

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 5 August 2013

Public Authority: Hertfordshire County Council
Address: County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Hertfordshire
SG13 8DQ

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant has requested from Hertfordshire County Council ("the Council") information related to its special educational need provision. The Council applied section 12 (cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to the request.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the Council has correctly applied section 12 to the complainant's request and he therefore does not require it to take any further steps to ensure compliance with the legislation.

Request and response

3. On 20 July 2012, the complainant wrote to the Council to request information related to its special educational need ("SEN") provision. The request contained a number of different parts. A copy of the request is attached as "Annex 1" at the end of this notice.
4. The Council responded on 25 July 2012. It stated that, in light of the request containing 80 questions, it had estimated that the cost of compliance would exceed the appropriate limit and that therefore section 12 applied. It invited the complainant to contact it to discuss what levels of information might be available within the appropriate limit.

5. The complainant wrote on 27 July 2012 to request an internal review. On 21 August 2012, the Council informed the complainant that the result of the internal review had been to uphold its application of section 12 to the request.

Scope of the case

6. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 13 November 2012 to complain about the way the request for information had been handled, specifically the Council's application of section 12.
7. The Commissioner considered whether the Council was entitled to rely on section 12 as a basis for refusing to provide the information that the complainant had requested.

Reasons for decision

Section 12 – Exceeding the appropriate cost limit

8. Section 12(1) of FOIA states that:

Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit."

9. Section 12(3) states that:

"In subsections (1) and (2) "the appropriate limit" means such amount as may be prescribed, and different amounts may be prescribed in relation to different cases."

10. The appropriate limit is currently set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ("the Fees Regulations"). A public authority may take into account the cost of locating, retrieving and extracting the requested information in performing its calculation. The cost limit is currently set at £450 for local authorities. Under the Fees Regulations, public authorities are required to cost their spending on the relevant activities at £25 per person per hour. Consequently, the appropriate limit would only be exceeded if a local authority estimated that it would take longer than 18 hours to carry out the relevant activities in order to comply with a request.
11. Under regulation 4(3) of the Fees Regulations, a public authority may, for the purposes of estimating the cost of complying with a request, only take account of the costs it reasonably expects to incur in:

- a. determining whether it holds the information;
 - b. locating a document containing the information;
 - c. retrieving a document containing the information; and
 - d. extracting the information from a document containing it.
12. The Council provided the Commissioner with an explanation of the reasons why it believed that compliance with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, this included estimates of time for complying with different parts of the request.
 13. The Council initially explained that this particular request asked many questions which required a descriptive and qualitative response, rather than statistical information. This made it difficult to issue the kind of reasoned refusal which a statistical question allows. The Council informed the Commissioner that its practice is to issue a response in respect of time spent searching files where that is the type of information that is requested. However, many of the questions required a descriptive response because the nature of the information being sought related to a highly individual set of circumstances and the combination of education, social care and transport services which were required to meet it.
 14. The Council confirmed that it had asked the people it had identified as the main information holders across the County Council to provide estimates of the time required to respond to different parts of the request. However, it informed the Commissioner that, because of the nature of some of the questions, it had been difficult to provide an estimate of time for some of the work involved.
 15. The Council confirmed that the estimates provided were based on the quickest method of providing the information and that it had not included in the estimate the timings for providing information that it had previously released. It reaffirmed that much of the information requested was held by the Council but not in a format which made it immediately and easily available for release.
 16. The Council explained that it had re-grouped some of the questions so that they were aggregated into 62 questions with sub questions, rather than as 88 separate questions, as provided in its original response to the complainant, and which grouped them across the varied subjects they related to. A copy of the 62 questions into which the Council aggregated the original 88 questions is attached to the end of this notice in "Annex 2".
 17. The Council provided the Commissioner with details of how long it estimated it would take to provide responses to the complainant's questions by reference to the 62 questions it had identified. It explained

that many of the estimates of the time required to respond to the questions were based on how long it would take an officer who is responsible for the relevant service to write a tailored response.

