

From: Freedom of Information Requests
Sent: Tuesday, September 3, 2024 10:34 AM
To:
Subject: FOI Response -

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 5 August 2024 for information about Doncaster Balloon Festival. Please find below City of Doncaster Council's responses to the questions you have raised.

1. I will require a viewing of all of the minutes recorded in the meetings of all sections of the council that were involved in these deliberations so that I can analyse the decision-making process to see where it went wrong in my opinion.

Response: There was an Event Safety Advisory group held for this event that the licensee attended. It has been decided to refuse to disclose the minutes for this group under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Council believes that this information is exempt from disclosure under Section 38(1)(b) where disclosure of this information would be likely to endanger the safety of any individual including the applicant, the supplier of the information or anyone else.

Basis for decision:

This law allows us to refuse to disclose information, through the Freedom of Information Act process, which refers to "public interest". This is called an "exemption".

Why does the exemption apply in this case?:

Section 38(1)(b) provides an exemption where disclosing information could endanger the safety of any individual including the applicant, the supplier of the information or anyone else. As the information requested contains detailed information of security protocols and processes that are shared only with Emergency Services and relevant internal teams for the safety and security of all those participating in the event, release of this information would compromise the safety of future events.

Public Interest Test:

This exemption is qualified and on that basis I have considered whether or not in this case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. In order to do this, the following factors have been considered;

Factors in favour of disclosure

- To release the information would be in the spirit of openness and transparency in which the Council operates
- The information is of interest to some members of the public
- The information would provide reassurance of safety measures to attendees of events

Factors in favour of withholding

- The safety of attendees of events would be comprised as security measures would be widely available if this information is released to the general public
- The Council has a duty to provide a safe environment for attendees of events
- There has been a recent and publicly known increase in unrest and releasing details of safety measures could have a detrimental effect on steps being taken to prevent this
- The information would provide intelligence allowing known individuals or the general public to be targeted

- The Council may be liable for an accident claim if this information is released to the general public, relied upon and then changes. It would not be in the public interest to expose it to such potential costs and expenses, given that they would be funded from the public purse.

Taking these factors into consideration, the City of Doncaster Council has decided that the reasons for withholding the information outweigh those for disclosing it and we will not be providing the information at this time.

2. I would like to view the Risk Assessments and Method Statement (RAMS) provided by the events company in addition to the same prepared by the Council

Response: Please find the Risk Assessment and Method Statement provided by the event company attached. Please be advised, the Counter Terrorism risk assessment has been withheld as per the above exemption. There were no risk assessments prepared by City of Doncaster Council as we do not risk assess other organisation's events, we assess via their event plans.

3. Finally, to conclude this section, what discussion, if any took place between the Licensing Committee and the Assistant Directors before the decision to issue the event licence was made. I would like to see the minutes of those meeting(s).

Response: This application did not receive any objections and therefore was granted without the need for a hearing, the Licensing Committee would not have been involved in issuing the licence as this is delegated to officers in these circumstances. There was no meeting of assistant directors and the committee on this matter.

I hope that this information is useful to you.

The City of Doncaster Council estimates that it has cost £196 to respond to this request for information.

Reviewing any decisions made:

If you are not happy with this reply you can ask us to review our response. To do this write to us within 40 working days of receiving your response at the address below or email FOIAppeals@doncaster.gov.uk

If you do not agree with the review decision you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision about our compliance or otherwise with the Freedom of Information legislation. Contact details for the ICO are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. www.ico.org.uk Telephone 0303 123 1113.

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