

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)
Decision notice

Date: 3 September 2024

Public Authority: Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

Address: Cloonavin
66 Portstewart Road
Coleraine
BT52 1EY
Northern Ireland

Request:

The complainant requested the following information from Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council on 16 May 2024:

"In a social media post at [time] on [date], a social media page connected with Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council stated that the Council's IT department had invested in a new drone. I want to request the following information regarding this drone:

1. Drone Model and Specifications:

Please provide the make and model of the drone. Include all technical specifications related to this drone.

2. Cost of the Drone:

How much did the drone cost?

3. Purchase Date:

When was the drone purchased?

5. Drone Weight:

What is the weight of the drone?

6. Committee Meeting Information:

Can you provide details of the committee meeting(s) where the expenditure for this drone was approved? This should include dates, minutes, and any related documents.

7. Operator ID Connection:

Who is the operator ID connected to? Is it registered under Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council? If not, please disclose the registered entity or individual.

8. Adherence to Visual Line of Sight Principles:

It has been noted that the drone was flown at night with reduced visibility. Did the operator adhere to the primary visual line of sight principles as required by regulatory guidelines? Where were the takeoff and landing points?

9. Training and Certification:

What training and certification have the drone operators received?

Are there records of the completion of this training?

10. Purpose of the Drone:

What is the primary purpose of the drone purchased by the IT department?

Are there any specific projects or tasks the drone has been used for since its purchase?

11. Insurance Coverage:

Is the drone insured? If so, please provide details of the insurance policy.

What type of coverage is included in the insurance policy (e.g., liability, damage, theft, third-party liability)?

12. Insurance Provider:

Which insurance company is providing the coverage for the drone?

What is the duration of the insurance policy?

13. Compliance with Aviation Regulations:

How does the council ensure compliance with national and local aviation regulations and guidelines?

14. Usage Logs:

Can you provide usage logs for the drone, including dates, times, locations, and purposes of each flight?

15. Public Safety and Community Impact:

How does the council ensure that the drone operations do not pose a risk to public safety?

Have there been any public consultations or community impact assessments related to the use of the drone?

Commissioner's Decision:

A public authority will breach section 10 of FOIA if it fails to respond to a request within 20 working days. Based on evidence available to the Commissioner, by the date of this notice the public authority has not issued a substantive response to this request. Therefore the Commissioner finds a breach of section 10.

Steps:

The public authority must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.

The public authority must take this step within 30 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of FOIA and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

Right of Appeal:

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: 0203 936 8963

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: grc@justice.gov.uk

Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF**