

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 002876  
Date            17 October 2018

### *Council Funding*

#### **Request:**

I write to request information under the Freedom of Information act.

I'd like to know, for each of:

- 2008
- 2009
- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017

1. What was the council's income from council tax?

The Council's income from council tax in each year is detailed in the following table.

| <b>Financial Year</b>  | <b>Council Tax Income<br/>£ million</b> |
|------------------------|---|
| 2008-2009              | 91.0                                    |
| 2009-2010              | 93.1                                    |
| 2010-2011              | 93.4                                    |
| 2011-2012              | 93.5                                    |
| 2012-2013              | 94.2                                    |
| 2013-2014 <sup>^</sup> | 73.3                                    |
| 2014-2015              | 76.6                                    |
| 2015-2016              | 80.9                                    |
| 2016-2017*             | 86.0                                    |
| 2017-2018*             | 90.9                                    |

<sup>^</sup> Introduction of new local government finance system and localisation of council tax support

\* Includes Adult Social Care Precept

In 2013-2014, a new local government finance system and the localisation of council tax support were introduced by Government. As a result, tax bases for 2013-2014 were significantly lower than those detailed in previous years as reductions to bills under local council tax support schemes were treated as discounts, which reduce the tax base, rather than benefits, which do not.

2. How much funding from other sources (Central Government, Lottery or similar) did the Council receive specifically to invest in parks and open spaces?
3. How much money did the council spend on improving and maintaining parks and open spaces?

With reference to questions 2 and 3 above, your request for information has now been considered and the City of Wolverhampton Council is not obliged to 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.*

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

*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 your request is not easily accessible and as such this information is not held as a distinct set able to be retrieved or reported on as the information cuts across many service areas and budgets within the Council. Therefore to get the information would require a full scale look into all records within the Council. 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).

Also, within our cost centres many are combined and therefore it will not be possible to identify the proportion of spend on individual sites also we do not hold the information for some years.

Excess cost removes the City of Wolverhampton Council's obligation under the Freedom of Information, however under Section 16 – (the duty to provide advice and assistance, the Council may be able to provide answers to the request, should you wish to submit a refined request.