



## COMPLAINTS AND INFORMATION GOVERNANCE TEAM

Town Hall, Darlington DL1 5QT  
DX 69280 Darlington 6  
Web site: <http://www.darlington.gov.uk>

Mr Barnes  
[request-588361-xxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx](#)

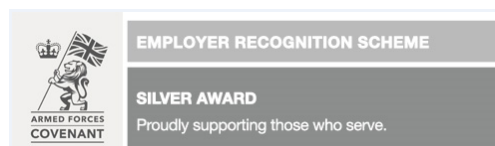
Date	: 06 August 2019
Please ask for	: Diana Willsher
Direct Line	: (01325) 406777
Your Reference	:
Our Reference	: DBC-1261-19
Document	:
Name	:

Dear Mr Barnes,

### Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Information Request

Your request for information, received on 10 July 2019, has now been considered. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you. Below is an outline of your request with our response.

- 1. Do you use national procurement frameworks to procure consultancy?**
  - a. If so, which frameworks do you use, and what proportion of your consultancy spend over the last 12 months has been on each of the frameworks you are part of.**
- 2. Do you use third party neutral vendors/procurement solution providers (eg ESPO, Bloom, Procurement hub) to procure consultancy?**
  - a. If so which do you use, and what proportion of your consultancy spend over the last 12 months has been on each of the vendors you use.**
- 3. Do you use internal frameworks to procure consultancy? (IE frameworks that are not national, that you administer yourselves or share with a small number of other local authorities)**
  - a. If so what proportion of your consultancy spend over the last 12 months has been on each of the frameworks you have and when will they expire/re-open for applications.**



**4. Have you procured consultancy services through your own unique, project specific tender processes? (for example advertising a tender for a specific consultancy piece of work)**

**a. If so what proportion of your consultancy spend was procured through this route, and where do you advertise such opportunities?**

**5. Have you procured consultancy services through any other mechanisms in the last 12 months? (for example direct awards). If so what proportion of your consultancy spend was this for.**

This information is not held in the format requested. We believe that the cost of collating the information in order to respond to your request would exceed the threshold of £450 as defined by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. As a result, we are refusing your request under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. A full refusal notice is appended to this letter.

I apologise that we are unable to assist you in this instance. If you would like to discuss ways of reformulating your request to bring it within the cost threshold, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request or would like to request an internal review of our response, please write to:

Complaints and Information Governance Manager  
Darlington Borough Council, Town Hall, Darlington  
DL1 5QT  
E-mail: [xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxx.xxx.xx](mailto:xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxx.xxx.xx)

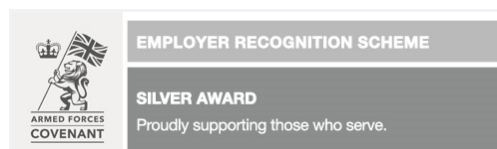
You can also obtain further information from the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House, Water Lane  
Wilmslow, Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Tel: 0303 123 1113  
Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Yours sincerely



**Diana Willsher**  
**Complaints & Information Governance Assistant**



## Refusal Notice – Section 12 Freedom of Information Act 2000

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows a public authority to refuse a request if the cost of providing the information to the applicant would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004:

*“12 Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit*

*(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit”.*

The Regulations provide that the appropriate limit to be applied to requests received by local authorities is £450 (equivalent to 2.5 days of work). In estimating the cost of complying with a request for information, an authority can only take into account any reasonable costs incurred in:

*“(a) determining whether it holds the information,*

*(b) locating the information, or a document which may contain the information,*

*(c) retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information, and*

*(d) extracting the information from a document containing it”.*

For the purposes of the estimate the costs of performing these activities should be estimated at a rate of £25 per hour.

**In relation to consultancy spend, for year 2018/19 it would be necessary to look at each invoice (which is not guaranteed to show which framework has been used)**

**925 invoices x 3 minutes = 46 hours**

**46 hours x £25 = £1150**

As a result, we are refusing your request under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

If you would like to discuss ways of narrowing your request to bring it within the cost threshold, please do not hesitate to contact me.

You have the right to request an internal review of our decision to apply this exemption; details of how to do this are provided in the letter that accompanies this refusal notice.

