



**Information Governance Team**

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02 October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

**Request ID: FOI644411765**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Social Services data recording system.

You have requested the following information:

**1a. What is the name of your current provider for your data management recording system for your Children Social Services?**

System C.

**1b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

No.

**2a. Does your current Children Social Services data system allow for 'Application Programming Interface' (API) i.e. allowing two or more computer programmes to communicate with each other?**

Yes.

**2b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

Yes, however it is not included in the current contract.

**3a. According to your own recording system data, for the last 5 years and on a year by year basis, what has been your referral rate into Children Social Services Department?**

Childrens:

Referral rates are submitted annually to the DfE in the Children in Need census.

Published figures to 2022/23 and provisional figures for 2023/24 are as follows:

			Coventry							
			2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
C1.01	Referrals	Number	5,433	5,923	5,660	5,382	5,754	4,987	4,925	4,505
C1.02	Rate per 10,000 children	Rate	709	763	717	675	712	653	645	560

3b.

**Similarly regarding referral rate into Adult Social Services Department?**

The information you requested falls under the exemption(s) in Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relates to ‘information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.’

The exemption applies as the information is published and publicly available to view by accessing the following webpage:

[Microsoft Power BI](#)

**4a. Over the last 5 years and on a year by year basis, how many registered Social Workers have resigned /left your Children Social Services Dept, and also Adult Social Services Dept,**

Leavers	Adults	Children
2020_21	4	57
2021_22	22	62
2022_23	20	78
2023_24	21	48
2024_date	18	38

4b. how many new permanent registered Social

Workers have been recruited during the same year on year period for each Dept?

Starters	Adults	Children
2020_21	14	79
2021_22	25	96
2022_23	24	81
2023_24	17	78
2024_date	11	32

**5a. Are you currently researching the use of artificial intelligence /learning software linked to your Children Social Services data recording system / processes?**

Yes.

**5b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

We are researching.

**6. If yes to Q5, is this via an internal or an external company?**

Children’s Social Care – External.

Adult Social Care - Internal.

**7a. Are you already currently actively using a form of artificial intelligence / learning software with regards to Children Social Services data recording / processes?**

No.

**7b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

Not currently actively using.

**8a. If yes to Q7a, in what areas/capacity is this currently being used?**

Not applicable.

**8b. Similarly if yes to Adult Social Services?**

Not applicable.

**9. If yes to Q8, is this via an external commission /and who?**

Not applicable.

**10. If currently not actively researching or using any artificial intelligence / learning software in relation to Social Services Departments (Children's or Adults), does your Local Authority anticipate that they will be looking to explore such technology and innovations in the near future?**

Not applicable.

**11. Would your Local Authority ever consider acting as a pilot Local Authority with such technology and specifically linked to your Social Services Department?**

Possibly

**12a. What was the initial cost for you to buy your current data recording system for Children Social Services?**

**12b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

For Questions 12a and 12b, it is confirmed that the Council does hold information pursuant to your request. However, it is our view that the information is exempt from disclosure under Section 43(2) – Commercially Sensitive Information. Section 43(2) exempts information from disclosure where disclosure of that information would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

It is the Council's position that the third-party providers and its own commercial interests would be prejudiced and/or would be likely to be prejudiced by the disclosure of the requested information.

Once the information is disclosed this means that it will be in the public domain and it could not only be used by the requester but also any other providers in a similar market.

Arguments in favour of disclosure.

- Promote accountability and transparency for the Council's decisions and in its spending of public money.
- Assist the public to understand and challenge our decisions.
- Inform the public of the activities carried out on their behalf, allowing for more user involvement and collaborative decision making.
- Enable the public to better scrutinise the public monies spent

Arguments against disclosure.

- There is a public interest in allowing public authorities to withhold information which if disclosed, would reduce providers' ability to compete in a commercial environment.
- The successful providers operate in a competitive market. If prejudicing the commercial interests of the successful providers in the market would distort competition in that market, this would not be in the public interest.
- Disclosure of information may cause unwarranted reputational damage or loss of confidence in the Council.
- Revealing information such as a pricing mechanism can be detrimental to a provider's commercial interest. If an organisation has knowledge of a provider's business model, it can exploit this for its own commercial interest. This would also have a detrimental impact on the Council on other contracts and procurements by distorting the market, for the reasons stated above.

Having considered the arguments for and against disclosure, the Council has decided that the public interest in this case is best served by maintaining the exemption under section 43(2) FOIA and by not disclosing the information requested.

The decision to withhold the information requested is therefore upheld on the basis that Section 43(2) in relation to commercially sensitive information has been applied correctly

**13. After the 'initial cost' for your data recording system, what was the breakdown of your year on year expenditure for your data recording system e.g. such as Maintenance, Support or Training fees?**

The information you requested falls under the exemption(s) in Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relates to 'information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means.'

The exemption applies as the information is published and publicly available to view by accessing the Council website, please use the following link:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/contractsregister>

For annual costs, you can view our Open Data information on our website from 2017 onwards, which shows the name of the software provider and the total sum:

[https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/818/spending\\_over\\_500](https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/818/spending_over_500)

**14a. How long have you used your current data recording system for Children Social Services?**

The Council originally contracted to use the software in September 2008. Whilst we do not have the exact date in our records, the system commenced its live use in 2009.

**14b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

We presume this question is asking for how long we have used our current adults social care system and so we have provided the following answer on that basis. The Council original contract to use the software commenced in December 2009. Whilst we do not have the exact date in our records, the system commenced in live use in 2013.

**15a. How long are you contracted to use your current Children's Social Services data recording system?**

Until 2028.

## **15b. Is this the case regarding Adult Social Services too?**

Until November 2026.

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

**Information Governance**