

# Information request annual Report of Financial Year 2025–26

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## Purpose of the report

This report provides an overview of information requests such as EIR's, FOI's and SAR's, recorded to date from April 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026. It summarises volumes of requests logged, compliance statistics and lessons learned to support governance, assurance, and continuous improvement.

## Introduction

As a public authority, Cheltenham Borough Council processes various types of information requests, including Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests, Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, and Data Subject Access Requests (DSARs). Handling these requests ensures our compliance with legislation such as the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, UK GDPR, and the Data Protection Act 2018. It also supports transparency by providing clear access to the personal and non-personal information we hold in delivering our services.

## Key terms-

Freedom of information request (FOI's)- This allows anyone to request non-personal, recorded information held by the Council.

Environmental Information Regulations (EIR's)- This covers requests for non-personal recorded information held by the Council that concerns environmental matters such as air, land, or waste.

Data Subject Access Request (DSAR'S)- These allow an individual to request personal information about themselves that is held by the Council.

## 2025/26 Performance data

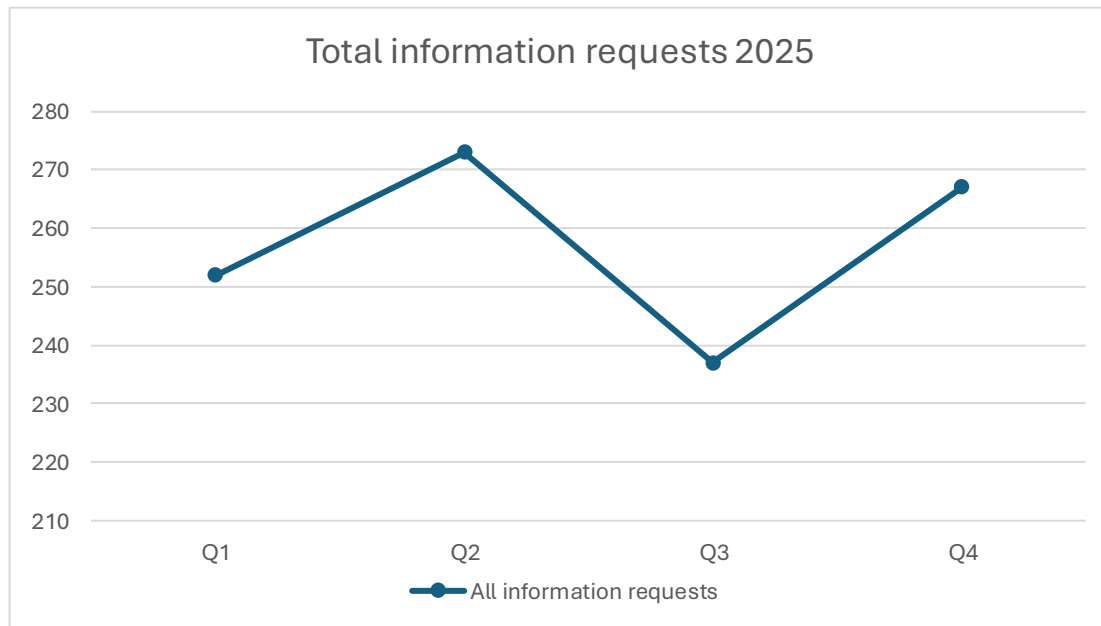
### Reporting period and scope

- **Financial year:** 2025–26
- **Reporting period covered:**
  - Quarter 1: April 2025 – June 2025
  - Quarter 2: July 2025 – September 2025
  - Quarter 3: October 2025 – December 2025
  - Quarter 4: January 2026 - March 2026

