1 of the Act, the Council estimates that to comply with your request in its current form will exceed the appropriate limit.

There is some of the data you have requested for 2010 on our website, if you follow the below link.

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council-services/council-and-democracy/data-protection-and-foi/regulation-of-investigatory-powers/>

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. Leicester City Councils website.

2011 statistics are being compiled and will be published on our website at the end of May 2012 and therefore this information is exempt as it is intended for future publication in line with S22 of the Act. This letter acts as S17 refusal notice in respect of this part of your request.

How many outside contractors do you currently have employed to carry out covert surveillance work on behalf of the council?

Covert Surveillance work includes:

Intrusive surveillance

This is covert and carried out in relation to anything taking place on any residential premises or in any private vehicle. It involves a person on the premises or in the vehicle, or is carried out by a surveillance device.

Directed surveillance

This is covert but not intrusive (and not an immediate response to events) but undertaken for a specific investigation or operation in a way likely to obtain private information about a person.

Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS)

The use or conduct of someone who establishes or maintains a personal or other relationship with a person for the covert purpose of obtaining information.

[Leicester City Council does not use any outside contractors to carry out covert surveillance.](#)

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

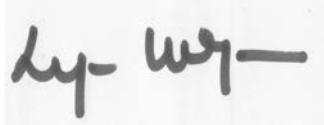
Wilmslow SK9 5AF

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', written on a light-colored rectangular background.

Lynn Wyeth
Information Governance Manager