

Part A

**Report to:**               **Audit Committee**

**Date of meeting:**   **Thursday, 25 November 2021**

**Report author:**       **Group Head of Democracy and Governance**

**Title:**                   **Freedom of Information Act Requests April to September 2021**

## 1.0   **Summary**

1.1   This is the half yearly report of Freedom of Information Act requests received between 1 April and 30 September 2021.

## 2.0   **Risks**

### 2.1

<b>Nature of risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	<b>Risk Rating</b> (combination of severity and likelihood)
Requests are not regularly responded to	Complaint by requestors and investigation and potential sanction by the Information Commissioner	CLO's diarise response times and chase responders	treat	4

## 3.0   **Recommendations**

3.1   That the report be noted.

### **Further information:**

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## 4.0   **Detailed proposal**

4.1   Since January 2005 when the Freedom of Information Act 2000 came fully into force the council has been obliged to respond to requests for information. These requests should be responded to within 20 working days of receipt. The Act, and public bodies' compliance with it, is overseen by the Information Commissioner who can

investigate complaints and can compel the disclosure of information as well as impose fines for failure to meet deadlines.

- 4.2 This committee receives half yearly reports on the council's performance in replying to such requests as well as Environmental Information Regulation requests.
- 4.3 For the period 1 April to 30 September 2021 the council received 354 Freedom of Information Act requests and 1 Environmental Information Regulation request. This was lower than the previous half year when the council received 422 requests. Of those 354 requests 61 were not replied to within 20 working days. Seven have not been replied to at all. In the previous half year 55 were replied to outside the time and 16 were not replied to at all.
- 4.4 Executive and Group Heads continue to be given fortnightly details of requests received and all requests are now registered on Firmstep. The requests are attached at Appendix 1

## 5.0 **Implications**

### 5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications. Services deal with requests from existing resources.

### 5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

### 5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

- 5.3.1 Information is suitably redacted if it contains personal information before being sent out.

### 5.4 **Staffing**

- 5.4.1 Replies are dealt with within services. The Customer Services Centre manages and responds to requests where it affects multiple services.

### 5.5 **Accommodation**

- 5.5.1 N/A

## **5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 N/A

## **5.7 Sustainability**

5.7.1 N/A

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Requests 1 April to 30 September 2021.

## **Background papers**

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.