

PART A

Report to: Audit Committee
Date of Meeting 30 June 2014
Report of: Head of Democracy and Governance
Title: Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

1. **SUMMARY**

This is a half year report of requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

From 1 October 2013 until 31 March 2014 the Council received 269 requests all but 66 of which were replied to in the required time. A list of the requests is attached at appendix 1

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To note the contents of this report.

Contact Officer:

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Report approved by Managing Director

3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

3.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came fully into force on 1st January 2005.
As a public authority we are obliged to answer written requests for information under the Act within 20 working days

3.2 This report covers the periods 1 October 2013 until 31 March 2014.

- 3.3 In this period the Council recorded receiving 269 requests for information under the Act all but 66 were replied to within the statutory 20 working days.
- 3.4 The requests have been varied. Appendix 1 gives a brief summary of each request.
- 3.5 Unfortunately as with my previous report there are a number of requests that have not been replied to within the ambit of Revenues and Benefits. There are also a number that are IT related.
- 3.6 The Customer Service Centre Team Leaders continue to emphasise to departments the need to respond to requests within the statutory time frame. Human Resources have developed an E-Learning module on Freedom of Information which is available for staff.
- 3.7 The Mayor and Managing Director continue to receive a weekly list of all new FOI requests that are received.
- 3.8 Officers have still not received any benchmarking data as requested by the Committee last June, however the Customer Service Centre Team Leader has done some comparison work on the number of requests received both quarterly and yearly since the scheme has been in operation by the Council, and also where the requests have come from. This is attached as Appendix 2. It should be noted the steady rise in the number of requests received since 2005.

4.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Financial

The Shared Director of Finance comments that this report indicates that information is found using existing staff resources. If, in the future, the requests increase in number and/or complexity then it may become necessary to review this situation.

4.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that ongoing training continues to be provided across the council to ensure officers are aware of the Council's responsibilities under the Act

4.3 Staffing

Requests are currently being managed within existing resources

4.4 Accommodation

No implications

4.5 Equalities

No implications

4.6 Community Safety

No implications

4.7 Sustainability

No implications

4.8

Potential Risks

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Request not replied to within statutory time limit	2	2	4
Those risks scoring 9 or above are considered significant and will need specific attention in project management. They will also be added to the service's Risk Register.			

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of FOI requests October 2013 to March 2014

Appendix 2 – Comparison statistics

Background papers:

None