



16 August 2018

Information Rights & Compliance Team
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Our Ref: FOI 2908

Dear Rachel

Thank you for your request concerning elections to the Trust's Council of Governors.

Your request has been considered and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

I am writing to obtain information about elections to the Trust's Council of Governors, for all elections held since 2012.

Please include the following information:

1. **Date of ballot**
2. **Balloting company used**
3. **Total number of eligible voters**
4. **Number of ballots issued (if different from the above)**
5. **Number of votes cast**
6. **Number of paper ballots**
7. **Number of electronic ballots**
8. **Turnout**
9. **Total Cost**

Please see attached pdf. We are unable to access the data for 2012 due to password protection being unknown.

10. **Cost charge by balloting company for admin**
11. **Cost charged for scrutineering including staff**
12. **Costs for other services**

The Trust considers the breakdown of administration, scrutineering and other service costs to be commercially sensitive under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Information is exempt if disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person, including the public authority holding the information. This is a qualified exemption and therefore subject to the public interest test. We have considered the reasons for and against disclosure below:

Reason in favour of disclosure

There is considerable interest in ensuring the Trust is transparent about its spending of public money at a time when public finances are under considerable scrutiny.

There is some interest in the contract with its balloting providers and ensuring that the Trust is getting value for money.

Reason against disclosure

The Trust is obliged to protect its commercial relationships with third parties; they must have confidence that their commercial information is secure when provided to the Trust. The release of this information is likely to prejudice our on-going relationship with the balloting company.

We reached the view that, on balance, the public interest is better served by withholding this breakdown under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The Trust has released the total cost which we feel satisfies our transparency obligations.

13. Any events or activities either social, marketing, CPD that your existing and potential ballot suppliers invite you too?

No.

Should you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please find enclosed an information sheet regarding copyright protection and the Trust's complaints procedure in the event that you are not satisfied with the response.

Yours sincerely

Sue Smith

**Sue Smith
Information Rights Officer**

Enc: Copyright Protection and Complaints Procedure Information Leaflet.

If you would like to complete a short survey in relation to your Freedom of Information request please scan the QR code below or click [here](#).

