

FOI Reference Number: FOI/430/1819

Date: 28 January 2019

Request:

I wish to request, under the Freedom of Information Act, that you supply me with:

The following Information regarding the use of consultants by the council (ie. Anyone taken in from an outside body to advice the authority on any matter).

A) The number of consultants used by the council in

- 1) 2018
- 2) 2017
- 3) 2016

B) The cost to the council of the use of consultants in

- 1) 2018
- 2) 2017
- 3) 2016

C) The number of projects and hours worked by consultants used by the council in

- 1) 2018
- 2) 2017
- 3) 2016

Response:

Thank you for your information request which Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received on 07 January 2019.

Please find below, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's response to the information you requested in relation to consultants/projects.

A) The number of consultants used by the council in

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| <i>1) 2018 -</i> | <i>66</i> |
| <i>2) 2017 -</i> | <i>74</i> |
| <i>3) 2016 -</i> | <i>80</i> |

B) The cost to the council of the use of consultants in

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>1) 2018 -</i> | <i>£345,731</i> |
| <i>2) 2017 -</i> | <i>£579,932</i> |
| <i>3) 2016 -</i> | <i>£647,826</i> |

Please note, we do not hold the information requested in relation to hours worked for Question C. In many circumstances, the projects undertaken are a cost per piece of work as opposed to a cost per hour.

In relation to the number of projects, unfortunately this is not held in a manner which is easily accessible. This would involve a manual search of all invoices, across all departments, for a three-year period.

The cost of the search would exceed the £450 prescribed limit for local government, therefore Council is not required to provide the information requested as per Section 12 Freedom of Information Act 2000. Under Section 12 of the Act, a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit as previously mentioned.

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/430/1819 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.