



Ministry  
of Defence

Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2HB

Ref: FOI2016/11624

Reply to: [REDACTED]

30 November 2016

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 29 November 2016 requesting the following information:

*“How much has been paid in Contribution in Lieu of Council Tax (CILOCT) by Service personnel in Northern Ireland, in each of the last five years and broken down by local government area.”*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act).

Section 12 of the FOI Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

It would take considerable time to just get the CILOCT information. The time and cost it would take to do this would take us over the cost allowed under the FOIA limit, therefore Section 12 applies to this part of the request. Furthermore it would not be possible to provide any breakdown by local government area, which would require detailed analysis and expertise that would need to be externally sourced. The FOI Act does not require the department to create data in order to release it under the act, and therefore the information sought by the second part of this request is exempt as it is not held by the MOD.

However, under Section 16 of the FOI Act, public authorities are required to provide the requester with advice and assistance especially where a request for information exceeds the appropriate cost limit. In the case of this request, you may wish to know that a similar question was raised recently in Parliament and the answer was published online on the parliament.uk website and can be viewed here:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-11-21/54053/>

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review

by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence People Secretariat