

Ms Avril Williams

25 November 2014

Email: [request-225087-8e39cc5a@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-225087-8e39cc5a@whatdotheyknow.com)

Dear Ms Williams,

**Re: Request for Internal Review under Freedom of Information Act 2000 – case 701249**

Thank you for your request for an internal review, received 22 October 2014. We have now completed our investigations into your request for an internal review with the assistance of the departments concerned.

**Your original request for information (RFI)**

Your RFI was received on 14 August 2014 and responded to on 15 September 2014. Please find a copy of H&F's RFI response attached.

**Your request for an internal review**

We have extracted your internal review request and italicised this below. Your full request for an internal review is attached.

*"I am writing to request an internal review of Hammersmith and Fulham Borough Council's handling of my FOI request 'Grants to Foster and Adoptive Parents'.*

*The original reply failed to answer my questions about grants to ADOPTIVE Parents. Can the situation please be rectified."*

**Our investigation**

In order to complete our internal review, we contacted the Finance and Family Services divisions in our Children's Services department as the service areas responsible for responding to your RFI. With their assistance we have addressed each of your points below:

For clarity, we have included the relevant extracts from your original RFI, H&F's RFI response along with our internal review response below:

**Original RFI:** *"Please could you state how much your Council spent during the financial year 2013-2014 on EACH of the following":*

**1. Original RFI:** *"1. Non-repayable grants to Foster Parents*

*a. towards the purchase of bigger cars. If more than one family received a grant please elaborate."*

**H&F's RFI Response:** *"£4,159.00"*

**H&F's Internal Review response:** H&F's RFI response provided the requested information. The amount was paid to one family.

**2. Original RFI:** *"b. towards the building of house extensions or the purchase of bigger houses. If more than one family received a grant please elaborate."*

**H&F's RFI Response:** "None"

**H&F's Internal Review response:** H&F's RFI response provided the requested information.

**3. Original RFI:** *If recipients later cease fostering, are grants repayable, in full or in part, - or would they be if this situation hasn't yet arisen?*

**H&F's RFI Response:** H&F's RFI response did not specifically address this part of the RFI.

**H&F's Internal Review response:** Children's Services have confirmed that non-repayable grants paid towards the purchase of bigger cars, house extensions or bigger houses are re-payable on a sliding scale if the recipient stops being a foster parent or the adopted child is returned to local authority care.

The sliding scale will usually apply over a period of 5 years, i.e. if a placement ends after 1 year, 80% will be repayable; after 4 years, 20% will be repayable; after 5 years, no repayment will be required.

**4. Original RFI:** *"1. Non-repayable grants to Adoptive Parents*

*a. towards the purchase of bigger cars. If more than one family received a grant please elaborate."*

**H&F's RFI Response:** H&F's RFI response did not specifically address this part of your RFI.

**H&F's Internal Review response:** Children's Services have confirmed that no non-repayable grants were paid in 2013-2014 to Adoptive Parents towards the purchase of bigger cars.

**5. Original RFI:** *"b. towards the building of house extensions or the purchase of bigger houses. If more than one family received a grant please elaborate."*

**H&F's RFI Response:** H&F's RFI response did not specifically address this part of your RFI.

**H&F's Internal Review response:** Children's Services have confirmed that no non-repayable grants were paid in 2013-2014 to Adoptive Parents towards the building of house extensions or the purchase of bigger houses.

**6. Original RFI:** *"If after a grant has been received adopted children are returned to Local Authority care, or are removed, are grants repayable, in full or in part, - or would they be if this situation hasn't yet arisen?"*

**H&F's RFI Response:** *"Any payment in respect of property is made in conjunction with a legal agreement and normally a charge is applied to the property. However all agreements are negotiated on a case by case basis and the terms and conditions of each may be different dependant on circumstances."*

**H&F's Internal Review response:** H&F's RFI response partially addressed this part of your RFI. The response given was only for non-repayable grants for buildings, it did not specifically address non-repayable grants paid towards the purchase of bigger cars. Please see our internal review response above for point 3 which provides the rest of the requested information.

## **Internal review outcome**

Our investigation into your request for internal review concludes that your complaint is upheld as H&F's RFI response did not specifically address all parts of your RFI.

Please accept our apologies on behalf of H&F for this omission in the RFI response. This internal review response has corrected this.

If you feel dissatisfied with the handling of your request for an internal review under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 0303 123 1113  
Website: <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely,

Anthea Ferguson  
Senior Information Management Officer

**NOTE: Please do not edit the subject line when replying to this email.**  
Please contact [H&FInTouch@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:H&FInTouch@lbhf.gov.uk) with all new requests for information.