

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**  
**Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)**  
**Decision notice**

**Date:** 26 March 2025

**Public Authority:** Bristol City Council  
**Address:** City Hall  
PO Box 3399  
Bristol  
BS1 9NE

**Decision (including any steps ordered)**

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1. The complainant has requested various information, including about the Green Party, councillors, and decision making on a range of topics. Bristol City Council ("the Council") relied on section 14(1) (vexatious requests) of FOIA and regulation 12(4)(b) (manifestly unreasonable requests) of the EIR to refuse the requests.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the requests were vexatious and therefore the Council was entitled to rely upon section 14(1) of FOIA, and where the requests seek environmental information, regulation 12(4)(b) (manifestly unreasonable requests) of the EIR.
3. The Commissioner does not require further steps.

**Request and response**

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4. Between 31 July 2024 and 6 September 2024, the complainant wrote to the Council and made 11 requests for information. These are contained within Annex A, along with their dates and associated Council reference numbers.

5. The Council responded to request 1 on 4 September 2024. It provided information. It later issued an internal review outcome on 13 September 2024 in which it revised its position, and stated that it refused the request under section 14(1) of FOIA, and for that information which was environmental, regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR.
6. The Council responded to requests 2-10 on 10 September 2024. It refused these requests under section 14(1) of FOIA and regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR. It later issued an internal review outcome on 19 September 2024 in which it maintained this.
7. The Council responded to request 11 on 14 October 2024. It refused it on the same basis of those above.

### **Scope of the case**

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8. The complainant contacted the Commissioner to complain about the way their requests for information had been handled, and specifically that the Council was not entitled to rely upon section 14(1) of FOIA and regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR to refuse them.
9. The scope of this case and the following analysis is whether the Council is entitled to rely upon section 14(1) of FOIA and regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR.

### **Reasons for decision**

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#### **Section 14(1) of FOIA – Vexatious requests** **Regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR – Manifestly unreasonable requests**

10. The following analysis considers whether the requests were vexatious.
11. Section 14(1) of FOIA states that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the request is vexatious.
12. Regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR states that a public authority may refuse to disclose information if the request is manifestly unreasonable.
13. The Commissioner recognises that, on occasion, there is no material difference between a request that is vexatious under section 14(1) of FOIA and a request that is manifestly unreasonable on vexatious grounds under regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR. The Commissioner has therefore considered the extent to which the request could be considered vexatious.

14. The word “vexatious” is not defined in FOIA. However, as the Commissioner’s guidance on section 14(1)<sup>1</sup> states, it is established that section 14(1) is designed to protect public authorities by allowing them to refuse any requests which have the potential to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress.
15. FOIA, and the EIR, gives individuals a greater right of access to official information in order to make bodies more transparent and accountable. As such, it is an important constitutional right. Therefore, engaging section 14(1) or regulation 12(4)(b) is a high hurdle.
16. However, the Commissioner recognises that dealing with unreasonable requests can strain resources and get in the way of delivering mainstream services or answering legitimate requests. These requests can also damage the reputation of the legislation itself.
17. The emphasis on protecting public authorities’ resources from unreasonable requests was acknowledged by the Upper Tribunal (“UT”) in the leading case on section 14(1), *Information Commissioner vs Devon County Council & Dransfield* [2012] UKUT 440 (AAC), (28 January 2013) (“Dransfield”)². Although the case was subsequently appealed to the Court of Appeal, the UT’s general guidance was supported, and established the Commissioner’s approach.
18. Dransfield established that the key question for a public authority to ask itself is whether the request is likely to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress.
19. The four broad themes considered by the Upper Tribunal in Dransfield were:
  - the burden (on the public authority and its staff);
  - the motive (of the requester);
  - the value or serious purpose (of the request); and
  - any harassment or distress (of and to staff).
20. However, the UT emphasised that these four broad themes are not a checklist, and are not exhaustive. It stated:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/section-14-dealing-with-vexatious-requests/>

"all the circumstances need to be considered in reaching what is ultimately a value judgement as to whether the request in issue is vexatious in the sense of being a disproportionate, manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of FOIA" (paragraph 82).

