

Mr D Williams
By Email:
request-457666-ac2551b3@whatdotheyknow.com

Ein Cyf/Our Ref	FOI7795
Dyddiad/Date	23 March 2018
Gofynner am/Ask for	Frankie Turner
Rhif Union/Direct Dial	01978 292000
E-bost/E-mail	foi@wrexham.gov.uk

Dear Mr Williams

Re: Internal review of FOI7795

An internal review has been undertaken in relation to your Freedom of Information (FOI) request (FOI7795) regarding Wrexham Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) and the processes in place for rough sleepers in the Wrexham area.

You have questioned the responses that you have been provided with and have asked for further information or clarification.

Findings:

Following receipt of your request, information has been provided by the relevant Officers within the Housing and Economy Department

Your FOI request posed 11 questions which followed a previous FOI request (FOI7724). You were dissatisfied with the response to FOI7795 and requested an internal review of the response to several of the questions.

This internal review has determined that it is evident some information should have been provided as part of your FOI request (FOI7795). This response has therefore addressed each of your enquiries in turn and provided further information or details as applicable.

Question 2:

The document that you were provided with does not form part of a larger document entitled "Homelessness". The response provided to your FOI was correct in stating that there is no document entitled "Homelessness". The document is the SWEP as it stands at the present time. In conducting the internal review, it has been confirmed that a review of the SWEP is currently being undertaken. The intention is to publish the document when complete, however that date is not yet determined.

Further information regarding Homelessness can be found at this link:
<http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/Housing/homeless/index.htm>

*Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg.
Byddwn yn ymateb i unrhyw ohebiaeth yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd hyn yn arwain at unrhyw oedi.*

*We welcome correspondence in Welsh.
We will respond to any correspondence in Welsh and this will not lead to any delay.*

Question 3:

The response to your FOI request advised that it is mandatory for all local authorities to have a SWEP in place, however further clarification has been obtained. There are currently no legal protections for people sleeping rough in “England” during severe weather – the provision of shelter is not a statutory duty, even when conditions are life threatening. However, there is a humanitarian obligation on local authorities to do all they can to prevent deaths on the streets, and for their partners and the public to support these efforts. There is no corresponding guidance for local authorities in Wales so the SWEP is followed for guidance rather than as a legal obligation.

Question 4:

The response provided advised you that the information is not available. In conducting the internal review it is evident that this answer is not satisfactory. Financial information should be held however the information has not been collated by the Housing Options Team. I have therefore asked the Department to revisit this response as part of FOI7795. You can expect a response within 20 working days.

Question 5:

The review found that the response to this question was inadequate. A MET office report is generated and sent directly to the Housing Options Team via email. At this point a determination is made to trigger the SWEP, although it can be triggered earlier by the Housing Options Team at their discretion. The receipt time can vary during the day and it is usually after 12pm.

Partner agencies are notified immediately the SWEP is triggered, which is on receipt of the MET Office report, or prior to this as referred to above. Known service users are informed directly.

Question 7:

The review found that the response to this question was inadequate. Once the SWEP is triggered by the Housing Options Team, partner agencies undertake their role, i.e. Outreach Workers inform the service users, which includes going out and speaking to the individuals concerned. This process is not managed by the Housing Options Team.

Question 9:

The response provided advised you that the information is not available. The internal review found that the information is not collected nor collated and, therefore, it is not held.

Question 10:

The internal review found that the response did not answer your question fully. When the SWEP is triggered, any rough sleeper can access the service by applying in person to Ty Nos. They will be provided with accommodation through a partner agency or, if this is not possible, they may be offered B&B accommodation through the Housing Options Out of Hours Service.

Question 11:

The response provided to your enquiry has been assessed and found to not have answered your request fully.

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As advised, office hours for the Housing Options Team are 9.00 – 4.30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday and Thursday 10.00 – 5.30 pm.

The Housing Options Team also have a specific Out of Hours Service managed by a designated Homeless Officer. B&B accommodation can be allocated by the Officer, if applicable.

Further Questions 1 - 6:

You have posed a further 6 questions in your internal review request, which have been considered. I am satisfied that questions 1, 2, 4 and 5 have been answered within the context of this response. However, questions 3 and 6 will need to be considered further under the Freedom of Information Act as they include further enquiries not originally included in FOI7795. I have therefore referred these to be dealt with accordingly and you will receive further correspondence in due course.

If you are not content with the outcome, you have a right to refer this matter to the Information Commissioner (ICO), who investigates complaints on information access. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,



Gareth Jones
Corporate & Statutory Complaints Lead

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