

Request

Could you supply me with accurate information of how much council investment each town within the borough has received since 2010 and on what projects

Response

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: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf

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 the Freedom of Information Act.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case.

We do not hold the information you have requested in an easily retrievable format. On average we have circa 100,000 transactions a year – to examine these would take approximately two minutes per invoice resulting in over 3,000 hours for one year alone – far in excess of the 18 hour officer hours stipulated in the act.