



REQUEST 18857

I am requesting the following information regarding your council's expenditure on foreign language translation and interpretation services.

For the calendar year 2024-2025 as well as the fiscal year 2024/2025, please provide the following:

1. The total amount spent on foreign language translation (written documents) and interpretation (spoken, including telephone and face-to-face) services across all council departments/services.
2. The number of foreign language translation/interpretation requests received and fulfilled in each year (e.g., 2024-25: 500 requests, 450 fulfilled).
3. A list of the 15 most common foreign language translation requests received with number of requests and fulfilled (e.g., 1. Polish 250 requests, 100 fulfilled).
4. Details of any current contracts or providers for these services (e.g., provider name, contract start/end dates, total value (excluding commercially sensitive pricing). If the council uses an inhouse team rather than contractors, please specify this.

For clarity, this request is limited to services for non-English spoken or written languages (e.g., Polish, Urdu, Arabic). Please exclude any costs related to British Sign Language (BSL), other sign languages, Braille, or accessibility services for disabilities, unless they cannot be easily separated out within the statutory FOI cost limits. Please specify if these costs have been included.

RESPONSE

1. The spend in fiscal year 24/25 on Language Line is £66,888 this covers all Council services.

2&3. Unable to provide this breakdown as we do not easily capture this information in the format required and multiple service areas across the authority receive monthly invoices. 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 FoIA.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case. It typically takes approximately 20–30 minutes to download an invoice, review its content, and record the required breakdown. Depending on the number of invoices involved, this would require a significant amount of time, likely exceeding the 18-hour limit set out in Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

4.

Provider Name: LanguageLine Solutions

Contract Start: 01/07/2024

Contract End: Rolling – no current end date.

Total Value: N/A – Service is used on an ad-hoc basis. £0.00 licence / setup costs.