

Date: 13th July 2018

Ref: FOI11264

London Borough of Camden
Information and Records
Management
Judd Street
London.
WC1H 9JE
e-mail:
foi@camden.gov.uk

Dear Requester

Thank you for your request for information dated the 12th June 2018 about the Social work provision from both children and adults. We have dealt with this under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

The council holds the information requested, however we are withholding some of this information because it is exempt. The answers to your questions are below we have stated where we are withholding information and what exemptions apply. Please see the refusal notices at the end of the answers which explain how and why the exemptions apply.

This request concerns the Council's social work provision for both children and adults for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 budget years.

First, please provide a basic definition for permanent social workers and a definition for agency workers (i.e. staff who are used temporarily to cover shortfalls in permanent staffing levels).

Please see the below the definitions that the London Borough of Camden has used for the purposes of this request.

Permanent Social Workers:

Permanent Social workers are employees who are directly employed by the London Borough of Camden on an indefinite contract in one of the following roles within the Councils' Adult Social Care and Children's Safeguarding and Social Work Divisions: Social Worker, Principal Social Worker, Senior Practitioner, Lead Practitioner, Team Manager and Operations Manager. The figures included in response to this particular FOI relate only to workers on a permanent contract and exclude any employees who were/are currently employed directly by the Council on a fixed term contract for a specified period.

Agency Workers:

This refers to workers who are not directly employed by the London Borough of Camden but were managed through the Councils' Neutral Vendor (Matrix-SCM) to cover positions within the organisation on a temporary basis.

Wage:

a) the average annual salary for permanent social workers in the team, and the annual salary for the most junior level of permanent social worker you employ.

The below table provides the average Full Time Equivalent Salary for permanent social workers and the annual Full Time Equivalent Salary for the lowest earning permanent social worker(s) as of the 31st March of each financial year.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Average Annual Salary for permanent social workers in team</i>	<i>Annual Salary for most junior level of permanent social worker</i>
2015/16	£39,907.98	£31,209.00
2016/17	£40,167.00	£31,521.00
2017/18	£40,341.98	£31,521.00

b) The hourly equivalent of these annual salaries, based only on working hours and not on allotted annual leave, bank holidays, development days etc. (i.e. annual salary divided by contracted work hours).

We are refusing your request under section 12 on cost grounds because we estimate that compliance with your request will exceed the "appropriate limit". This 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 are sorry but to provide this information would require a manual check and calculation of the working arrangements, annual leave, bank holiday, entitlements, sickness absence, training days and additional hours worked per period for between 278 – 297 permanent social workers in each financial year we estimate that to provide this information would take in excess of 29 hours. We are able to provide the average hourly rate of pay for employees based on their Full Time Equivalent Salary and the number of hours worked per week, using the following calculation: *(Full Time Equivalent/Weeks Per Year)/Contracted Hours Per Week* and these figures are show in the below table.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Average Hourly Rate Equivalent of Annual Salary for permanent social workers in team</i>	<i>Average Hourly Rate Equivalent of Annual Salary for most junior level of permanent social worker</i>
2015/16	£21.43	£16.63
2016/17	£21.56	£16.79
2017/18	£21.63	£16.79

c) the average hourly wage for agency staff.

Please see below a table that provides a breakdown of the average hourly rate of pay paid to agency staff covering Social Worker roles within the London Borough of Camden during each of the requested financial years.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Average Hourly Rate of Pay for Agency Social Worker</i>
2015/16	£25.94
2016/17	£23.44
2017/18	£23.49

d) the agency fee, and how this works, i.e. is it a one off up-front cost or an hourly commission for each agency staff member? If it is the latter, please highlight whether this is included within the hourly agency staff wage or is an additional cost on top.

As part of the London Borough of Camden's contract with its neutral vendor, the agency fee is paid to a workers agency as an hourly commission as an additional cost on top of the agency workers hourly rate of pay.

Hours:

a) the total number of annual contracted hours for permanent social workers. Please divide this into working hours, and non-working hours (i.e. annual leave entitlement, bank holidays, development days etc.).

b) the actual number of permanent staff hours worked in total across the whole team.

We are refusing your request under section 12 on cost grounds because we estimate that compliance with your request will exceed the "appropriate limit". This 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 are sorry but we are unable to provide the in information parts a) and b) of this section of the request. In order to provide this information, a manual check and calculation of the working arrangements, annual leave, bank holiday, entitlements, sickness absence, training days and additional hours worked per period for between 278 – 297 permanent social workers in each financial year we estimate that to provide this information would take in excess of 29 hours.

c) the actual number of agency staff hours worked in total.

d) The percentage of total agency hours that covered permanent staff vacancies, rather than maternity or sick leave.

e) the average timeframe that individual agency staff members worked within the service (i.e. how long do they normally stay?).