### Summary of information request statistics

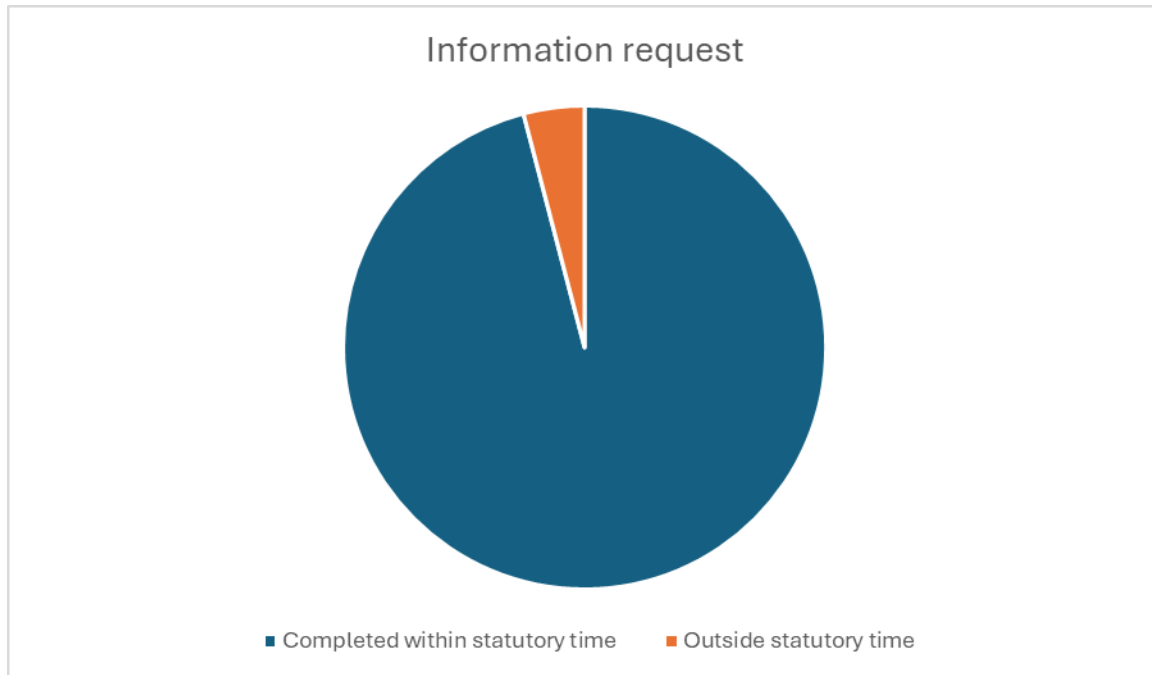
From 1st April 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026, Cheltenham Borough Council received 1,029 requests for information. This included 867 FOI's, 91 EIR's and 71 DSAR's.

| Quarter            | Date                    | FOI's requested | EIR's Requested | DSAR's requested |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <b>Q1</b>          | April – June 2025       | 211             | 28              | 13               |
| <b>Q2</b>          | July – September 2025   | 237             | 15              | 21               |
| <b>Q3</b>          | October – December 2025 | 200             | 23              | 14               |
| <b>Q4</b>          | January-March 2026      | 219             | 25              | 23               |
| <b>Total (YTD)</b> | April 2025– March 2026  | <b>867</b>      | <b>91</b>       | <b>71</b>        |



## Compliance with the statutory timeframe

| Quarter            | Date                    | Foi's answered within timeframe | EIR's answered within timeframe | DSAR's answered within timeframe |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Q1                 | April – June 2025       | 92.9%                           | 96.4%                           | 100%                             |
| Q2                 | July – September 2025   | 97.9%                           | 93.3%                           | 100%                             |
| Q3                 | October – December 2025 | 94.5%                           | 82.6%                           | 100%                             |
| Q4                 | January-March 2026      | 99.1%                           | 88%                             | 100%                             |
| <b>Total (YTD)</b> | April – March 2026      | <b>96.2%</b>                    | <b>92.2%</b>                    | <b>100%</b>                      |



## A. Freedom of Information requests

### Breakdown of requests received per service area

Please note that as FOI's were transferred onto a new system we are unable to confirm the accuracy of service area reporting. This is as it doesn't account for multiple service areas and the development of new teams within the system.