18. Questions 1-11, the Council explained that it had previously provided some of this information in response to other requests. However, there were difficulties in giving an estimate for figures for the most recent year as the team which provided this information was disbanded in 2013. Based on previous estimates of the time taken to respond to similar requests in the past, the Council estimated that it would probably take 3-4 hours to provide responses to these questions. This took into account the fact that it would only need to update some of the requested information from responses that had previously been provided.
19. The Council noted that in its list of questions, Question 10 duplicated Question 7. It consequently did not include any time for a response to Question 10.
20. Questions 12-20, the Council explained that it had estimated that to provide the information in relation to ASD Advisory Teachers would take 2 hours work. It would require information to be drawn from assorted resources available to the Council's Lead for Complex Needs and Early Years. It pointed out that it did not hold information in respect of Questions 17 and 20.
21. Question 21, the Council estimated that it would take its commissioning team 15 minutes to identify and retrieve the information from the contract and any extension documentation but this information only related to qualified therapists.
22. Question 22, in relation to speech and language therapy, the Council confirmed that it did not have any contracts with a PCT but it did have contracts with a health provider. It had information from the contracts which detailed the number of sessions per week for each special school and units or bases within schools which served children with SEN. It also had information on the number of hours offered to mainstream schools but this information combined the total number of sessions for mainstream schools (rather than providing details for each mainstream school). Consequently it did not indicate in which schools the sessions took place.
23. The Council explained that to provide all of the information requested in this question would take a considerable time. It would require it to check the details of each child with statements of SEN to identify at which schools, from the mainstream schools, children were receiving speech and language therapy and to identify how much and what therapy was

being provided. The Council estimated that it had approximately 3,000 children with statements of SEN. If it allowed 2 minutes per child to check each statement, this would involve 100 hours of work.

24. The Council informed the Commissioner that occupational therapy provision was an NHS commissioned service and therefore it did not hold this information.
25. Question 23, the Council estimated that it would take 30 minutes in total to identify and retrieve this information from its contracts with four independent providers.
26. Question 24, the Council explained that, as this was an NHS commissioned service, it did not hold the information.
27. Questions 25-33, in its original response to the Commissioner, the Council estimated that it would take 16 hours and 50 minutes to respond to these questions. This was primarily based on the time required to respond to Question 30. In relation to this question, it initially estimated that there were 200 children receiving services from the respite centres and that it would need to examine each file to be able to provide the requested information. It had allowed 5 minutes per file to do this.
28. However, having checked further, the Council confirmed to the Commissioner that there were 302 children that had accessed respite care and whose records would need to be checked. If 5 minutes were allowed to check each file, it would take approximately 25 hours to respond to Question 30.
29. The complainant queried the Council's estimate of time in respect of Question 30, specifically whether it would take 5 minutes per case file to identify the information requested. The complainant's understanding was that the Council would hold a statement for each child that had SEN in an electronic form. Each statement would be held in a standardised form with details of a child's learning difficulties clearly identified in the second part of the statement.
30. The Council accepted complainant's comments about the requested information being held in electronic files in a standardised form. However, it explained that it would need to identify the cohort of children who had stayed at respite centres first, before then looking up each individual child on its electronic system to identify the recorded learning difficulty. Its estimate was therefore based on a two stage process, firstly, identifying the relevant children and secondly, extracting the relevant information from the children's files.

