

06 April 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Request for information: RFI-2017-0450

I can confirm that Newark and Sherwood District Council holds some of the information you have requested about the companies and charities that have become liable for the business rates within the period from 08/3/17-31/03/17.

Unfortunately I have to inform you that on this occasion we are refusing your request under the exemption at section 12, where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit, of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Therefore, this letter serves as a refusal notice as required under section 17 of that Act.

The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. The appropriate limit for a local authority is £450 at a set hourly rate of £25 per person which equates to 18 hours of officer time. Work that can be taken into account for estimating the appropriate limit is to determine if the information exists, locate the information, retrieve the information and extract the information.

Although the IT system used by the council for Business Rates works well for billing purposes we do not have the reporting module that allows us to extract either the date that a company became liable or the name of that company . To comply fully with your request each one of the 4,000 records in the Council's system to be checked manually to ascertain whether they became liable for business rates during the period which you have specified and then manually collate the detail you have requested for those that meet your criteria.

Based on the above we have estimated that to comply fully with your request would require some 90 officer hours, this equates to £2,250 at the prescribed hourly rate.

The only way of us being able to provide this type of information to you is to identify a period of time in the future and we could then manually collect information on new business liabilities occurring during that period. However requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can only be valid if the information requested has already been recorded on the date of the request or prior to that date. Therefore we cannot offer you any alternative information.

If you have any further queries or concerns about the information provided please do not hesitate to contact us. If we do not hear from you within 40 days, starting the day after the date of this letter, we will consider the request closed.

If following our response to your query you are still dissatisfied you have the right to request an internal review. This will be conducted by the Director of Safety or the Deputy Chief Executive who have not been involved with the request or complaint until this point. Should you wish to proceed to this stage please advise us quoting the reference number at the top of this page.

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of any internal review to the Council you have a further right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office, details of which can be found on the Information Commissioner's website www.ico.org.uk/

More details of this complaints process are available to view on our website at the following link: www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/yourcouncil/makingarequestforinformation/accesstoinformation-complaintsprocedure/

There is no charge for making an appeal at any stage.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of David Clarke.

David Clarke
Information Governance Officer