

Jamie Dee
Email: request-170082-042a924b@whatdotheyknow.com

Our Ref : CB/TW/FOI/253/13
Your Ref :
Date : 15 August 2013
Ask For : Claire Birch/Tracy Whittemore
Ext : 1662
Email : lawandassets@ambervalley.gov.uk

Dear Mr Dee

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your email dated 24 July 2013 requesting the following information:

“a complete list of companies and name and addresses including property description of those whose rateable values qualify for small business rate relief upto £11k but are NOT actually in receipt of it for whatever reason.

Please also include the date that they are liable from.

Please indicate if the account is live or not and please supply on an Excel spreadsheet”.

Our obligation

The Council is dealing with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “Act”).

When dealing with requests for information, the Council’s obligations include:

- (i) confirming or denying whether it holds the information specified in the request; and
- (ii) communicating the information requested to the applicant. You should note that this is effectively a decision that the information can be released into the public domain and not simply to the specific applicant.

Response to your request

I confirm that the information you have requested is held. However, the Council considers that the information is exempt from release under section 12 of the Act.

This exemption applies where the cost of complying with the request for information exceeds the appropriate limit which is currently set at £450.

The method of calculating the cost of complying with the request is set out in The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulation 2004. In this instance, we have calculated with the cost of complying with your request would exceed the limit of £450, calculated on the basis of £25 per person, per hour for each hour spent:

- determining whether the information is held;
- locating the information, or a document containing it;
- retrieving the information, or a document containing it; and
- extracting the information from a document containing it.

Providing the information requested would involve the Council manually opening each individual record and extracting the information requested. On this basis, I have estimated that it would take approximately 5 minutes to interrogate the account in question and compile a list of the information requested. The Council currently holds 3732 live records which would all need to be reviewed which would take approximately 311 hours (3732/12 records per hour). On the basis of £25 per person, per hour, this would cost approximately £7,775.

Unfortunately, the Council does not currently have a computer programme available to it that could automatically extract this data, hence the fact that this would need to be undertaken manually.

As a public authority, we are required to provide you with advice and assistance to assist you in narrowing down the scope of your request so that it falls within the cost limit. If you are aware of another local authority that uses the same software as the Council (Academy revenues software) and the authority is prepared to give the Council permission to use the relevant structured query language (SQL) needed in order to extract the data requested, then the information would not need to be extracted manually but could be processed automatically and accordingly your request would fall within the appropriate cost limit and we would be able to provide you with the information requested.

Review

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your request has been dealt with, you have the right to refer the matter to Civic Links and FOI Officer for an internal review within 20 working days.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you may refer the matter for appeal to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner may be contacted at the address below:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Claire Birch/Tracy Whittemore
Legal & Assets Assistant