

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Reference: | FOI.9631.22 |
| Subject: | Bluestone |
| Date of Request: | 15 August 2022 |

Requested:

Could you please advise how much Hywel Dda Health board paid Bluestone for the hire of the resort during the Covid crisis. Information is requested in the following format please

1. Costs associated with rental hire of the Bluestone resort
2. Costs associated with setting up inside and then subsequent removal of all equipment
3. Costs per patient treated
4. Can you also give the reasoning behind the selection of Bluestone over the use of leisure centres and copies of supporting information (electronic minutes etc are suitable) Also, did the Pembrokeshire County Council pay towards the hiring of Bluestone.

Response:

As the information requested from Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) relates to third parties, the UHB considers that under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), Section 43 applies, as answering would be prejudicial to their commercial interests. Section 43(2) exempts information, disclosure of which would or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person, in this case the provider listed above. Commercial interests may be prejudiced where disclosure would, or would be likely to:

- Weaken a company's position in a competitive environment by revealing market sensitive information or information of potential usefulness to its competitors
- Damage a company's business reputation or the confidence that customers/users, suppliers or investors may have in it.

This exemption is qualified; therefore, even if information falls within Section 43, public authorities must then apply the public interest test set out in Section 2(2)(b).

The information can only be withheld if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

In favour of disclosure: There is a public interest in transparency and in the accountability of public funds. Furthermore, it is in the public's interest that public funds be used effectively and that public sector bodies obtain the best value for money when contracting for the provision of services. Private sector bodies engaging in commercial activities with the public sector must expect some information about those activities to be disclosed.

Against Disclosure: Disclosure of this information could cause direct harm to the third party provider as the costs associated with the Field Hospital are under direct scrutiny as the total costs associated with the pandemic have been well publicised and criticised by many parties. Any conclusions drawn about the expenditure without a full understanding of the contract details and context behind the expenditure could cause reputable damage to the provider's reputation. The

COVID pandemic was a unique scenario which we have not previously experienced and so the sharing of costings, contract details and logistics could impact fair negotiation opportunities should there be a need for the re-introduction of field hospitals for any purpose in the future.

Decision:- The UHB has considered the views of the relevant third party and considers that it is in the public interest to provide the requested information, showing the UHB's commitment to openness and transparency. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a matter of high publicity and has attracted attention from the public, along with opinion, both positive and negative towards the need for Field Hospitals and the speed at which they were assembled. Should there be a future need for the rise installation of Field Hospitals the UHB could use lessons learnt and experience to benefit any future negotiations, there should be no reason why the chance of future requirements should impact the disclosure of the requested information. It is therefore the UHB's opinion that it is within the public's interest to have the UHB's expenditure on field hospitals disclosed and accessible for review. The responses to your questions are therefore set out below:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) confirms that the total costs for the rent and hire agreements for Bluestone was £6,182,900.00.
2. The UHB confirms that the total cost for the setting up of Bluestone Field Hospital was £2,310,600.00 and the decommission costs were £1,858,000.00.
3. The UHB confirms that the cost of treatment per patient was £143,729.00.
4. When selecting sites for the Field Hospitals, the Local Authority were tasked with presenting suitable available locations for consideration. Discussions and decision making around the Field Hospitals was taken within the UHB's gold command, committees and Board meetings. All documentation relating to site selection and the installation and decommissioning of the Field Hospitals is recorded within the minutes and papers of the relevant UHB meetings. As a result, the UHB has applied a section 21 exemption of the FOIA to the information being requested, as this is already accessible within the public domain. For ease, a hyperlink directing you to one of the sets of papers which references why Bluestone was selected has been provided: [Bundle Public Board 16 April 2020 \(nhs.wales\)](#)

The UHB can confirm that Pembrokeshire County Council did not contribute any funds towards Ysbyty Enfys Carreg Las.