



My Ref: FOI/ 5473
Enquiries to: Information Requests
E-Mail: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

Dear Requester,

Re: Request for Information – Freedom of Information Act 2000

I wish to confirm that the council has completed its search for the information which you requested.

The information requested and our findings are as follows: -

1/ Information showing how the council came to the decision to sign up to the library of sanctuary initiative and endorse the city of sanctuary charter. This information (expect meeting minutes) should show how raised, discussed and who (councillors and senior council officers) agreed.

It was a Service decision to apply for the Library of Sanctuary accreditation to recognise the continuous work to make the Library Service accessible for everyone wanting to use it, which is part of the public libraries' statutory duty.

The application process was discussed verbally with colleagues, but no formal decision was required.

2/ Copy of application made by BMBC for the library of sanctuary award.

A redacted copy of the application has been included with this response. The redactions are to remove personal information which is exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as disclosure would contravene the UK GDPR.

Within the document are names and photographs of staff and members of the public which have been removed as, particularly with members of the public, we have no legal basis to process their information in this way. Consents were obtained to photograph the event they attended but disclosure under FOI was not covered in the consent form.

3/ Costs, including staff time and payments associated with setting up and the ongoing running of the library initiative.

This is not an initiative and does not have any ongoing costs. The Libraries of Sanctuary Award is an accreditation scheme recognising the existing work of the Library Service to make library users, particularly refugees and asylum seekers, feel welcome and to support them to access library services. This is part of the core function of a public Library Service and as such costs cannot be specifically attributed to this award. The activities outlined in the application form would have happened even without applying for the award.

4/ How the effectiveness of the library initiative is measured. (Key Performance Indicators, value for money measures, no of clients supported, referrals etc).
- Data for the measures for last financial year and this financial year to date.
- If no measures are in place appreciate information showing why not required.

This isn't an initiative and therefore there are no performance targets or indicators associated with it.

5/ The Barnsley council web site states "We don't track people seeking asylum, and we don't report interactions with sanctuary seekers to official bodies". Please provide information showing the legal basis for this statement. i.e. how council staff are empowered to not report legal breaches to the relevant authorities.

This statement is to give reassurance to refugees and asylum seekers who may have come from areas of conflict and persecution, that they are entitled to use the public library service free from worry and that their use will not be reported. It is the legal duty of all councils under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 to provide a public library service for anyone wanting to use it.

6/ How people who use the service are identified/vetted as asylum seekers.

There is no requirement to identify or vet anyone's legal status in order for them to use the public library service.

7/ Information to understand purposes of links between Barnsley Council and the organisation Barnsley Borough of Sanctuary, and the senior Barnsley Council officer/s and councillors accountable/involved. Appreciate copy of the organisational structure of Barnsley Borough of sanctuary held by Barnsley council. Information showing how approval from Barnsley council was obtained for use of the words "Barnsley Borough of Sanctuary".

In hosting the Migration Response Group, Barnsley Council works across the whole Barnsley community and voluntary sector. This Response Group allows for delegates to share non-confidential information which may be of use to a range of service providers.

The Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary structure chart is not held by Barnsley Council.

No approval is required from Barnsley Council to use the words 'Barnsley Borough of Sanctuary'.

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8/ List of support groups allied/part of the City of Sanctuary organisation that the council deal with and for what purposes.

We do not currently attend any support groups provided by the City of Sanctuary.

9/ Details of any lobbying by City of Sanctuary organisation/associated groups. (For clarity this is any approaches requesting involvement/endorsement of Barnsley Council and/or use of council controlled/taxpayer resources).

The Barnsley Borough City of Sanctuary have successfully applied for funding as detailed below,

£500 Supporting Unity and Inclusion to support the Celebrating our Communities event in November 2024

£249 for costs related to the Flavours of Christmas event in December 2024

£680 Supporting Unity and Inclusion to hold a series of events as part of the Refugee Week in June 2025

£720 for costs relating to the Flavours of Christmas event December 2025

10/ Information on Barnsley Council plans and costings for taking on other initiatives and endorsing charters from City of Sanctuary/allied organisations.

Please read in conjunction with the response to question 1. Whilst there are no current plans in place within the Public Health & Communities Directorate for initiatives or charters from the City of Sanctuary, some initiatives could include such costs whilst delivering services to meet the needs of all Barnsley residents.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the way the Directorate has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. Please clearly mark your correspondence 'Complaint' and address it to:

Barnsley MBC
Information Requests Team
PO Box 634
Barnsley
S70 9GG
email: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

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PO Box 634, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 9GG

Customer Services Team
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Email: <http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>

Kind regards,

Information Requests Team, Barnsley MBC

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