

PART A

Report to: Audit Committee
Date of Meeting 27 June 2016
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 2015 to 31 March 2016 the Council received 240 requests of which 20 were replied to outside of the required time, and a further 15 it is unclear of their status. 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 October 2015 to 31 March 2016.

- 3.3 In this period the Council recorded receiving 240 requests for information under the Act of those 20 were 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 from the end of May 2014 and during the whole of the period October to March 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 department's 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 FOI's from ICT for this period. Officers have been reminded to complete the spreadsheet. This is the reason why there are 15 noted where we have insufficient detail to confirm whether the request was responded to within the time.
- 3.6 The Lagan E-Forms are now working and have been since May. Customer Liaison Officers have been advised to start using Lagan again to log these requests. It is also intended to carry on with the spreadsheet as a back up.

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

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 October 2015 to March 2016

Background papers:

None