

Report to:	QSMTM
Report by:	Liz Brown
Meeting Date:	05 February 2019
Subject/Title:	Information requests and reviews report VC112099
Attached Papers	Summary table VC102747 Exemptions and exceptions applied VC102747 Report analysing the outcomes of requests VC102747

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
2. This CR is now produced on a 6 monthly basis for the QSMTM, although statistics are still produced quarterly for upload to the statistics portal.

Recommendation and actions

3. I recommend:
 - (i) the SMT is asked to note the contents of this report
 - (ii) the SMT notes that information in this report has not been uploaded to the stats portal this quarter because the portal is currently unavailable. P&I are working to resolve this.
 - (iii) the report is published in full

Executive summary

4. 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

5. 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.
6. In Q2, 25 requests were received as follows:
 - 21 requests under FOISA
 - 1 request under EIRs
 - 2 subject access requests (SARs)
 - 1 request for review
7. In Q3, 42 requests were received as follows:
 - 27 requests under FOISA

- no request under EIRs
- 10 subject access requests (SARs)
- 5 request for review

8. Figures in comparison to last year:

	2017-18	2018-19	% increase/(decrease) over 2018-19
Number received Q1	42	21	(50%)
Number received Q2	17	25	47%
Number received Q3	18	42	133%
Number received Q4	23		
Total	100	88	

Subjects of requests received in the quarter

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

	2017-18	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	%
Misdirected - sent to us in error, asking for information which is likely to be held by other authorities	43	4	6	7		17	26%
Application-related	10	6	4	6		16	24%
Functions / services e.g. IT, procurement, policies	25	7	11	14		32	48%
Other	9	0	1	0		1	2%
Total	87	17	22	27		66	100%

Outcomes of requests

10. 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:

	2017-18	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	%
Information provided in full	13	6	4	6		16	24%
Information partially supplied	15	0	3	7		10	15%
Information not held	59	7	11	8		26	40%
Information refused (exempt)	1	2	1	6		9	14%
Neither confirm nor deny	0	0	0	1		1	1%
Clarification not provided	2	0	1	1		2	3%
Repeated request	1	0	0	0		0	0%
Request withdrawn	2	0	1	1		2	3%
Request invalid	0	0	0	0		0	0%
Vexatious	0	0	0	0		0	0%
Total	93	15	21	30		66	100%

Timescales for compliance

11. Timescale and target for responding to requests for information

Description	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Request response: 5 days or fewer	60%	60%	52%	43%		50%
Request response: 20 days or fewer	100%	100%	100%	100%		100%

Requests for review analysis

12. The analysis is:

- (i) there was 1 request for review in Q2 but this was invalid
- (ii) there were 5 requests for review in Q3 - 3 were invalid and 2 confirmed the original decision in full
- (iii) invalid requests for review are not recorded in the stats portal
- (iv) all requests for review were responded to in 6 working days
- (v) there were no open requests for review at 31 December 2018

Subject access requests analysis

- 13. 2 SARs were received in Q2, but there was a big jump to 10 in Q3
- 14. 1 SAR was open at 31 December 2018
- 15. All SARs were responded to within the statutory timescale

Risk impact

- 16. Risk 15 of the Operational Risk Register applies (robust systems for dealing with RFIs and SARs).
- 17. Risk 16 also applies in relation to General Data Protection Regulation and effective internal procedures for dealing with subject access requests.

Equalities impact

- 18. 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

- 19. 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

- 20. 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)

21. None.

Consultation and Communication

22. None.

Publication

23. This committee report should be published in full.