21. While section 14(1) of FOIA effectively removes the duty to comply with a request, regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR only provides an exception. As such the EIR explicitly requires a public authority to apply a public interest test (in accordance with regulation 12(1)(b)) before deciding whether to maintain the exception. The Commissioner accepts that public interest factors, such as proportionality and the value of the request, will have already been considered by a public authority in deciding whether to engage the exception, and that a public authority is likely to be able to "carry through" the relevant considerations into the public interest test. However, regulation 12(2) of the EIR specifically states that a public authority must apply a presumption in favour of disclosure. In effect, this means that the exception can only be maintained if the public interest in refusing the request outweighs the public interest in responding.

### **The Council's view**

22. The Council has argued the following to the Commissioner:

- Between 7 May 2024 and 16 January 2025, the Council has received 28 information requests from the complainant. Of these:
  - 25 were made between 7 May and 9 October 2024, and can be characterised as all relating to the Green Party, councillors, and democratic services. The first 14 requests were handled as usual in accordance with FOIA and the EIR. However, the subsequent 11 requests were refused as vexatious.
  - 3 were made between 14 November 2024 and 16 January 2025. These relate to other subjects and were handled as usual.
  - Whilst the Council has considered it necessary to refuse 11 requests as vexatious, it has sought to engage with the requester on those made before and after them and continues to do so. The Council has provided the Commissioner with a

spreadsheet of these requests and directed him to where they can be found on [whatdotheyknow.com](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com)<sup>2</sup>.

- The Council argues that compliance with these 11 requests – which have been submitted in short period of time, and before the time for compliance of the previous request has elapsed – would place burden upon it, and force public resources to be diverted to handle them.
- The Council has referred the Commissioner to the UT's findings in Dransfield, in which the Tribunal explained that "A requester who consistently submits multiple FOIA requests or associated correspondence within days of each other, or relentlessly bombards the public authority with e-mail traffic, is more likely to be found to have made a vexatious request".
- The Council acknowledges that there is value in the requested information being made available to the public, and that there is an overarching interest in ensuring that there is transparency in the way the Council handles decisions and manages public finances.
- However, the Council argues that compliance with the requests would impose a real and significant burden upon its limited resources, and that this would undermine the credibility of the legislation and divert public resources from other requests and the Council's core functions. The Council further argues that the complainant is repeatedly conflating their requests with personal political comment, which makes some of the requests unclear.
- The Council considers that, whilst there is value in the sought information, and significant burden that the requests would impose on it means that the public interest is most served by refusing the requests under section 14(1) and regulation 12(4)(b).

### **The complainant's view**

23. The complainant argues that the Council is not entitled to 'aggregate' the requests and refuse to comply with them as a group. The requests seek different elements of information, including not only political activities, but also day-to-day operational information that should be open to public scrutiny.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/>

24. The Council's handling of the requests, and treating them as a single group, suggest that the Council is not acting in an applicant-blind manner, as required by the legislation. Further, the Council has failed to comply with its obligations under section 12 (cost of compliance) of FOIA by providing that information which it is able to within the costs limit.
25. The Council has also failed to comply with some previous requests, which makes these requests necessary.

### **The Commissioner's decision**

26. In cases where a public authority is relying on section 14(1) or regulation 12(4)(b), it is for the public authority to demonstrate why it considers that a request is a disproportionate, manifestly unjustified, inappropriate or improper use of FOIA or the EIR.
27. In reviewing both parties' submissions, the Commissioner notes that both parties refer to terms such as 'aggregation', and more generally, the cost of the requests. The Commissioner highlights – for the benefit of both parties – that those factors are only relevant to when a request is being refused under section 12 of FOIA, or regulation 12(4)(b) (on the grounds of cost) of the EIR. In this case, the requests have not been refused on the basis of cost, but on the basis that they are vexatious. Whilst the question of whether a request is vexatious includes a consideration of 'burden', the Commissioner emphasises that this is not the same basis as a consideration of 'cost', for the reasons explained in his public guidance on vexatious requests.
28. The Commissioner will now go on to consider whether the requests are vexatious.
29. In the circumstances of this case, the Commissioner recognises that the requests seek on the whole, information that has value. Whilst the requests seek information on a number of topics, these are topics which are likely to have importance for local residents, relating as they do to the Council's decision making or the actions of elected representatives. Each of the requests may therefore be considered to have a "reasonable foundation"<sup>3</sup> that gives them value or serious purpose.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/section-14-dealing-with-vexatious-requests/how-do-we-assess-value-or-serious-purpose/>

