

Freedom of Information (FOI) and MP Correspondence Annual Report 2017/18

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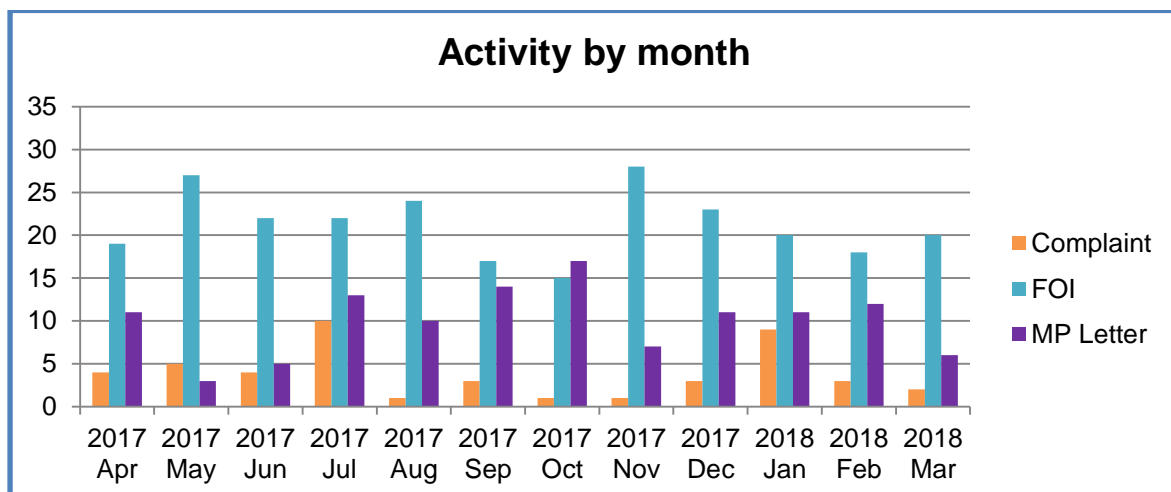
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Summary

By law public bodies are required to deal with requests for information under the Freedom of Information act. The Corporate Governance team took on the administration of letters received from local MPs during 2017/18. This report incorporates analysis of MP letter communication and the statutory function of Freedom of information. Aligning the combination of these two functions and the complaints function within the Corporate Governance team allows for improved understanding and reporting for the organisation.

Activity

In 2017/18 NHS Kernow received 257 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and 137 MP letters. The table below shows the different types of communication received by the Corporate Governance team during the year.



There was a 20 percent decrease in FOI requests from 2016/17 to 2017/18, however, the number received in 2017/18 is in line with the number of requests made in previous years.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
April	20	19	16	31	19
May	24	23	14	23	27
June	14	26	23	27	22
July	25	15	21	24	22
August	26	10	31	30	24
September	32	29	16	17	17
October	18	22	18	22	15
November	24	11	23	20	28
December	14	24	16	27	23
January	23	24	17	33	20

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
February	22	19	24	30	18
March	14	18	17	34	20
Total	256	240	236	318	255

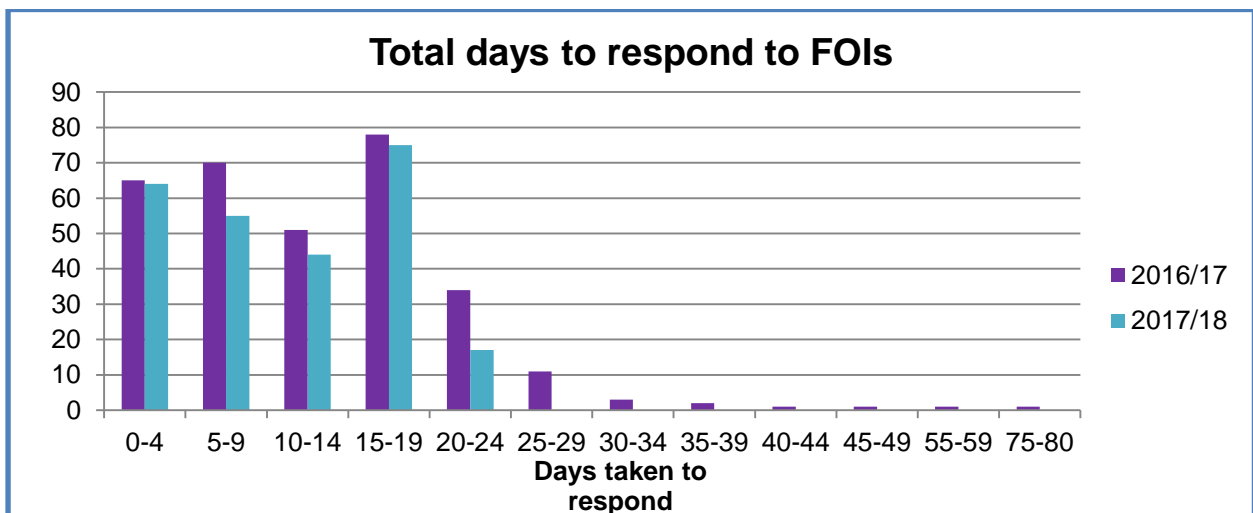
NHS Kernow received two requests for internal reviews from requestors during the reporting year. This process allows requestors who are dissatisfied with the response they have received to have their response reviewed and to determine if an amended response should be provided.

