



FOI REF: 23/746

Eastbourne District General Hospital
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Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

10th January 2024

Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: www.esht.nhs.uk

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

I am responding to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The answers to your specific questions are as follows:

I am trying to understand the number of SME suppliers the public sector purchases from so please can you send me a list of all suppliers you purchase goods or services from and the annual value you bought from them in your last financial year.

I can confirm that we hold the information requested above. However, the information is exempt from disclosure under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is because the information is accessible to you, as it is already in the public domain and can be accessed by the following link:

[Financial transparency – East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust \(\[esht.nhs.uk\]\(http://esht.nhs.uk\)\)](http://www.esht.nhs.uk/financial-transparency)

A copy of the Trust's Contract Register is also available on the Trust's Disclosure Log via:

<https://www.esht.nhs.uk/about-us/contact-us/freedom-of-information/foi-disclosure-log/>

<https://www.esht.nhs.uk/?s=Contract+Register>

This is an absolute exemption and there is, therefore, no requirement to consider the public interest.

Whilst the Trust holds the information requested in respect of annual value under £25k, it is applying a Section 43(2) exemption in relation to this part of the request as the release of the information is likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

In applying the exemption consideration has been given to the public interest in enabling scrutiny of public sector decision making and the general public interest in accountability and transparency.

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We have concluded that sharing commercials for spend under £25k could disadvantage the incumbent supplier against their competitors. The information could provide competitors with the suppliers pricing, which could result in these suppliers obtaining a competitive advantage which could result in the Trust not obtaining best value for money.

In this instance, we consider that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the public interest in disclosing the information.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Should you be dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Please write to the Freedom of Information Department (esh-tr.foi@nhs.net), quoting the above reference, within 40 working days. The Trust is not obliged to accept an internal review after this date.

Should you still be dissatisfied with your FOI request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely

Linda Thornhill (Mrs)
Corporate Governance Manager
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