FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – 549/18

Dear Sir/Madam

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is provided below.

Request/Response:

Shelter would like to request information from your authority’s housing department, under the provisions of the above Act. We would like to request copies of all your authority’s documents currently in use relating to how housing officers assess whether a household’s last settled accommodation was affordable for them, when they present in need of housing advice and assistance.

1. Please can you send us copies of all documents currently used by your housing officers to conduct these housing affordability assessments (such as guidance notes, briefings, training sessions and template forms). If any of these documents are already in the public domain, please can you send a link to where we can retrieve these exact documents?

These documents could include (but not be limited to):

- Guidance for housing officers on how to carry out affordability assessments
- Training materials on how to assess affordability
- Template income and expenditure forms
- Details of what costs are regarded as essential living needs.
- Costs of essential living needs, for different family types, used in affordability assessments

Answer: Rutland County Council would send an applicant to Citizens Advice Rutland for a full financial assessment as we commission them to deliver our financial debt advice service. We do however get applicants to complete the attached budgeting sheet as a guideline. The team have not had specific training.

2. If not included in the above documents, please can you send us the following information:

a. A list of items that are regarded as essential living needs, for the purpose of assessing affordability.

Answer: These are highlighted in bold in the attached sheet
b. A list of costs of essential living needs, for different family types, that are used for the purpose of assessing affordability

Answer: Detailed in the attachment.

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If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please contact the Head of Corporate Governance, Rutland County Council, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House, Water lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700

Yours faithfully

FOI Administrator
Corporate Support Team, Rutland County Council