30. However, whilst each of the requests in isolation have value or serious purpose, this does not override any other consideration of whether it is vexatious, and the Commissioner must still consider the other relevant factors identified by the UT in Dransfield, such as burden. As the Upper Tribunal in CP vs Information Commissioner [2016] UKUT 0427 (ACC) 26 September 2016 explained:

"It is clear from the Court of Appeal's decision [in Dransfield] that the public interest in the information which is the subject of the request cannot act as a trump card so as to tip the balance against a finding of vexatiousness" (paragraph 45).

31. The Commissioner understands that 11 information requests have been refused. The first being submitted on 31 July 2024, with the final one submitted on 9 October 2024. As noted by the Council, these information requests appear to share focus on the Green Party, councillors, and decision making.
32. The Commissioner highlights that, whilst the Council has referred to there being 11 requests (and the Commissioner has used this term for continuity in this decision), these 'requests' are in fact items of correspondence that include a number of individual requests within them. For example, request 1 appears to contain approximately nine information requests, each asking the Council to 'please confirm', 'please explain' or 'please share' specific information. As such, there appears to be a significantly greater number of requests than 11.
33. As explained by the Commissioner's guidance<sup>4</sup>, in Dransfield the UT advised that when assessing burden, the following factors were relevant considerations:
- number;
  - pattern;
  - duration; and
  - breadth.
34. In this case the Commissioner perceives that a significant number of requests have been made, in a sustained fashion, across a period of a little over 3 months. These requests, with the exception of request 11,

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<sup>4</sup> <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/foi/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/section-14-dealing-with-vexatious-requests/how-do-we-consider-burden-motive-and-harassment/>



were all submitted within the time for compliance of the previous request, and some of them were submitted within days of each other. The Commissioner therefore accepts that compliance with these requests would, by necessity, require the Council to dedicate significant public resources to ensure proper compliance under the FOIA or EIR, and that this would undermine the Council's delivery of other business, including its ability to handle information requests from other individuals.

35. In such a situation, it is reasonable for the Commissioner to conclude that, whilst the requests seek information with public value, compliance with them would place a grossly oppressive burden upon the Council and damage its ability to deliver other services. The Commissioner considers that this would be against the public interest.
36. The Commissioner has also considered the Council's handling of previous requests – as raised by the complainant – but is not satisfied that the value of the requests in this case is increased by this. This is because the requests in this case appear to relate to different topics, and in such a scenario, it is not clear to the Commissioner how the Council's handling of previous requests would make later requests more necessary. It is also relevant for the Commissioner to note that, whilst the Council has sought to withhold information in respect of previous requests – the proper route of challenge for this is to submit a complaint about that request to the Commissioner for an independent decision to be made, which the complainant has done.
37. In respect of that sought information which is environmental (and therefore falls under the EIR, and not the FOIA) the Commissioner recognises that there is a presumption in favour of disclosure. However, as noted above, the Commissioner recognises that the volume of requests would place a grossly oppressive burden upon the Council and damage its ability to deliver other services. In this context, the Commissioner does not consider that there is an equal or greater public interest in the requests being complied with.
38. The Commissioner's decision is that the Council was entitled to rely on section 14(1) of FOIA and regulation 12(4)(b) of the EIR to refuse the requests because they were vexatious.

## **Other matters**

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39. The Commissioner notes, for the benefit of the complainant, that FOIA and the EIR only relate to recorded information. A public authority is not required to create information to respond to a request, such as by confirming statements, or creating statements to respond to a question.



