

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 000707  
Date            16 December 2016

### *HMO Licensing*

#### **Request:**

The following information is requested in relation to HMO licensing consultations.

- Do you operate mandatory HMO, additional HMO and selective licencing schemes?  
Mandatory licensing is a statutory requirement; we have 124 mandatory licenses in place as of today. We had a selective licensing scheme covering All Saints which expired 3/1/17 and we issued 207 licenses for that scheme (including re-licenses – 195 were active at the time the scheme ended). We do not have an additional licensing scheme in place at the moment.
- And, how many have been issued in each of the last 5 calendar years (2011-15)?  
City of Wolverhampton Council cannot supply all the information you requested for the reasons set out below. Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires City of Wolverhampton Council, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt) to provide you, the applicant with a notice which:
  - (a) states the fact,
  - (b) specifies the exemption in question and
  - (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies:

In relation to your particular request, the following exemption applies:

#### **Section 12 - Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit**

We can confirm that the Council holds information falling within the description specified in your request. However, Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows a public authority to refuse a request if the cost of providing the information to the applicant would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information.

The Regulations provide that the appropriate limit to be applied to requests received by local authorities is £450 (equivalent to 18 hours of work). In

estimating the cost of complying with a request for information, an authority can only take into account any reasonable costs incurred in:

- (a) *Determining whether it holds the information,*
  - (b) *Locating the information, or a document which may contain the information,*
  - (c) *Retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information,*
- and*
- (d) *Extracting the information from a document containing it.*

*For the purposes of the estimate the costs of performing these activities should be estimated at a rate of £25 per hour.*

Our records indicate 331 licensees have been issued since 2011. Due to a change in IT we do not have this broken down year on year and is not easily accessible or held as a distinct set able to be retrieved or reported on. To get the information would require a full scale look into each individual license. This would be a manual exercise and as such we believe that the aggregated time it would take to collate the information would be in excess of 18 hours (equivalent to a notional cost of £450).

- What is the average length of time to process each type of licence application for the 5-year period?  
This varied considerably and we do not have an average figure recorded.
- How many applications that are up to 3 months old; 3-6 months old; 7-12 months; older than a year, where a licensed has not been issued?  
All applications received have been dealt with between 3-6 months and there are no applications outstanding. There were a few exceptions to this on the selective licensing side which were dealt with as unlicensed and prosecuted due to failure to provide valid applications or make appropriate payment. We have also prosecuted for failing to licence mandatory HMOs during this period.