

Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council

Freedom of Information Act – Publication Scheme

Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000, which came into full effect on 1 January 2005, gives a general right of access to all kinds of recorded information held by public authorities. Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council is a public authority as defined in the Act.

Every public authority is required to adopt and maintain a model publication scheme with effect from 1 January 2009. Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme (detailed below) at its meeting on

Members of the public already have a high degree of access to information from Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council via meetings, the telephone, email, and its website or by personal visits to town councillors.

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 guide to information can still be requested and should be made available unless it can be legitimately withheld due to an exemption. All applications must be made in writing to: The Clerk, Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council, Incott Farm, Sampford Courtenay, Okehampton EX20 2SR. All information not covered by an exemption must ordinarily be released to the applicant within 20 working days of the request. If the town council considers that the information requested should not be made available because of an exemption applying then the applicant will be informed of this.

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 Okehampton Hamlets 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 <i>Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts</i> <i>This will be current information only</i>	<i>Website or hard copy</i>	
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website, or hard copy	5p per sheet/free
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Website or hard copy	As above
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website or hard copy	As above
Staffing structure	Website or hard copy	As above
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it <i>Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit</i> <i>Current and previous financial year as a minimum</i>	<i>Website or hard copy</i>	
Annual return form and report by auditor	Hard copy and website	5p per sheet/free
Finalised budget	Hard copy	As above
Precept	Website Hard copy	Free As above
Borrowing Approval letter (if applicable)	Hard copy	As above
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Hard copy and website	As above
Grants given and received	Website or hard copy	As above
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard copy	As above
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy	As above
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing <i>Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews</i>	<i>Website or hard copy</i>	
Parish Plan (if applicable)	Hard copy	5p per sheet

		5p per double sheet
Local charters (if applicable) drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	Hard copy	As above
Class 4 – How we make decisions <i>Decision making processes and records of decisions</i> <i>Current and previous council year as a minimum</i>	<i>Website or hard copy</i>	
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and annual parish meeting)	Website, or hard copy	Free 5p per sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website or hard copy	As above
Minutes of meetings (as above) – note this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website or hard copy	As above
Reports presented to council meetings - note this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard copy	As above
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy	As above
Responses to planning applications	Website or hard copy	As above
Bye-laws (if applicable)	Hard copy	As above
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures <i>Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities</i> <i>Current information only</i>	<i>Website or hard copy</i>	
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements	Hard copy and website	As above
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment		

of staff:		
As available – see website, full list and additional documents available on request	Hard copy and website	As above
Class 6 – Lists and Registers		
<i>Currently maintained lists and registers only</i>	<i>Hard copy; some information may only be available by inspection</i>	
Any publicly available register or list	Hard copy/website	4p per single sheet 5p per double sheet
Assets Register	Hard copy/website	As above
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests)	Hard copy	As above
Register of members' interests	Hard copy/website	As above
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hard copy	As above
Class 7 – The services we offer		
<i>Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses</i>	<i>Website or hard copy; some information may only be available by inspection</i>	
<i>Current information only</i>		
Old Town Park	Website or hard copy	As above
Meldon Woods	Website or hard copy	As above
Seating, litter bins, dog bins	Website or hard copy	As above
Bus shelters	Website or hard copy	As above
Noticeboards	Website or hard copy	As above

Contact details:

Website address: www.okehamptonhamlets-pc.gov.uk

Jane Gillard
Parish Clerk
Incott Farm
Sampford Courtenay
Okehampton EX20 2SR

Telephone: 01837 55728

Email: mail@okehamptonhamlets-pc.gov.uk

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