

Economy, Communities & Corporate
Geoff Hughes

Your Ref:

Our Ref: FOI IAT 10585

Please ask for: Claire Jacobs

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Extension:

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12 November 2015

Dear Sir,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST FOI IAT 10585

Further to previous correspondence, your request for information has now been considered, and the council's response is set out below:

Q1 Which individuals are responsible for the decision not to refer any new cases to Ledbury Road from November 2013?

- A. Wye Valley NHS Trust (WVT) was unsuccessful in gaining a contract for short breaks and respite services under the council and the Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) joint commissioning prospectus in the autumn of 2013. Both the council and the CCG therefore had to reach an operational decision about whether it was appropriate to continue to make new placements with a provider who had not been awarded a contract.

The recommendation to suspend referrals was made in February 2014 by the council's Head of Commissioning (Children) and the CCG's Programme Manager: Children and Mental Health, which was approved by the council's Children's Wellbeing joint senior management team, in agreement with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

As a result, the agreed position of both the council and the CCG was to put in place other options for those families assessed as needing overnight respite.

Children already accessing 1 Ledbury Road would continue to do so with their needs being reviewed as part of ongoing social care and medical assessments, as appropriate.

Q2 Did the council employ a consultant with regards to the consultation in the change of short break services?

- A. A lead commissioner was appointed to head the engagement and design process that led to the 2013 short breaks commissioning prospectus and tendering arrangements.

Q3 If the council and political resultant with regards to the consultation on the changes of short break provision how much money did they cost to carry out their consultancy work?

- A. In publishing the details of the salaries paid to its employees, Herefordshire Council follows the Code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency, published in September 2011, which states that local authorities in England should routinely publish the current salaries of all employees earning over £58,200, together with their job descriptions and their names (with an option for individuals to refuse consent to their name being published).

The salary level of the lead commissioner appointed to head the engagement and design process that led to the 2013 short breaks commissioning prospectus and tendering arrangements falls below this level. As such the council does not consider that it would be in the officer's reasonable expectations that their personal data would be publically released. Therefore we consider that disclosure of this information would breach Principle 1 of the Data Protection Act 1998 i.e. disclosure of this information would not be fair and lawful. As such we consider this information to be exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because this information constitutes the employee's personal data. Please take this letter as a refusal notice under S17 of the Act for this part of your request.

We are however, able to confirm the pay scale for this position, and would advise that the post was the equivalent of HC13 (£51,824 - £56,165).

Q4 How many days holiday will the new disability specialist foster carers for overnight short breaks receive?

- A. Unlike general foster carers, each short breaks foster carer will be able to offer a number of nights service per year depending on their individual circumstances, which is not expected to exceed 200 nights, some will offer less. Carers holidays will be planned well in advance and therefore there will be ample opportunity to ensure continuity of provision.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request or you would like a review of the response provided, further information regarding our review procedure is available in the 'Internal Review Procedure for EIR and FOI requests' which is published on Herefordshire Council's website via the following link:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/government-citizens-and-rights/data-protection-and-freedom-of-information/data-protection>

Further information is also available from the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 www.ico.org.uk

Yours faithfully

CLAIRE JACOBS

INFORMATION ACCESS OFFICER