

Freedom of Information Act Annual Report 2020-2021

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 In line with best practice, Haringey has been proactively publishing more data and information online and has a disclosure log, which shows all requests received and responses issued. In addition, a full performance report is published online.
- 1.6 Between April 2020 and March 2021 Haringey responded to a total of 1094 requests, a decrease from the previous year. 82% of responses were sent within 20 days. The following table shows the performance across the past 5 years.

Year	No. of requests	% on time
2020-2021	1094	82%
2019-2020	1384	86%
2018-2019	1434	82%
2017-2018	1352	83%
2016-2017	1471	87%

- 1.7 There are cases where information was not provided to the requestor either because it was not held or there was a cost attached to it.

Information not Provided	Total	% of Total requests
Information not held	109	10%
Information not given due to cost	20	2%

- 1.8 In addition to these requests there were a further 152 cases (14%) 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	48	32%
Section 31 – Law Enforcement	38	25%
Section 43 – Commercial Interests	12	8%
Section 42 - Legal Professional Privilege	4	3%
Section 21 - Info accessible by some other means	5	3%
Section 41 – Confidential Information	3	2%
Section 22 - Intended for future publication	3	2%
Section 36 - Effective Conduct of Public Affairs	2	1%
Section 24 – Safeguarding of National Security	1	<1%
EIR - Exemption Applied	Total	% of Total Exemptions
Regulation 12 (4) b) – Manifestly Unreasonable	31	20%

Regulation 12 (4) (a) – Information not held	2	1%
Regulation 12 (4) (d) – Material in the course of completion	2	1%
Regulation 12 (4) (e) – Communications between Government departments	1	<1%

- 1.9 The highest number of requests was received by Environment and Neighbourhoods Service who dealt with 352 cases, 32% of all received, and they responded to 90% on-time.

Service	No of Requests	% of Total Requests
Environment & Neighbourhoods	352	32
Corporate & Customer Services	137	13
Commissioning	101	9
Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability	100	9
Children's Services - Safeguarding & Social Care	60	5
Human Resources & Organisational Development	41	4
Children's Services - Schools & Learning	41	4
Children's Services - Early Help & Prevention	37	3
Finance	37	3
Legal and Governance	30	3
Public Health	29	3
Digital Services	28	3
Adult Social Services	24	2
Strategy, Communications and Delivery	22	2
Housing	22	2
Capital Projects and Property	21	2
Regeneration and Economic Development	10	1
Programme Delivery – CPMO	1	<1

2. Internal Reviews

- 2.1 If a customer is unhappy with the way their FOI/EIR request was handled, they can ask for an Internal Review.
- 2.2 A total of 26 reviews were conducted in 2020/2021, 2% of the 1094 requests received. 34% of the reviews were upheld. 85% of Internal Reviews were responded to in time

Decision	Total	% of Total Reviews
Not upheld	15	58%
Partly upheld	2	8%
Upheld	9	34%

Information Commissioner

- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 During 2020/2021 a total of 4 formal enquiries were received from the ICO. In all these cases the Commissioner found in our favour, with no action required from us.