

110/14

REQUEST

How many departments within the council are involved when there is a public health funeral/national assistance burial/welfare funeral?

What is the name of the staff member and departments involved?

For each staff member involved in ensuring that the funeral takes place, what is his/her job title and/or duties they are responsible for?

At what stage are efforts made to trace the next of kin?

What is the name of the staff member/external contact who is responsible for this?

Are there any external companies, firms, organisations, or people that are involved in the public health funeral process? (Excluding family and friends of the deceased)

What is their name and email, and/or telephone number (if available).

Could you also kindly send me any information you may hold relating to public or welfare funerals and persons who have died with no known next of kin since 1/11/13 to the day of your reply.

Please include:

1. full names of deceased persons,
2. dates of death,
3. marital status,
4. maiden surnames of married or widowed females,
5. dates of birth or ages at death,
6. last known addresses,
7. estimated value of estates,
8. date(s) when the information was passed (or information that is about to be or likely to be passed) to the QLTR Offices, Treasury Solicitor, NUHU, Farrer & Co, The Crown Solicitor or the Coroner.
9. If information has been sent to the coroner, please include the name of the coroner and their jurisdiction.

RESPONSE

I refer to your request for information in relation to persons dying with no known next- of-kin and would inform you that the Authority holds the information requested, but is unable to provide part of this information because it is exempt under section 31(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act (Law Enforcement) and is therefore being withheld.

Section 31(1) states that Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice —

- (a) the prevention or detection of crime

We are applying this exemption because the release of personal details of a deceased individual with no known relatives and no will may make the assets of that person vulnerable and disclosure of the information may lead to the commission of offences and cause loss to the unsecured estates.

The Authority has applied the public interest test and determined that in part of the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The first part of your request we will be able to provide the answers as below.

How many departments within the Council are involved when there is a public health funeral / national assistance burial / welfare funeral?

Answer: One

What is the name of the staff member and departments involved?

Answer: Martin Court, Katie Wesley-Smith and Wendy Townsend - Pollution & Environmental Control, Street Scene

For each staff member involved in ensuring that the funeral takes place, what is his / her job title and / or duties they are responsible for:

*Answer: Martin Court – Senior Environmental Health Officer: Overseeing duties as outlined in sec 46 of Public Health Act 1984 and internal standard operating procedure.
Katie Wesley-Smith – Technical Officer: Overseeing duties as outlined in sec 46 of Public Health Act 1984 and internal standard operating procedure.
Wendy Townsend – Admin Support: Administration of paperwork and compliance with internal operating procedure.*

At what stage are efforts made to trace next of kin?

Answer: Immediate and throughout

What is the name of the staff member / external contact who is responsible for this?

Answer: Katie Wesley-Smith and Wendy Townsend

Are there any external companies, firms, organisations, or people that are involved in the public health process? (excluding family and friends of the deceased):

Answer: Paskalls Funeral Directors / Essex County Registrar / Essex Coroners / NHS – North East Essex / Essex County Council Guardians

What is their name and email / or telephone number if available:

*Answer: Paskalls Funeral Directors – 01206 396 709
Essex County Council - 08457 430 430 / <http://www.essex.gov.uk>*

The section that is classed as exempt are the questions relating to the information you require regarding names, dates of death etc. (namely those numbered 1 to 9).