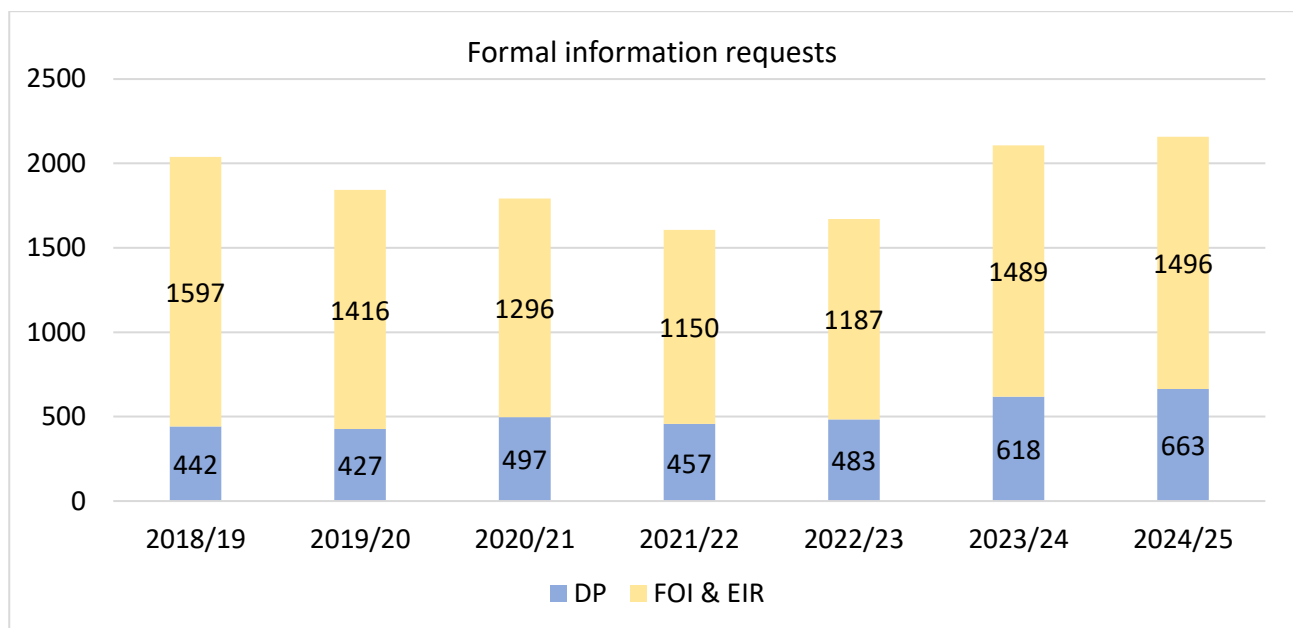


Appendix 4 Formal requests for information 2024/25

1.0 Information requests statistics

1.1 The following is a breakdown of the number of FOI and EIR requests and Data Protection requests (such as Subject Access Requests, Individual Rights Requests, etc.) for the seven years. In 2024/25, for FOI / EIR requests that equates to an average of 6 request per working day. For DP requests, an average of 2-3 per working day.



1.2 There were also an additional 2,807 “Con29s” completed in 2024/25. These are a specific type of request for local authority searches used in property conveyancing, under EIR. These achieved 100% compliance with the statutory 20 working days deadline.

2.0 Complaint process: internal reviews of formal information requests

2.1 When a requester wants to make a complaint regarding the final response of a FOI and EIR request, there is a separate procedure called an internal review. In ESCC this is carried out by Legal Services.

2.2 For Data Protection subject access requests (SARs), if the requester remains dissatisfied with a response, the Customer Services Team reviews and responds and asks for Legal Services support if it is complex. Requesters can complain to the Council’s Data Protection Officer if they remain unhappy. For all the types of information requests, there is the option to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) if the requester remains dissatisfied.

2.3 In 2024/25, the Council received six requests for internal reviews, which was the same number as 2023/24. Out of the six internal reviews, Legal Services found fault with three requests. For these three the internal reviews provided further information to the requesters. For two of the internal reviews, our positions were held and exemptions used were supported. The sixth

internal review final response is outstanding. Internal reviews are used to identify where improvements can be made, and they are reviewed thoroughly irrespective of the outcomes.

3.0 Complaints to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

3.1 If a requester makes a complaint to the ICO, the ICO first serves an Information Notice to the Council requesting it reviews the complaint and tries to resolve it. The Customer Services Team received six information notices regarding information requests in 2024/25, compared to three in 2023/24. Five of these notices in 2024/25 were resolved. One notice is outstanding. No formal complaints from the ICO were received.

3.2 There are various reasons why the ICO may contact the Council. These reasons are not solely about information requests the Council receive. The ICO also contacts the Council regarding complaints it receives in relation to any data protection concern including potential data security incidents. The ICO initially takes an informal approach and raises any concerns on behalf of a customer about their personal data. ICO will ask us to investigate and take ownership in the first instance and to report back to the ICO how we remedied the situation directly with the customer. Sometimes communication takes place directly with a service or mostly in contact with our Data Protection Officer. Some of the reasons the ICO contact us do not fall under this annual report; however, where contact from the ICO is relevant to this report, it has been included.