

Freedom of Information Act Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

Please provide a list of all legal firms, consultancies and mediation services that the trust has paid money to in the last 12 months.

Please provide a short description of the work paid for, the organisation's name, and the beginning and end date of any work carried out.

The Trust can confirm the following information is held and provides the table below with firm names and relevant dates:

Firm	Reason		Start	End
Capsticks	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Jul-24	Sep-24
DAC Beachcroft	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Ongoing	Ongoing
DAC Beachcroft	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Oct-23	Ongoing
DAC Beachcroft	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Nov-24	Mar-25
DAC Beachcroft	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Dec-24	Ongoing
DAC Beachcroft	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Jan-25	Ongoing
DAC Beachcroft	Redacted – exemption 42 and 40(2)		Aug-23	Ongoing

Section 42 – Legal Professional Privilege

This exemption applies to information that consists of confidential communications between a professional legal adviser and their client made for the purpose of giving or receiving legal advice, or in contemplation of litigation. The reasons for engaging these legal firms relate to legal advice and proceedings, and disclosure would breach legal professional privilege.

Section 40(2) – Personal Information

This exemption applies because some information could identify individuals involved in legal proceedings, inquests, or sensitive matters. Disclosure of such information would contravene the data protection principles under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, specifically regarding the fair and lawful processing of personal data.

Public Interest Test (Section 42)

Section 42 is a qualified exemption and requires consideration of the public interest. The Trust recognises the general public interest in openness and transparency. However, there is a stronger public interest in maintaining the confidentiality of legal communications to ensure organisations can receive full and frank legal advice and to protect the integrity of legal proceedings.

On balance, the Trust considers that the public interest in withholding this information outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Therefore, while we have disclosed the names of the legal firms and the timeframes of engagement, we have withheld the specific descriptions of the work under Section 42 and Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Requests for an internal review should be submitted within 40 working days from the date of this response, and should be addressed to d.wraith@nhs.net.

If you remain dissatisfied after the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>