

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

[REDACTED]
(By email)

Our Ref: MGLA150221-5935

2 March 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 13 February 2021. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

Please may I request:

- 1. The name of the company or companies that were engaged or paid by the GLA / Mayor to put on the New Year's fireworks display that took place at midnight New Year's Day 2021.*
- 2. The total cost spent on said fireworks display, broken down by company if more than one was engaged.*
- 3. Copies of all correspondence about said fireworks display between any employee/member/the Mayor of the GLA and the aforementioned companies and/or any other GLA employees/members/the Mayor.*

If part 3 of this request is too wide for the costs limit, then limit the request to emails about the contents of the fireworks display and messaging to be included within it.

You narrowed your request on 13 February as follows:

Please limit my final request to information held by the Mayor's office and not any other team nor information held on the GLA's behalf by any external organisation.

Our response is as follows:

Please find below the information we hold within the scope of your request:

As per our previous response, the companies engaged were: Jack Morton Worldwide, On The Sly, Titanium Fireworks, Durham Marengi Lighting, Signify and SKYMAGIC.

The reconciled final figure for NYE 2020 is £1,412,540.46 However, we are unable to provide you with a full breakdown of spend by recipient. This information is exempt under section 43 (2) (Commercial interests) of the FOIA. Please see Annex A at the end of this letter for details.

The Mayor's Office team has conducted searches and has not located information within the scope of your request.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference MGLA150221-5935.

Yours sincerely


Information Governance Officer

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 A Section 43(2) – Prejudice to commercial interests and Public Interest Test

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.

I have considered the potential harm that could be caused by disclosure.

The procurement for the next five years is planned to happen over the next 3 to 6 months.

Disclosure of the requested information at this time would weaken the position of the GLA at a vital moment in a competitive environment and prejudice the commercial interests of the GLA. Companies need to be able to bid competitively and disclosure of market-sensitive information prior to the contracts for services being let would give bidders a commercial advantage over the authority. This would be likely to prevent the GLA from achieving the best value in a tender process.

Public Interest Test

Factors favouring disclosure – Disclosure of the requested information would allow transparency in understanding how public money is spent by the GLA and would facilitate accountability. The requested information would demonstrate the GLA's commitment to ensuring value for money.

Factors favouring non-disclosure – The public interest would not be met if the GLA released information that would result in the expenditure of more public money / failure to achieve best value for the public.

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 'right to know' must be balanced against the need to enable effective government and to serve the best interests of the public.

The GLA recognises the legitimate public interest in the release of information relating to expenditure and best value for the taxpayer. The public interest will be met in part by the eventual publication of all GLA spend over £250 at <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/spending-money-wisely/our-spending>

However, the public interest would not be met if the GLA released information that would result in the expenditure of further public money and it is important that the GLA protects its own commercial interests.

In view of this, it is felt that the public interest is best served by ensuring that the GLA achieves value for money in securing contracts for the New Year's Eve celebrations. The public interest lies in favour of preserving the commercial interests of the GLA by withholding the requested information at this time; and withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure.