

22 November 2019

Our ref: 5750173

Thank you for your request received on 25 October 2019, for the following information:

This request is made under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and is submitted on behalf of Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association.

The term 'documents' used below includes documents whether in written or in electronic formats and includes reports, papers, notes, emails, letters and memoranda.

The request relates to matters relevant to the consultation 'Barnet Cycleway: consultation on a new walking and cycling route' of June/July 2019.

In an email to me dated 26th September 2019 you wrote:

'Following the conclusion of the consultation period in July, analysis of the results of the consultation has been undertaken and a draft report produced which has been discussed by officers and with ward members. The results of the consultation show a mix of support and concern across the route, and additional work is in progress to better understand the detail of the concerns raised especially in the area affected by the proposals at the junction of Ashurst Road and Buxted Road.

1. Please provide

A. copies of any documents held containing any such discussions (both between officers and with ward members) as are mentioned above;

B. particulars of the 'additional work ' referred to;

C. copies of the draft report and any other documents made available to or provided to ward members in connection with the results of the consultation.

2. Were any meetings held with ward members to discuss the draft report? If so, which ward members were invited, and which actually attended, and on what dates? Who else attended the meeting(s)?

4. Please provide copies of any documents held containing notes of such meetings or discussing the meetings or containing comments arising from or 'following up' from the meetings, or containing conclusions from, or setting out actions to be taken in consequence of such meetings.

We have processed this request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Response

The council holds the information requested and it is attached/ the answers to your questions are below

1. Please provide

A. copies of any documents held containing any such discussions (both between officers and with ward members) as are mentioned above;

We expect to send a letter to residents in the area consulted, including a link to the consultation report, within the next month.

In the meantime we consider that the exemption in the EIR regarding unfinished documents in production applies to this request.

Once the report is published you may request additional information related to the development of the document if it is not provided.

Refusal Notice

We consider that regulation 12 (4) (d) (In course of completion, unfinished or incomplete) applies to the information requested because we consider that the request relates to material which is still in the course of completion, to unfinished documents or to incomplete data.

Therefore, we have decided to withhold the information.

In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the interest in favour of disclosure.

There are also public interest arguments in favour of disclosure:

- The general proposition of maximising openness that the EIR and the Council aspire to;
- The benefits of ensuring transparent and accountable government by disclosing how the Council makes decisions and spends public money;

However, there are also public interest arguments against disclosure:

- Releasing the requested information could prejudice the Council's future decision making process, staff would be reluctant to have free and frank discussions if all that is discussed is subject to scrutiny with no safe space for 'blue sky thinking', the requested information may prejudice pending or future decisions which would be detrimental to the Council.
- There is a set down process by which the responses are checked and assessed and a final report will be made available to the public. To release incomplete or unfinished information ahead of time would divert resources and officer time away from frontline activities and may distract from or confuse the formal set down publication process of the consultation exercise.

In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Once the consultation report is published you may request additional information related to the development of the document if it is not provided.

B. particulars of the 'additional work ' referred to;

As A, but in general terms the additional work is developing adjustments to proposals to mitigate some of the consultation concerns.

C. copies of the draft report and any other documents made available to or provided to ward members in connection with the results of the consultation.

As A

2. Were any meetings held with ward members to discuss the draft report? If so, which ward members were invited, and which actually attended, and on what dates? Who else attended the meeting(s)?

A meeting was held with ward members for affected wards to discuss the draft report on 2 September 2019. Invited councillors were Cllrs Hutton, Schneiderman and Cooke representing Woodhouse Ward and Cllrs Rawlings, Patel and Coakley Webb for Coppetts Ward. Councillor attendees were Cllrs Hutton, Cooke and Rawlings. Officers from Barnet, including Mario Lecordier, Interim Strategic Lead Commissioner - Highways Environment Commissioning Group, Re and Sustrans also attended.

4. Please provide copies of any documents held containing notes of such meetings or discussing the meetings or containing comments arising from or 'following up' from the meetings, or containing conclusions from, or setting out actions to be taken in consequence of such meetings.

As 1A

Further information

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to

prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link www.ico.org.uk

For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.

Your rights

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: foi@barnet.gov.uk. Or by post to Information Management Team (FOI) London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website www.ico.org.uk). There is no charge for making an appeal.