

E3817

Dear Ms Brantman,

RE: Freedom of Information Request.

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request that Belfast City Council received on <> . I wish to apologise for the delay in responding to your request, which was caused by the unprecedented and enormous volume of correspondence, including freedom of information (FOI) requests, that Belfast City Council received on this subject. I wish to assure you that the Council was not attempting, at any stage, to avoid the statutory obligations placed upon it by the Freedom of Information Act.

The Council accepts that it failed to respond to your request within the twenty working days statutory framework set out in the Freedom of Information Act, but is now in a position to respond. Accordingly, the Council's response to your request is set out below.

In the first instance I would wish to advise you that the Council is very aware of the concerns expressed by many members of the public regarding this case. I would therefore assure you that, for the duration of his time in the care of Belfast City Council, the dog was kept in Government approved kennels where he was properly cared for. He was well fed, received daily exercise and had access to veterinary services when required. I can also confirm that, during this period, he was regularly visited by Council staff.

The Council's position on this matter, including the County Court decision of 30th September 2011 and the Court of Appeal decision of 12th June 2012, is set out on its website and you can access it at <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/news/lennox-update.asp>

You will note that the County Court Appeal decision of Judge Rodgers describes not only the background to the case but also the reasons for the Court's decision. I trust this addresses any questions you may have regarding this case.

If you are dissatisfied with how the Council handled your request for information, you have the right to request that the Council formally review this decision. If you do wish to do so, please write to the Records Manager, Records Management unit, Belfast City Council, Room 121, City Hall, Belfast, BT1 5GS.

Should you remain dissatisfied following the councils internal review, you could seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for an independent review should be made in writing to: The Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. However I would advise that the Information Commissioner has indicated that a review will not be undertaken unless the Council has first had an opportunity to re-consider its decision.

Yours sincerely,

Environmental Health Service