

Sexual harassment is defined in law in the Equality Act 2010 as 'unwanted conduct [related to a person's sex] which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual'. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, requests for sexual encounters and favours, sharing sexual images.

If you categorise incidents of sexual harassment in other ways, including sexual misconduct, sexual assault or rape, please include these cases too for the questions below.

All questions require information regarding the last five financial years: 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/2022, 2022/23. Please note there are 2 parts to my request.

<p>1) Please provide a total figure of how much the Council has spent on wages for staff who have been suspended over allegations of sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual misconduct.</p> <p>2) Please share the total cost of claims closed/settled with damages paid in the last five years in relation to sexual harassment. Please include the following in the total figure:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Damages paid Defence costs paid Claimant Costs Paid</p>	<p>1)The total figure paid over the above-mentioned period is £28,258 (please note this is basic pay plus on costs i.e. employers pension and National Insurance contributions).</p> <p>2)The Council does not keep a central record of claims closed / settled. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) relieves a public authority from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the estimated time required to locate, review and extract the information exceeds a certain threshold set out in Regulations. The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3244) set out the rules in relation to the cost limit (otherwise called the "appropriate limit"). These Regulations are published by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) and are viewable on their web site from this link: <a href="http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf">http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf</a></p> <p>The Regulations set out the cost limit for Government departments and for other public authorities. For local government, Regulation 3 states that the cost limit is £450 and Regulation 4(4) states that the prescribed hourly rate is £25. Regulation 4(4) further provides that where the local authority estimates the time taken to gather the information would exceed this limit (which based on the prescribed hourly rate, equates to 18 officer hours), it may refuse the request under section 12 of FoIA. I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case. In order to identify the cost of claims in relation to</p>
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sexual harassment this would involve an examination of each employment case that has been opened during the last 5 years. Each individual case file would need to be checked and correspondence looked at to identify the subject matter of the claim and the outcome of the claim.

There have been approximately 10 files opened per year and it would take approximately 30 minutes per file to identify the necessary information and collate it. This would mean it would take approximately 25 hours of employee time to identify the requested information which would incur costs of over £600. This would mean that the cost in time and resources to identify this information would be excessive.