40. The Commissioner has published guidance for requesters, which includes advice how to write an effective request for official information. This guidance can be accessed at:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>

## Right of appeal

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41. 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](mailto:grc@justice.gov.uk)

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber)

42. 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.
43. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Daniel Perry**  
**Senior Case Officer**  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
**Wycliffe House**  
**Water Lane**  
**Wilmslow**  
**Cheshire**  
**SK9 5AF**

## Annex A

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### 44. Request 1, 31 July 2024 (Council reference 49823723):

Please confirm the total budget for the South Bristol Liveable Neighbourhoods (SBLN) project, including the amount spent to date on publicity including flyers etc.

Many local councillors are on the steering committee of the organisation chosen to run the consultation. Please confirm who took the decision to award that work to said organisation, the process undertaken, as well as any involvement and/or declaration of interest from any of the local councillors during that process and any related correspondence. Please also set out any other engagement undertaken prior to this round of engagement, listing the stakeholders involved in a numbered list.

An advertising feature from Bristol City Council on Bristol24/7 says that "measures such as modal filters, bus gates, pocket parks, and changes to traffic flow will be implemented" in South Bristol. It uses the definitive "will": <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-feat...>

Please therefore confirm what exact measures will be implemented and where. An actual map of proposed interventions is absent from the engagement website. Please share a list of all interventions already under consideration by councillors and/or transport officers, and any accompanying analysis.

The currently scheduled engagement drop-in sessions are all within the school summer holidays, limiting the chance of many to participate. Please share any equalities impact assessment undertaken in relation to the project, including the decision taken to start engagement during the school summer holidays.

The Bristol Green Party manifesto pledged to "create low traffic neighbourhoods by calming and curbing traffic on selected streets and helping it flow better on main routes [and] focus first on completing proposed East Bristol and South Bristol schemes." Please explain the difference between a "Low Traffic Neighbourhood" and a "Liveable Neighbourhood".

The East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood (EBLN) has yet to be implemented or tested. Please share any assessment of what lessons have been learned from the controversial process around that nascent project, and how they have been applied to the SBLN project. Please also confirm who took the decision to proceed with engagement around this project before EBLN was underway, as well as all correspondence

involving Green Party councillors about EBLN and/or SBLN from April 2024 (when they published their manifesto) onwards.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

45. Request 2, 13 August 2024 (Council reference 50216208):

Please provide all correspondence and communications between any of: council leader Tony Dyer, the Leader's Office, council deputy leader Heather Mack, policy committee chair Martin Fodor (and/or any other policy committee chairs), and/or senior council officers from May 2024 onwards related to South Bristol Cemetery and/or Yew Tree Farm, including around:

- Reports prepared for and noted by the Strategy and Resources Policy Committee meeting that took place on 15 July;
- Questions submitted to the Environment and Sustainability Policy Committee meeting that took place on 25 July;
- The statement issued from the Green Party Group's X/Twitter account on the night of Saturday 26 July, which referenced the positions/conduct of Bristol City Council: <https://x.com/bristolgreen/status/181728...>
- The establishment of the investigation mentioned in the aforementioned statement, including details of the terms of reference, commissioning officer, investigating officer, timeline, (anticipated) cost to the council taxpayer in officer time and/or any other costs, and outcome;
- A further Green Party Group statement on X/Twitter on 30 July, which makes commitments on behalf of the council including to publish the terms of reference for the investigation "and [as yet undefined] wider issues" within a week of that date (which has not happened, two weeks on): <https://x.com/bristolgreen/status/181824...>
- Internal communications/discussion about whether those two social media statements were stated by appropriate avenues for those announcements, rather than official Bristol City Council channels, including involving the Public Relations team;

- Discussion of whether/when to publish the investigation terms of reference, and an explanation as to why that has not been published as promised.

I ask as Bristol24/7 reported on 26 July that:

"Emails sent by council bosses at the end of June, seen by the Local Democracy Reporting Service, suggest the cemetery expansion work was given the all-clear by the new Green council leader Tony Dyer. In the emails, Patsy Mellor, director of management of place, said: 'This is still going ahead, as we need the burial spaces by next year. The leader is fully briefed and supportive.' Jon James, head of service for natural and marine environment, added: 'John Smith and Patsy Mellor have been in conversation with Tony Dyer on a regular basis on this matter, and the instruction I have received is to continue with the works to expand the South Bristol Cemetery.'

