

**Information Governance**  
*People, Policy and Performance*

**Information Governance**  
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Ask for: Information Governance  
Email: [information.governance@newham.gov.uk](mailto:information.governance@newham.gov.uk)

FOI Reference: 3151857

Date: 26/11/2020

Dear Ms Smith,

**Freedom of Information Act 2000**  
**Subject: Professional Services**

We write with regard to your recent enquiry for information held by the Council under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**Request**

I am writing to ask that you please provide me with the spend for your Professional Services procurement at the Authority, by which I mean the procurement of projects and consultancy through Statement of Work excluding temporary agency staff.

1. What have you spent on Professional Services over the last 12 months?
2. What did the authority spend on professional Services Between April 2019 and March 2020?
3. Between April 2019 and March 2020, which categories had the highest level of spend throughout that period?
4. Has the authority planned any large construction-based projects over the next two years?

5. If you have got construction projects planned, please could you provide project details, budget and timeframes?

6. What is the Councils current process to engage with professional service providers? Please could you provide details of the process and name third parties if they are being used.

### Response

1. We do not hold this information as we do centrally or explicitly hold information on spend on consultancy and project works which excludes agency workers.
2. As above
3. As above
4. In terms of Housing construction projects we have a number of sites we are progressing as part of our GLA programme, some large and some small. Those which have 50 homes or more have been included below as 'large' construction projects.

Programme	Unit Numbers	Start	Completion
Plashet Road, One Love Community Centre (Site 30)	65	15/03/2021	15/08/2022
Greenhill (AHfN Site 86)	80	15/01/2022	26/08/2023
Hartley Centre (Site 31)	84	15/09/2021	01/11/2023
Vacant Land and Newham boys club at John Street (AHfN Site 46)	80	01/02/2022	05/01/2023
William Paton House (AHfN Site 10)	65	28/04/2022	19/05/2024
Cyprus (AHfN site 58)	91	15/06/2022	01/01/2024

5. Please see above table.

Under Section 43 of the FOI, budget data for these construction projects is commercially sensitive due to tenders being advertised in the near future.

In considering the public interest test the Council has regard to the benefits of maintaining a healthy bidding position during any procurement process, the need to attract a wide range of bidders confident with the way in which the Council would handle their information and how this may affect the Council's bargaining position during future contractual negotiations. We also consider

that disclosure would make it less likely that companies or individuals would provide the local authority with commercially sensitive information in the future and consequently undermine the ability of the local authority to fulfil its public role.

We acknowledge that the public interest is served by promoting transparency in the accountability of public funds and the negotiated terms of such agreements, ensuring that public money is being used effectively, and that the local authority is getting value for money when entering into commercial transactions. On the other hand, however, we recognise and consider that there is a greater public interest in maintaining confidentiality and protecting commercially sensitive information, release of which could damage commercial interests of both external organisations and the local authority. As such, we consider that maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

6. Our procurement process and details are on our website:  
<https://www.newham.gov.uk/council/procurement-%E2%80%93-buy?documentId=266&categoryId=20013>

Please quote the FOI reference number provided above in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be submitted to the contact details given above.

If you are still dissatisfied with the Council's response after the internal review you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

If you require any further information or are not happy with our response please do not hesitate to contact a member of our team on (020) 8430 2000 or email us at [information.governance@newham.gov.uk](mailto:information.governance@newham.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely,

**Information Governance**  
Newham Council