



## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 000337  
Date            02 August 2016

### **Schools - Software**

#### **Request:**

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I request that a copy of the following information be provided to me:

1. The software that schools in your authority use to compile school census, e.g. Capita SIMS, RM Integris etc, broken down by each school in your authority. Please include school type (primary, secondary, special etc).  
[All local authority schools use SIMS.](#)
2. Do you provide a licence / contractual arrangement with an MIS supplier to schools within your authority and is this available to all schools or only schools of a specific type (primary only for example?)  
[The LA holds the SIMS license for all LA schools.](#)
3. If yes to question 2:
  - a. Please provide the name of the supplier. [Capita.](#)
  - b. Please provide the duration of this contract. [12 months.](#)
  - c. Please provide the cost to the LA for this contract. [In respect of the information requested the Council has withheld it due to it being confidential and commercially sensitive, at this time, we should explain that in considering requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, a public authority may decide that the information requested is exempt from disclosure. This, in turn, may require the public authority to apply a public interest test to ensure it is satisfied that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the public interest in disclosing it.](#)

[The Council considers that the information you have requested, which we have identified above, is exempt from disclosure under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 43 of the Act permits the Council to withhold information if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person, including the public authority holding it.](#)

[We should explain that Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 permits the Council to withhold information if its disclosure would, or](#)

would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interest of any person, including the Public Authority holding it. The Council considers that to disclose the information you have requested, at this stage, would prejudice the commercial interests of the parties concerned and this information is therefore exempt from disclosure under section 43 of the Act. This information is commercially sensitive to the tenderers and it is important to their competitiveness that they are able to remain as a participant in the market. With regards to the Council's commercial interest, if the Council disclosed this type of information it would adversely affect our ability to source suppliers in a competitive environment. Where the Council decides that the information requested is exempt from disclosure under section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act, it must then apply what is known as a "public interest test". This requires the Council to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing information.

In applying the public interest test the Council gave careful consideration to the arguments for and against disclosure. When considering factors which would favour disclosing the information, the Council had to assess whether disclosure of the information would:

- Allow for more informed debate on the issue;
- Promote accountability and transparency for our decisions and in our spending of public money; and
- Assist the public to understand and challenge our decisions.

Against these considerations the Council had to balance the likelihood of disclosure having an adverse effect on the commercial interest of the tenderers concerned and the Council itself.

Having taken into account the arguments for and against disclosure, the Council decided that the public interest in this case is best served by maintaining the exemption and by not disclosing the information requested, at this stage. The Council considers that the possible benefits of disclosure are outweighed by the real risk of causing prejudice to the commercial interests of the tenderers concerned and the Council itself. In this case there is an overriding public interest in ensuring that companies are able to compete fairly and in ensuring there is competition for public sector contracts.

- d. Please provide the pricing structure for each school. Pupil numbers.
  - e. Please provide the notice period? 30 days.
4. Do you provide support for MIS software? Yes.
5. If yes to question 4:
- a. What MIS software do you provide support for? SIMS, FMS and Caspa.
  - b. Please describe nature of support - does it include support of whole system or just around statutory returns? Full support for SIMS system.
  - c. What is the cost to the school for this support? £2,400 - £4,000.
  - d. Can schools just purchase MIS licences or are they bundled with support? Can just purchase licences with no other support.

- e. How is the pricing structure calculated for each school's support? [Pupil numbers.](#)
  - f. Does your team provide support only for one MIS Software or do you provide support for any MIS systems the schools may use? [SIMS only.](#)
6. Are schools free to choose their own MIS software, or is this chosen by yourselves? [Free to choose own software.](#)
  7. Can you see any reason why a school choosing to change its MIS software would cause an issue or problem for yourselves? [No.](#)
  8. If you have a licence / contract with an MIS supplier, when is this being reviewed? [February 2017.](#)
    - a. Will a formal tender be carried out for this software? [Possibly.](#)
  9. Please provide the date of the last formal tender for MIS supply and the result? [Unknown.](#)
  10. Aside from a formal tender process when did you last review the available MIS options available in the marketplace? [February 2016.](#)
  11. Do you have plans to create a trust or provide support to schools in the transition to academy status? [No.](#)
  12. Do you feel that you currently provide your schools with the best MIS solution that combines functionality and cost effectiveness? [Yes.](#)
  13. Please provide all contact details of the person(s) that are responsible for the MIS supply and support for the LA? [Jo Woodcock, SIMS Manager, 01902 554223, \[Jo.Woodcock@wolverhampton.gov.uk\]\(mailto:Jo.Woodcock@wolverhampton.gov.uk\)](#)