

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Thank you for your email of 8<sup>th</sup> November 2011 where you requested information about personal searches and official searches. You asked for:

**The number of personal searches carried out so far this year in each month beginning with January 2011 and the names of the organizations that carried out the searches. Please will you also supply the number of the 'official' searches carried out in the same period by the local authority.** (You later clarified this to mean LLC1 searches)

The number of searches carried out so far this year by month (Jan 11<sup>th</sup> 2011 to the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011) is as follows:

<b>Month 2011</b>	<b>Number of personal searches</b>	<b>Number of LLC1s</b>
January	57	154
February	87	199
March	118	309
April	74	173
May	95	220
June	99	291
July	101	262
August	97	231
September	133	253
October	128	314

To release the numbers of searches requested by specific companies would potentially provide commercial information. To provide a breakdown by month of a specific company's requests, would potentially allow information about profitability and market share to be calculated.

This information is therefore exempt under Section 43(2) – commercial information, which provides an exemption from disclosure where to release information would, or would be likely to prejudice the commercial activity of any party. To release this level of detail about a specific company or about the Authority could impact upon the ability to enter into commercial activity or operate in an open and competitive market. This is therefore a refusal notice under s17 of the Act.

I am satisfied that the information would, or would be likely to, be prejudicial to commercial interests if released, and it is not in the public interest to do so at this time. There is arguably a public interest in ensuring that private companies and Authorities are able to participate freely and competitively in their commercial activities. Both Authorities and Companies operate in a competitive environment and to release specific information could damage their ability to participate effectively against competitors or maximise their income.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

**Head of Information Governance**  
**Information and Support**  
**Leicester City Council**  
**FREEPOST (LE985/33)**  
**New Walk Centre**  
**LEICESTER LE1 6ZG**  
e-mail: [foia@leicester.gov.uk](mailto: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](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 Head of Information Governance before contacting the Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

**Lynn Wyeth**  
**Head of Information Governance**