



PUBLICATION SCHEME 2009

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL: PUBLICATION SCHEME 2009

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 Approved Publication Scheme for adoption by Reading Borough Council in accordance with Section 19 and Section 20 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2. Applicability

- 2.1 All Reading Borough Council staff.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Director of Resources has overall responsibility for ensuring that administration of Freedom of Information is managed appropriately in accordance with this Scheme.

- 3.2 The Head of Legal Services is responsible for:

- Directing and reviewing this Scheme
- Ensuring that there is effective consultation and communication of Freedom of Information related matters in terms of the Publication Scheme.
- Publishing and promoting the adoption of this Scheme.
- Ensuring compliance with Freedom of Information Legislation.

- 3.3 The Information Law Solicitor is responsible for the day-to-day management of Freedom of Information including ensuring implementation of this Scheme.

- 3.4 All Reading Borough Council staff are responsible for familiarizing themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with this standard.

4. Publication Scheme

- 4.1 This Publication Scheme commits Reading Borough Council 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.

- 4.2. The Scheme commits Reading Borough Council 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.
- specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.

- proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- 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.
- review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- make this publications scheme available to the public.

5. Classes of Information

- 5.1 Who we are and what we do
Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.
- 5.2 What we spend and how we spend it
Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.
- 5.3 What our priorities are and how we are doing
Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.
- 5.4 How we make decisions
Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.
- 5.5 Our policies and procedures
Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.
- 5.6 Lists and Registers
Information held in registers requires by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.
- 5.7 The services we offer
Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.
- 5.8 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.

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

6.1 Reading Borough Council will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

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

6.3 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.

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

6.5 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 the scheme.

7. Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

7.1 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.

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

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

7.4 Charges may be made, normally at 10p a page, for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- Photocopying
- Postage and packaging

- The costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

7.5 Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorized, they are in all 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 of fees which is readily available to the public.

7.6 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.

8. Written requests

8.1 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.

9. Review

9.1 This Publication Scheme will be reviewed in accordance with such guidance as is produced by the Information Commissioner, and in accordance with section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

S Smith
Legal Services
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