

Mr. Bernard Gentry
[By Email only]

15 July 2015
Our ref: IR113340

Dear Mr. Gentry

Thank you for your request for information received on 1 June 2015

This request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked

Can you let me know the entirety of the property holdings of Lambeth and their annual valuations and income from those assets?

Council response

I can confirm that Lambeth Council holds the information you requested.

ANNUAL VALUATION

As at 31 March 2015, the Council held c 24,300 council housing properties with an estimated value of £1.9bn as detailed in Appendix A. This estimated value has not yet been audited.

Council dwellings are held at existing use value which is a discounted form of market value in order to reflect social use.

The Council also holds approximately 8,000 various other properties (such as offices, schools, garages, nurseries, community centres, commercial properties etc). At 31 March 2015 the combined estimated value of these other properties was £552m as detailed in Appendix B. This estimated value has not yet been audited.

INCOME

A full list of properties managed by the council to generate a commercial income is attached at Appendix C. As at 31 March 2015, total income generated from this portfolio during 2014/15 was £3,877,702.11

Unfortunately, it is not possible to meet all of your request in regards to commercial incomes from each individual property (only the total income from all properties is supplied to you). In accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.

The information is being withheld because the following exemption applies.

s43 (Prejudice Commercial Interests)

Section 43(2) is a qualified exemption under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which means that consideration must also be given to whether in all the circumstances of the case would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Council.

This is a qualified exemption under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which means that consideration must also be given to whether in all the circumstances of the case the public interest favouring disclosure is greater than the public interest in maintaining the exemption.

The public interest means what is in the best interests of the public not what is of interest to the public.

Public interest test considerations

In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the interest in favour of disclosure.

Factors in favour of disclosure

- There is a clear public interest in the work of local government being closely examined to encourage the discharging of public functions in the most efficient and effective way
- There is an important public interest in the work of public bodies being transparent and open to scrutiny to increase diligence and to protect the public purse
- There is a public interest in public authorities being accountable for their decision making.

Factors in favour of withholding

- Providing details of the commercial income from individual properties is likely to cause harm to the Council as it could prejudice the arrangements of future negotiations and would damage Council's position in a competitive environment, given the market sensitivity of information and potential usefulness to competitors and impact on the Council's need to obtain value for money in future negotiations.

In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Therefore, the information is not provided to you.

If you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House,
Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Richard Carter
Freedom of Information Co-ordinator
Internal review team

London Borough of Lambeth

Tel. 07710 0262 40

E-mail rcarter@lambeth.gov.uk

Website: www.lambeth.gov.uk

Room 210

Lambeth Town Hall

London

SW2 1RW

Lambeth - a Co-operative Council