

Procedure for Handling Requests for Information

Any request for information that includes the name and full contact details of the member of public who has requested it and contains details of the information required is deemed to be valid under the Act, even if the Act is not referred to within the request.

A request can be made in writing by e-mail or by letter.

Once a request has been received the Council has 20 days to respond.

On receipt of a request, the Council will:

- Determine whether it holds the information. If the information is not held, a notice will be issued to this effect.
- Determine whether any exemptions apply and apply the public interest test. If the request is subject to an exemption then an exemption notice will be issued to the applicant. The exemption notice will state the reason why the information is exempt and outline the appeal process.
- Determine whether the information contains personal information which might be exempt under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Determine whether there will be a charge (see information about charging in section 5 below).
- Issue a fee notice. The applicant has 3 months to pay the required fee beginning on the day the fee notice is received. The 20 day period resumes the day after the receipt of the fee.
- Compile the information for the request within 20 days.

A charge can be made for staff costs and any relevant materials. The following factors will be considered when calculating the estimated cost:

- The cost of materials
- Staff costs for determining:
- Whether the information is held
- Locating the information or documents
- Retrieving the requested information
- Extracting the information from the document