

OVERALL POLICY AIM

To ensure that MOPAC complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Freedom of Information Policy

1. Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives the public the right to request information held by the Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC). The FOIA aims to ensure that public sector bodies are open and accountable and applies to any recorded information.

The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 provides a similar public right to access, relating to environmental information held by public authorities.

The FOIA places a statutory obligation on all public bodies to publish details of all recorded information they hold and to allow the public to have access to this information on request, except where an exemption applies e.g. personal or confidential data.

MOPAC recognises the importance of the FOIA and ensures that appropriate systems are in place to publicise what recorded information is held by MOPAC and how this information can be accessed on request by the general public.

The statutory deadline for a public sector body to respond to Freedom of Information requests is within 20 working days of receipt of the request.

MOPAC does not charge for responding to FOI requests, even though Public Authorities are permitted to do so under the FOIA.

2. Organisational responsibilities:

MOPAC will:

- Publish and maintain a Publication Scheme, which sets out the information MOPAC routinely publishes under the following categories:

Who we are and what we do

What we spend and how we spend it

What our priorities are and how we are doing

How we make decisions

Our policies and procedures

Lists and registers

The services we offer

- Provide details of how to make an FOI request on the MOPAC website
- Provide relevant FOI training for all staff with FOI responsibilities
- Develop and maintain clear procedures for recognising and responding to requests for information under FOI in a timely manner to meet the requirement to respond within 20 working days
- Respond to FOI requests within the statutory 20 working day deadline
- Publish FOI requests and responses on the MOPAC website

3. Employee responsibilities

MOPAC employees will:

- Ensure information is recorded correctly, accurately, adequately named and indexed for easy retrieval or publication
- Observe all forms of guidance, codes of practice and procedures about the storage, retention and disposal of documents and records
- Be aware that general public may have access to any piece of information held within MOPAC and must pay due regard to how they record information as part of their normal duties
- Forward on to the MOPAC FOI inbox any information requests received directly
- Provide promptly any information requested by the MOPAC Private Office as a result of an FOI request

4. Managing Requests for Information

Freedom of information requests will be dealt with by the Private Office, specifically the Information Governance Manager.

Draft responses will be cleared by the Chief Executive, and where required, by the Mayor's Office.

5. Internal Review

- Members of the public have a right to an internal review if they are dissatisfied with MOPAC's response to their FOI request. Internal reviews will be conducted by someone who was not involved in the original handling of the request; in most cases, this will be the Directorate of Risk and Assurance (DARA). Internal review outcomes will be sent to the requestor in writing. Internal Reviews will be carried out within the statutory 20 working day deadline.

If a member of the public is not satisfied with the outcome of an internal review they can make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 745
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: enquiries@ico.gsi.gov.uk
<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

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0.1		04/03/2019	February 2020
0.2		03/02/2020	February 2021