



Derry City & Strabane  
District Council  
Comhairle  
Chathair Dhoire &  
Cheantar an tSratha Báin  
Derry Cittie & Stràbane  
Destrìck Cooncil

Ref: FOI / 5724

19<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Email:

Dear

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request Mayors Trip to Boston**

I refer to your FOI request and respond as follows:

### **Request**

1. Why Mayor Barr was procured a business class ticket to Boston? for a low-level government official, why wasn't Economy class procured?
2. Was there a special reason for this?
3. Who approved this request?
4. Was this trip approved at council level?
5. What was the purpose of the trip?
6. What was the value for money exercise carried out in relation to flights and accommodation for Mayor Barr, and was VFM at the forefront of council?
  - Please provide the 3 quotes that were sought as outlined within the local government standing financial instructions and VMF framework.
7. What was the total cost, end to end, of Mayor Barr's Trip to Boston.

#### **Derry**

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## **Response**

The Mayor was invited by Worcester State University to receive an Honorary Doctorate. Worcester State University covered the cost of an economy class return ticket from Dublin International Airport to Boston and covered accommodation and meals. The Mayor personally upgraded to business class and covered the cost herself. The only cost to Council was the Mayor's accommodation at the Hilton Dublin Airport Hotel on Monday 21st April 2025 at a cost of €204. The stay in the Hilton was to facilitate the Mayor's early flight to Boston from Dublin Airport. Driver accommodation costs of €167.75 were also incurred to facilitate an early return flight time.

The Council was not responsible for the booking of / procurement of flights, accommodations or other costs with the exception of the pre-flight and return flight accommodation costs.

We do not hold total costs for this trip.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have rights of review and appeal; these rights consist of two review processes.

Firstly, our internal review procedure is available by contacting:

John Kelpie  
Chief Executive  
Derry City and Strabane District Council  
98 Strand Road  
Derry BT48 7NN  
Tel: 028 71253253 or email: [john.kelpie@derrystrabane.com](mailto:john.kelpie@derrystrabane.com)

Secondly, you can appeal directly by contacting the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
CHESHIRE SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

I would however advise that the Information Commissioner has indicated that a review will not be undertaken unless the Council has first had an opportunity to re-consider its decision.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EL', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Ellen Cavanagh**  
**Lead Democratic Services and Improvement Officer**