

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 001024  
Date            31 March 2017

### ***Fostering Families***

**Request:**

Please could you provide the following for the three years listed below:

1. Average number of internal fostering families (monthly per year)?  
Your request for information has now been considered. Unfortunately City of Wolverhampton Council cannot supply 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.*

The information appertaining to average number of internal fostering families is not easily accessible and as such this information is not held as a distinct set able to be retrieved or reported on. To get the information would require a full scale look into all individual cases. We currently have approximately 150 cases and in order to retrieve and analyse this information would take approximately 30 minutes per case. Furthermore, there are approximately 20 new cases a year and 20 leaving each year which would be a further 120 cases over the 4 years. We consider the approximate time to consider this request would exceed 125 hours to complete. 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).

2. Average number of beds offered (monthly per year)?  
Not available
3. Internal fostering families recruited and beds offered?  
2014/15 – 15 approvals – 21 beds  
2015/16 – 20 approvals – 25 beds  
2016/17 – 22 approvals – 30 beds
4. Total number of fostering families leaving and beds lost?  
The number of families leaving is 15.
5. Total spend on Independent Fostering Agencies?  
2013/14 - £12,821,169  
2014/15 - £14,888,964  
2015/16 - £11,967,771  
2016/17 - £ 9,955,699 (provisional outturn)
6. Total spend on internal foster carers?  
2013/14 - £9,626,297  
2014/15 - £3,934,363  
2015/16 - £3,822,903  
2016/17 - £4,174,003 (provisional outturn)
7. Average number of foster children placed internally (monthly per year)?  
2014/15 – 230 new internal placements within year avg. 19 per month  
2015/16 – 207 new internal placements within year avg. 17 per month  
2016/17 - 218 new internal placements within year avg. 18 per month
8. Average number of foster children placed with IFA (monthly per year)?  
2014/15 – 243 new internal placements within year avg. 21 per month  
2015/16 – 117 new internal placements within year avg. 10 per month  
2016/17 - 137 new internal placements within year avg. 11 per month

9. Number of fostering families offering capacity for sibling groups of three or more?

2015/16 – 17 households

2016/17 – 18 households

- 10, Number of sibling groups placed with IFAs?

31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 – 12 sets of siblings

31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 – 14 sets of siblings

31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 – 20 sets of siblings

31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 – 29 Sets of siblings

Please can this information be provided for the following years:

Year to 31 March 2014

Year to 31 March 2015

Year to 31 March 2016

Year to 31 March 2017