


<b>MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL</b>			
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Legal and Governance Services, Charlotte Benjamin		
<b>Relevant Executive Member:</b>	The Mayor, Chris Cooke		
<b>Submitted to:</b>	Single Member Executive – The Mayor		
<b>Date:</b>	17 July 2025		
<b>Title:</b>	Public Information and Information Requests Policy		
<b>Report for:</b>	Decision		
<b>Status:</b>	Public		
<b>Council Plan priority:</b>	All		
<b>Key decision:</b>	No		
<b>Why:</b>	Decision does not reach the threshold to be a key decision		
<b>Subject to call in?</b>	Yes		
<b>Why:</b>	Non-urgent report		
<b>Proposed decision(s)</b>			
That the Mayor <b>APPROVES</b> the revised Public Information and Information Requests Policy.			
<b>Executive summary</b>			
<p>The report seeks approval for the Council’s Corporate Public Information and Information Requests Policy, following completion of a scheduled review.</p> <p>The policy ensures that the Council meets the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and associated guidance, proactively identifies and publishes datasets over and above those required by the Code to minimise the need for individuals or organisations to submit statutory information requests.</p> <p>The decision requires Single Member Executive approval as it is a ‘minor variation to an existing policy or procedure’ as per Section 6.38.2(a) of the constitution.</p>			

1. Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions

1.1 This report presents and seeks approval of the Council’s Public Information and Information Requests Policy following its scheduled triennial review in order to ensure our continued compliance with statutory and regulatory guidance.

Our ambitions	Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims
A successful and ambitious town	Implementation and adherence to a Public Information and Information Requests Policy does not directly impact on these ambitions, however compliance with the principles of the policy will ensure requests for information are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• transparent</li><li>• dealt with in line with timescales.</li></ul>
A healthy Place	
Safe and resilient communities	
Delivering best value	Effective responses to requests for information, including proactive publication of data will ensure alignment with Best Value principles. Monitoring of service performance against statutory timescales is undertaken as part of the policy to ensure the Council identifies and addresses in relation to statutory information request compliance. This will assist the Council to improve services.  Data on compliance with the policy is reported regularly to senior managers, Executive, OSB and Audit Committee, which supports the Council to demonstrate accountability and transparency in its approach to responding to requests for information and increase the volume of data published.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Mayor **APPROVES** the revised Public Information and Information Requests Policy.

3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

3.1 Consideration of policy is required to ensure compliance with our statutory responsibilities which will ensure we articulate how we will deal with request for information and what can be expected from that process.

4. Background and relevant information

- 4.1 The Public Information and Information Requests Policy applies to all services including services directly provided by the Council, by a contractor or through a partnership which the Council leads.
- 4.2 The policy sets out how the Council will respond to information requests submitted to the Council by individuals and organisations that could fall within the rights established by the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA), Environmental Information Requests (EIR), General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA).
- 4.3 The policy sets out how the Council will proactively publish data to reduce the need for people to submit requests. The policy sets out that the Council will respond to requests in line with statutory timescales.
- 4.4 Separate processes are in place for the following:
  - Councillor Enquires
  - Legal Requests
  - CCTV Requests.
- 4.5 The Policy is reviewed every three years unless there are changes to legislation in the intervening period, or other events that would require an earlier review.

**5. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate**

- 5.1 This is not applicable to this decision and does not directly impact on any Ward. The Public Information and Information Request Policy forms part of the suite of policies put in place as part of the Information Governance Framework.

**6. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended**

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to adopt corporate policies on requests for information. However, statutory duties would remain in place. Without a standard approach, there is an increased risk of making decisions that fail to meet those duties, which could result in financial penalties. Given these duties, this option is not recommended.

**7. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)**

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There are no additional financial costs associated with the approval of these recommendations.
Legal	The policies will continue to ensure that the Council conducts its business and decision making in line with the requirements of statutory duty around our response and processing of requests raised with us.
Risk	Approval of the policies will positively impact on risks within the Council’s risk registers, primarily the risk that the Council fails to comply with the law.

Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	There is no impact associated with the proposed policy within this area.
Reducing Poverty	There is no impact associated with the proposed policy within this area.
Climate Change / Environmental	There are no climate or environmental impacts associated with the proposed policy.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	There are no direct implications arising from this Policy on this group.
Data Protection	This policy aims to protect individual rights against the legislation in relation to their protected characteristics.

**Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)**

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline
Publication of the policy on the MBC Website and Intranet pages	L Hamer, Governance and Information Manager	July 2025

**Appendices**

1	Public Information and Information Requests Policy
2	Public Information and Information Requests Supporting Procedure

**Background papers**

Body	Report title	Date

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