The majority of requests were handled by Planning (9%).

| Service area           | Total FOI's received |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Business Rates         | 35                   |
| Democratic Services    | 7                    |
| Council Tax            | 24                   |
| Parking Services       | 21                   |
| Licensing              | 51                   |
| Finance & Assets       | 60                   |
| Environmental Services | 36                   |
| Executive Support      | 6                    |
| Customer Services      | 9                    |
| Housing Repairs        | 15                   |
| ICT                    | 37                   |
| Bereavement Services   | 8                    |

|                                                                                                              |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Building Control                                                                                             | 9  |
| Planning                                                                                                     | 79 |
| Housing Services                                                                                             | 20 |
| Neighborhood Team                                                                                            | 29 |
| Communities, Wellbeing & Partnerships                                                                        | 24 |
| Housing Options                                                                                              | 44 |
| Environmental Health - Environmental Protection, Food Safety, Regulatory Health and Safety, Animal Licensing | 59 |
| Housing Strategy & Enabling                                                                                  | 13 |
| Public realm CCTV, animal control, emergency planning, anti-social behaviour (Solace)                        | 13 |
| Property - Works & Maintenance Team                                                                          | 14 |
| Communications and Marketing                                                                                 | 5  |
| Public Realm, Parks & Gardens/Green Space Development                                                        | 18 |
| Human Resources                                                                                              | 31 |
| Climate, Flooding and Decarbonisation Team                                                                   | 18 |
| Procurement/Contracts                                                                                        | 16 |
| Property Estates                                                                                             | 16 |
| Pest Control and Lifelines                                                                                   | 6  |
| ASB                                                                                                          | 54 |
| Elections                                                                                                    | 6  |
| Private Sector Housing and Disabled Facilities Grants                                                        | 22 |
| Learning & Development                                                                                       | 7  |
| Safeguarding and Equality Diversity and Inclusion                                                            | 4  |
| The Cheltenham Trust                                                                                         | 3  |
| Place Marketing and Inward Investment                                                                        | 4  |
| Benefits                                                                                                     | 9  |
| Benefit & Money Advice                                                                                       | 1  |
| Tree Section                                                                                                 | 4  |
| Business Support                                                                                             | 3  |
| Digital Development & Project Portfolio Management Office                                                    | 3  |
| Council Vehicle Fleet                                                                                        | 1  |
| Finance (Housing)                                                                                            | 1  |
| Information Governance                                                                                       | 5  |
| Health & Safety                                                                                              | 1  |
| Not our FOI                                                                                                  | 22 |
| Housing allocations                                                                                          | 1  |

## B. Environmental Information Regulation

### Breakdown of requests received per service area

94.5% of EIR's were referred to multiple service areas, these mostly required a joint response from the Flooding team and Environmental health.

| Service area           | EIR's received |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Multiple service areas | 86             |
| Licensing              | 1              |
| Property estates       | 2              |
| Planning               | 1              |
| Environmental health   | 1              |

