

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 25–470

North East and North Cumbria ICB
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By Email

9 March 2026

Dear Applicant

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

Thank you for your request received on 16 February 2026 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Newcastle Gateshead, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley.

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

Your Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please could you provide the following details relating to your Integrated Care Board's public website:

1. The name of the current website provider (organisation name).
2. The start date and end date of the current website contract.
3. The total contract value (or annual value if the total is not available).
4. The procurement route used to appoint the supplier (e.g. framework, open tender).
5. The name and contact information of the person who manages the contract.

If any of this information is already publicly available, I would be grateful if you could direct me to the relevant source.

Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the information requested.

1. The current website provider is Cantarus Ltd.

2. The contract start date was 13 February 2024. This is an ongoing rolling contract.
3. We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the requested information. However, on this occasion, it is not possible to satisfy all elements of your request.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 contains a number of exemptions that allow a public authority to withhold certain information from release. Some of the requested information is exempt under s.43(2) of the FOIA2000 as disclosure is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of a person as defined by the Act. The s.43(2) exemption applies to question 3 in its entirety.

S.43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act protects against the disclosure of information where it would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of either a third party or the public authority itself. We are of the opinion the release of the specific details would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of both Cantarus Ltd and NENC ICB.

The Information Commissioners Office has established a multi criteria test for assessing whether a section 43(2) exemption is applicable to the requested information. The first criteria is to determine if the information relates to or could impact on a commercial activity, the second criteria is if the commercial activity is conducted in a competitive environment, and finally if that information is commercially sensitive.

The application of this exemption requires an examination of the public interest in disclosure in comparison as opposed to that in non-disclosure. This contract was awarded through a competitive tender process with 7 other companies taking part. It was awarded to Cantarus Ltd based on standard of work, pricing and support services offered. Releasing this information would impact the level of competition and also impact future web tenders where the price is the determining factor.

The factors in favour of disclosure would include:

- Transparency of functions; procurement and services to NHS.

Factors in favour of withholding the information are largely laid out in the explanation for the use of the exemption above but would include:

- Procurement processes would be impacted.
- Competitive disadvantage – releasing this information could prejudice future competitive tender.

To summarise, releasing the contract value could disadvantage Cantarus Ltd in the future if a competitor was aware of their pricing for public sector contracts. A competitor may look to undercut the pricing to ensure an NHS contract is added to their portfolio

After consideration of the above factors, we believe, on balance, the public interest lies in maintaining the exemption.

4. The procurement route used to appoint the supplier (e.g. framework, open tender). Government digital frameworks – G-Cloud 13 and Digital Outcomes 6, by a competitive tender.
5. The name and contact information of the person who manages the contract. Elaine Barclay, Public Relations Manager manages the contract.

Please direct all queries to Elaine Barclay using the ICB's generic mailbox nencicb-sun.reception@nhs.net marked for her attention. Alternatively, please telephone the ICB's Switchboard on 0191-512-8484.

In accordance with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, you should write to the Information Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your review, you do have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the ICB's complaints procedure.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or www.ico.org.uk.

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 www.legislation.gov.uk. This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance Support Officer

**Information Governance Support Officer
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**