FOI Request
Lowest & Highest Wages, Zero Hours Contracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>RSN16798</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Request Stage</td>
<td>Request / Internal Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Received</td>
<td>08/01/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Responded</td>
<td>10/01/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure</td>
<td>Part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemptions / Exceptions</td>
<td>S.40(2) – Personal Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Documents</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Request

I am requesting you release the following data:

1) What is the lowest wage paid by Merseytravel to an employee per annum, and what is the job title of this employee? (for example "Security Guard", I am NOT requesting an employee's name)

2) What is the highest wage paid by Merseytravel to an employee per annum, and what is the job title of this employee? (for example "Security Guard", I am NOT requesting an employee's name)

3) Are any employees of Merseytravel working on a zero hours contract?

3) (i) If applicable, what is the lowest wage paid to said employee(s) on zero hours contracts per annum, and what is their job title? (for example "Security Guard", I am NOT requesting an employee's name)

3) (ii) If applicable, what is the highest wage paid to said employee(s) on zero hours contracts per annum, and what is their job title? (for example "Security Guard", I am NOT requesting an employee's name)

Response

Thank you for your recent request made under the Freedom of Information Act. Please find Merseytravel’s response below.

1) What is the lowest wage paid by Merseytravel to an employee per annum, and what is the job title of this employee? (for example "Security Guard", I am NOT requesting an employee's name)

   £15,421 - £16,361. Job titles: Cleaner, Admin Clerk, Apprentice, Spaceport Attractions Assistant. This is the Real Living Wage foundation rate.

2) What is the highest wage paid by Merseytravel to an employee per annum, and what is the job title of this employee? (for example "Security Guard", I am NOT requesting an employee's name)

   £155,339. Job title: Chief Executive and Director General

3) Are any employees of Merseytravel working on a zero hours contract?

   No

Please note that the exact salary has not been provided for Q1. Personal information is exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as disclosure would allow the possibility of the identification of a living individual(s), thereby breaching the Data Protection Act 1998.
I believe that this information relates to an individual’s private life and consider that there would be no expectation that their information would be disclosed to a third party outside of the process.

I do not regard disclosure as constituting the ‘fair and lawful’ processing of personal data, meaning that its release would therefore breach the First Principle of the Data Protection Act 1998, neither do I believe that any of the conditions of Schedule 2 or Schedule 3 are met.

When considering this response I have had regard to the Information Commissioner’s published guidance on requests for personal data about employment, which state:

[50] There is a legitimate public interest in knowing how public money is apportioned across an organisation, which includes salaries at lower levels. In order to meet this interest it may be sufficient to disclose the advertised salary range for these posts.

The Commissioner’s guidance also states:

[51] Exceptional circumstances are needed to justify the disclosure of exact salaries when they are not routinely published. In such cases there may be additional public interest factors that outweigh any detriment to the individuals concerned. These exceptional circumstances could include situations where:

- there are current controversies or credible allegations;
- there is a lack of safeguards against corruption;
- normal procedures have not been followed;
- the individual in question is paid significantly more than the usual salary for their post; or
- the individual or individuals concerned have significant control over setting their own or others’ salaries.

In the case of Q1, I do not believe any of these exceptional circumstances apply. The response therefore includes the salary range of the relevant posts.

In respect of Q2, this information is published in Merseytravel’s Statement of Accounts, and there is therefore no issue with its release.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right under the Act to ask for an internal review, which should be addressed to:

Mrs Julie Watling
Legal, Democratic Services & Procurement Manager
Merseytravel
PO Box 1976
Liverpool
L69 3HN
julie.watling@merseytravel.gov.uk
If you are not content with the result of your internal review, you also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner, whose address is

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire SK9 5AF
www.ico.gov.uk