31. The Council had estimated that there were 3000 children that had statements of SEN. Out of these it would have to identify approximately 300 that had attended respite centres and from those identify the children with learning difficulties. If they did have a learning difficulty, it would then have to extract that information from the file. Given what needed to be done, the Council argued that its estimate that, on average it would take 5 minutes to locate and check each file, was realistic.
32. Questions 34–37, 39, 40, 46, 52, 54 and 56, are all questions that related to respite centres used by the Council. The Council explained that it would need to contact each of the 5 respite centres that it used and ask them to provide a response. It pointed out that only one of the centres belonged to the Council. The others were operated by independent providers with whom the Council had contractual arrangements. The answers to these questions would therefore be dependent on the contracts the Council had with the providers and it may be that not all information would be held by the Council. In addition, responses to these questions would require a mix of statistical and descriptive information.
33. The Council explained that a typical contract with the independent providers would contain broad statements requiring the contractor to have sufficient trained staff, competence to provide a behaviour management plan, staff to be able to manage behaviour, enable children to develop, staff to have the necessary communication skills, moving and handling skills, etc but the contracts did not contain further specification in relation to these issues. However, the Council went on to inform the Commissioner that it then required information from contractors for each individual child's care plan, which is a separate document from a child's statement of SEN.
34. The Council informed the Commissioner that it also conducted monitoring of the respite centres. Monitoring reports were required monthly which contained numerical data around the number of service users but did not go into the level of detail required to fully respond to these questions.
35. In addition, service visits were made to the respite centres every six months. These included reporting on the number of children receiving services, with a breakdown including the different categories, two of which were relevant in relation to these questions.
36. The Council explained that a summary of the developments of the service and the progress of, and benefits to, children using the service were required at service visits. The monitoring paperwork from these visits fell into three parts. These forms would hold some of the

information requested but only provided a snapshot of what was observed at the time of visit. They contained, for example, some information about the qualifications and training of individual staff working at the time and training courses run by the organisation in the past 12 months, along with any external courses that its staff members attended.

37. The Council informed the Commissioner that each monitoring form contained a first part which was largely tick boxes with some descriptive text and second and third parts which consisted of 16 pages of largely descriptive text. Its estimate was that it would be likely to take 20 minutes for someone who was familiar with the format of the forms to identify and extract any relevant information.
38. As Question 35 requested information for the last five years, the Council explained that this would mean that it would have to check, for each of the four respite centres run by independent providers, a total of 10 monitoring forms as visits took place every six months. This meant that it would require approximately 3 hours to check the forms for one respite centre and a total of 12 hours to check the forms for the four centres.
39. In relation to the respite centre run by the Council itself, it confirmed it employed a total of 17 staff. It would therefore need to check each of their personnel files for relevant information. However, the Council explained that the type of information requested was not held in one particular place in the file. Its Human Resources Department had estimated that it would take on average 15 minutes to check each file and so to check all of the files would take approximately 4 hours.
40. Question 37, the Council explained that to identify what speech and language therapy was available at each of the respite centres would require it, as with Question 30, to identify the 300 children who had attended the respite centres and then check their statement of SEN. It estimated 5 minutes per child to do this.
41. The Council suggested that, alternatively to the above, it could provide a general description of the arrangements at each respite centre which it believed would take approximately 20 minutes for each centre, making a total of 1 hour 40 minutes. However, it had concerns that to do so might involve it in creating new information rather than disclosing information that was already held.
42. In relation to occupational therapy, the Council confirmed that this was commissioned directly from the respite centres by the health service. Consequently, the information was not be held by the Council.

43. Question 38, the Council believed that this would take 2 hours to provide the information as it could only be derived by examining previous financial records and practice.
44. Questions 39, 40, 46, 54 and 56, the Council indicated that this information might be in the monitoring forms in respect of the respite centres. However, it might only be held in individual care plans, for example, where an individual had a particular communication or sensory need or where a strategy had been put in place to manage conflicts between individual clients.
45. Questions 41-43, the Council explained that it had been unable to identify whether it held all of this information. It depended on which educational placements were involved. It believed that some information may only be held by the educational placements and the respite centres themselves.
46. Questions 44-45, the Council was of the view that it would take 30 minutes each to describe the social care and plan arrangements, making a total of 1 hour to respond to these questions.
47. Question 47, the Council believed that that it would take approximately 20 minutes to provide a descriptive answer to this question.
48. Questions 48-49, the Council stated that it was unable to estimate how long it would take to respond to these questions as it would require descriptive input from a number of service managers, not all of whom were employed by the Council. In addition, it would need clarification from the requester to be certain as to any other therapeutic input they were referring to before answering further.
49. In addition, as with Question 37, in relation to occupational therapy, the Council confirmed that this was commissioned directly from the respite centres by the health service. Consequently, the information was not held by the Council.
50. Questions 50-51, the Council explained that it had estimated that a response to these questions would take approximately 2 hours each as it would need to liaison with the five respite centre managers and the contracts manager in order to provide the required information. This would therefore make a total of 4 hours.
51. Question 52, the Council explained that it would need clarification from the requester as to how an autistic specific environment was defined. The information might be contained in contracts and retrievable as part of work for Questions 34-36. However, the provider's definition might not match the requester's. The Council's contracts specify dealing with children with ASD but also additional needs and for children who are not

ASD. It was also possible that this might be information that was already available to the requester as it might be published by the respite centres themselves.

