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Ask for: Information
Governance

Your ref :

Our ref: FOI/E6229

Date: 17/05/2010

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Dear Ms Buckingham,

Freedom of Information Act 2000
Request for Information: Information Provided
Please quote our reference: E6229
Subject: Disabled Parking Space

We write with regard to your recent enquiry for information held by the Council under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We trust that the information provided is satisfactory. You are free to use the information for your personal use only. Any other type of re-use, for example, publishing the information or issuing copies to the public will require permission of the copyright owner. If the Council is the copyright owner, a licence can be applied for under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005.

For future reference we publish information on our website, including the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme and summary of Freedom of Information requests and responses that may be of help to you in searching for information. Our website is mentioned above.

It is important to note that under the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 the Council asks not to receive unsolicited marketing communication.

Request & Response

Our response to your request is below.

Q1. When was the decision taken to move the disabled designation of the space.

A1 Originally the Council had thought the decision to redesignate the parking spaces was made whilst the Council were owners of the building and during the Council's fit out works. However, further enquiries of the managing company on the 20th April 2010 has shown that the parking spaces were re-designated during works carried out between 13/8/07 and 5/10/07.

Q2. Who made the decision to re-designate the space.

A2 At the time of the decision to change the disabled designation for this space there were a number of parties involved in decisions relating to the building. This included the then owner and vendor of the building, their contractors and agents. The Council were notified of works proposed to the building from the date of the Council's decision to purchase on the 2nd July 2007 to the date of completion of the purchase on the 26th October 2007. The Council's Project Manager for the move into the building took the decision to designate this space for the office holder of Mayor.

Q3. What officers, if any, of Newham Council were involved in the decision.

A3 As far as we are aware no officers of the Council took the decision to remove the disabled designation from certain car parking spaces. The council was on notice of works proposed to the building including redesignation of the disabled parking bays on or before the 13 August 2007.. The Project Manager for the Council's move to Newham Dockside was responsible for the decision on designating of reserved spaces for certain office holders including marking this bay for the Mayor.

Q4. What members of Newham Council were involved in the decision.

A4 As far as we are aware none

Q5. Specifically what involvement did Robin Wales, the current Mayor of Newham, have in the decision

A5 As far as we are aware none

Q6. Is there a surveyor's report dealing with this aspect before the Council became involved. If so, when was it written and If so can this be provided to me.

A6. The managing agents of the building commissioned a Health and Safety Access Audit from Ark Health and Safety Ltd. Their report is dated 15th September 2004. A copy is attached as requested.

Q7. I understand that there was a conditional contract to purchase subject to remedying defects. Was any reference made in this to the provision of disabled parking bays and, in particular did it make any reference to the current bay allocated to the Mayor. Can you provide me with a copy.

A7 A schedule of proposed works to be carried out between the Council confirming it's intention to purchase the premises and completion of the purchase is attached.

Q8. Can you provide any correspondence from the Mayor or the Mayor's office regarding the provision of a mayoral parking space.

A8. A search of our systems has not found any such documentation was sent from the Mayors office or the Mayor. Two documents relating to this enquiry were received by the Mayor's office (1) email from Maggie Cameron-Ratchford dated 26th March 09 and (2) email from Jackie St Romaine on 22nd May 09 confirming that the spaces had been marked up. Copies are attached.

Q9. What advice was given and by which officers to councillor Alan Craig or the Christian People's Alliance or any other person regarding the re-designation of the parking bay.

A9. It is not possible to search all information to establish all enquires that may have been made of officers in relation to the car parking space reserved for the Mayor as that will take longer than 2.5 days. However the Council can confirm that any recent enquires in relation to this matter have been dealt with by a number of officers but responses have been lead by the Divisional Director for Legal and Democratic Services. As set out above prior to the 20 April 2010 relevant Council officers had thought that the decision was made at about the time of the fit out of the building which occurred after the Council became the owners. Officers dealing with any request for information did know that there are at least 8 disabled parking bays in the underground car park that have been re-designated from disabled to general use. Three of these are reserved for certain Office holders; five are not. Officers were aware that the decision to designate the car parking spaces for particular office holders would have been one for the relevant Council officer, and not a Member decision. Any enquiries would have been responded to in this way at that time.

If you require any further information or are not happy with our response please do not hesitate to contact a member of our team on (020) 8430 3737 or email us at information.governance@newham.gov.uk.

Yours Faithfully

Information Governance

Newham Council