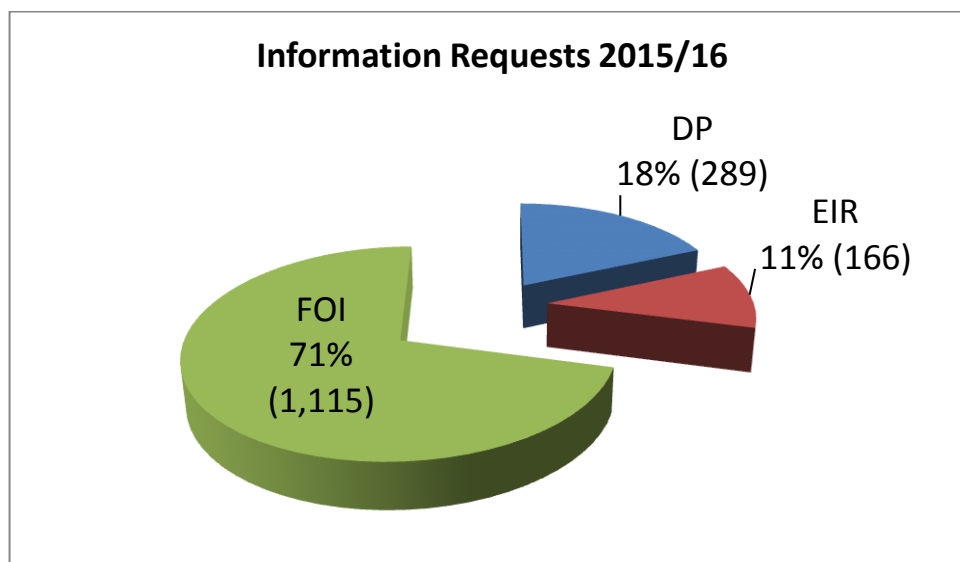


1. Summary

1.1 There were 1,570 official requests for information in 2015/16 made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) and Data Protection Act (DP). This is the first year that the information requests have plateaued, with a slight decrease of 4% from last year. The breakdown by type of request is as follows:



1.2 Although the total number of information requests is largely static, DP requests have increased 28% from 225 in 2014/15 to 289 in 2015/16. These requests may involve hundreds of pages of information being located, scanned and redacted for each request. Teams will look into streamlining the delivery of these requests this year, including exploring the provision of more information in electronic formats instead of paper copies, and whether information can be scanned directly at the council's records centre and archives, which will have the added benefit of helping to reduce the risks around data 'in transit'.

1.3 One of the greatest challenges is to ensure the Council's compliance to the legislative deadlines and this is monitored using the corporate CRM system. The Information Commissioner may consider action against the Council, such as placing the authority under a formal monitoring regime, if it receives more than 4 complaints within a six month period and/or if the Council meets less than 85% of its deadlines. Monitoring may be a precursor to further action if an authority is unable to demonstrate an improvement within a specified timescale. For example, the Commissioner may issue an enforcement notice to order the authority to clear a backlog in dealing with overdue requests by a given date. The Council responded to 93% of information requests on time in 2015/16.

1.4 Not every request for information will result in a full disclosure of information and the Council must be clear about what information has been provided and/or withheld. This year the Council released no data or partial data on 395 requests.