

Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council – Internal Note

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Freedom of Information Act – The New Model Publication Scheme & Guide to Information

1. BACKGROUND: Under the Freedom of Information Act (“the Act”) it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. Publication Schemes facilitate the proactive release of information and play a crucial role in supporting and providing greater openness and transparency across the public sector. In line with section 20 of the Act the Information Commissioner has approved a new model publication scheme which should be adopted by all public authorities by 1st January 2009. The scheme comprise two documents which must be adopted by the authority; (a.) – The Model Scheme (to be adopted without modification) and (b.) – The Guide to Information available from the authority. For convenience both are presented here as a single combined document. – *Clerk to the Council*

2. THE MODEL SCHEME:



Information Commissioner's Office
Promoting public access to official information
and protecting your personal information

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.

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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.

3. THE GUIDE TO INFORMATION

Information available from Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council under the model publication scheme.

Note: A strikethrough indicates that the information is not held or not applicable.

Where cost = 'varies', the actual cost depends on the number of sheets copied as document sizes vary. Postage will be added as applicable.

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost (excluding postage)
Class1 – Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) This will be current information only N.B. Councils should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted.	Hardcopy Via email Noticeboards	15p Free Free
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	As above	As above
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	As above	As above
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	As above	As above
Staffing structure	As above	As above
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 as a minimum	Hardcopy Via email	30p Free
Annual return form and report by auditor	Photocopy	60p
Finalised budget	Hardcopy Via email	30p Free

Precept	As above	30p
Borrowing Approval letter	Not applicable	-----
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Hardcopy Via email	25p Free
Grants given and received	Hardcopy Via email	60p Free
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hardcopy Via email	Varies Free
Members' allowances and expenses Current Council policy is nil expenses/allowances	Not applicable	-----
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	Hardcopy Via email	Varies Free
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum) preparation In	Not available yet	-----
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hardcopy Via email	20p Free
Quality status Not a quality council yet	Not applicable	-----
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	Not applicable	-----
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Note: With respect to RsAPC these are contained within Minutes of meetings Current and previous council year as a minimum	Hard Copy Via email	Varies Free
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings) Note: With respect to RsAPC, timetables of sub-committee meetings only available 5 working days before meeting takes place	Hard Copy Via email Noticeboards	5p Free Free
Agendas of meetings (as above)	As above	As above
Minutes of meetings (as above) – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hardcopy Via email	Varies Free
Reports presented to council meetings – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hardcopy Photocopy Via email	Varies Varies Free
Responses to consultation papers	As above	As above
Responses to planning applications	Hardcopy	10p
Bye-laws	Photocopy only	50p
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only	Hardcopy Via email	Varies Free
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders	Hardcopy Via email	Varies Free

Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements Note: All the above are contained in Councillors Handbook	As above	As above
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Internal policies relating to the delivery of services Equality and diversity policy Health and safety policy Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) Not applicable (no policy) Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Hardcopy Via email Photocopy (some documents only)	Varies Free Varies
Information security policy (contained within Risk Analysis document)	Hardcopy Via email	15p Free
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	As above	As above
Data protection policies	As above	As above
Schedule of charges for the publication of information	As above	As above
Class 6 – Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only	Hard copy Via email some information may only be available by inspection	Varies Free
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	As above	As above
Assets Register	Hardcopy Via email	40p Free
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish council)	Not applicable	-----
Register of members' interests	Inspection only	-----
Register of gifts and hospitality No information held at present	Not applicable	-----
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	Hardcopy Via email Some information may only be available by inspection or photocopy	Varies Free
Allotments	As above	As above
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	As above	As above
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	As above	As above

Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	As above	As above
Bus shelters	As above	As above
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	As above	As above
Community centres and village halls Run as a separate charity	Not applicable	-----
Markets	Not applicable	-----
Public conveniences	Not applicable	-----
Agency agreements	Not applicable	-----
Additional Information		
This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above		
No additional information identified	Not applicable	-----

Contact details:

Mr Mel Bentley – Clerk to the Council

PO Box 456

Rushmere St Andrew

Ipswich

IP4 5WH

Tel: 01473 711509

Email: mel.bentley@rushmere-st-andrew.org.uk

Mrs Jean Potter – Assistant Clerk to the Council

PO Box 456

Rushmere St Andrew

Ipswich

IP4 5WH

Tel: 01473 723409

Email: assistantclerk@rushmere-st-andrew.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 @ 10p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost 10p
	Postage 45p up to A5 size <i>(RM postage cost as at April 2011)</i>	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class 36p + envelope
	Postage 70p A4 size <i>(RM postage cost as at April 2011)</i>	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class 58p + envelope
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)
Other		

* the actual cost incurred by the public authority

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