

Broads Authority Publication Scheme: Charging for the provision of information

1 Introduction

1.1 The [Freedom of Information Act](#) (FOIA) and the [Environmental Information Regulations](#) (EIR) give rights of public access to information held by public authorities, including the Broads Authority.¹ This guidance sets out our charging policy for complying with FOI or EIR requests¹ and should be read in line with our Publication Scheme.

1.2 More information is available on the [Information Commissioner's Office website](#).

2 Requesting information under the FOIA or EIR

2.1 The FOIA sets appropriate cost limits for public bodies when dealing with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. The Broads Authority's limit is set at £450. These costs are calculated at a rate of £25 per hour for each person making the information available, which means our limit will be exceeded after 18 hours of work.

2.2 When we receive your FOI request, we will estimate whether complying with it would exceed our appropriate limit. To do this, we consider reasonable costs to find out whether we hold the requested information and if we do, to locate, retrieve and extract it.

2.3 If the cost of compliance does not exceed our appropriate limit, we will comply with the request and release the information, unless an exemption applies. We will not consider the cost of staff time, but we may charge for other expenses such as postage (see 3.4).

2.4 If our appropriate limit is exceeded, or we estimate it will be exceeded, we can either refuse your request, provide the information free apart from expenses, or provide the information and issue an invoice. We can also, without providing an initial estimate, search up to the limit and then stop. In this case, we will tell you how we have arrived at our estimate and, where possible, suggest how your request could be refined to come within the limit.

2.5 If you disagree with our decision that complying with your request would exceed our appropriate limit, you can ask the UK Information Commissioner to intervene. More about this process is available at www.ico.org.uk.

2.6 The EIR relate to public access to environmental information, and are aimed at encouraging greater awareness of issues that affect the environment. Charging to provide

¹ Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulation 2004

information under the EIR is at our discretion. To remain comparable with our FOI policy, we will calculate staff costs at £25 per hour. Where the cost is less than £450, we will provide the information free of charge. Where it exceeds £450, we will provide the information and issue an invoice for the total cost.

2.5 If you disagree with our decision that complying with your request would exceed our appropriate limit, you can ask the UK Information Commissioner to intervene. More about this process is available at www.ico.org.uk.

3 Invoicing for costs

3.1 When we make a charge to provide requested information, we will issue you an invoice within the set period of 20 working days for responding to a FOI request. The time from the day we issue the invoice to the day we receive the fee will not count towards this 20-day limit. However, if we do not receive payment within three months of issuing an invoice, we are no longer obliged to respond to the request.

3.2 If the actual cost of answering a request is higher than we specify in the invoice, we will bear the additional cost. If the costs are lower, we will refund the overpayment to you as the applicant. As such, our officers charged with providing the information keep a careful record of the time taken to comply with the request.

3.3 We may combine two or more FOI requests for the purposes of calculating costs, to prevent applicants evading our appropriate cost limit by dividing a request into smaller parts. We will do this if the requests are:

- made by one person, or by different persons who appear to the Authority to be acting together or for a campaign;
- for the same or similar information; and
- the subsequent request is received by the Authority within 60 working days of the previous request.

3.4 We can also recover reasonable additional costs to let you know we have the information you have requested, and to copy and post the information to you. Such costs include printing, photocopying and postage. They also include complying with [FOIA Section 11](#), where you have expressed a preference for the means of communication and where this is reasonably practicable.

3.5 We can make similar charges for providing information under our Publication Scheme.

3.6 We will issue an invoice when charges are to be made and will release the requested information after receiving the fees.

We will make the following charges for photocopying documents. If the charge would total less than £2.00, we will provide the information free of charge.

Table 1

Charges for photocopying documents

Paper size	Black and white print	Colour print
A4	10p per copied side	20p per copied side
A3	20p per copied side	40p per copied side
A2	40p per copied side	80p per copied side
A1	80p per copied side	£1.60 per copied side

We may charge to provide information in other requested formats, such as compact disc. Please contact us to discuss your requirements. We will adhere to any obligations under disability and discrimination legislation, and other relevant legislation, to provide information in accessible ways.

Postage will be charged at normal Post Office rates.

5 Contact us

For more information about anything in this guidance, please contact the Governance Team, Broads Authority, Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich NR1 1RY, telephone 01603 610734 or email committees@broads-authority.gov.uk.

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