

## **FOI 39/2015**

### **REQUEST**

I am interested in the staffing of the front desk/reception at the Town Hall.

(i) How may staff spend some or all of their time staffing reception?

(ii) What does (i) equate to in terms of full-time staff i.e. when summed what is the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts?

(iii) Would you expect have 5 people sat behind the desk at any one time? I witnessed this for approximately 40 minutes a few days ago during which time interaction with the public was less than 5 minutes in total for the five staff concerned.

(iv) Is it permissible, encouraged or discouraged for staff behind the desk to be drinking tea/coffee and idly chatting amongst themselves? Would it not be more professional for breaks to be taken in a designated area away from public view?

(v) The five staff mentioned in (iii) above were all women. Why is this?

### **RESPONSE**

Our response to your recent FOI request is as follows:

i) Staff in the Visitor Information Centre in the Town Hall form part of the Customer and Support team in the Life Opportunities department and there are four permanent members of staff and one Apprentice who spend some or all of their time staffing this area.

These staff provide the main reception service for the Town Hall, as well as providing information and services for tourists and residents, for example relating to National Express and First Bus tickets and Senior Railcards. They are also responsible for manning the Princes Theatre Box Office.

ii) This equates to 2.98 full time equivalent staff, excluding the Apprentice position, who provide the above services 6 days a week.

iii) I can confirm that, as advised during the time of your visit, the five members of staff present were participating in a team meeting. These are held in the Visitor Information Centre to ensure that the service to members of the public can be maintained. This meeting involved two members of staff who ordinarily would not have been based in this area at that time.

iv) As the staff working in the Visitor Information Centre do not benefit from a back office area or have access to any staff rooms in the Town Hall, drinks are permitted to be consumed in this area.

v) The Council is an equal opportunities employer and selection for employment and promotion is on the basis of aptitude and ability. All recruitment is also carried out in accordance with the Council's agreed Recruitment and Selection Policy and Equality and Diversity Policy.