

Ref. No: 2529
Date: 24th April 2026
Subject: IT Infrastructure

REQUEST and RESPONSE

1. **A list of server hardware currently in use, including manufacturer, model, and year of installation or purchase.**

2024

2. **A list of storage hardware (SAN/NAS) currently in use, including manufacturer, model, and year of installation or purchase.**

2024

3. **A list of networking equipment (switches, routers, firewalls, load balancers) currently in use, including manufacturer, model, and year of installation or purchase.**

Various installation have taken place over several years, bulk of it occurred in 2022/2023.

4. **For each item above, whether the equipment is currently covered by the original manufacturer's support/warranty, a third-party maintenance provider, or is unsupported.**

Server/SAN - Manufacturer's Warranty/Support
Network – Network maintenance contract with third-party

5. **The annual spend on hardware maintenance and support contracts for the categories listed above, for the most recent financial year.**

SAN/Server – This was purchased with five years supplier support/maintenance so no in year costs for 25/26.
Network – Approximately 60k

6. **The date(s) on which current hardware maintenance contracts are due for renewal.**

SAN/Server – Feb 2029
Network – March 2028

7. The name, job title, and contact email address of the person(s) responsible for IT infrastructure procurement and/or hardware maintenance contracts.

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For all queries requesting the manufacture and model of equipment which is used for key infrastructure, following a detailed review, Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust is applying Section 31(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as this information could be used as part of reconnaissance exercise to understand technologies used and in turn understand potential vulnerabilities to stage a cyber-attack.

This section provides a qualified exemption from disclosure where the release of information prejudices the prevention or detection of crime.

Application of Section 31(1)(a) FOIA – Prevention or Detection of Crime

Under Section 31(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, information is exempt from disclosure if releasing it would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. ICO guidance confirms that this exemption applies broadly, including to public authorities without direct law enforcement responsibilities. It can be used to withhold information that, if disclosed, would make the authority or others more vulnerable to criminal activity, for example, by revealing internal security procedures or cyber defence capabilities.

Freedom of Information disclosures are made to the public at large, not just the individual requester. Therefore, the Trust must consider the wider implications of releasing sensitive information. In this case, disclosure of the requested material could enable cyber criminals to assess the Trust's preparedness for a cyber-attack, potentially exposing vulnerabilities. Based on this risk, and in line with ICO guidance, the Trust has determined that Section 31(1)(a) applies and is therefore withholding the information to protect its systems and the public interest.