

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 24 July 2023

Public Authority: Dr Adrian Richardson, Dr Shahina Dadabhoy, Dr Vivek Kazal, Dr Abdullah Daulatzai, Dr Mohammed Malik, Dr Zafran Suleman

Address: Partners of Bramingham Park Medical Centre
Lucas Gardens
Luton
LU3 4BG

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant requested information about call volumes. By the date of this notice Bramingham Park Medical Centre (BPMC) had not issued a substantive response to this request.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that BPMC 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 BPMC to take the following step to ensure compliance with the legislation.
 - BPMC must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.
4. BPMC must take this step within 35 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.

Request and response

5. On 3 May 2023, the complainant wrote to BPMC and requested information in the following terms:
- “Under the Freedom of Information I am requesting the following information:
- This is in respect of calls for option 1 – Appointments and 5 – General enquiries
1. The number of call centre staff manning the phones each day from 1st April 2023 to 3rd May 2023 inclusive?
 2. The average time it took to deal with each call?
 3. What is the service level agreement for handling calls, please state times?
 4. How many calls fell outside the service level and the reasons?
 5. The number of calls requesting a doctor to call back?
 6. How many of those calls were actioned during business hours? Please specify the number by hourly breakdown?”
6. BPMC acknowledged the request on 5 June 2023. To date, a substantive response has not been issued.

Reasons for decision

7. 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.”
8. 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”.

9. On 29 June 2023 the Commissioner wrote to BPMC, reminding it of its responsibilities and asking it to provide a substantive response to the complainant's request within 10 working days.
10. Despite this intervention BPMC has failed to respond to the complainant.
11. From the evidence provided to the Commissioner in this case, it is clear that BPMC did not deal with the request for information in accordance with FOIA. The Commissioner finds that BPMC 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.

Right of appeal

12. 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

13. 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.
14. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

Michael Lea
Team Manager
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF