

# **Seer Green Parish Council Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme Adopted December 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](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. Seer Green Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme at their Council Meeting on 3rd 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 continues to make large amounts of information available to the public, through the website, via the telephone and by post. Should a personal visit to view information, an appointment will be necessary.

### **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.

<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class1 - Who we are and what we do</b> (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)  This will be current information only	Website  Hard copy	Free  10p per A4 sheet
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))	Hard Copy	As above
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website/Hard Copy	As above
Staffing structure	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
<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	10p per A4 sheet
Annual return form and report by auditor	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Finalised budget	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Precept	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
<del>Borrowing Approval letter</del>		
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Hard Copy	10p per A4

		sheet
Grants given and received	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard Copy	10p per A4 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	10p per A4 sheet
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
<del>Quality status</del>		
<del>Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines</del>		
<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b> (Decision making processes and records of decisions)	Website	Free
Current and previous council year as a minimum	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet

Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website Hard Copy	Free 10p per A4 sheet
Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Responses to planning applications	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Bye-laws	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
<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	10p per A4 sheet
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	10p per A4 sheet
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet

Internal policies relating to the delivery of services 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	10p per A4 sheet
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Data protection policies	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Schedule of charges) for the publication of information)	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b>  Currently maintained lists and registers only	Hard Copy  (hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	10p per A4 sheet
Any publicly available register or list	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Assets Register	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
<del>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)</del>		

Register of members' interests	Hard Copy	10p per A4 sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hard Copy	As above
<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  (some information may only be available by inspection)	As above
Allotments	Hard Copy	As above
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Hard Copy	As above
Community centres and village halls	Hard Copy	As above
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Hard Copy	As above
Seating, litter bins, memorials and lighting	Hard Copy	As above
Bus shelters	Hard Copy	As above
<del>Markets</del>		
<del>Public conveniences</del>		
Agency agreements	Hard Copy	As above
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Hard Copy	As above
<b>Additional Information</b>	Upon request by hard copy if available	10p per A4 sheet

## Contact details:

Website Address: [www.seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Request for hard copies:

Mrs Elizabeth Bates, Parish Clerk  
Gerston, Back Lane  
Chalfont St Giles  
Bucks  
HP8 4PB

Email: [clerk@seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@seergreenparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Telephone 01494 874233

## SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
<b>Disbursement cost</b>	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying @ £1.00 per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
<b>Freedom of Information Request</b>	An additional charge may be made if the cost to the Parish Council for retrieval and collation is unreasonable.	