

30 March 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Request for information: RFI-2020-0298

I can confirm that Newark and Sherwood District Council holds some of the information you have requested about business rates

Unfortunately I have to inform you that on this occasion we are refusing your request under the exemption at section 12, where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit, of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Therefore, this letter serves as a refusal notice as required under section 17 of that Act.

The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. The appropriate limit for a local authority is £450 at a set hourly rate of £25 per person which equates to 18 hours of officer time. Work that can be taken into account for estimating the appropriate limit is to determine if the information exists, locate the information, retrieve the information and extract the information.

Although our system works well for billing purposes, we don't have a reporting module that would allow us to extract the level of information you request. To comply fully with your request would require each one of the 4000 records in the Council's system to be checked manually to extract:

- Occupied / Vacant
- Date of Occupation / Vacancy
- Detail of any reliefs / Exemptions applied to the account
- 2017/2018 rates year charge (Inclusive of transition)
- 2018/2019 rates year charge (Inclusive of transition)
- 2019/2020 rates year charge (Inclusive of transition)
- 2020/2021 rates year charge (Inclusive of transition)

Based on the above we have estimated that to comply fully with your request would require some 488 officer hours, this equates to £12,200 at the prescribed hourly rate.

As an alternative we can provide:

- Billing Authority Property Reference Code (linking the property to the VOA database reference)
- Firm's Trading Name (i.e. property occupant) in a separate list that will not correlate with the address list.
- Full Property Address (Number, Street, Postal Code, Town)

If you wish to receive this alternative information please submit a new request to:
freedom@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

If you have any further queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us. If we do not hear from you within 40 days, starting the day after the date of this letter, we will consider the request closed.

If following our response to your query you are still dissatisfied you have the right to request an internal review. This will be conducted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team who has not been involved with the request or complaint until this point. Should you wish to proceed to this stage please advise us quoting the reference number at the top of this page.

Should you be dissatisfied with the outcome of any internal review to the Council you have a further right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office, details of which can be found on the Information Commissioner's website www.ico.org.uk/

More details of this complaints process are available to view on our website at the following link:
www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/yourcouncil/makingarequestforinformation/accesstoinformation-complaintsprocedure/

Yours sincerely



David Clarke
Information Governance Officer