"This appears to be a different approach than before the Greens won the local election in May, when they largely took control of the council. The council leader and the deputy leader are now both Greens, as well as six of the eight policy committee chairs."

Please therefore also provide:

- Any and all notes, decision logs, and/or any other records of the regular conversations between Councillor Dyer and senior council officers, and his resulting instruction given to continue works to expand the cemetery and/or his support for the project in either general or specific terms.

And please confirm the current status of the works to expand the capacity of South Bristol Cemetery.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

46. Request 3, 19 August 2024 (Council reference 50549767)

On Thursday 15 August, Bristol Green Party shared a video on Twitter/X promoting Councillor Abdul Malik, who is most well-known for having a personal Facebook account that shares videos from a proscribed terrorist group (Hamas) before ignoring questions about that: <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/loca...>

The recent video (while not carrying an imprint detailing who paid for, recorded, edited, or published it, ends with a logo for Councillor Abdul Malik and the Green Melon Community Shop) clearly includes footage of College Green/City Hall recorded by an aerial drone from an event the day before (Wednesday 14

August): <https://x.com/bristolgreen/status/182408...>

Bristol Film Office (BFO), which is part of Bristol City Council, says that, for safety reasons, in line with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) rules, over congested areas it "will only consider requests for drone filming in the city centre early on Sunday mornings, subject to planned activity in the area": <https://filmbristol.co.uk/filming-permis...>

Drone permits, BFO says, cost from £225 per day and are only issued after a thorough application is received a week in advance of proposed filming and then approved by BFO. There is no mention of retrospective permission. Other, non-commercial drone filming can take place in some parks, not including College Green, with a similar application being required by the Council's Parks

Service: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/mus...>

The CAA also sets out that drones must not be flown within 50m of people or, for smaller drones, over crowds and should keep at least 150m away from residential, recreational, commercial and industrial sites: <https://register-drones.caa.co.uk/drone-...>

It appears that Councillor Abdul Malik/the Bristol Green Party Group have either flouted or bent these safety rules in order to promote themselves.

Please provide any and all correspondence, communications, documentation, and/or other records related to this filming, including an application which must include, according to BFO: "A full risk assessment; A copy of your company's public liability insurance certificate (minimum £5million); A copy of the drone pilot's A2CofC, GVC or PfCO; A map/site plan pinpointing take-off and landing points, cordoned areas and proposed flight path; A method statement advising how you plan to manage the areas over which the drone will fly. In line with the CAA guidelines, we will insist on a 30m2 clear radius for this area." Please of course include all information held by the BFO, Parks Service, and/or other parts of the council regarding this matter that involves Councillor Abdul Malik, the Green Melon Community Shop, and/or the Bristol Green Party Group.

If no information is held because no permit was either sought, issued, and/or purchased, please confirm what penalties will be imposed on the Bristol Green Party Group/Councillor Abdul Malik, in addition to

them being charged at least £225, including whether a report would usually be made by BFO in such circumstances to the police or the CAA to investigate potential offences and, if so, whether that has happened or is being considered on this occasion.

47. Request 4, 21 August 2024 (Council reference 50536065)

A Register of Financial Interests was recently published for Carla Denyer MP, a former councillor for Clifton Down/Clifton East: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm...>

It includes employment, gifts, benefits, and hospitality, including from during her time as a Bristol councillor. It details donations worth almost £200,000 registered on a single day, 30 July 2024 – though it is unclear when those donations were offered and/or received. It is not always stated when that money was spent, and on what. None of the 20 or so people or organisations who made these donations have declared a Bristol address. One "dynamic consultancy and investment firm" from Canary Wharf, who specialise in "the buying and selling of real estate", donated £10,000 (which was just over the average amount of those declared donations). The Register also discloses Denyer's directorship at a company, the name of which has been redacted.

