

## **Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) fees and charges**

The FOI Act and EIR allow public authorities to recover costs when responding to a request for information. For example, costs associated with photocopying, printing and postage. Most requests for information will be responded to by e-mail and in such cases, there would normally be no costs to recover. If it is necessary to make a charge for a request, we would let you know before we carry out any work on the request. In such cases payment must be received before we will send the information.

Under FOI, we will not charge for staff time, unless other legislation allows this. However, if the cost of complying with the request exceeds the 'appropriate limit' then we are permitted to recover our full costs, including staff time. The appropriate limit is set at 18 hours (or £450) and is outlined below.

Under EIR, in some circumstances we can charge a fee for making the information available. Any charge should be 'reasonable' - it should not exceed the costs we incur in making the information available. It may cover the costs associated with photocopying, printing and postage. It may also include the cost of staff time in locating, retrieving and extracting the information from storage.

There is no charge for:

- information contained in the public registers we hold
- lists of environmental information we hold
- published data sets
- examining information at the Council's offices

### **What we will charge for**

We won't charge for the first £450 (known as the appropriate limit) worth of council officer time spent on:

- working out whether we hold the information
- locating and retrieving the information
- extracting the information

Where we estimate that search and collation time will exceed £450, we will discuss the requirements with you and try to reduce the costs to within that limit. If this is not possible, we will consider each request individually and either:

- refuse to answer the request, or
- apply a charge of £25 per hour of officer time to all work we undertake to fulfil the request.

The Council will only charge for expenses actually incurred, for example, photocopying or postage.

Please note - the amount charged will not exceed the amount it costs to provide the information.