

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 000133
Date 10 May 2016

FOI Requests

Request:

Could you please supply me the following information regarding information governance within Wolverhampton Borough Council:

- A. The number of FOI requests you receive on a monthly basis. Further within this:
- i. The total number of FOI requests you receive if you do not have this recorded month on month, yearly figures are fine.

Month (2015/2016)	Number of Freedom of Information Requests Received	Number of Freedom of Information Requests responded to within statutory timeframe	Percentage responded to within timeframe
April	95	95	100%
May	78	78	100%
June	99	99	100%
July	110	110	100%
August	111	110	99%
September	75	75	100%
October	87	87	100%
November	106	105	99%
December	66	66	100%
January	100	100	100%
February	112	112	100%
March	116	116	100%

- ii. The total number of FOI requests which are processed through to being completed, regardless of the time frame. The total number rejected. By "rejected" I mean the number of FOI requests which you do not process on the grounds that they are not valid under the Freedom of Information Act.
As per the above table. Unfortunately we do not separately record how many requests are rejected.
- iii. The time scale in which FOI requests are carried out, how quickly do you aim to complete them?
All requests are dealt with as soon as possible and in accordance with the statutory timeframe.

What is the actual average time taken to complete a request?

Unfortunately we do not record the time it takes to process a request from

start to end and therefore we cannot provide an average figure for this.

How many FOI requests exceed the prescribed 20 working day period?
Please see above table.

- B. The structure under which FOI requests are dealt with, do you have a specific team/department? How many people work within this team?

Six staff within the Council's Information Governance team are involved in answering Freedom of Information requests (this includes compliance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). Please note that the six officers are not engaged in FOI/EIR activity for 100% of their time.

- C. What are the total costs to Wolverhampton Council for carrying out FOI requests? This can be for any time period, monthly, yearly ect.

The total estimated cost of responding to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests in 2014/15 was £490,000. This comprises an element of process management and administration and is based on six people working on FOI requests for a percentage of their time (an estimated cost of £133,440 based on a combined annual salary of £242,280). This figure also comprises an assessment of respondent time across the organisation based upon the number of requests received for that period (1245) broken down into categories of complexity; but does not include any costs associated with Councillors or Strategic Directors.

The costs recorded are direct employee costs (basic pay and employers national insurance and pension fund contributions). Overhead costs (general running costs of the service) have not been included.

Please note that these are estimated costs and not an exact recording of time spent. Information regarding time spent is held at a granular level within Council systems and therefore in order to provide an accurate figure the Council estimates that work to identify and retrieve relevant information would exceed the statutory cost limit of £450 (18 hours at a rate of 25 per hour) and therefore we believe that section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("The Act") would be engaged.

Section 12 of the Act exempts Public Authorities from providing information where the estimated cost of compliance with the request exceeds the appropriate limit. Any estimate must be made in accordance with the limits set in fees regulations made under Section 12 (5) of the Act.

These Fees Regulations (SI 2004/3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations) allow for a refusal where the cost of compliance, for local authorities such as the Council, would exceed £450.

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]