What we charge for providing information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act

Most information contained within our FOI Publication Scheme is downloadable free of charge from our website. If it is not downloadable or if you are unable to download it and you ask us for copies, we may charge for the cost of photocopying/printing and postage. If we are going to charge, we will let you know the cost when you contact us.

If you request information outside the Publication Scheme, we are allowed to charge a fee. In all cases where we intend to charge a fee, we will advise you of the cost of the fee in advance so that you can decide whether or not you wish to continue with your request.

If we reasonably estimate that the cost of providing the information is greater than £450 (as set down in the FOI Appropriate Limit and Fees Regulations 2004) we do not have to provide it. This figure is known as the 'appropriate limit' and is based on 18 hours work at £25 per hour. If the cost exceeds the appropriate limit, we must tell you, except in some specific cases, if we hold the information, and how the cost has been estimated.

We also have a duty to assist you so we will contact you to see if you can refine your request so that the cost of providing the information is less than £450.

If the cost of providing the information is less than £450, unless the information falls under one of the exemptions in the FOI Act, we must provide it to you within 20 working days of receipt of your request. We may charge you for printing and photocopying costs, for postage costs and, if you have asked for the information in a particular way that will incur additional costs, we may charge those costs to you.

Although we are not obliged to provide information if the cost is greater than £450, we may choose to do so if you agree to pay it. In this case, we will charge for the cost of locating and retrieving the information, and postage and photocopying costs, including staff time. Staff time will be charged at a rate of £25 per hour.