

Report to: Policy & Finance Committee May 2021
From: Senior Policy & Data Compliance Monitoring Officer
Subject: Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information
Regulations (EIR) Requests 01.04.2020 – 31.03.2021

The Information Commissioner's Office states:

“Good FOI practice benefits public authorities. As well as complying with the law, there are reputational and financial benefits from efficient and effective FOI practices.

It also provides an opportunity to develop a relationship with the public based on openness and transparency.”

In the period between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021 a total of twelve requests were made to the Town Council for information. Of these six are still within the internal review period and will be added to the disclosure log once the file is closed.

The majority of requests received are under the FOI but the Town Council has received two under the EIR which are subject to different process of management and legislation.

All have been complied with in the required time period (twenty working days).

All of the requests have been fulfilled within the 'appropriate limit' where the cost of compliance is estimated to be within 18 hours of staff work and therefore the cost (excluding any permitted charges) is borne by the Town Council.

One request (still within the internal review period) has been refused on the grounds of being manifestly unreasonable. (In this instance this means that the cost of compliance with the request would be too great.)

An additional member of staff has received internal training to assist with requests.

The Information Commissioner's Office is constantly updating their resources and guidance. It has recently published a self-assessment toolkit which will provide an opportunity to reflect on performance to date.