

Request

I am making a request under the Freedom of Information act. I am looking for information on the percentage of applications for Voter Authority Certificates (VACs) that have been accepted and rejected by the council. I understand these are made in the first instance on the gov.uk website, and then passed on to yourselves to process - and so please take 'received' here to mean applications which come to you to be processed. Please could you tell me:

- a) The number of VAC applications received by the council
- b) The number of these applications accepted/approved by the council
- c) The number of these applications rejected by the council
- d) Any numerical breakdown you hold on the reasons for these rejections (I understand these may include, but not be limited to: issues with the photograph, applicant not being registered to vote, National Insurance number not supplied)

For part D, I am asking for numerical data and not any information that may lead to the identification of an individual. If satisfying part D of the request would exceed the time and resource limits stipulated by the act, please feel free to disregard it.

Response

With reference to your request for information relating to this request, I would like to draw your attention to the distinction between the roles of the local authority and those of the Returning Officer for local elections.

The role of the Returning Officer is separate from that of the Chief Executive of the local authority and the responsibilities and duties associated with the former roles are personal to the postholder. A list of public bodies and local authorities that are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act is available at the following website:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/schedule/1>

As you will see, the Freedom of Information Act does not list any person appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (or related electoral legislation). It therefore follows that the (Acting) Returning Officer or any other person appointed under the 1983 Act (or related electoral legislation) such as the Counting Officer, are not subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Therefore, as there is no statutory obligation to provide you with this information, I am on this occasion unable to supply any answers to your question