A Register of Interests for Carla Denyer can still be found on the website of Bath & North East Somerset Council but none can be found on the website of Bristol City Council: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/mgDecla...>

Please therefore provide any and all copies of Carla Denyer's Register of Interests from her time as a Bristol city councillor (2015-24).

48. Request 5, 27 August 2024 (Council reference 50614157)

Please confirm why, since May 2024, the only policy committee to be livestreamed on Bristol City Council's YouTube page is the Strategy and Resources one. Please share any correspondence and/or communications from May 2024 onwards involving any of the following people related to livestreaming/recording further council meetings: Councillor Tony Dyer, Councillor Heather Mack, Councillor Abdul Malik, senior council officers, and/or Democratic Services officers.

Please confirm when Bristol City Council started livestreaming meetings and explain why a number of livestreamed council meetings uploaded to the YouTube page, including from before May 2019, no longer appear there, limiting scrutiny of the previous administration and of councillors now serving in the current one. The oldest livestream video currently showing is the Full Council meeting on 13 November 2018,



with a gap then until 21 May 2019. Playlists on the page do not currently include any from the 2018-19 municipal year, though do include some from 2016-17. Those videos must surely be held within the council or in its platforms/archives. Please provide reinstated links of those videos on the YouTube channel.

Please provide any correspondence and/or communications related to previous livestreamed meetings for the same people and timeframe as above, including any related to any officer and/or politician's decision to remove, archive, and/or delete any videos of council meetings.

49. Request 6, 30 August 2024 (Council reference 50731985)

The Bristol Cable published the following interview with Councillor Tony Dyer, now the Leader of the Council, in November 2023:

"The ability for the public to access information that helps them understand decision making is an essential part of confidence in the system," Dyer says, adding that if the Greens end up leading the council they would look to communicate "proactively" with citizens, including by helping them clarify requests, routinely publish more data and keep this process under review: <https://thebristolcable.org/2023/11/tran...>

Since then, Bristol City Council has reportedly appealed an enforcement notice from the Information Commissioner's Office after the watchdog said that the local authority's proposed timeframe to clear its Freedom of Information request backlog was unacceptable: <https://localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/info...>

According to law firm Mishcon de Reya, this is thought to be the first ever appeal of an FOI enforcement notice to the First-Tier Tribunal.

Please provide all correspondence, communications, documents, notes and/or other information related to the decision to appeal, including who took that decision, when, and how – and including any discussion/approval related to this which involves any of/any combination of the following people since May 2024: Councillor Dyer, his offices, Councillor Heather Mack, the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer, and/or council staff in Information Governance and/or Legal Services.

Please also confirm any and all costs associated with the appeal, including officer time, as well as providing copies of the council's submission(s) to the First-Tier Tribunal.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold,

please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

50. Request 7, 3 September 2024 (Council reference 50816588)

Just months after being taken over by the Green Party and Lib Dems, Bristol City Council has announced plans to kill five beautiful, mature, healthy trees in the city centre in the new year, 25 years after they were planted: <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/str...>

Councillor Andrew Brown, the Chair of the Economy and Skills Policy Committee, is quoted in the press release about the project (<https://news.bristol.gov.uk/press-releas...> ).

Three of the five pits currently have little or no visible damage from the trees, yet all of the trees are set to be killed. Councillor Andrew Brown appears in a short video on the council's Instagram page, next to the worst-looking tree pit, seeking to justify the decision to fell all five trees: [https://www.instagram.com/reel/C\\_dPfNWs9yB](https://www.instagram.com/reel/C_dPfNWs9yB)

No public input is being sought and it is unclear who has been consulted on or has approved the plan to kill and shred five mature trees. The plans do not appear to have been mentioned in the papers for the Economy and Skills Policy Committee in July, its only meeting since 6 May, and appear not to warrant a planning application.

