

Report to:	QSMTM
Report by:	Liz Brown
Meeting Date:	25 April 2018 2018
Subject/ Title: (and VC no)	Information requests and reviews report 101121
Attached Papers (title and VC no)	Summary table including, for 2016-17 a comparison of SIC with its peer group (1-250 requests per year); 90525 Report showing exemptions and exceptions applied; 90525 Report analysing the outcomes of requests; 90525

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - Inform the SMT about information requests and requests for review received
 - Inform the SMT of any exemptions applied in dealing with those information requests.

Recommendation and actions

2. I recommend
 - (i) the SMT is asked to note the contents of this report
 - (ii) the SMT notes that information in this report has been uploaded to the stats portal
 - (iii) the report is published in full

Executive summary

3. As a Scottish public authority we have statutory obligations to respond to requests we receive for information (including personal information) which we hold. Requests are forwarded, on receipt, to the most appropriate member of staff for a response (all staff respond to information requests). We maintain a full record of all requests in our case management system.

Volumes of requests

4. Any requests categorised as joint FOISA/EIRs have been included in both the FOISA and the EIR numbers. The attached summary table analyses the statistics in the same way. This reflects the requirement on the FOI portal when entering our stats and, therefore, ensures consistency of reporting.
5. In Q4, 23 requests were received as follows:
 - 19 requests under FOISA
 - 0 request under EIRs
 - 4 subject access requests
 - 0 request for review

6. At 100, the number of requests (IRs, RFRs and SARs combined) for the year is 54 fewer than in the 2016-17 when 154 requests were received.

	2016-17	2017-18	% increase/(decrease) over 2016-17
Number received Q1	38	42	10.5%
Number received Q2	34	17	(50%)
Number received Q3	30	18	(40%)
Number received Q4	52	23	(56%)
Total	154	100	(35%)

Subjects of requests received in the quarter

7. An examination of the synopses of the FOISA/EIRs information requests to date reveals:

	2016-17	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	%
Misdirected - sent to us in error, asking for information which is likely to be held by other authorities	48	16	12	8	7	43	50%
Application-related	29	4	1	2	3	10	11%
Functions / services e.g. IT, procurement, policies	30	16	3	0	6	25	29%
Other	13	4	0	2	3	9	10%
TOTAL	120	40	16	12	19	87	100%

Outcomes of requests

8. For the requirement of the stats portal, responses are recorded in the quarter they are made, which may not be the same quarter in which the receipt of the request was recorded. For requests made under FOISA and EIRs, the following outcomes were recorded:

	2016-17	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	%
Information provided in full	18	11	0	1	1	13	15%
Information partially supplied	24	10	0	2	3	15	16%
Information not held	59	24	13	8	14	59	63%
Information refused (exempt)	7	1	0	0	0	1	1%
Neither confirm nor deny	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Clarification not provided	0	1	0	0	1	2	2%
Repeated request	0	0	1	0	0	1	1%
Request withdrawn	6	0	0	1	1	2	2%
Request invalid	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Vexatious	1	0	0	0	0	0	0%
TOTAL	117	47	14	12	20	93	100%

9. The attached table shows the exemptions and exceptions which were applied.

Timescales for compliance

Description	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Request response: 5 days or fewer	60%	64%	86%	83%	65%	70%
Request response: 20 days or fewer	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Requests for review analysis

10. The analysis is:

- (i) No requests for review were received in Q4.
- (ii) 1 request for review was closed in Q4, which upheld the original decision in full.
- (iii) There were no open requests for review at 31 March 2018.
- (iv) All requests for review handled in 2017/18 were responded to within 20 working days or fewer.

11. The SMT agreed that time recording will no longer be carried out.

Risk impact

12. Section 15 of the Operational Risk Register applies (robust systems for dealing with RFIs and SARs).

Equalities impact

13. Equalities issues were considered when writing the SIC's guidance and procedures on responding to information requests (VC85601). No requests for special assistance have been received.

Resources impact

14. Requests can be demanding on officer time due to the deadlines for response and the research that may be required to identify relevant information. However, it is not possible to quantify the exact amount of officer time spent responding to requests or on reviews.

Operational/ strategic plan impact

15. The guidance and procedures for handling information requests aim to ensure consistency of approach across the office and improve the efficiency of the process.

Records management impact (including any key documents actions)

16. None.

Consultation and Communication

17. None.

Publication

18. This committee report should be published in full.