Both requestors were sent an amended response following an internal review. No applicants approached the Information Commissioners Office to raise a complaint following the Freedom of Information process during 2017/18.

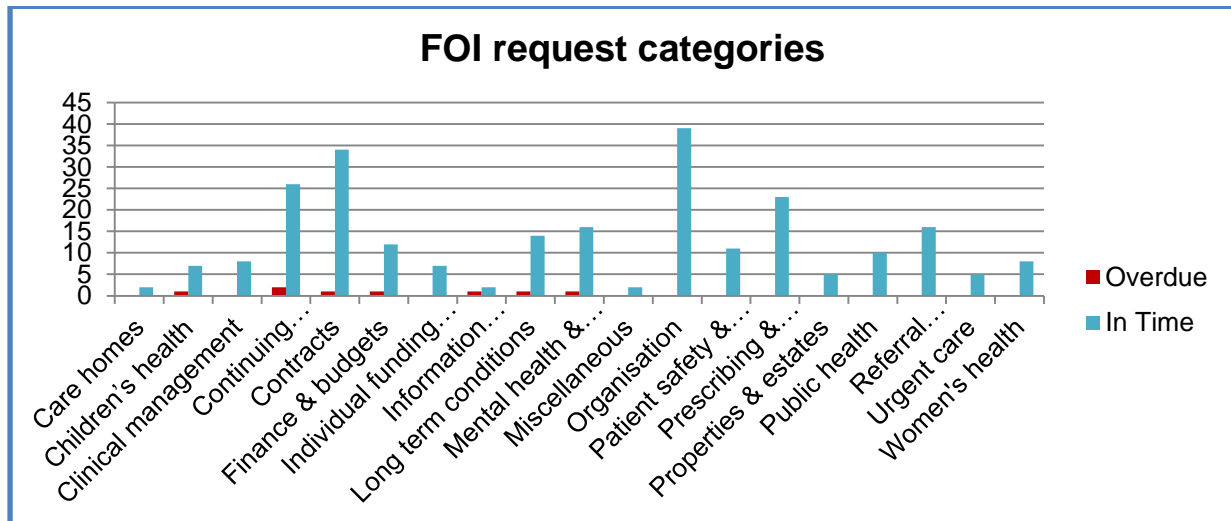
FOI response times

By law all Freedom of Information requests must be answered within twenty working days. To allow this to happen NHS Kernow staff are given fifteen working days to locate and provide the information requested, this leaves five working days for the FOI and Complaints Officer to compile the response and organise director sign off.

The Corporate Governance team has undertaken significant work to reduce the amount of FOIs that have gone over the twenty day deadline resulting in a 79 percent reduction in overdue requests from 38 in 2016/2017 to eight in 2017/2018. Since the new FOI and Complaints Officer started in post at the beginning of November 2017, no FOIs have exceeded the twenty day time limit.



