



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Further to your information request FOI/EIR 20/21-187 please find your question and our response below.

Request:

Could you please provide the cost of supplying refuse sacks (black bags) to all households in East Cambridgeshire for each year from 2015 to 2020?

Response:

The information below is in regard to the purchasing cost of refuse sacks. Please note: we are unable to provide the annual delivery cost, as this is included in East Cambs Street Scene transport costs as a whole and not broken down.

Until 2018, East Cambridgeshire District Council's waste service was externally operated by Veolia. East Cambridgeshire District Council paid Veolia for the contract as a whole, and we do not have a breakdown of costs. Therefore your request for the cost of supplying refuse sacks from 2015 to 2017 (inclusive) is refused under 'Information Not Held'

In regard to your request for the cost of supplying refuse sacks from 2018 to 2020, this information is refused under Section 43 of the FOI Act 2000 – Commercial Interests.

In respect of those requests that were answered in full or partially and the total refused please take this as notice under FOIA, that we:

- a) Consider the information as exempt from disclosure under the Act;
- b) Claim exempt under sections of the Act:

Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000

- c) State why the exemption applies

Commercial Interests

(2) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it)

We confirm that we hold the information requested. As Section 43 is a qualified exemption, we, the authority, must consider the balance of public interest in the circumstances of the request.

The requested information is held by one of East Cambridgeshire District Council's Trading Companies, East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS). Whilst there is a need for openness and transparency regarding how public funds are being managed, it is essential that ECSS can negotiate rates in a competitive market place so that they can obtain the best value for public money. Publication of the prices would hinder the competitive nature of any future tendering process by allowing service providers to tailor their quotes based on what they know ECSS is currently paying, and on what they know their competitors are currently charging. This could result in an increased cost to the public purse. As well as the commercial interests of East Cambs Street Scene, we have a duty to protect the commercial interests of third party suppliers by not publishing their commercially sensitive rates, and thereby allowing their market competitors to have access to information that they could use to their own advantage, and to the detriment of our suppliers. Whilst the Council strongly believes in the principle of open and accountable local government and its Trading Companies, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

This concludes your request FOI/EIR 20/21-187

If information has been refused please treat this as a Refusal Notice for the purposes of the Act.

If you disagree with our decision or are otherwise unhappy with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you may approach foi@eastcambs.gov.uk and request a review. A request for review must be made in no more than 40 working days from the date of your this email.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right under s50 of the Freedom of Information Act to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF.