

Part A

Report to: Audit Committee

Date of meeting: Thursday, 25 May 2023

Report author: Group Head of Democracy and Governance

Title: Freedom of Information Act Requests October 2022 to March 2023

1.0 Summary

1.1 This is the half yearly report of Freedom of Information Act requests received between 1 October 2022 and 31 March 2023.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Requests are not regularly responded to	Complaints by requesters and investigation and potential sanction by the Information Commissioner	CLOs diarise end 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 (EIR) requests.

4.3 For the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 the council received 275 Freedom of Information Act requests and 0 EIR requests. This was 30 more than the previous half year. Of those 275 only 9 were not replied to within 20 working days. There were 0 that were not replied to at all. This a significant improvement on the last half year when 54 were not replied to within the time. This can be attributed to all requests now being logged into firmstep and able to be viewed on the Qlik system and being able to be easily monitored by managers. Details of the requests are shown in appendix 1.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications. Services requests are dealt with 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.

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

5.3.1 Information is redacted if it contains personal information.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 Replies are dealt with within services. The customer service centre managers oversee the process via the firmstep platform.

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

- FOI Requests October 2022 to March 2023

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.