



By email

22 March 2018

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request for Information

I am writing in respect of your enquiry dated 7 March 2018 for information held by the Council. Your enquiry is being dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked for the following information:

"On Monday 11 July 2016 a general assembly of the council meeting was held, during the meeting a question was submitted by the shadow leader of the council;

"Q2. What assurances can the Leader give to Dartford residents that complaints about the Council's Warmer Schemes Project will be thoroughly investigated by his administration and appropriate action will be taken to address the poor quality of work experienced by residents?"

Could you provide the answer the leader of the council gave along with the supporting documentation and the information to any completed or ongoing investigations/work?"

The response to the question asked at the meeting of the General Assembly of the Council on 11 July 2016, and the supplementary question asked, was as follows:

"Question 2

Councillor J S Hawkes:

'What assurance can the Leader give to Dartford residents that complaints about the Council's Warmer Streets Project will be thoroughly investigated by his administration and appropriate action will be taken to address the poor quality of work experienced by residents?'



Councillor J A Kite:

In reply, the Leader of the Council said that the Warmer Streets programme had made improvements to 800 homes so far delivering environmental improvements. 97% of the improvement schemes had been signed off with the contractors and no scheme was signed off until the applicant was satisfied with the work carried out. 120 applications were on the waiting list for improvements. There were currently 20 complaints of which half would be settled in the next few weeks. However there were a very small number of persistent complainants with whom agreement was unlikely to be reached and it might be necessary to go to an independent arbitration process to ensure that their expectations were realistic to resolve the matters. The Warmer Streets programme was a success story that had delivered energy efficiencies and lowered energy bills for residents who were queuing up to apply.

Supplementary Question

Councillor J S Hawkes:

The Shadow Leader said that one resident had claimed that his property had been damaged. He asked whether it might be helpful for the Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the programme focussing on the scheme set up, arrangements with contractors and the level of oversight by the Council.

Councillor J A Kite:

The Leader of the Council said that it was not up to him to advise the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee what he could or couldn't scrutinise but repeated that out of 800 properties 97% had been successfully signed off and the 20 that were still outstanding would be likely to reduce to a single figure in the coming weeks. There had been one particularly vociferous complainant who had complained to Councillors, Leaders, the MP, local press and social media. His complaint had been investigated under the Council's complaints process and not upheld. Regarding the level of oversight he stressed that Members had engaged with Housing Services, visited properties and spoken to contractors and he failed to see the need for anything more".

In terms of the other information that you have requested , there are no ongoing investigations/works, other than the Council has been notified that the applicant has complained to the Information Commissioner's Office about the Council's response to a previous request for information under reference FOI 1097.

As to completed investigations/works, the Council does hold such information connected with works carried out to other properties under the Warmer Streets Project but this information is being withheld on the basis that it is exempt by virtue of s.40(2) and 40(3)(a)(i) of the FOI Act. Release of the exempted information is refused on the following ground:



The information has been withheld on the ground that withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is personal information. The disclosure of this information to a member of the public would breach the first data protection principle, namely that personal data must be processed fairly.

Finally, you have already been supplied with any such information held by the Council regarding your own property.

If you are unhappy with the way in which your enquiry has been dealt with, you may ask for an internal review by initiating the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure, details of which may be obtained by logging onto the Council's website <http://www.dartford.gov.uk> or telephoning or emailing me. Should you remain dissatisfied with the decision on internal review, you may appeal to the Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow SK9 5AF.

I would be grateful if you would address any future correspondence you may have in relation to this matter, to me, quoting the reference number FOI 1107. Please familiarise yourself with the informative on re-use of information.

Yours sincerely

Alan Twyman
Member Services Manager



INFORMATIVE

DARTFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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