

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 000758
Date 10 January 2017

Car Cruising Injunction

Request:

I would like to make an FOI requesting the following information:

Cost to local authority of securing car cruising injunction.

How much did it cost Wolverhampton Council to secure the injunction to ban car cruising in the Black Country. The injunction was secured in conjunction with Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall and was granted in December 2014. The cost should include legal costs including external legal fees and the cost of using legal officers and solicitors employed directly by the council.

In response to your request please find our response below in regards to costs and disbursements sent to Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall. Costs break down as follows:

Legal's Time

Between 22/3/2013 when file was opened and the "project" started to 09 January 2015 Legal Services recorded 841.45 hours. **£61,356.66**. (That is for all lawyers' time).

Why 09 January 2015?

The injunction was granted 01/12/2014 but the court ordered there had to be a carefully orchestrated publicity campaign before the injunction entered into force and then reports were made to court end of January 2015 explaining how we had conducted our publicity campaign. The court was satisfied at that point that we had done what we needed to and injunction entered into force 01/02/2015).

Lots of work was done around implementation and on 09/1/2015 we sent our invoices to the other authorities. We have therefore used 09/01/2015 as "implementation date" for costs purposes in order to answer this FOI.

External Legal Spend and Disbursements

We instructed Counsel (a junior (who was retained between 30/5/14 to 1/12/14) and a QC (who was retained between 13/6/14 to 1/12/14)) costs were capped at various stages of the works to keep their fees down. Their fees were **£9,000**(net of VAT) and **£22,000** (net of VAT) respectively.

In addition, we incurred disbursements of £480 in court costs (issue fee), £300 cost of producing all the A2 maps required for court and the publicity campaign, courier's

fees of £414 and document centre costs of £978.21 for producing all the bundles (the bundle in the case ran to 9 lever arch files and we needed several copies of this). **£2,172.21** in total.

Total liability for Wolverhampton was therefore **£94,528.87**

Costs Sharing Agreement with other Black Country Boroughs

We negotiated an agreement with our counterparts (Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall) with effect from 21/05/2014 to the end of the case. This was that the four councils would bear ¼ of the costs (Wolverhampton's legal costs plus expenses).

On 09/01/2015 we "billed" our counterparts for 716.2 hours of Legal's time plus Counsel's costs and disbursements and split this four ways. That is £19,861.00 (Our liability 21/05/2014 to 09/01/2015).

Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall each paid their share. Combined total received from them £59,583.

The Actual Costs

Actual cost to Wolverhampton £94,528.87 less £59,583.00 which is £34,945.87