

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 001337  
Date            19 July 2017

### ***Inspections of homes in the private rented sector and enforcement measures***

#### **Request:**

I would like to request information under the Freedom of Information Act about inspections of homes in the private rented sector and enforcement measures. Please could you answer the following questions:

- 1) The total number of inspections carried out by your local authority using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) in 2016/17 and 2015/16?  
2015/16 = 275  
2016/17 = 340
- 2) The total number of Category 1 hazards – as defined by the 2004 Housing Act – found by officers within your local authority in 2016/17 and 2015/16?  
The 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 total number of Category 1 hazards – as defined by the 2004 Housing Act – found by officers within your local authority in 2016/17 and 2015/16 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 files/inspections carried out. 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).

- 3) The total number of improvement notices served by your local authority in the course of dealing with Category 1 or 2 hazards within 2016/17 and 2015/16?  
2015/16 = 15  
2016/17 = 14
- 4) The total number of prohibition orders made by your local authority in the course of dealing with Category 1 or 2 hazards within 2016/17 and 2015/16?  
2015/16 = 1  
2016/17 = 4
- 5) The total number of hazard awareness notices served by your local authority in 2016/17 and 2015/16?  
2015/16 = 0  
2016/17 = 3
- 6) The number of housing prosecutions taken by your local authority under the Housing Act 2004 in 2016/17 and 2015/16?  
2015/16 = 6  
2016/17 = 3

Please could you provide this information in the format given in the attached spreadsheet.