52. Questions 53, the Council explained that it had estimated that it would take 1 hour to draft a comprehensive response including a description of the care planning process, brokerage service and SEND pathfinder.
53. Question 55, the Council explained that it had estimated that it would take 20 minutes for a descriptive response.
54. Questions 57-62, the Council explained that it had estimated that it would take 1 hours work to provide the information relating to transport.
55. The Council confirmed that, when it became clear that the request would exceed the appropriate limit, it had written to the requester to give them the opportunity to narrow the scope of the request. It explained that, given the scope and range of the request, it was difficult for it to identify which information might be the most important to the requester. However, it explained that the complainant did not engage with it in trying to narrow the scope of the request. Consequently it was not able to offer any advice and assistance to the complainant in bringing the scope of the request within the appropriate limit.
56. The Commissioner notes that the total time that the Council has estimated, where it has been able to do so, that it would take to provide a response to the request is over 180 hours. This is considerably in excess of the 18 hours required for section 12 to apply.
57. The Commissioner has considered the questions asked by the complainant, the nature of the information being sought and has made enquiries with the Council to determine whether its estimates of time for responding to the different parts of the complainant's request are reasonable.
58. The Commissioner notes that in some cases, the Council's estimates for responding to different questions involve some degree of duplication of work. For example, identifying those children who have attended respite centres from those with statements of SEN. In addition, having identified the relevant children, it would be possible to extract the different pieces of information needed to respond to different questions at the same time from each child's file. This would result in savings in time in terms of the Council's estimates. He therefore accepts that the Council's estimates may not be wholly accurate.
59. The Commissioner does however accept that, given the nature of some of the information requested, it is difficult for the Council to give precise

estimates of how long it would take to provide the requested information and that in some cases it has not been able to provide an estimate at all. He also notes that some of the information requested relates to third party providers and, consequently, may raise difficulties, and so take some time, in establishing what information the Council holds. This may depend, for example, on the contracts between the Council and the third party providers.

60. Even where it is clear that the Council does hold relevant information, the Commissioner notes that some of the questions asked would appear to require the Council to undertake considerable amounts of work in order to be able to provide a response.
61. According to the Council's estimates, there are a few questions which, if taken individually, would on their own require an amount of work which would exceed the appropriate limit. Even if these estimates are not totally accurate, and the Council itself accepts that it in relation to some questions it is difficult to provide a completely precise estimate given the nature of the information requested, responding to them would still appear to involve a considerable amount of work. There are also other questions which would seem to be requests for information which would not be readily and easily available. In addition, the Commissioner notes the large number of questions contained within the request.
62. In light of the above, the Commissioner is satisfied that the Council's estimate that responding to all of the questions contained within the request would exceed the appropriate limit of £450, taken as a whole, is a reasonable one. On that basis, he is satisfied that the Council has correctly applied section 12 to the request.

Right of appeal

63. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)
GRC & GRP Tribunals,
PO Box 9300,
LEICESTER,
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504

Fax: 0116 249 4253

Email: informationtribunal@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/courts-and-tribunals/tribunals/information-rights/index.htm

64. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
65. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

Rachael Cragg
Group Manager
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Annex 1

A copy of the original request (with details related to the complainant redacted)

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

**Form of Authority Requiring the Release of Material under the
Freedom of Information Act 2000**

To: Freedom of Information Officer
Address: Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford
 SG13 8DQ
Date: 20th July 2012

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we would like you to provide the following information

