



# ASHURST WOOD PARISH COUNCIL

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PUBLICATION SCHEME

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## 1. 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 1 January 2009. Ashurst Wood Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme at their Council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 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, through its website, via the telephone, by post or by appointment where much of the information can be viewed free of charge. Occasionally it may be necessary to book an appointment.

## 2. 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 Ashurst Wood Parish Council under the model publication scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
<p><b>Class1 - Who we are and what we do</b> (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This will be current information only</p>	<p>hard copy – contact Clerk</p> <p>website</p>	<p>6p per sheet</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Who's who on the Council and its Committees</p>	<p>hard copy – contact Clerk</p> <p>website</p>	<p>6p per sheet</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))</p>	<p>hard copy – contact Clerk</p> <p>website</p>	<p>6p per sheet</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Location of main Council office and accessibility details</p>	<p>hard copy – contact Clerk</p> <p>website</p>	<p>6p per sheet</p> <p>Free</p>
<p>Staffing structure</p>	<p>hard copy – contact Clerk</p>	<p>6p per sheet</p>

<b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b> (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)  Current and previous financial year as a minimum	hard copy – contact Clerk  website (some only available by hard copy.)	6p per sheet  Free
Annual return form and report by auditor	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Finalised budget	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free
Precept	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free
Borrowing Approval letter (if/when appropriate)	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Grants given and received	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract (when awarded)	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Members' allowances and expenses (currently expenses only)	Hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet

<b>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</b> (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	hard copy – contact Clerk	Free
	website	Free
Annual Report to Parish Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet (A3)
	website	Free
Quality status	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
	website	Free
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> (Decision making processes and records of decisions)	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Current and previous council year as a minimum	website	Free
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
	website	Free
Agendas of meetings (as above)	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
	website	Free
Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet

	website	Free
Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Responses to consultation papers	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Bye-laws	N/ A	
<b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b> (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)  Current information only	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free
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 – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Some of the below are only available in hard copy.  Internal policies relating to the delivery of services	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free

Equality and diversity policy N/A 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	N/A	
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	N/A	
Data protection policies	Hard copy	6p per sheet
Schedule of charges )for the publication of information)	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free
<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b>		
Currently maintained lists and registers only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	
Any publicly available register or list	None currently held.	
Assets Register	Hard copy	6p per 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)	None currently held.	
Register of members' interests	Hard copy	6p per sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet

<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b> (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)  Current information only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	
Allotments	None at present	
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	N/A	
Community centres and village halls	N/ A	
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities (where applicable)	hard copy – contact Clerk  website	6p per sheet  Free
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Bus shelters	hard copy – contact Clerk	6p per sheet
Markets	N/A	
Public conveniences	N/A	
Agency agreements	N/A	
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	N/A	

**Contact details:**

**Clerk: Susan Wellerd  
 Parish Office  
 St Dunstan’s Church  
 Chapel Lane  
 Ashurst Wood  
 West Sussex  
 RH19 3QT**

**Hours Mon. Wed Thurs. 9a. m.to 12.00noon.**

**Tel: / Fax: 01342 823770  
 Email: Clerk@ashurstwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk  
 Website: www.ashurstwoodparishcouncil.gov.uk**

**SCHEDULE OF CHARGES**

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

<b>TYPE OF CHARGE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BASIS OF CHARGE</b>
<b>Disbursement cost</b>	Photocopying @ 6p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
<b>Statutory Fee</b>	For information which costs public bodies less than £450 to retrieve and collate, there will be no charge. This is roughly equivalent to two and a half days of work, for free.	In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)
<b>Other</b>		

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### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**

The Council would normally expect the Parish Clerk to understand what information you have asked for and to 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 Parish Clerk. If the information you have asked for is not available, the Parish Clerk will tell you 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. These details are available on the website under our Standing Orders or you can contact the Parish Clerk at the above address.

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 the matter.