

DRAFT - PROTECT

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

Date: X

Public Authority: Etchingham Parish Council
Address: Parish Office
Parsonage Croft
Etchingham
East Sussex
TN19 7BY

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant requested information from Etchingham Parish Council (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 failed to respond to the request within 20 working days and has therefore breached regulation 5(2) of the EIR.
3. The Commissioner requires the the public authority to take the following steps to ensure compliance with the legislation.
 - Issue a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under the EIR.¹
4. The public authority must take these steps 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

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](#)

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pursuant to section 54 of the Freedom of Information Act and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

Request and response

5. On 23 February 2024, the complainant made the following request for information to the public authority:

"Under FOI and IER may I please have all correspondence (including any what's app or text messages) between yourself and [redacted name] in relation to Planning applications RR/2022/840/P and RR/2022/2690/P specifically in relation to all submissions you have made on behalf of Etchingham Parish Council under the delegated authority given to you by Etchingham Parish Council at item 2497 biii on the 18 August 2022 not limited to but including any drafting of submissions and any form of correspondence discussing those two applications. In addition, any correspondence between [redacted name], yourself and any other Parish Council or body on the same applications."

Reasons for decision

6. Regulation 5(1) of the EIR states that:

"a public authority that holds environmental information shall make it available on request."

7. Regulation 5(2) of the EIR states that:

"Information shall be made available under paragraph (1) as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after the date of receipt of the request."

8. The Commissioner contacted the public authority on 20 June 2024 reminding it of its responsibilities and asking it to provide a substantive response to the complainant within 10 working days. Despite this intervention the public authority has failed to respond to the complainant.
9. 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 the EIR. The Commissioner's decision is that the public authority has breached regulation 5(2) by failing to respond to the

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

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Right of appeal

10. 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

11. 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.
12. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF