Schedule of Charges – EIR and FOI.

Current FOI & EIR fees

Adopted October 2026.

Fees and charges for requests

Freedom of Information Act 2000 charges are set by legislation. The Council cannot alter these amounts.

Sections 9, 12 and 13 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 apply.

In brief.

If your request, or accumulated requests for similar information exceed "the appropriate limit" as determined by FOI s12(1) we may issue you with a FEES NOTICE and request that you pay a fee.

The Appropriate Limit is currently set by regulation at £25 per hour for the first 18 hours. In effect this means that a request made under Freedom of Information legislation does not attract a fee for the first 18 hours of work at £25 per hour (£450).

Any requests (or group of requests) which take more than 18 hours may attract the full fee (£450) in addition to any extra hours of work it takes. That means if your request takes 21 hours to complete, we may charge a fee of 21 hours at £25 per hour, or £525.

Environmental Information Regs 2004. Unlike standard Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, **there is no statutory cost limit.** Legislation only requires that the council publish a '**Schedule of charges**' for Environmental Information it holds, and those charges be 'reasonable'.

In brief

The schedule of charges applies to any environmental information that is not held or maintained on a 'public register' (or list) of information.

Stratford District Council have searchable public registers for planning and licensing for example

Licensing Register

Planning Register

Other registers can be found by searching the website.

This **Schedule of Charges** is in two parts

a) The hourly rate
Our current rate is set at £38.62 per hour. This represents a calculation of the average amount of cost of staff time taken per hour to compile and respond to a request.

b) The amount of time the rate applies
The amount of time for which this applies is set in 3 ½ hours (The Charging Threshold), or about half a day's work.

These figures are subject to review from time to time.

The effect

Put this together and any information taking less than 3 ½ hours at £38.62 per hour (or £135.17) to compile is effectively free of charge.

Any additional time above the 3 ½ hours to compile would attract the whole fee, including the initial 3 ½ hours, so a request taking 5 hours at £38.62 would be £193.10.

All FOI and EIR requests

Any fees charged (FOI or EIR) may apply to multiple, accumulated or aggregated requests of a similar nature, submitted by one person, or by multiple people who appear to be working together or in concert, as per FOI s12(4).

Where it is possible, we will notify you in advance that a fee may be payable. Sometimes it might not be possible to anticipate the time a request might take until we have started to examine the information. While we will make every effort to let you know ahead of time that the limit might be reached or even exceeded, we cannot guarantee before searches begin that will be the case. We may pause processing the request and advise you. We may ask you to clarify which parts of the request you wish us to proceed with, if there is still time remaining (i.e, Fewer than 18 hours for FOI and 3 ½ hours for EIR requests)

Any request made which attracts a fee, will be charged at the rate that exists on the date the request is received, or the following working day if submitted outside of normal working hours.

If a request is subject to a fee, we may pause searches until the fee is paid.

We may also refuse further requests for similar information until a previous fee has been paid.

How to Avoid Charges

Here are some tips to reduce the likelihood of charges:

- **Narrow down your request**: The more specific your request, the less time and resources it required to fulfil.
- **Request information that is already available**: Check if the information you need is already publicly available on the authority's website or through its publication scheme.
- **Request electronic copies**: Requesting information in an electronic format (e.g., PDF, Excel) rather than paper can help reduce charges for reproduction.

None of this guidance takes away any of your existing rights under the appropriate legislation.

The Information Commissioners Office can advise you. Information Commission's Office