Questions/Actions	Response
What paybands apply to the Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council? Please list entire payscale from top to bottom i.e. most senior to most junior with all spinal points inbetween.	
Please list the, skill mix, experience and qualifications considered acceptable by Hertfordshire County Council as LEA for the Teaching Assistant pos, at the top end of the scale, and at the bottom end of the scale.	
What training does Hertfordshire County Council as LEA provide for Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council?	
Please list training provided for Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council over the last 5 years.	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

What paybands apply to a Higher Level Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council? Please list entire payscale from top to bottom i.e. most senior to most junior with all spinal points in-between.	
Please list the, skill mix, experience and qualifications considered acceptable by Hertfordshire County Council as LEA for a Higher Level Teaching Assistant post, at the top end of the scale, and at the bottom end of the scale.	
What training does Hertfordshire County Council as LEA provide for a Higher Level Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council?	
Please list training provided for a Higher Level Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council over the last 5 years.	
Please advise what is the additional oncost to the Local Authority Employer as a percentage of salary, (i.e. National Insurance/Pension Contribution) for Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants? Please include variations associated with age of pupils taught and variations associated with number of hours worked by the employee.	
Does Hertfordshire County Council employ specialist ASD Advisory Teachers?	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>What paybands apply to the ASD advisory Teachers within Hertfordshire County Council? Please list entire payscale from top to bottom i.e. most senior to most junior with all spinal points in-between.</p>	
<p>Please list the, skill mix, experience and qualifications considered acceptable by Hertfordshire County Council as LEA for the ASD advisory Teachers post, at the top end of the scale, and at the bottom end of the scale.</p>	
<p>What do the ASD advisory Teachers cost per hour and what is the on cost? Where would they travel from, what is the distance and how long would the journey take?</p>	
<p>Where do ASD Advisory Teachers travel from and what the distance to The Valley School?</p>	
<p>Does The Valley School have a specialist ASD Advisory Teacher or ASD trained Teachers on staff?</p>	
<p>If the Authority has to "buy in" a specialist ASD trained Teacher, what will be the cost per hour, and how will the cost of travel and travel time be billed to the Authority?</p>	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>Please provide a copy of the Service Level Agreements with your Local NHS Trusts within Hertfordshire County Council as regards the provision of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy within The Hertfordshire County Council, as LEA maintained mainstream, and special schools, also LEA Specialist Unit provision.</p>	
<p>Do you have any contracts with any specific Primary Care Trusts for any Speech and Language Therapy and/or Occupational Therapy provision within schools within Hertfordshire County Council as LEA maintained mainstream, and special schools, also LEA Specialist Unit provision. What is the funding that you supply under these contracts? What therapy (Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapy) is provided under these contracts within the settings set out above? How much therapy (Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapy) is provided under these contracts within the settings set out above; how often; by whom (Qualified Therapist or Teaching Assistant)? Which schools are provided with therapy (Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapy) within Hertfordshire County Council area?</p>	
<p>If independent Speech & Language Therapy has to be bought in by the Local Authority, what are the hourly costs and how is travel time billed?</p>	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>If independent Occupational Therapy has to be bought in by the Local Authority, what are the hourly costs and how is travel time billed?</p>	
<p>Does Local Authority Social Services have a Direct Payment Scheme for parents assessed as eligible? Please provide details of the scheme.</p> <p>Does the Direct Payment Scheme rate per hour vary at all for different needs or expert?</p> <p>If the Direct Payment Scheme rate varies on what basis are the different hourly rates allocated to eligible individuals?</p>	
<p>If the rate per hour is insufficient to purchase services (i.e. the services cost more than the hourly rate) what happens then:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it increased? • Do we have to repay the monies we cannot use to buy services? • Are we expected to use the direct payments to buy a more limited amount of services at the higher rate charged by providers? 	
<p>Where are the respite centre used by the Local Authority, please provide name and geographical location.</p>	
<p>What is the cost per night at the various respite centres used by the Authority?</p>	
<p>At these respite centres, what is the adult to child ratio?</p>	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>Do all of the children staying at the respite centres have learning difficulties is so what?</p>	
<p>What is the age range of the children staying at the respite centres?</p>	
<p>Are the children staying at the respite centres matched for similarity of learning difficulties or age?</p>	
<p>How many children stay at each of the respite centres?</p>	
<p>What qualifications are held by the staff at each of the respite centres?</p>	
<p>What has been the focus of staff training over the last five years at each of the respite centres?</p>	
<p>What training has the respite centres staff received from Speech & Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists?</p>	
<p>What speech and language therapy, Occupational Therapy and ASD advisory provision is available at these centres?</p>	
<p>If you have to buy in speech and language therapy, Occupational Therapy, Clinical Psychology or ASD advisory teacher input into a respite centres, would there be an extra charge, what would you have to pay per hour and how would travel time be billed?</p>	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>Within each the respite centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the range of communication strategies? • What consistent forms of communication are used? • What opportunities for spontaneous and directed communications are in place? • What professional advice and training has been made available to staff on these issues? • When was the advice/training provided, and how long was the session? 	
<p>What strategies are in place at each of the respite centres to address potential conflict of needs when residents have different range of learning difficulties?</p>	
<p>What arrangements are currently in place for liaison between educational placements and the respite centres?</p>	
<p>What arrangements are currently in place for liaison between the home setting and the respite centres?</p>	
<p>What arrangements are currently in place for liaison between the home setting and transport?</p>	
<p>What arrangements are currently in place which will provide consistency of programmes and consistency of implementation across all setting school, home, transport and respite centres, so that the child needs can be met across all settings, ensuring that the child can</p>	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>learn and develop in context and in meaningful, functional way to ensure the skills learned are generalised?</p>	
<p>If arrangements are in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are they? • How often are programmes updated? • What steps are taken to ensure that consistency is maintained? 	
<p>How do the respite centres meet the needs of residents with severe sensory issues such as auditory or visual sensitivity?</p>	
<p>If a higher staff/child pupil ratio is required by the respite centres is there an additional cost to the Local Authority if so what is the cost?</p>	
<p>If additional therapeutic input is required by the respite centres, is there a cost to the Local Authority, if so what is the cost?</p>	
<p>If clinical psychology input is required by the respite centres is there a cost to the Local authority if so what is the cost?</p>	
<p>If Behavioural Management Programmes are required at the respite centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who designs them? • What level of professional expertise is involved? • What arrangements are in place to ensure consistency with other settings? 	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]

Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<p>Do Behavioural Management Programmes at the respite centres include the collection of data on challenging behaviour, a functional analysis of the behaviour and the development of pro-active and reactive strategies and the instruction all of staff, so they can respond appropriately to challenging behaviour?</p>	
<p>Are any of the respite centres used by the Local Authority's an Autistic Specific environmental, if so which?</p>	
<p>Does each respite centre used by the Local Authority have an individual placement plan or care plan which has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A highly detailed description of and overviews of the young persons and their needs? • Details of the young persons programs such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speech and language therapy - Occupational therapy, eating and toileting. - Where there is psychological intervention and behavioural management programme - Shared targets which need to be implemented by school, transport, home and respite centres. • Many Children with severe autism have a restrictive diet which adversity affects both weight and health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do the respite centres deliver consistent programmes of exposure to different foods and motivation to try new food? 	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE: [REDACTED]

Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If so who designs the programmes? - What skills mix is involved? - How is staff trained to ensure consistency delivery? - What approaches are in place to ensure consistency with school / home programmes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps are in place at the respite centres to introduce and increase social settings for young persons with autism and avoid those with autism isolating themselves? • Within the Respite Centres what autism specific programmes or methods are in use? 	
<p>What would be the cost of a taxi with escort from the [REDACTED] to each of the Respite Centres and from the Respite Centre to The Valley School?</p>	
<p>How long would the journey take?</p>	
<p>What is the cost of a taxi with escort from the [REDACTED] to The Valley School?</p>	
<p>What training in Autistic Spectrum Disorders have drivers and escorts received?</p> <p>How often and when?</p> <p>What are the professional qualifications of the experts involved in training the drivers and escorts?</p>	

PLEASE QUOTE OUR REFERENCE ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE:
Please direct queries to [REDACTED]

