

Reference: FOI0049

**Request:**

I would like to make a Freedom of Information request to North Tyneside Council to obtain information about the Councils Complaints process.

Specifically I would like to know some statistics regarding the numbers of Complaints received about the Council and at which stages these were resolved. For those complaints which reached stage 3 of the process, I would like to know how many were referred to the Appeals and Complaints Committee, and how many the Council decided to close at that stage, having taken the decision that they did not feel they would take it to the committee, and their reasons for taking these decisions.

I am looking for this information for the last 3 years - 2014 to date.

**Response:**

Please find attached the statistics, taken from the Annual Complaints Reports, for financial years 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.

You will see that table gives you the percentage of complaints resolved at Stage's one, two and three of the corporate process. I have included also, for your information, the actual number of complaints per year.

When a Stage three request is received, the full complaint is reviewed by the Complaints Officer and a decision is taken whether or not to progress it to the next stage, which is the Regulation and Review Committee, the complainant is then advised on the progress. If the complaint is progressed to Stage three, this is recorded on a database, however, if the request is refused at Stage three, the complaint is closed at Stage two.

To provide the information relating to the second part of your complaint: "For those complaints which reached stage 3 of the process, I would like to know how many were referred to the Appeals and Complaints Committee, and how many the Council decided to close at that stage, having taken the decision that they did not feel they would take it to the committee, and their reasons for taking these decisions."

This would entail a manual search of each individual record as there is no central record of the information you have requested. To do this, would exceed the appropriate limit as in the financial year 2017/18 alone, there were 138 complaints closed at Stage two, this is for only for one year.

Therefore this part of the request is refused under s12 (1) Freedom of Information Act 2000, since the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

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In assessing the cost of complying, the costs attributable to officer time involved in complying have been taken into account. Such costs are limited to £450.00 under the Regulations, which equates to eighteen hours of officer time.

I have however, provided the information I can within the appropriate limit.

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