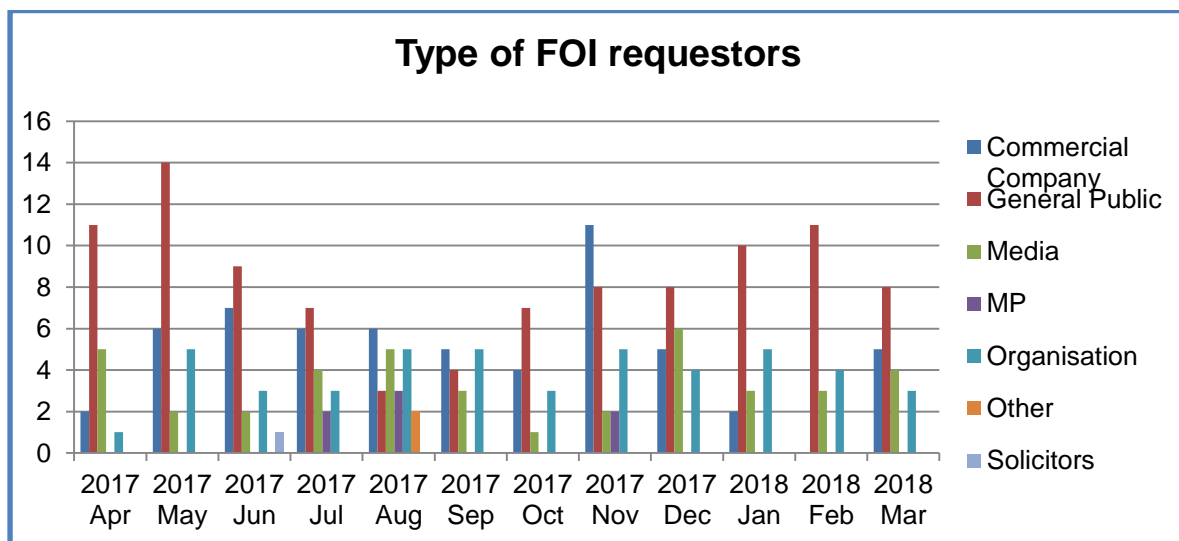
A combination of the volume of requests and the subject matter occasionally results in requests going over the 20 day deadline. We can see from the chart below where requests have gone overdue, this has been due to the complexities and number of teams required to provide complex information held by the organisation. Additionally requests relating to Shaping our Future, which are multi-organisational in nature, have been time consuming to collate.



Type of FOI requestors

The FOI log categorises requestors by type, which are as follows:

- Commercial company
- General public
- GPs
- Media
- MPs
- Organisations
- Solicitors
- Other



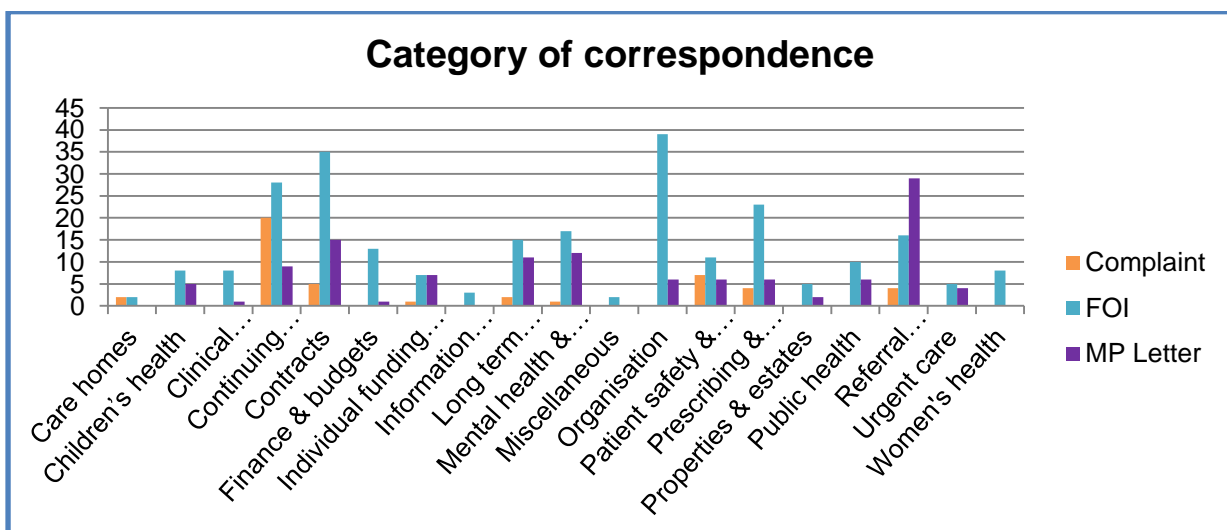
The majority of requests received in 2017/18 were from the general public.