What arrangements are in place to ensure that any changes in drivers and escorts are pre planned, and notification is send to parents?	[REDACTED]
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Annex 2

Aggregation by public authority of separate parts of the request into 62 questions

Teaching Assistants and Higher Level Teaching Assistants qualifications and pay:

1. What paybands apply to the Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council?
2. Please list entire payscale from top to bottom ie most senior to most junior with all spinal points in between.
3. Please list the skill mix, experience and qualifications considered acceptable by Hertfordshire County Council as LEA for the Teaching Assistant post at the top end of the scale and at the bottom end of the scale.
4. What training does Hertfordshire County Council as LEA provide for Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council?
5. Please list training provided for Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council over the last 5 years.
6. What paybands apply to a Higher level Teaching Assistant within HCC?
7. Please list training provided for a Higher level Teaching assistant within HCC for the last 5 years
8. Please list the skill mix, experience and qualifications considered acceptable by Hertfordshire County Council as LEA for a Higher Level Teaching Assistant post at the top end of the scale and at the bottom end of the scale.
9. What training does Hertfordshire County Council as LEA provide for Higher Level Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council?
10. Please list training provided for Hertfordshire County Council for Higher Level Teaching Assistants within Hertfordshire County Council over the last 5 years. (Duplicates question 7 above)
11. Please advise what is the additional on cost to the Local Authority Employer as a percentage of salary for Teaching Assistants and higher level Teaching Assistants. Please include variations associated with number of hours worked by the employee.

ASD Advisory teachers

12. Does Hertfordshire County Council employ specialist ASD Advisory Teachers?

13. What paybands apply to the ASD advisory teachers within HCC?

14. Please list the entire payscale from top to bottom ie most senior to most junior with all spinal points in between

15. Please list the skill mix, experience and qualifications considered acceptable by Hertfordshire County Council as LEA for the ASD advisory teacher post at the top end of the scale and at the bottom end of the scale.

16. What do the ASD advisory teachers cost per hour and what is the on cost?

17. Where would they travel from, what is the distance and how long would the journey take?

18. Where do ASD advisory teachers travel from and what the distance to The Valley School?

19. Does the Valley School have a specialist Advisory teacher or ASD trained teachers on staff?

20. If the Authority has to "buy in" a specialist ASD trained teacher what will be the cost per hour and how will the cost of travel and travel time be billed to the Authority?

Service Level Agreements with Health service providers

21. Please provide a copy of the Service Level Agreements with your local NHS Trusts within Hertfordshire County Council as regards the provision of Speech and Language and Occupational Therapy within the Hertfordshire County council as LEA maintained mainstream and special schools, also LEA specialist unit provision.

22. Do you have any contracts with any specific Primary Care Trusts for any Speech and Language Therapy and/or Occupational Therapy provision within schools within Hertfordshire County Council as LEA maintained mainstream and special schools, also LEA specialist unit provision.

- What is the funding that you supply under these contracts
- What therapy (Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapy) is provided under these contracts within the settings set out above
- How much therapy (Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapy) is provided under these contracts within the settings set out above. How often? By whom (Qualified Therapist or Teaching Assistant)?
- Which Schools are provided with therapy (Speech and Language and/or Occupational Therapy) within Hertfordshire County Council area?

23. If independent Speech and language Therapy has to be bought in by the Local Authority, what are the hourly costs and how is travel time billed?

24. If independent Occupational Therapy has to be bought in by the Local Authority, what are the hourly costs and how is travel time billed?

Direct payments Scheme

25. Does Local Authority Social services have a Direct Payment Scheme for parents assessed as eligible? Please provide details of the scheme.

- Does the Direct Payment Scheme rate per hour vary at all for different needs or expert?
- If the Direct Payment Scheme rate varies on what basis are the different hourly rates allocated to eligible individuals?

26. If the rate per hour is insufficient to purchase services (i.e. the services cost more than the hourly rate) what happens then:

- Is it increased
- Do we have to repay the monies we cannot use to buy services?
- Are we expected to use the direct payments to buy a more limited amount of services at the higher rate charged by providers?

