

Freedom of Information Act Annual Report 2019-2020

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 In line with best practice, Haringey aims to proactively publish 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 2019 and March 2020 Haringey responded to a total of 1384 requests, a decrease from the previous year. 86% of responses were sent within 20 days. The following table shows the performance across the past 5 years.

Year	No. of requests	% on time
2019-2020	1384	86%
2018-2019	1434	82%
2017-2018	1352	83%
2016-2017	1471	87%
2015-2016	1494	89%

- 2.2 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	210	15%
Information not given due to cost	33	2%

- 2.3 In addition to these requests there were a further 139 cases (10%) 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 31 – Law Enforcement	49	35%
Section 40 – Personal Information	35	25%

Section 43 – Commercial Interests	18	13%
Section 21 – Info accessible by some other means	11	8%
Section 22 – Intended for future publication	10	7%
Section 24 – National Security	6	4%
Section 42 – Legal Professional Privilege	2	1%
Section 38 - Health and Safety	2	1%
Section 36 – Effective Conduct of Public Affairs	1	<1%
Section 30 - Investigations and proceedings by public authorities	1	<1%
EIR - Exemption Applied	Total	% of Total Exemptions
Regulation 12 (4) (a) - Information not held	2	1%
Regulation 12 (4) (d) - Drafts/incomplete/unfinished documents/data	1	<1%
Regulation 12 (5) (b) - the course of justice	1	<1%

2.4 The highest number of requests was received by Environment and Neighbourhoods Service who dealt with 488 cases, 35% of all received, and they responded to 92% on-time.

Service	No of requests	% of total requests
Environment & Neighbourhoods	488	35%
Corporate & Customer Services	179	13%
Commissioning	129	9%
Planning, Building Standards & Sustainability	97	7%
Children's Services - Safeguarding & Social Care	88	6%
Schools & Learning	69	5%
Corporate Governance	45	3%
Housing	39	3%
Strategy & Communications	38	3%
Finance	36	3%
Adult Social Services	35	3%
Public Health	31	2%
Children's Services - Early Help & Prevention	31	2%
Digital Services	26	2%
Regeneration & Economic Development	20	1%
Human Resources & Organisational Development	13	1%
Capital Projects and Property	11	1%
Customer Services & Libraries	4	<1%
Programme Delivery – Corporate Programme Management Office	3	<1%
Construction Related Project Delivery	2	<1%

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 43 reviews were conducted in 2019/2020, 3% of the 1384 requests received. 20% of the reviews were upheld.

Decision	Total	% of Total Reviews
Not upheld	29	67%
Partly upheld	3	7%
Upheld	11	26%

- 3.3 We responded to 84% 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 2019/2020 a total of 6 formal enquiries were received from the ICO. In all of these cases the Commissioner found in our favour, with no action required from us.