

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 003639  
Date            05 June 2019

### ***Looked after Children***

#### **Request:**

I am sending this request under the Freedom of Information Act to ask for the following information:

The following questions relate to the time period between the 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018 only. Please disclose:

1. The total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that have been:
  - a. Identified as having been trafficked or a victim of modern slavery – including, but not limited to, those identified through the National Referral Mechanism.
  - b. Suspected of having been a victim of trafficking or modern slavery , if not included in a.
  - c. Identified as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC) or a separated child. **7 children were identified as UASC during this time period.**
2. The total number of looked after children in the care of your authority:
  - a. Identified or suspected as having been trafficked/victim of modern slavery and that have gone missing or absent.
  - b. Identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent. **0 UASC**
3. The total number of individual incidents (which could involve the same child on more than one occasion) of looked after children in the care of your authority:
  - a. Identified or suspected as having been trafficked/victim of modern slavery and that have gone missing or absent.
  - b. Identified as an UASC or separated child and that have gone missing or absent. **0 UASC**
4. The total number of looked after children in the care of your authority that are still missing or absent (including those that subsequently turned 18 without being found) that were identified or suspected as having been trafficked or identified as an UASC or separated child.

(Please note that statutory duties include collecting and recording the following:

Whether a child is a victim of trafficking/ modern slavery, or whether there is reason to believe they may be a victim.

Whether a child is an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC).

Data on children reported missing from care.

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.*

*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. To get the information would require a full scale look into over 4,850 referrals. 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).