Respite Centres

27. Where are the respite centres used by the Local Authority? Please provide name and geographical location.

28. What is the cost per night at the various respite centres used by the authority?

29. At these centres what is the adult to child ratio?

30. Do all of the children staying at the respite centres have learning difficulties if so what?

31. What is the age range of the children staying at the respite centres?

32. Are the children staying at the respite centres matched for similarity of learning difficulty or age?

33. How many children stay at each of the respite centres?

34. What are the qualifications held by the staff at each of the respite centres?

35. What has been the focus of staff training over the last five years at each of the respite centres?

36. What training has the respite centres staff received from Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists?

37. What speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and ASD advisory provision is available at these centres?

38. If you have to buy in speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, clinical psychology and ASD advisory teacher input into a respite centre would there be an extra charge? What would you have to pay per hour and how would you be billed?

39. Within each of the respite centres:

- What is the range of communication strategies?
- What consistent forms of communication are used?
- What opportunities for spontaneous and directed communications are in place?
- What professional advice and training have been made available to staff on these issues?

When was the training provided and how long was the session?

40. What strategies are in place at each of the respite centres to address potential conflict of needs when residents have different range of learning difficulties?

41. What arrangements are currently in place for liaison between educational placements and the respite centres?

42. What arrangements are currently in place for liaison between the home setting and the respite centres?

43. What arrangements are currently in place for liaison between the home setting and transport?

44. What arrangements are currently in place which will provide consistency of programmes and consistency of implementation across all setting school, home, transport and respite centres so that the child needs can be met across all settings, ensuring that the child can learn and develop in context and in meaningful, functional way to ensure the skills learned are generalised?

45. If arrangements are in place:

- What are they?
- How often are programmes updated?
- What steps are taken to ensure that consistency is maintained?

46. How do the respite centres meet the needs of residents with severe sensory issues such as auditory or visual sensitivity?

47. If a higher staff/child pupil ration is required by the respite centres is there an additional cost to the Local Authority? If so what is the cost?

48. If additional therapeutic input is required by the respite centres is there an additional cost to the Local Authority? If so what is the cost?

49. If clinical psychology input is required by the respite centres is there an additional cost to the Local Authority? If so what is the cost?

50. If Behavioural Management Programmes are required at the respite centres:

- who designs them
- what level of expertise is involved?
- what arrangements are in place to ensure consistency with other settings?

51. Do Behavioural Management Programmes at the respite centres include:

- the collection of data on challenging behaviour, a functional analysis of the behaviour and the development of pro-active and reactive strategies and the instruction of all staff so they can respond appropriately to challenging behaviour?

52. Are all of the respite centres used by the Local Authority's an Autistic Specific environmental, if so which?

53. Does each respite centre used by the local authority have an individual placement plan or care plan which has:

- a highly detailed description of and overviews of the young person and their needs?
- details of the young persons programme such as :
 - speech and language therapy,
 - occupational therapy , eating and toileting?
 - where there is psychological intervention and behavioural management programme
 - shared targets which need to be implemented by school, transport, home and respite centres.

54. Many children with severe autism have a restrictive diet which adversely (adversely) affects both weight and health:

- Do the respite centres deliver consistent programmes of exposure to different foods and motivation to try new food?
- If so who designs the programmes?
- What mix of staff is involved?
- How is staff trained to ensure consistent delivery
- What approaches are in place to ensure consistency with school/home programmes

55. What steps are in place at the respite centres to introduce and increase social settings for young persons with autism and avoid those with autism isolating themselves?

56. Within the respite centres what autism specific programmes or methods are in use?

Transport

57. What would be the cost of a taxi with escort from [address removed] to each of the respite centres and from the respite centres to the Valley School?

58. How long would the journey take? (assume all?)

59. What would be the cost of a taxi with escort from [address removed] to the Valley School?

60. What training in Autistic Spectrum Disorders have drivers and escorts received?

- How often and when?

61. What are the professional qualifications of the people involved in training the drivers and escorts?

62. What arrangements are in place to ensure that any changes in drivers and escorts are pre-planned and notification is sent to