

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request Reference FoI/20/130

Waste Disposal - Sustainability

Request details

I am hoping you can provide me with the hospital annual report and in particular I am looking for information around the costs for waste disposal from the hospital and the approach to sustainability and improving the hospitals carbon footprint.

Are you able to supply the report and data around costs associated to the hospital please?

Response details

Waste Management Costs

After considering your request, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB) considers this information to be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Section 43) Commercial Interests. This section of the Act sets out an exemption from the right to know if:

- the information requested is a trade secret, or
- release of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

This exemption was considered by the UHB when deciding whether to disclose information because it considered that in doing so there could be a significant risk in prejudicing the commercial interests of the company in question. As this is a qualified exemption, the UHB is required to complete a public interest test in deciding whether it is in the public's interest to withhold or disclose the information.

In favour of disclosure: There is a public interest in transparency and in the accountability of spending of public funds. Furthermore, it is in the public's interest that public funds be used effectively and that public sector bodies obtain the best value for money when contracting for the provision of services.

Against disclosure: There is a risk of disclosure prejudicing the commercial interests of the UHB by affecting its bargaining position with agencies. This in turn could lead to less effective use of public funds in future. It has been established above that releasing the information under the Freedom of Information Act, to which the UHB is subject, will give an unfair advantage to the supplier's competitors. The UHB believes that there is wider established public interest in companies not being prejudiced merely because they have contracted with a public sector body (as upheld in ICO decision notice FS50473543 ICO v Royal Marsden Hospital Trust).

Decision: The UHB considers that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the interests in disclosing it and thereby giving unfair commercial advantage to competitors of the supplier to which this information concerns. The UHB believes that disclosure of information in a manner which fails to protect the interests and relationships arising in a commercial context could have the effect of discouraging companies from dealing with the Health Board because of fears that

the disclosure of information could damage them commercially. In turn this could then jeopardise the Health Board's ability to compete fairly and pursue its function to bring forward development in the area and obtain value for money. It was therefore decided that it was not in the public's interest to disclose this information.

Sustainability

The Health Boards Sustainability program includes a range of initiatives including the following:

Environmental Management Policy and ISO14001

The Health Board operates an Environmental Management strategy and has also achieved ISO14001 Environmental accreditation.

Refit Program

The Refit program is an essential element of the Health Board's Cost and Carbon Reduction program for 2020/21 and beyond.

Refit is a Government program whereby large scale strategic energy conservation programs and solutions can be implemented by a Service Provider/contractor with guaranteed savings. The Service Provider is appointed through a Government framework arrangement and associated processes.

The UHB's Refit program commenced in March 2020 and has been split into 3 project phases as follows to achieve carbon and cost savings as early as possible in 2020/21.

Phase 1a: Non- complex Measures – These include projects with low design requirements short lead times and high savings.

Phase 1b: Non- complex/medium complex measures – Including schemes which may have increased complexity and an element of design, but still can be implemented within a medium timescale.

Phase 2: Complex Measures – These will include significant strategic solutions for larger sites which will provide significant energy and carbon benefits.

The Phase 1a project commenced on site in early March 2020 with a completion date of February 2021.

Phase 1(b) and 2 of the Refit program are in the development/feasibility stage.

LED Lighting Program

Lighting has been replaced with high efficiency LED systems in a range of areas (as follows) and is also generally included in Capital project, new builds and refurbishments:

- New Children's Hospital for Wales
- Lakeside Building at UHW
- UHW Tunnels and certain corridors and lobbies
- UHL Corridors
- Refit program discussed above includes a full range of LED lighting programs.

Solar Panel Systems

The UHB operates 5 small solar PV schemes as follows:

- 3 systems at UHL
- 1 system at UHW
- 1 system at Barry Hospital
- Further solar PV schemes are being investigated as part of the Refit program.