

FOI number: **HBC_FOI_2019076**
Date FOI Received: **23/01/2019**
Department: **Finance**
Title: **Money spend on food for staff**
Description: **Amount spent on food and drink for staff including hospitality, events and alcohol.**

Request: *(As Redacted sent by requestor)*

Freedom of Information Act Request

I wish to request, under the Freedom of Information Act, that you supply me with:

- Money spent on food and sustenance for staff
 - Total amount of money spent on food and drink for staff
 - Total amount spent in total for hospitality/events
 - breakdown of spend on whether it's breakfast or lunch.
 - Total amount spent on alcohol.

Public Interest

I believe there is a strong public interest in releasing this information since it will promote greater transparency in government and greater accountability in the conduct of those who hold public office.

The information requested is not reasonably accessible by other means to the best of my knowledge.

Commercial interests

I do not believe that any of the information I have requested is exempt from disclosure as a result of the exemption provided by section 43 of the Act. However, should you judge that parts of the material requested would come under this exemption, I request that you *redact the relevant sections* and release the documents in their entirety.

For example, should you believe that the identification of suppliers that may result from disclosing the invoices received would prejudice that company's commercial interests, then I request that you redact the details of the supplier from the documents you release.

Confidentiality issues

Exemptions on the 'information being provided in confidence' do not apply. The Information Commissioner advises, "information which is protected from disclosure by an obligation of confidence must have the necessary 'quality of confidence'" (*Freedom of Information Act Awareness Guidance No 2*).

Where it is considered that under the FOI Act certain parts of documents requested breach confidentiality issues, I would request that these sections be redacted and the documents be released in their entirety.

Redacting personal information is a common practice - It is not acceptable to refuse to release a document simply because it contains elements of personal information that could be redacted.

Data protection issues.

I am not requesting personal information. Where necessary personal details may be redacted from any documents that you release.

Redacting personal information is a common practice - It is not acceptable to refuse to release a document simply because it contains elements of personal information that could be redacted.

Processing of these requests

I would like to receive this information by email, sent to: <REDACTED>

Further to section 16 of the FOI Act (duty to provide advice and assistance), if you have any queries relating to these requests or need clarification on any issue, I would be grateful if you could contact me <REDACTED>

I would like to request that any refusal to any part of the above requests (including on cost grounds) be accompanied by a recommendation of how the request may be modified so as to be granted.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this email and provide me with FOI reference number(s) as soon as possible.

With thanks,

Response: (Response as Redacted sent by service)

Your request does not specify a date range, we have treated the request to assume the last full financial year ending 31 March 2018.

Staff Meal Subsistence : £2,054.41 - this is generally a meal allowance for attendance at evening meetings but cannot specify whether breakfast/lunch/dinner as per request as this is not recorded on the ledger. It may also include lunch if staff attend an all-day training course.

Events: Staff Social Club Christmas Party: £370.94

Alcohol : none

Hospitality: Not available. Refreshments for meetings are only permissible when there are external visitors, and the external visitor numbers exceed the number of internal attendees. It would not therefore be possible to calculate how much was consumed by staff.

If you have any queries about the processing of your request then please do not hesitate to contact me. Further information explaining the Council's process for responding to information requests together with a complaints/appeals procedure is available in our reception or via our website at:

<https://www.hertsmere.gov.uk/Your-Council/Official-Publications--Guides--Policies/Access-to-Information.aspx>

The Information Commissioner oversees the application of the Freedom of Information Act. You may contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545700
Website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please include the above reference number on all correspondence related to this request.

Thank you for your request.

Kind regards
Information Services

