

West Grinstead Parish Council

Freedom of Information Act

Publication Scheme

Adopted 19th November 2008

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

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 1 January 2009. **West Grinstead Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme at their Council Meeting on 19th November 2008.** 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, via the website, notice boards, email, telephone and the local newsletter. Information is also available to people who wish to visit the Parish Office.

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 within 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
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, 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.

Information available from **West Grinstead Parish Council** under the model publication scheme

{Notes:

1) I think we will need to ask to put more information on the newsletter web site (www.wgpublications.com) if everyone is agreeable.

2) Some of the items probably don't apply to us.}

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
<p>Class1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This will be current information only</p> <p>N.B. Councils should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted.</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>Hard copy</p>	<p>Free</p> <p>6p per A4 sheet</p>
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website/Hard Copy	As above
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Website/Hard Copy	As above
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website/Hard Copy	As above
Staffing structure	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
<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)</p> <p>Current and previous financial year as a minimum</p>	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Annual return form and report by auditor	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet

Finalised budget	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Precept	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	Hard Copy (if available)	6p per A4 sheet
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Grants given and received	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Quality status	N/A	
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	N/A	
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions)	Website	Free
Current and previous council year as a minimum	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet

Minutes of meetings (as above) – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Reports presented to council meetings - NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Responses to planning applications	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Bye-laws	Hard Copy	6p per A4 sheet
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)	Website	Free
Current information only	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:		
Procedural standing orders (<i>on Website</i>)	Website <i>where indicated</i>	Free
Committee and sub-committee terms of reference		
Delegated authority in respect of officers	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Code of Conduct (<i>on Website</i>)		
Policy statements		
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:		
Internal policies relating to the delivery of services	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Equality and diversity policy		
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)		

Information security policy	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Data protection policies	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Class 6 – Lists and Registers	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Currently maintained lists and registers only	Some information may only be available by Inspection	
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Assets Register	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)	N/A	
Register of members' interests	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Class 7 – The services we offer (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Current information only	Some information may only be available by Inspection	
Allotments	N/A yet	

Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Hard copy	
Community centres and village halls	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Bus shelters	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
Markets	N/A	
Public conveniences	N/A	
Agency agreements	Hard copy	6p per A4 sheet
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Hard copy	
Any other Additional Information	Upon request by hard copy if available	6p per A4 sheet

Contact details:

Website Address: www.wgpublications.com

Request for hard copies:

Mrs Helen Dayneswood (Parish Clerk)
 Parish Office
 Village Hall
 High Street
 Partridge Green
 West Sussex
 RH13 8HX

Email westgrinsteadpc@tiscali.co.uk
 Telephone 01403-710270

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 6p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
		Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Freedom of Information Request	An additional charge may be made if the cost to the Parish Council for retrieval and collation is unreasonable.	

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Council would normally expect the Clerk to understand what information you have asked for and be able to tell you where you can find it. If the information you receive is not what you asked for or need, you should first contact the Clerk. If the information is not available you will be told why.

If you believe that the Council has not dealt with your request fairly and cannot deal with it satisfactorily on an informal basis, you should follow our complaints procedure. You can get details of this procedure from the Clerk (details as above) or visit the Council Regulations page on the website.

If you have followed our complaints procedure and are still not happy with how we have dealt with your request, you may also contact the Information Commissioner to ask them to investigate this matter further.