

16 May 2024

**Our Ref: FOI 398**

## **Request**

We received your request on 12 May 2024 for the following information:

*"I am requesting information concerning the NIHE payment of retainers to local legal firms. I would like to know the total cost of retainer fees paid during the NIHE's last full financial year. A full list of legal firms retained and when the practice of retainer payments to legal firms began. I would prefer the information to be printed and sent either by email or post. Please let me know if there is a charge for this service. Thank you."*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

## **Our response**

NIHE do not pay retainer fees to solicitors. Under public procurement regulations, NIHE are obliged to advertise and award contracts to suppliers where we have an ongoing need for services. In relation to legal services, we run procurement exercises to form Panels of solicitors under various contracts to meet the specific needs of NIHE. For example:

- Land & Property Solicitors Panel
- Building Contracts Solicitors Panel
- Public Liability Solicitors Panel
- Procurements Solicitors Panel

As required, a firm from the Panel will be assigned a case and paid for services delivered in line with the terms of the contract.

This concludes our response.