

Freedom of Information Act Annual Report 2017-2018

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act was introduced in 2005 with its purpose being to make authorities and public bodies more open and transparent with the information they hold.
- 1.2 The FOI Act and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) are very similar and are dealt with through the same process. The figures given below are for both FOI and EIR requests.
- 1.3 Public Authorities should respond to FOI / EIR requests within 20 working days from the date the request was received.
- 1.4 All requests must be received in writing and Haringey has a dedicated online form and email address for this.
- 1.5 Requests are administered by the Feedback and Information Governance (FIG) Team, which is based with the Shared Service Centre, although the services themselves draft the responses.
- 1.6 In line with best practice, Haringey has been proactively publishing more data and information on line and has a disclosure log, which shows all requests received and responses issued.

2. Breakdown of Performance Information

- 2.1 Between April 2017 and March 2018 Haringey responded to a total of 1352 requests, a small decrease from the previous year. 83% of responses were sent within 20 days. The following table shows the performance across the past 5 years.

Year	No. of requests	% on time
2017-2018	1352	83%
2016-2017	1471	87%
2015-2016	1494	89%
2014-2015	1472	91%
2013-2014	1364	84%

- 2.2 There are cases where information was not provided to the requestor either because it was not held, there was a cost attached to it which the requestor chose not to pay, or because the request was deemed vexatious.

Information not Provided	Total	% of Total requests
Information not held	216	16%
Information not given due to cost	38	3%
Information not given due to vexatious request	2	<.5%
Information not given as repeat request	2	<.5%

2.3 In addition to these requests there were a further 174 cases (13%) where an exemption was applied. Both the FOI and EIR Acts contain exemptions that allow Public Authorities to withhold information in certain cases.

FOI - Exemption Applied	Total	% of Total Exemptions
Section 40 – Personal Information	46	3%
Section 31 – Law Enforcement	29	2%
Section 43 – Commercial Interests	20	1%
Section 21 – Info accessible by some other means	33	2%
Section 22 – Intended for future publication	27	2%
Section 24 – National Security	5	<.5%
Section 42 – Legal Professional Privilege	1	<.5%

EIR - Exemption Applied	Total	% of Total Exemptions
Regulation 12 4 (a) – Information not held	9	1%
Regulation 12 4 (e) – Internal Documents	2	<.5%
Regulation 12 5 (f) - Interests of person who provided the information	1	<.5%
Regulation 13 – Personal data	1	<.5%

2.4 The highest number of requests was received by Environment and Neighbourhoods Service who dealt with 385 cases, 28% of all received, and they responded to 88% on-time.

Service	No of requests	% of total requests
Environment & Neighbourhoods	385	28%
Corporate Resources	218	16%
Housing and Growth	103	8%
Planning	107	8%
Commissioning	97	7%
Children's Services - Safeguarding & Social Care	82	6%
Schools and Learning	64	5%
Children's Services - Early Help and Prevention	46	3%
Corporate Governance	42	3%
Public Health	35	3%
Shared Digital (Haringey)	35	3%
Adult Social Services	26	2%
Customer Services & Libraries	22	2%
Regeneration	31	2%
Strategy & Communications	32	2%
Transformation and Resources	25	2%
Construction Related Project Delivery	2	<.5%

3. Internal Reviews

- 3.1 If a customer is unhappy with the way their FOI/EIR request was handled, they can ask for an Internal Review.
- 3.2 A total of 51 reviews were conducted in 2017/18, 4% of the 1352 requests received. 20% of the reviews were upheld.

Decision	Total	% of Total
Not upheld	33	65%
Partly upheld	8	16%
Upheld	10	20%

3.3. We responded to 69% of Internal Reviews within 20 days.

4. Information Commissioner

- 4.1 If, following an internal review, a customer remains dissatisfied with the response they can approach the office of the Information Commissioner (ICO) to ask them to review the decision.
- 4.2 During 2017/18 a total of 8 formal enquiries were received from the ICO. Four of these were settled by local resolution, meaning that agreement was reached with the requestor without the ICO issuing a formal decision. One found in favour of Haringey. The Commissioner disagreed with our earlier responses in three cases and in two of those cases asked us to provide more information, which we did.