



Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance Department

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Buckingham Row
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Wigan
WN1 1XX

Email: foi@wwl.nhs.uk
Web: www.wwl.nhs.uk

Ref: FOI/2024/10019

Date Received: 30th July 2024

Response Due: 28th August 2024

Date: 19th August 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 30th July 2024, I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below.

In your request you asked:

1. Does the authority share accounts payable or procurement functions with another authority or shared service function? If yes, who?

Yes, NHS Shared Business Service.

2. Which ERP system is used by the authority (e.g. Oracle, SAP, Advanced, Civica)?

Oracle.

3. Please state the total number and value of supplier transactions (invoices and credit notes) processed by Accounts Payable in the last financial year?

72,205 transactions, value of £312,849.

4. Does the authority utilise any 3rd party software to identify or protect against supplier payment errors (including duplicate, erroneous payments or potential fraud) before payment is made?

No.

4a. If yes, please state the name of the software, the engagement date, the current contract end date and the annual value of the contract awarded to the external organisation (or total value and contract length).

N/A.

5. Does the authority utilise any 3rd party or 3rd party software to identify historical payment errors (including duplicate, erroneous payments or potential fraud)?

No.

5a. If yes, please state the name of the software or partner, the engagement date and the current contract end date and frequency of engagement (if not continuous). Please also provide the contract value or terms of engagement (if not a fixed fee).

N/A.

5b. Please provide the value of monies recovered by the software or partner for the most recent financial year.

N/A.

6. Does the authority utilise any 3rd party or 3rd party software to reconcile supplier statements and identify overpayments or unclaimed credits on a regular basis?

Yes.

6a. If yes, please provide the name of the provider/software and a brief description of frequency/level of support.

AOB Portal. The subscription allows access for an unlimited number of users, a number of licenses for the AOB Dashboards, a data upload and validation service and technical support.

6b. Please provide the current contract end date and the annual value of the contract awarded to the external organisation (or total value and contract length).

The current contract end date is 28/02/2025. The annual value of the contract is being withheld under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please see below.

7. Does the authority make any checks, either directly or via any 3rd party or 3rd party software to identify sanctioned suppliers, both directly and indirectly owned, within the supplier master file?

No.

7a. If yes, please provide the name of the provider/software and confirm the frequency of checking.

N/A.

Section 43(2) – Commercial interests

Information regarding the annual contract has been withheld under section 43(2) of the FOIA if its disclosure would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Trust.

Section 43 of the FOIA is a qualified exemption and is subject to the Prejudice Test and the Public Interest Test.

Prejudice test

We confirm that we have carried out a full prejudice test and that, on the balance of probability, the Trust's interests would be prejudiced in the event of disclosure. Therefore, we confirm that the Prejudice Test is engaged.

Public interest test

We have also carried out the Public Interest Test to ascertain whether the public interest in disclosure outweighs the public interest in withholding the requested information:

Public interest in disclosure of the information:

- We acknowledge that there is public interest in transparency around how the Trust engages with suppliers and procurement.

- We acknowledge that there is public interest in the Trust's finances.

Public interest in withholding of the information:

• **Protecting public finances** – As a public authority, the Trust must ensure that it obtains the best value for money. Disclosure of the information would be likely to affect the quality of future offers provided to the Trust. It is therefore firmly in the public interest not to disclose any information which would affect commercial offers made to the Trust, which in turn will affect the Trust's finances.

• **Ensuring fair competition** – Information provided to the Trust during the procurement process contains sensitive competition information. It is not in the public interest to disclose information which would affect free and fair competition.

• **Transparency** – We understand that there is public interest in how the Trust engages with suppliers. However, we consider that the information held by the Trust would not significantly further the public understanding of its relationship with these suppliers beyond what has already been disclosed in this response.

• **Reputation damage or loss of confidence** - It is firmly in the public interest that the Trust takes all steps to protect its reputation around information handling. It is not in the public interest to do anything which would jeopardise our ability to maintain strong working relationships with third parties.

If you are not entirely satisfied with this response, please do not hesitate to contact the Information Governance Department via the email address provided. If we do not hear from you within 40 days, we will assume that we have been able to accommodate your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Yours sincerely,



Tabitha Gardner
Chief Finance Officer

PLEASE NOTE:

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to: Information Governance Department, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, Suite 9, Buckingham Row, Brick Kiln Lane, Wigan, WN1 1XX.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision at:

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

Helpline number: 0303 123 111