

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.2701.20
<b>Subject:</b>	Paid Trade Union activity
<b>Date of Request:</b>	11 March 2020

**Requested:**

1. How much time off with pay did Hywel Dda provide to Trade Union officials under “dedicated time” agreements during 19/20? 18/19? And 17/18? Can the Health Board indicate the split given to each individual trade union in each County? (It would be useful to have this in financial amounts and number of hours agreed)
2. How many accredited Trade Union officials are reported to the Health Board and recognised by the Health Board by union and location?
3. How many staff are employed by Hywel Dda on behalf of named trade unions. I.e. Does Hywel Dda allow adverts under its branding and terms and conditions to staff who are funded by trade unions?
4. Does the Health Board fund any retired Trade Union members / officials or give them access to Trade Union facilities?
5. Does the Health Board openly publish this data in the public domain? How is it scrutinised internally / externally?

**Response:**

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with all of the information requested as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the “appropriate limit” as stated in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The “appropriate limit” represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours (or 2 ½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the delay in providing a response, not all of the information is easily accessible. Therefore, in order to provide you with the information that was held at the time of your request, the UHB would need to undertake a manual search of UHB systems, to identify any information that would fulfil your request.

Additionally, the UHB’s Oracle database system only retains information for the previous 26 months. Consequently, a manual search of financial records would need to be undertaken to identify the information requested for the financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19, as this information is no longer recorded centrally. Furthermore, to provide the information for question 1 broken down by Trade Union would also require a manual search of records as the information is not recorded in this manner.

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), which provides an exemption from a public authority’s obligation to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the appropriate limit.

However, under Section 16 of the FoIA, we are required as a public authority, to provide advice and assistance so far as it is reasonable, to individuals who have made a request under FoIA. Therefore, we are able to provide the information currently available, as below.

Prior to April 2021, support for dedicated time off for Trade Union officials was agreed by each Local Partnership Forum, following conversations with representatives at the beginning of a financial year, linked with available resource.

In addition to dedicated time off, all accredited Trade Union Representatives are afforded paid time away from their workplace to support staff as per the Time Off and Facilities Agreement.

1. The UHB provides, within the table overleaf, the total amounts paid for Trade Union officials for dedicated time, by locality, for the financial years 2019/20 to 2020/21 and 2021/22 to 28 September 2021.

Locality	2019/20 Actual spend	2020/21 Actual spend	2021/22 Budget allocation
Carmarthenshire	£23,419.62	£27,067.78	£60,020
Ceredigion	£14,652.81	£761.06	£21,181
Pembrokeshire	£5,983.83	£43,772.56	£49,671
Total	£44,056.26	£71,601.40	£130,872

Please note, the information provided for 2019/20 and 2020/21 is where money was allocated to service budgets to support trade union officer release time and been taken off the financial management system. Where this money was not drawn down it would show on the table. For 2021/22 the figures are the allocation available which is held centrally in Workforce & OD for draw down and not what has actually been used by services to date.

Also note this breakdown is based on the county in which the Trade Union representative is primarily based. However, Trade Union representatives may support employees on a Health Board wide basis across the three (3) counties of Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion.

2. The UHB confirms that as part of a review in April 2021, the Partnership Forum Terms of Reference and Time off and Facilities Agreement were refreshed. Therefore, the UHB provides, within the table below, the number of individuals that were recognised as accredited Trade Union Representatives, by Union, at this time. The UHB is unable to provide the locations, as not all representatives cover a geographical location and provide a service to Union members across the whole of the UHB's geographical area.

