

FOI Reference Number: FOI/161/1819

Date: 14 August 2018

Request:

It's been brought to my attention that the Chief Executive has signed off on accounts and procured services both as CEO and the Chief Financial Officer. I therefore wish to submit a new inquiry on how this might be explained from the appointment of Anne Donaghy as CEO of Mid and East Antrim BC. This may have some perfectly reasonable explanation, but I need to know who has been signing off spending as Chief Financial Officer in the time that Anne Donaghy has been CEO, and if/when there has been no Chief Financial Officer in post who are the two signatories on spend of over £30K

This is matter that is being raised both by numerous residents and several businesses who work with the council in the course of my survey work. I have approached both the NAO and NIPSO on this matter seeking clarity on how to address this and they advise that I must seek an explanation from the Council before referring the matter to them.

I would be most grateful if you could provide clarity on the role of Chief Finance Officer at the Council and the signatory process on transactions of over £30K where the CEO is involved.

Response:

Thank you for your information request which Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received on 06 July 2018.

Please find below Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's response to the information you requested in relation to the Chief Financial Officer.

Please see below, the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 article 1 which provides information in relation to the CFO within Councils.

Duty to make arrangements

1—(1) A council shall make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs.

(2) A council shall designate an officer of the council as its chief financial officer.

(3) Arrangements made by a council under subsection (1) shall be carried out under the supervision of its chief financial officer.

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council as with almost every council in Northern Ireland has designated the Chief Executive as its Chief Financial Officer

The Council has a Scheme of Delegation and a Procurement Policy which stipulates those officers who can authorise payment and the procedure for the procurement of goods and services on behalf of the council.

These are regularly audited and follow accepted practice on the administration of procurement and related financial affairs.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of part of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Chief Executive at the Braid Ballymena Town Hall, 1-29 Bridge Street, Ballymena, BT43 5EJ.

Please remember to quote the reference number FOI/161/1819 in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of an internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Please be advised that Mid and East Antrim Borough Council may release the response to this information request into the public domain via our website at <https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/>.

If we publish our response to your request, your personal data will be removed to protect your privacy.