Please see below a table that provides the total number of hours agency social worker staff worked at the London Borough of Camden during each of the financial years requested based on timesheets submitted, the percentage of hours worked where the hire reason was associated with a permanent vacancy and the average length of each placement.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total Number of Hours worked by Agency Social Workers</i>	<i>Percentage of Agency Hours Worked where the hire reason was associated with a permanent vacancy</i>	<i>Average length of agency placement</i>
2015/16	112625.40	55.68%	40.40 Weeks
2016/17	123063.40	71.43%	53.23 Weeks
2017/18	87277.50	78.28%	64.16 Weeks

Benefits:

a) Any additional benefits offered/given to permanent staff members including pension contributions (and the total cost of these), and any additional benefits offered/given to agency staff members, including pension contributions (and the total cost of these).

The London Borough of Camden is unable to provide any details relating to additional benefits/offered/given to agency staff as this information is not held by the Council. In regards to permanent staff, in addition to pension contributions made by the Council if the employee had opted into a pension, the only additional benefit paid to Social Workers during the requested timeframe relate to the Councils reward and recognition scheme. This is performance related pay and where applicable an employee receives an additional one off payment of 1% or 2% of their salary (up to a maximum of 2% per 12-month rolling period). This is a council wide scheme and does not vary between teams. The below table provides a breakdown of the amounts paid out during each of the financial years requested.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total Cost of additional benefits offered/given to permanent members of staff</i>
2015/16	£1,563,769.66
2016/17	£1,700,615.14
2017/18	£1,635,404.47

b) Any costs that permanent staff members can claim back, but which agency staff members have to absorb themselves - for example travel/petrol costs. In such cases, please detail the total cost of these permanent staff claims.

The London Borough of Camden is unable to provide any details relating to any costs that permanent members of staff can claim back but agency staff have to absorb themselves as this information is not held by the Council. In regards to permanent staff, the table below provides a breakdown of the amounts paid out during each of the financial years requested in relation to car mileage allowances, travel and subsistence payments and reimbursements for other expenses paid.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total Cost that permanent members of staff can claim back</i>
2015/16	£23,849.02
2016/17	£17,986.12
2017/18	£15,373.32

c) Any incentives you offer as part of the recruitment of social workers, either to social workers themselves or recruitment consultants, for example relocation packages (and the cost of these).

During the financial years requested, the London Borough of Camden did not offer any incentives during the recruitment of social workers.

Total Cost:

a) The total cost of permanent staff members and the total cost of agency staff members.

Please see below a table which provides a breakdown of the total costs incurred by the London Borough of Camden, which related to permanent and agency social workers during the financial years' requested. Please note, that the figure listed for permanent social workers includes Employers NI and Pension Contributions.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Total Cost of Permanent Social Workers</i>	<i>Total Cost of Agency Social Workers</i>
2015/16	£13,570,135.43	£3,673,170

2016/17	£14,029,457.04	£3,951,794
2017/18	£13,123,090.33	£2,948,666

Then, looking at the current situation:

- How many permanent full time equivalent staff members are currently employed?

As of the latest information available (30th May 2018); the permanent full time equivalent of social workers within the London Borough of Camden's Adult and Children's team is: 254.55

- How many full time equivalent agency staff are currently employed covering permanent positions (not maternity or sick leave)?

As of the latest information available (30th May 2018); the full time equivalent of agency social workers who are covering permanent positions within the London Borough of Camden's Adult and Children's team is: 42.76

- What are the names of the agencies used by the council to provide temporary social workers?

The London Borough of Camden is unable to provide this information, as we are not the data holders for this information. The data holder for this information is the Councils' neutral vendor, Matrix-SCM.

- What was the number of applications you had for the last five permanent social worker roles that were advertised (and over what time-period this was)

As of the latest information available (30th May 2018); the total number of applications received for the last five permanent social worker roles that the London Borough of Camden advertised was 69. These roles were advertised over the period 11th April 2018 – 27th May 2018.

Further Information:

Why not check our Portal [Open Data Camden](#) before making a new request as your question may already be answered by a previous [FOI response](#) or in one of our many useful and interesting datasets.

Your Rights

If you are not happy with how your response was handled you can request an Internal Review within 2 months of this letter by email to foireviews@camden.gov.uk or post: Information and Records Management Team, London Borough of Camden, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE. Please quote your case reference number. If you are not satisfied with the Internal Review outcome you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at casework@ico.org.uk telephone 0303 123 1113, or post to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. The ICO website www.ico.org.uk may be useful.

Yours sincerely

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