WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Publication Scheme**

**INTRODUCTION**

**The Freedom of Information Act**

The Freedom of Information Act grants to members of the public rights of access to all kinds of recorded information held by a wide range of public authorities. Information about the Act is available from the Information Commissioner’s Office at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

**Publication Scheme**

The Act requires every public authority to adopt and maintain a generic model publication scheme which should be adopted and operated by all public authorities from 1st January, 2009. Washington Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme at their Council Meeting on ……………… It is intended to provide everyone interested in the Council with a comprehensive guide to the information that the Council will automatically or routinely publish or otherwise makes available to the public.

**Freedom of Information Requests and the Publication Scheme**

It is important to note that a publication scheme simply sets out the information that is routinely available. Information that is not listed in the Information Available Guide of this document can still be requested and it will be made available unless it can be legitimately withheld. This can be done by making a written request to the Parish Clerk who will reply within 20 working days after receipt of the request.

**The Council’s Commitment to the Act**

The Council is committed to openness and accountability and already makes large amounts of information available to the public, through the website, via the telephone and by post. Should a personal visit to view information be required, an appointment will be necessary.

**MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME**

This model publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. It may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

This publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

* To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
* To specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
* To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
* To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
* To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
* To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
* To make this publication scheme available to the public.

**Classes of Information**

**Who we are and what we do.**

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

**What we spend and how we spend it.**

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering procurement and contracts.

**What our priorities are and how we are doing.**

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

**How we make decisions.**

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

**Our policies and procedures.**

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

**Lists and registers.**

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

**The services we offer**.

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include :-

* Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
* Information in draft form.
* Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

**The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available**

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged wsithin a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

**Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme**

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as :-

* photocopying
* postage and packaging
* costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information.

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorized, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

**Written requests**

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Please note that should information requested and the cost of complying with your request exceed £450 (this is calculated on the basis of 18 hours work at £25 per hour) the Council is entitled to make a charge known as ‘prescribed costs’ which include the costs of locating the information, retrieving the information, extracting the information from a document containing it, informing you whether we hold the information and communicating the information to you prior to complying with your request. Alternatively the Council may refuse the request.

You will be informed as early on in the process in writing if the request is likely to exceed £450 so that you have the option to adjust your request to bring it under the £450 limit. Where the cost of complying with the request does not exceed £450 the Council may only charge for disbursements which include photo-copying, printing, postage, etc. You will be informed as early on in the process as possible if a charge is payable. Any charges must be paid prior to the information being sent. The requestor will have 60 days to pay the fees, failing which the request will be closed.

**Information available from Washington Parish Council under the model publication scheme**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Information to be published** | **How the information can be obtained** | **Cost** |
| **Class1 - Who we are and what we do**  (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)  This will be current information only | Website  Noticeboard  Hard copy | Free  Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Who’s who on the Council and its Committees | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Contact details for Parish Clerk | Website  Noticeboard  Newsletter  Hard copy | Free  Free  Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Contact details for Council members | Website  Newsletter  Hard copy | Free  Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Location of main Council office and accessibility details | Website  Noticeboard  Newsletter  Hard copy | Free  Free  Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Staffing structure | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |
| **Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it**  (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)  Current and previous financial year |  |  |
| Annual return form and report by auditor | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Finalised budget | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Precept | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Borrowing Approval letter | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Standing Orders and Financial Regulations | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Grants given and received | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| List of current contracts awarded and value of contract | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Members’ allowances and expenses | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Risk Assessment – Financial and non-Financial | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |
| **Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing**  (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews) |  |  |
| Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum) | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum) | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Quality status | Website | Free |
| Complaints Policy and Procedure | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |
| **Class 4 – How we make decisions**  (Decision making processes and records of decisions)  Current and previous council year |  |  |
| Timetable of meetings – Full Council and Committee | Website  Noticeboard  Hard copy | Free  Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Agendas of meetings – Full Council and Committee | Website  Noticeboard  Hard copy | Free  Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Responses to consultation papers | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Responses to planning applications | Hard copy  Horsham District Council Website | 5p per A4 copy +P&P  Free |
| Bye-laws | Horsham District Council Website | Free |
|  |  |  |
| **Class 5 – Our policies and procedures**  (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)  Current information only | (hard copy or website) |  |
| Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:  Procedural Standing Orders  Councillors Code of Conduct  Policy statements | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:  Internal policies relating to the delivery of services  Health and safety policy  Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)  Policies and procedures for handling requests for information  Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme) | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Information security policy | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive) | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Data protection policies | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Schedule of charges )for the publication of information) | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Class 6 – Lists and Registers**  Currently maintained lists and registers only |  |  |
| Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice) | None held |  |
| Assets Register | Hard copy | 5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Disclosure log | None held |  |
| Register of members’ interests | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Register of gifts and hospitality | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |
| **Class 7 – The services we offer**  (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)  Current information only |  |  |
| Allotments | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Closed churchyards | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Village halls | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Recreation Ground | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Seating, litter bins | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
| Bus shelters | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |
| **Additional Information**  This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above |  |  |
|  | Website  Hard copy | Free  5p per A4 copy +P&P |
|  |  |  |

**Contact details:** The Parish Clerk, Washington Parish Council, PO BOX 2286, Pulborough RH20 9BT.

0777 6772921 or Email: <clerk@washingtonparish.org.uk>

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **TYPE OF CHARGE** | **DESCRIPTION** | **BASIS OF CHARGE** |
| **Disbursement cost** | Photocopying @ 5p per sheet (black & white) | Actual cost 5p |
|  | Photocopying @ 5p per sheet (colour) | Actual cost 5p |
|  |  |  |
|  | Postage | Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2nd class postage |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other** |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Policy adopted May 2012

Last reviewed and agreed May 2024Minute ReferenceAPCM/26/12

Next Review May 2025