

# People's Rights - Freedom of Information

## The Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act") comes into force on 1 January 2005. From that date, anyone can request information from the Council under the Act, regardless of their age, nationality or location.

### What information will be available?

Any information held by the Council will be eligible for release subject however to a number of exemptions which may be applied to protect information which should properly be kept confidential.

### How do I make a request?

- Put your request in writing (emails are acceptable or you can use the form attached)
- State clearly what information you want
- Include your name and address
- Indicate the way you would like to access the information or have it sent to you (for example by inspection at one of the Council's Offices; as paper copy or via email). The Council may take into account the cost of supplying the information in the form you request.

It would be helpful if a request to the Council could be addressed to the Chief Executive, specifying the Box No. 660, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1WY.

The Council may need to transfer your request to another public authority which holds the information you want or to consult other public authorities and/or third parties in order to reach a decision on whether the requested information can be released. If you wish to be notified before any transfer of request or consultation is made, please say this in your request.

If you have difficulty in identifying the information you require, the Council will be pleased to help you. In the first instance address these queries in writing to the Director of Law and Democracy, PO Box 11, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1LD; by telephone to 016420 527061, or by email addressed to [margaret.fawkes@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.fawkes@stockton.gov.uk).



## What happens when I make a request?

When the Council receives a request for information, they must respond as soon as possible, and not later than 20 working days after receiving your request.

The Council will consider your request, and reply.

The reply will state whether we hold the information, and either provide the information you requested, or explain why it has not been possible.

## What happens if the Council doesn't understand my request?

If the Council doesn't understand your request, we will contact you to clarify what it is that you want.

## What does it cost?

If you are requesting information contained in the Council's publication scheme, the scheme will give details of whether (and how much) you will be charged for the information.

If you are requesting information not contained within the publication scheme, the authority may be able to charge you a fee, as laid down in regulations.

## What happens if my request is refused?

A request for information may, for instance, be refused by the Council if it falls under one of the statutory exemptions.

If your request is refused, the reply from the Council will explain why. If you are not satisfied with the decision you can ask for the decision to be reviewed. How you can do this will be explained in the letter you receive.

If, after a review, the Council still refuses your request, you may ask the Information Commissioner to review that decision.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:-

The Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House, Walter Lane  
Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF  
Tel: 01625 545700  
Fax: 01625 545510  
Website: <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>

This leaflet and an application form are accessible on the Council's website

(<http://www.stockton.gov.uk/foi>)



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BOROUGH COUNCIL