These trees are located in a conservation area, and do not appear to be either dying or dangerous (or the council would have said so). Following the tree scandal in Plymouth city centre, the Forestry Commission says that councils have a new legal duty, as of November 2023, to consult residents before committing to fell street trees – with notices required on the trees during a minimum 28 day consultation period: <https://www.trees.org.uk/News-Blog/Lates...>

In the council website links above, no mention is made of these trees falling under any exemption(s) which would mean no consultation would be required. None of the examples of exemptions cited by the Forestry Commission appear to apply, which may mean that the council has prejudiced/pre-determined itself by publishing definitive plans to remove these trees.

Please provide all advice provided by and/or correspondence with the city council's tree officers and/or other "arboricultural specialists" in relation to this plan, as well as any and all assessments of the five trees that are to be killed – including the timeline and risk assessment for when "the trees could become unstable" "if left as they are", the

latest recorded height of the trees, and other details such as their estimated CAVAT value and annual carbon absorption. Please also provide the corresponding forecast details for the five smaller trees which will replace the five mature trees, with a timeline estimate for when, if at all, they will make the same contribution to urban cooling and air pollution reduction.

Please provide a list of all internal and external people and organisations, including councillors, the Leader, the Deputy Leader, the Leader's Office, the Bristol Tree Forum, and/or any members of the Environment and Sustainability Policy Committee, who have been consulted on this £365,000 project.

Please share any and all communications, correspondence, documents, decision logs, minutes etc involving any of them, including Councillor Andrew Brown, related to the trees, the above video, and, if possible, the project as a whole, showing clearly which named officers, councillors, and committees have approved the work.

Please also share any such records of discussions on whether to do any of the following: consult the public on this project as a whole, consult on the killing of these five trees specifically, seek planning permission, expand and future-proof the existing pits to retain all or some of the trees (and any costs identified with doing that), and/or spend this more-than-a-third-of-a-million pounds of council taxpayers' money on alternative projects.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

51. Request 8, 4 September 2024 (Council reference 50863117)

Bristol City Council is proposing cuts to frontline services and interventions including for people with HIV; disabled children; women-only mental health services; and people living in sheltered accommodation.

Please provide all correspondence, communications, minutes etc related to the development, approval, and/or launch of the "Help When You Need It" consultation, and/or the proposals therein, between any of/any combination of the following people since May 2024: Councillor Tony Dyer, his offices, Councillor Heather Mack, Councillor Stephen

Williams, Councillor Lorraine Francis, and/or the relevant senior officers.

If any part of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

52. Request 9, 6 September 2024 (Council reference 51006945)

It is reported that Bristol City Council wants to introduce a charge of more than £1,000 a year for anyone who parks at their place of work: <https://www.bristolworld.com/news/transp...>

In 2017 and 2018, the Green Party Group called for all councillors, ex-councillors, and senior officers to give up their free parking at City Hall and pay £600 per person each year for the privilege (despite the Green Party Group noting that members of the public parking in council car parks in the city centre at that time had to pay around £2,000 per person each year for the same thing): <https://bristolgreenparty.org.uk/parking...> ; <https://bristolgreenparty.org.uk/parks-a...>

Please also confirm how many and which Green Party Group councillors and ex-councillors, if any, received free parking at City Hall and how many and which of them gave it up, for each full year from 2017/18 onwards (and earlier if possible). Please also confirm how many and which of them received travel-related perks on top of their taxpayer-funded allowances, for instance bus passes.

Please confirm how many and which Green Party Group councillors and ex-councillors, if any, currently receive free parking at City Hall. Please also confirm how many and which of them currently receive travel-related perks on top of their taxpayer-funded allowances, for instance bus passes.

For all of the above, where possible, please also confirm the annual (estimated) cost in administration, lost income, and any other costs for those free parking permits/exemptions/passes etc.

Please also share all correspondence and communications involving Councillor Tony Dyer, Councillor Heather Mack, and/or Councillor Ed Plowden from May 2024 until now which discuss (a) removing free parking for councillors and/or council officers at City Hall and/or (b) offering parking passes to either and/or both of those groups and at what price.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

53. Request 10, 6 September 2024 (Council reference: 51006946)

In June, Councillor David Wilcox, from the Transport and Connectivity Policy Committee, trumpeted that the Junction 3 underpass had been "unblocked" with work done "so they don't block in future" and an end to "breeze blocks or pallets to cross the ponds": <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-feat...>

Councillor Emma Edwards, the Leader of the Green Party Group and fellow member of the Transport and Connectivity Policy Committee, celebrated that there would be "No more Krypton Factor challenged [sic] to get through the underpass when it floods": [https://x.com/bristol\\_pip/status/1801210...](https://x.com/bristol_pip/status/1801210...)

