

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA020118-9069

7 February 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 1 January 2018. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

Please could you provide a detailed breakdown of the costs involved in the New Year Fireworks event that took place in central London by the London Eye at 0:00 on Monday 1st January 2018? As I understand it, most of the costs involved are funded by the Greater London Authority and consequently, the taxpayer. Whilst I agree the display was an overwhelming success as always and all British people can be proud of it, I feel it is important to note the costs involved in the production of the event and how much tax revenue is deemed appropriate to be spent.

Please find attached the information we hold within the scope of your request.

The total cost of the event in 2017 is £3,109,151. With net ticketing revenue and other income of £866,233 the Greater London Authority expenditure is £2,242,918. Please note final figures are still to be confirmed as we are awaiting final invoices for some costs elements. Please see table below.

EXPENDITURE	£
Production and programme, including pyrotechnics, lighting & sound; infrastructure and site equipment, toilets, barriers, fencing, structures, rigging and signage; permissions and fees, traffic management, cleansing, insurance, crowd control, stewarding, health & safety; business & resident liaison and management, ticketing management; staffing, administration, creative development, pre-event and on-site project management.	2,881,894
Ticket operator ticket sales commission, and ticket collection booths operation	139,977
Marketing	87,280
TOTAL	3,109,151

I am unable to provide a breakdown of these costs for reasons of commercial interest. Please see Annex A for an explanation of this exemption.

We are pleased that you consider the event to be a great success and something British people can be proud of it. In this context although the GLA expenditure is significant, the economic benefits as a result of the event are considerable. With more than 100,000 ticket holders from London, across the UK and abroad, this translates into a multi-million pound boost to the capital's visitor economy.

In addition, the national and worldwide media coverage of the event brings significant media value and promotion of London. In 2017 the event was seen on BBC TV and other media by an audience of more 12 million, and many more across the globe.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA020118-9069.

Yours sincerely

Brian Oakaby
Events for London

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>

Annex 1 - Exemption provisions

Section 43: Commercial interests

43 (2) *Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).*

How these exemptions apply to this information

Section 43(2) provides that information can be withheld from release if its release under this Act would or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person including the public authority.

The disclosure of a detailed breakdown of costs at the present time would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the GLA, particularly in relation to the procurement of services and sponsorship in connection with the New Year's Eve event.

Publication of this information prior to the contracts for services being let and sponsorship being secured may prevent the GLA from achieving the best value in a tender process.

The release of this information would also prejudice the commercial interests of Jack Morton Worldwide Limited, the event production company contracted to provide the display on 31 December 2017. This financial information could be used by their competitors to gain an advantage in future negotiations or bids in which they might be competing.

Public interest test

It is necessary to consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption and withholding the more detailed breakdown of costs is greater than releasing the information.

The GLA recognises the legitimate public interest in the release of information relating to the financial arrangements for the New Year's Eve celebrations and fireworks display.; the public interest being met by the GLA demonstrating that it made the decision in the best interests of London and achieved value for money doing so.

In balancing the public interest in disclosure, we consider the greater good or benefit to the community as a whole if the information is released or not. The 'right to know; must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and serve the best interests of the public.

In this case, it is felt that the public interest is best served by ensuring that the GLA achieves value for money in securing contracts and sponsorship for the New Year's Eve celebrations.

The public interest would not be met if the GLA released information that would result in the expenditure of further public money. Disclosure by the GLA would be likely to have a detrimental effect on the procurement of services provided by third party contractors and on potential sponsorship secured for the New Year's Eve events.