

Bere Ferrers Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy- 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. Bere Ferrers Parish Council is a public authority as defined in the Act.

Every public authority is required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme with effect from 1 January 2009. Bere Ferrers Parish Council reviewed, amended and re-adopted the Model Publication Scheme (detailed below) at its Meeting held on 29th June 2021, minute no 31, page 2. Members of the public already have a high degree of access to information from Bere Ferrers Parish Council via publicly accessible Council Meetings, the telephone, email, and its website.

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 this guide 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: Mrs Caroline Metcalf, the Parish Clerk, Council Offices, Station Road, Tavistock, PL19 7EJ.

All information not covered by an exemption must ordinarily be released to the applicant within twenty working days of the request. If the 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 whereby 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 impractical 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, whereby its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Information available from Bere Ferrers Parish Council under the Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost (sheet is single sided)
<p>Class 1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)</p> <p>This will be current information only.</p> <p>N.B. Councils should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted.</p>	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website/Noticeboard/hard copy	Free/free/10p per sheet
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Councillors (named contacts with telephone number and email address)	Website/Noticeboard/Hard copy	Free/free/10p per sheet
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Staffing structure	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
<p>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</p> <p>Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit. Current and previous financial year as a minimum.</p>	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Annual return form and report by auditor Website	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Finalised budget	Website (minutes) / hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Precept	Website (minutes) / hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	n/a	n/a
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Grants given and received	Website (minutes) / Hard copy	Free / 10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of	Hard copy only	Free/10p per

contract		sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)	Website/hard copy	
Parish Plans (if applicable)	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Quality status	n/a	n/a
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	n/a	n/a
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous Council year as a minimum	Website / hard copy	
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website / hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website/noticeboard/hard copy	Free/free/10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings (as above) – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	Website/hard copy	Free/10 p per sheet
Reports presented to council meetings – NB this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting	Website/hard copy	Free/10 p per sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Website (minutes)/hard copy	Free/10 p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	Parish Council website/DNPA website/hard copy	Free/free/10p per sheet
Byelaws (if applicable)	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only	Website/hard copy	
Policies and procedures for the conduct of Council business: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedural standing orders • Committee and sub-committee terms of reference 	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegated authority in respect of officers • Code of conduct • Policy statements 		
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and diversity policy • Health and safety policy • Recruitment policies • Policies and procedures for handling requests for information • Complaints procedure 	Hard copy only. The following are published on our website: Freedom of Information policy. Complaints procedure	10 per sheet/free
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
Data protection policies	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Class 6 - Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only	Website/hard copy; some information may only be available by inspection	
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
Assets Register	Website/hard copy	Free/10p 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)	n/a	n/a
Register of members' interests	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality (if applicable)	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
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	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available on inspection).	
Allotments	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
Burial Grounds	Website/hard copy	
Community centre and village halls	n/a	n/a
Parks, playing fields and recreational fields	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Dog bins e.g. inspection, maintenance and emptying schedules, and emptying costs	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
War memorial	Hard copy only	10p per sheet
Bus shelter	Hard copy only (inspection schedules)	10p per sheet
Markets	n/a	n/a

Public conveniences	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet
Agency agreement	n/a	n/a
A summary of services for which the Council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees) Website/ hard copy Free/10p per sheet	Website/hard copy	Free/10p per sheet

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per single sided sheet (black & white)	Actual cost 10p
	Photocopying @ 15p per single sided sheet (colour)	Actual cost 15p
	Postage – as per Royal Mail	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2nd class

Contact details:

Website address: www.bereferrersparishcouncil.co.uk

Parish Clerk: Mrs Caroline Metcalf (Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer)

Bere Ferrers Parish Council

Council Offices

Station Road

Bere Alston

PL19 7EJ

Tel; 01822

Email: - bereferrersparishcouncil@btconnect.com.

Bere Ferrers Parish Council reviewed, amended and re-adopted the Model Publication on 29th June 2021, minute no 31, p2.

Date for next review: March 2022.