Councillor Cara Lavan predicted that the flooding would "be no more": [https://x.com/cara\\_films/status/18012783...](https://x.com/cara_films/status/18012783...)

Councillor Wilcox suggested that people contact other politicians to ask them why they had not done the work sooner: [https://x.com/David\\_on\\_a\\_bike/status/180...](https://x.com/David_on_a_bike/status/180...)

Councillor Wilcox then said that, "after some investigation", it was unnecessary to fix an underground pipe, as had been previously reported: [https://x.com/David\\_on\\_a\\_bike/status/180...](https://x.com/David_on_a_bike/status/180...)

The same underpass, just a few months later, has flooded once again: <https://x.com/xjib/status/18317300322905...>

On Fix My Street, the council says: "This issue is currently under investigation. We'll provide updates on the outcome as soon as we can": <https://www.fixmystreet.com/report/6440826>

Please provide all records from the "investigation" cited by Councillor Wilcox about that underpass.

Please also provide all communications and correspondence between relevant council officers and Green Party councillors about that underpass, from the start of May 2024 until the end of August 2024. Or, if that is too much for the time limit, please limit the request to involve relevant council officers corresponding with one or more of the following: Councillor David Wilcox, Councillor Emma Edwards,

Councillor Cara Lavan, Councillor Tony Dyer, Councillor Heather Mack, and/or Councillor Ed Plowden.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.

54. Request 11, 9 October 2024 (Council reference: 52087421):

Yesterday (8 October), Carla Denyer MP was one of two Green Party MPs to abstain on whether private school fees should continue to receive tax breaks, in an apparent break with party policy: <https://votes.parliament.uk/votes/common...>

Ironically, this morning (9 October) Bristol Green Party Group issued a tweet quoting Denyer as saying that the rich do not pay enough tax and that "many are happy to pay a bit more": <https://x.com/bristolgreen/status/184394...>

Carla Denyer did not speak in yesterday's debate in the House of Commons, and has yet to explain why she abstained. A recent interview/profile in Vogue describes Denyer as being "coy about her own background": <https://www.vogue.co.uk/article/carla-de...>

MPs are often lobbied by their local councils and councillors around votes in parliament that might impact the local authority.

My request is therefore as follows:

1. Please provide any and all correspondence and/or communications regarding private schools and/or the upcoming introduction of VAT on their fees that have been exchanged between Carla Denyer and Bristol Green Party Councillors (for instance, in their official capacities as Council Leader, Council Deputy Leader, and Chair of the Education Committee) and/or Bristol City Council officers since 4 July 2024.
2. Please confirm the number and ratio of private (i.e. fee paying) schools and educational institutions (excluding universities/higher education) in each of Bristol's parliamentary constituencies, starting with Bristol Central, and in the city overall that are known to the council/local education authority.
3. Please provide any and all correspondence and communications regarding the upcoming introduction of VAT on private school fees that have been exchanged between Bristol Green Party Councillors (for

instance, in their official capacities as Council Leader, Council Deputy Leader, and Chair of the Education Committee) and/or Bristol City Council officers and staff/representatives of any private schools and/or networks of private schools since 4 July 2024.

4. Please provide a list of any and all meetings held involving Bristol City Council staff and/or councillors where this subject was mentioned, who attended, and provide the relevant minutes.

5. Please confirm the position of Bristol City Council's administration in relation to private schools generally and whether private school fees should be subject to VAT.

If any parts of this request would, either individually or by accumulation with the others, trigger the 18 hours costs threshold, please disregard it from this request so as to provide as much of the information requested as possible. Please provide advice and assistance, as required under the Act, to enable me to refine any such elements of this request for any future request, should that be necessary.