

FOI Reference Number: FOI/072/2425

Date: 14 May 2024

Thank you for your information request received by the Policy team at Mid and East Antrim Borough Council (MEABC) on 13th May 2024 which has been processed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your request:

'Under the Freedom of Information Act, I wish to request the following information:

- 1. How many instances of test purchasing vapes were carried out, to combat underage sales of vaping products?*
- 2. How many of these test purchases resulted in the sale of vapes/e-cigarette products to underage individuals?*
- 3. What is the £ cost of carrying out a single test purchase investigation?*

Please present this data annually for each of the below periods:

1st January 2023 > 22nd November 2023

1st January 2022 > 31st Dec 2022

1st January 2021 > 31st Dec 2021

1st January 2020 > 31st Dec 2020

1st January 2019 > 31st Dec 2019'

Our response:

This information is regarded as *held* for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please see the spreadsheet attached to this response as requested.

Please note that this information has also been presented in tabular form as Appendix 1 to this response to aid any future publication by MEABC.

Please quote the reference number FOI/072/2425 on any related communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of part of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within forty working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original email/letter, and should be sent by email to FOI@midandeantrim.gov.uk or by post to:

Policy Team,

The Braid,
1-29 Bridge Street,
Ballymena,
BT43 5EJ.

If you are not content with the outcome of an internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. You must make your complaint to the ICO within 40 working days of you receiving your response or the date of your last contact with the Council.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF.

Alternatively, a complaint may be made via the ICO website at:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

Please be advised that Mid and East Antrim Borough Council may release the response to this information request into the public domain via our website at:

<https://www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/>

If we publish our response to your request, your personal data will be removed to protect your privacy.

Appendix 1

	1/1/19 - 31/12/19	1/1/20 - 31/12/20	1/1/21 - 31/12/21	1/1/22 - 31/12/22	1/1/23 - 31/12/23
1. How many instances of test purchasing vapes were carried out, to combat underage sales of vaping products?	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	23	29
2. How many of these test purchases resulted in the sale of vapes/e cigarette products to underage individuals?	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	3	2
3. What is the cost of carrying out a single test purchase investigation?	N/A*	N/A*	N/A*	Information not held**	

N/A* - no data exists as the offence in relation to the sale of a vape product to an U18 was introduced in N Ireland on 1.02.2022

** Unable to calculate the cost of a single test purchase investigation due to the number of potential variables that could occur during the visit e.g. no sale / sale followed by follow up visits, interviews under Caution, service of fixed penalty notices etc.