

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 14 June 2024

Public Authority: London Borough of Bromley
Address: Stockwell Close
Bromley
BR1 3UH

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant requested information from the London Borough of Bromley (the public authority). By the date of this notice the public authority had not issued a substantive response to this request.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the public authority has breached section 10(1) of FOIA in that it failed to provide a valid response to the request within the statutory time frame of 20 working days.
3. The Commissioner requires the public authority to take the following step to ensure compliance with the legislation.
 - The public authority must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.¹
4. The public authority must take this step within 30 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of FOIA and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

¹ The Commissioner expects the public authority to take appropriate precautions to protect any personal data when disclosing information in a spreadsheet or similar format; [Information Commissioner's Office - Advisory note to public authorities | ICO](#)

Request and response

5. On 27 February 2024, the complainant wrote to the public authority and requested information in the following terms:

"1) Copies of all correspondence (all communications) between your Council and all third parties outside your borough relating to the Crofton Roman Villa?

2) This request relates to all such communications over the last two years. This includes any body corporate or individuals relating in any way to the Roman Crofton Villa situated in your borough? [sic] That is, to clarify all communications to and from your Council on this subject? [sic] As this is the third request, as no response to date, I will take this further if no response is received in writing within 20 days as the Act requires."

Reasons for decision

6. Section 1(1) of FOIA states that:

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled –

(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and

(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him."

7. Section 10(1) of FOIA states that a public authority must respond to a request promptly and "not later than the twentieth working day following the date of receipt".
8. On 2 May 2024, the Commissioner wrote to the public authority, reminding it of its responsibilities and asking it to provide a substantive response to the complainant's request within 10 working days.
9. Despite this intervention the public authority has failed to respond to the complainant.
10. From the evidence provided to the Commissioner in this case, it is clear that the public authority did not deal with the request for information in accordance with FOIA. The Commissioner finds that the public authority has breached section 10(1) by failing to respond to the request within

20 working days and it is now required to respond to the request in accordance with FOIA.

Other matters

11. The Commissioner attempted to contact the Council in respect of the outstanding response on 5 separate occasions and to three different email addresses. On each occasion the Council failed to acknowledge or respond to the Commissioner's correspondence.
12. The Commissioner therefore wishes to express his dissatisfaction with the Council's level of engagement with his offices. He would remind the Council that it should have suitable systems and procedures in place to handle its duties under FOIA efficiently – including dealing with correspondence from his office.

13. Right of appeal
14. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)
GRC & GRP Tribunals,
PO Box 9300,
LEICESTER,
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0203 936 8963
Fax: 0870 739 5836
Email: grc@justice.gov.uk
Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

15. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
16. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

[Signatory Name]
[Signatory Title]
Information Commissioner's Office
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Water Lane
Wilmslow
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