

PART A

Report to: Audit Committee
Date of Meeting 14 December 2015
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 April to 30 September 2015 the Council received 226 requests of which only 1 was replied to outside of the required time. A list of the requests is attached at appendix 1

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To note the contents of this report.

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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 April to 30 September 2015.

- 3.3 In this period the Council recorded receiving 226 requests for information under the Act of those only 1 was replied to outside of the statutory 20 working days.
- 3.4 The requests have been varied. Appendix 1 gives a brief summary of each request.
- 3.5 Unfortunately since the end of May 2014 the Council's CSM system Lagan which is used by services to log all FOI requests and under which the Customer Services Team Leader can run off reports has not been generating E-forms and it has not been possible to log any of the requests on Lagan. The Customer Services Team Leader has therefore set up a spreadsheet which is accessible for each departments Customer Liaison Officer to complete. This therefore relies on those officers filling in the spreadsheet and it should be noted that there are no recorded FOIs from Finance for this period. Officers have been reminded to complete the spreadsheet.
- 3.6 This Committee has previously asked for an update on progress with fixing the E-form issue. Unfortunately I am unable to report any progress.
- 3.7 Members will note the vast improvement across all service areas who have reported, but particularly Revenues and Benefits, in replying to requests within the statutory time scale..

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.			

Appendix

Appendix 1 – Summary of FOI requests April to September 2015

Background papers:

None