## C. Data Subject Access request

### Breakdown of requests received per service area

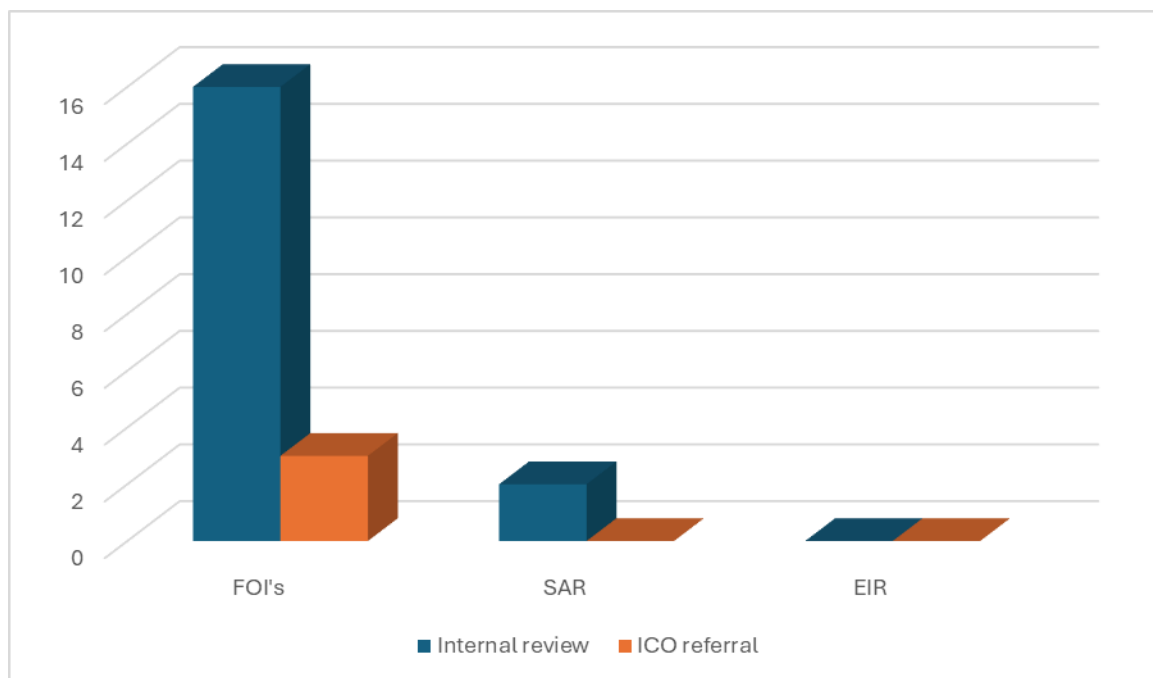
40.6% of DSAR's were referred to multiple service areas.

| Service area               | DSAR's received |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Multiple service areas     | 29              |
| Information and Governance | 1               |
| Business rates             | 1               |
| Council tax                | 4               |
| Not our request            | 1               |
| Housing services           | 12              |
| Customer services          | 1               |
| Housing strategy           | 3               |
| Human Resources            | 4               |
| Planning                   | 1               |
| Public protection          | 6               |
| Revenues and benefits      | 5               |
| Housing options            | 1               |
| Licensing                  | 1               |

## Statistics on Internal reviews and ICO referral

If requestors are unhappy with how their information request has been handled, they can ask for an internal review. In 2025/26 we received 18 requests for an internal review, this makes up 1.46% of requests.

If following an internal review, a requestor remains unhappy with how we have handled their request, they can approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to appeal the decision. In 2025 we received 3 referrals to the ICO, this makes up 0.3% of all requests.



## Achievements and continuous improvement

Whilst responding to the FOI, EIR and SAR requests are the responsibility of service areas, all requests are monitored by the Information and Governance team. Reminders are sent 10, 5 and under 5 working days before the deadline to ensure that we are able to provide a response on time.

This year we have seen an increase in potentially fraudulent requests and claims. In order to resolve this the team has worked closely with our Legal team and well as other organisations including National Anti Fraud Network (NAFN) Data and Intelligence Services.

**What we have achieved this year-**

This year the information and governance team has focused on streamlining our approach to how we handle information requests and ensuring that we comply with legislation.

- We have developed and rolled out an internal case management system for handling FOI's.
- Published quarterly disclosure logs and compliance data to ensure accountability and transparency.
- Continued to work with service areas to develop our process and provide support.

**Looking forward-**

- Looking ahead, we aim to roll out the use of our case management system to include all information requests.
- We will continue to work on improving our case management system to ensure it is efficient and user friendly.
- Review and develop the training and guidance that we offer to Officers and Councillors this includes policies and guidance.