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	Total
General public	100	94	97	97	80	468
Media	40	86	40	31	51	248
Organisation	46	57	44	53	66	266
Commercial company	59	51	41	44	38	233
MP	8	22	6	9	15	60
Other	2	4	2	0	1	9
GP	0	3	6	2	4	15
Solicitors	1	1	0	4	1	7
Total	256	318	236	240	256	1306

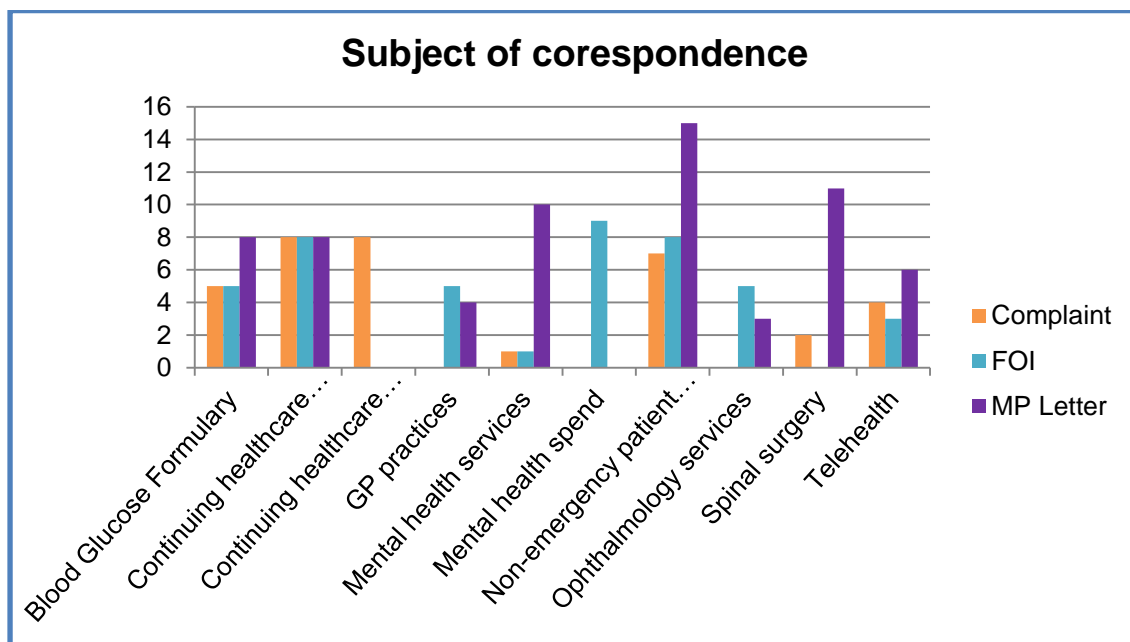
2016/17 saw a significant increase in requests from the Media and MPs regarding both Mental Health spend and Shaping our Future, 2017/18 saw this reduce back down to similar levels of previous years.

However, there continues to be a steady increase in requests from commercial companies. We receive many requests from companies wanting to know what we spend on different aspects of our business and when we might be tendering for different items or services. We also receive a number of requests looking for the lead contact for an item or service.

Category of correspondence FOI and MP



Bringing together the handling of FOI and MP letters with complaints has enabled the Corporate Governance team to highlight areas where there has been a lot of interest and to make sure these are considered when commissioning decisions are made. For example there was so much interest in the blood glucose formulary and NHS Kernow has now reconsidered the commissioning of Continuous Glucose Monitors. This report does not include correspondence received outside of the Corporate Governance team, or informal enquiries received. Of the MP letters regarding referral management 10 were regarding Spinal Surgery, this was a big area of interest due to the suspension of routine spinal surgery pathway. Another big area of interest was Non-emergency patient transport.



MP letters



The chart above shows the amount of correspondence we get from each constituency, letters are generally related to individual case work. The chart below shows this by subject of correspondence, the majority of correspondence has related to referral management and mental health and learning disabilities. Correspondence from MPs usually relates to delays in treatment and our access policies. Prescribing and pharmacies have received eight letters related to the blood glucose formulary and continuous glucose monitors.

