



FOI Request

July 2020 Expenditure

Data

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| Reference | RSN21182 |
| Request Stage | Request |
| Date Received | 05/10/2020 |
| Date Responded | 05/10/2020 |
| Disclosure | Withheld |
| Exemptions / Exceptions | S.22 – Information held with view to future publication |
| Supporting Documents | |

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Request

I am looking for some assistance with your organisation's Spend/Transparency data, available on the following weblink:

<https://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/doing-business-with/Pages/Monthly-Expenditures.aspx>

There appears to be no file available for the month of July 2020. Could you advise when the file will be made available to view online? Would it be possible for you to email me a copy of the July 2020 file please and thank you?

Response

Thank you for your request, which has been dealt with in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

Information related to expenditure in March 2020 is held with a view to future publication, and consideration must be given to Section 22 of the Act. This applies even if a fixed publication date has not been decided upon. The Information Commissioner's Office guidance on Section 22 can be viewed [here](#).

Section 22 is a qualified exemption, meaning that we must balance the public interest factors for release and for the information to be withheld until its formal publication.

The public interest argument for disclosure is that it allows a greater degree of scrutiny over how public money is spent in the delivery of Merseytravel's work. It is important that public authorities allow their decisions to be scrutinised by the public to ensure that funds are managed appropriately. This is reflected in the fact that the data is published in the first place, even though we are not subject to the Local Government Transparency Code.

We must also, however, take into account the impact that earlier than intended disclosure or publication would have, chiefly that it would require officers to prioritise this work over other more pressing duties. Officers are required to ensure that day to day duties are carried out in a timely and efficient manner. Diverting resources to prepare the requested information for disclosure or publication early would have a significant detrimental impact upon this work. The difficulties faced by staff during the current COVID-19 pandemic in having to work remotely and with limited access to some systems must also be taken into account.

On this occasion, the public interest factors in withholding the as yet unpublished data outweigh those in favour of its disclosure at this time. The requested information is therefore exempt by virtue of Section 22 of the Act.

I can advise you to keep an eye on the [published expenditure data webpage](#), where the information will be posted in due course.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, which should be addressed to:

Mrs Julie Watling
Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement Manager
Merseytravel
PO Box 1976
Liverpool
L69 3HN
julie.watling@merseytravel.gov.uk

If you are not content with the result of your internal review, you also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner, whose address is

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire SK9 5AF
www.ico.org.uk