

Reference:	FOI.12571.23
Subject:	Stradey Park Hotel
Date of Request:	4 September 2023

Requested:

1. Could you please tell me when you, as an organisation serving the community of Carmarthenshire, were informed that the decision had been made to place asylum seekers in Stradey Park Hotel, Llanelli and who informed you?
2. How many times (including dates) were you informed of this? (formally / informally)?
3. Were you asked for your views as to the suitability of the site for purpose and if so, what were your responses?
 - a. If you submitted your views, what was the response you received back?

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) considers the application of exemption Section 36(2)(c) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) in relation to question 3 of your request. This states that information being considered under this exemption, would or would be likely to, in the reasonable opinion of the UHB's qualified person, prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. In the case of the UHB, the qualified person is the Chief Executive.

The UHB considers that the disclosure of the requested information, would or would be likely to inhibit the effectiveness of the UHB's decision making and the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation between the UHB and its partner organisations. As a public authority, the UHB has an effective risk management process in place and requires the discretion to assess risks posed and prioritise them thereafter.

This exemption is qualified; therefore, even if information falls within Section 36 of the FoIA, public authorities must 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.

All communication providing views and opinion were submitted collectively, as a result, the UHB sought the opinions of Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) and Dyfed Powys Police (DPP) for consideration as part of the public interest test, who consented to the disclosure of the information relating to question 3.

Therefore, the UHB considers that the public interest in disclosing the information is greater than the interest in withholding it. It believes that there is wider established public interest in the Board's ability to make decisions on the public's health, safety and care provisions of its communities and as such, the Section 36 exemption has not been applied and the decision has been taken to release the information requested.

1. The UHB confirms that it's Executive Director of Primary, Community and Long Term Care was invited to attend an emergency meeting co-ordinated by CCC on 17 April 2023, at which point the UHB was made aware of the intention to place asylum seekers in Stradey Park Hotel, Llanelli.

2. The UHB was informed on 17 April 2023 and weekly meetings were held, led by CCC, working collaboratively with DPP and the UHB.
3. The UHB contributed to a joint communication, led by CCC, setting out the views of Partner Organisations to the Home Office. A copy of the letter has been provided, which details the collaborative views, and was issued by CCC to the Home Office, at Attachment 1.

Should you require any further information, and as CCC are leading on communications, we suggest that you contact their Freedom of Information team. Contact details have been provided below:-

Information & Data Protection Officer, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall,
Carmarthen, SA31 1JP or by email foia@carmarthenshire.gov.uk