



Anna Caple

**Reply to**  
foi@bristol.gov.uk  
Our ref 14498497  
Date 23 August 2021

Dear Anna Caple

**Information requested by:** Anna Caple

**Our ref 14498497 – internal review response**

I am writing in response to your concerns about Bristol City Council's handling of your request for information received on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

I was appointed to carry out an independent review as I was not involved in the original request.

In your request you asked for the following information:

**“Please disclose all internal and external correspondence involving Councillor Tom Brook and relating to Stoke Lodge Playing Fields, from 1 January. 2018 onwards.”**

**Original decision**

Despite you seeking an update to your request on 8<sup>th</sup> April, Bristol City Council did not provide you with a response.

**Internal review request**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July you contacted Bristol City Council to request an internal review as you were not satisfied with the lack of a response to your request.

I have treated your request for an internal review in line with the terms of the FOI Act.

**Internal review**

**Website**  
[www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk)



Having reviewed your request, the Council has considered it to be vexatious in accordance with Section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I concur with this view.

The Freedom of Information Act is a piece of legislation giving the public access to information held by public authorities. However, Section 14(1) is designed to protect public authorities by allowing them to refuse requests that have the potential to cause a disproportionate or unjustified level of disruption, irritation or distress.

This decision has been taken by reference to the background and history of this matter. Whilst you may not personally have submitted previous requests to the council in relation to this matter, the council is satisfied that requests relating to the Stoke Lodge playing fields have been submitted in high volumes over the past few years by individuals who are either members of or affiliated with the 'We Love Stoke Lodge' community group and that this request falls into that category. The council has provided the information requested in the years since the fence was erected, but the point has been reached where the view has been taken that the disproportionate burden placed on the authority by this campaign outweighs the transparency element for which the access regime provides.

In the hope that it may assist in your understanding of why this request has been declared to be vexatious, you may wish to read the ICO guidance at the link below:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1198/dealing-with-vexatious-requests.pdf>

However, I do find that Bristol City Council did not provide you with a response within the statutory 20 working day timeframe and as such is in breach of 10(1) of the FOI Act. I would like to take this opportunity to apologise for the delay in providing you with a response and that BCC recognises the breach in FOIA. We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused; we do remain committed to responding to information requests as soon as we are able to do so in these unprecedented times.

## **Decision**

The final decision of this review is that it partially upholds your complaint.

If you are not content with the outcome of this Internal Review you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a further decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

Yours faithfully

Ben Hodge  
Data Protection Officer