



Environmental Information Requests Charging Policy

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Introduction

Recent changes in guidance of Environmental Information Requests (EIR) originating from the Court of Justice of the European Union have significantly changed when and how we can make charges for the provision of EIR information. Before the Council implement any charges we are required to publish charges online.

In October 2015, the Court of Justice of the European Union clarified the charging position and ruled that local author can charge for:

- Staff salary costs – the time spent answering requests for environmental information.
- Staff overhead costs – attributable to time spent by answering requests for information, such as heating, lighting and staff training.
- Disbursements – incurred by the Council in transmitting the information to the applicant, such as photocopying and postage.

How do we charge?

When it is determined by the heads of each section (Planning, Building Control and Property Information) that a charge will be made a Fees Notice must be sent to the requestor as soon as it is practicable possible, but no later than 20 working days after the date of receipt of the requestor for information. The Fees Notice will be created by the department responsible for providing the information and then sent to the central EIR/FOI team for sending on to the applicant. This will be accompanied by advice on how to make the payment.

Requestors will have to pay 60 days for payment to reach the Council. Where payment is not received, it will be assumed that the information is no longer required and the request terminated.

Where the actual cost of complying with the request turns out to be less than the estimate, the balance will be returned to the requestor. Therefore each service will have to keep a record of the number of hours spent on requests where a charge is made. If the actual cost exceeds the estimate we cannot pass this onto the customer.

Charging Regime

The current policy will require a charge to be made under the following circumstance. This will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Assistant Director for Regeneration and the Built Environment and published.

Any EIR request that is estimated to take more than 2 hours of officer time will be charged for (unless the request is covered by circumstances for waived fees). Where the request is deemed not to be manifestly unreasonable and is

estimated to take over 2 hours an estimate of the cost will be calculated so the person requesting the information can be informed of the charge and an invoice raised.

Photocopying Charges

The following charges will apply were paper copies of documents are requested. These charges will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Assistant Director for Regeneration and the Built Environment and published.

Small format documents

Paper size	Style	Copies	Cost
A4	Mono	1	£0.10
A3	Mono	1	£0.20
A4	Colour	1	£0.50
A3	Colour	1	£1.00

Large format documents

Paper size	Style	Copies	Cost
A2	Mono	1	£2.00
A1	Mono	1	£3.00
A0	Mono	1	£4.00
A2	Colour Plans	1	£4.75
A1	Colour Plans	1	£7.25
A0	Colour Plans	1	£12.50
A2	Full Pages (Mono or Colour)	1	£7.60
A1	Full Pages (Mono or Colour)	1	£10.60
A0	Full Pages (Mono or Colour)	1	£15.50

Waiving/Amending of Charges

The Assistant Director of Regeneration and the Built Environment may waive or amend the fee if they feel that the information is not going to be used commercially and the provision of the information could be of economic or social benefit to the residents of the Borough.