



Assurance Group
London Borough of Barnet,
2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale,
London NW9 4EW
24 July 2020
Our ref: 6372052

Thank you for your request received on 18 June 2020, for the following information:

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following from your finance systems and Accounts Payable department:

Invoice payment performance data for financial years 18/19 and 19/20:

- 1. How many invoices were paid late (actual number rather than %) and what is the total value of invoices paid late?**
- 2. Is this split out by sector / category or can you identify SME suppliers that have been paid late? If so, what are the volumes values?**
- 3. How many claims have you processed for late payment of invoices? How many claims were successful and how many were rejected (and for what reason)? (Volumes and values of claims)**
- 4. Do you have a documented process for late payment claims? If so, is this published and can it be shared? In the absence of a process, where should late payment claims be submitted?**

I am aware that many councils may publish a summary of their payment performance as required by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. I am seeking the transaction detail that sits behind this.

This information should be readily available from your finance systems but if there are any difficulties in producing or sending the data please advise and I will provide any assistance necessary. I have provided a table that may help to present this information back.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me via email or phone (xx Personal data redacted xx) and I will be very happy to clarify what I am asking for and discuss the request, my details are outlined below.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

Financial Year

18/19

19/20

Question

Volume

Value

Volume

Value

1. How many invoices were paid late?

2. How many invoices of SME suppliers were paid late?

3 a. How many successful claims have you processed for late payment of invoices?

Value of claim (not invoice)

Value of claim (not invoice)

3 b. How many claims have you rejected for late payment of invoices?

Value of claim (not invoice)

4 a. Do you have a documented process for late payment claims?

Yes / No

4 b. If yes, is this published and can it be shared?

(Online location of Late Payment Process)

4 c. In the absence of a process, where should late payment claims be submitted?

Name of contact, department, email address, postal address, telephone number

We have processed this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

We are refusing your request under section 12 because we estimate that compliance with your request will exceed the "appropriate limit" under section 12. The appropriate limit is £450 which is equivalent to 18 hours at £25 per hour. The per hour figure is set by Regulations rather than actual salary paid to any officers handling requests. The appropriate limit includes the time it will take the council to discover if it holds the information requested, to locate it, extract it and collate it as well as putting it into any particular format requested by the requester.

We have calculated that it will take approx 79000 hours to comply with your request. Our calculation is as follows:

Finance would need to make enquiries of purchasing managers for 240000 records out of 290000 processed which show a payment in excess of 30 days, this would be in the form of

an email to the manager asking them to check their records. They would then need to collect and update the returns. This also assumes the purchasing manager is still employed by the council and is able to access the record.

Advice and Assistance

I have agreed with Finance that they will develop a process to report on late invoices as opposed to disputed invoices so that this information can be published as Datasets on Open Barnet going forward.

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.