

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 001052
Date 11 April 2017

School Food

Request:

- 1. In the last three financial years, how much money has been spent on food imports from abroad for school meals at local schools and nurseries?**

I realise you might not hold information on every item of food imported from abroad, but please just supply the information which you do hold.

This request of course only includes primary and secondary schools under your remit, so excluding private schools and academies. However, please include nurseries and schools for children with special educational needs.

If any of this data is held by a third party, I would be grateful if you could ask the company for the information they hold and include within the response.

Please provide this information broken down for the school years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 so far.

By school year, I refer to the academic year – i.e. September – July/August.

For the most recent two years (2015-16 and 2016-17 so far), please provide a breakdown of all food imports including the country, food product, amount, and what the cost was.

E.g.

YEAR: 2016-17

FOOD: 500 kg chicken

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: France

COST: £200

- 2. For reference, please provide the total amount of money spent on all food for schools broken down for the same years as above - i.e. including both imported food and food from UK-based suppliers (2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17).**

[In response to your above questions and following careful consideration, the Council regrets to inform you that it has decided not to disclose this information.](#)

[Information you have requested has been withheld from disclosure. The exemption engaged is Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 \(FOI\).](#)

Section 12 of the FOI exempts Public Authorities from providing information where the estimated cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. Any estimate must be undertaken in accordance with the limits set in fees regulations made under Section 12(5) of the FOI.

These Fees Regulations (SI 2004/3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations) allow for a refusal where the cost of compliance, for local authorities such as the Council would exceed £450. As a guide, staff time to identify and extract this information is charged at a rate of £25 per hour.

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”.*

In summary to provide the information you have requested it would take us longer than 18 hours to compile as we do not record this type of information centrally and therefore we would have to carry out a manual trawl (scrutinise) of all our suppliers to find out the information you have requested.

However under Section 16 (duty to provide advice and assistance) we can provide you with the following information which we hope will be of assistance:

Catering Services provide catering to over 80 schools within city of Wolverhampton Council and hold the Food for Life catering Bronze award, this award is based on a formal assessment and involves:

- At least 75% of the dishes on the menu are freshly prepared from unprocessed ingredients.
- All meat and poultry is from farms which meet UK welfare standards/
- We only serve fish from the approved list of the Marine Conservation Society.
- We only use free range eggs.
- No undesirable additives and artificial trans fats are used.
- No genetically modified ingredients are used.
- Drinking water is always available.

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

- Seasonal and in season produce is part of our menus.
- Information about food provenance is available.
- We provide for cultural and medical needs.
- Suppliers have been verified to ensure that they apply appropriate safety standards.
- Staff are supported with training in fresh food preparation and that we encourage our staff to be involved in a whole school approach to food issues

All our major suppliers are within the West Midlands conurbation.