

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – PUBLICATION SCHEME

MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

(Core classes, plus optional classes of information)

adopted December 2008. Amended June 2012.

The Freedom of Information Scheme is intended to encourage local councils to publish more information, proactively and to develop a greater culture of openness and transparency. All local authorities are required to have a publication scheme and to list the information it produces. Other information is available from the Town Council office or the clerk may know its location/publisher and help will be given wherever possible locate information.

Paddock Wood Town Council endeavours to be open and accountable is happy to make the documents detailed in the following list available. Photocopies of documents released under this scheme will be forwarded within 20 working days.

If a request for information is refused then an explanation will be given. Appeals against any refusal should be made to the chairman of the Governance Committee.

The Clerk to the Council is responsible for operating the scheme on a day to day basis.

Paddock Wood Town Council has adopted the model publication scheme published by the National Association of Local Councils.

The classes are as follows:-

CORE CLASSES OF INFORMATION

1) COUNCIL INTERNAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Minutes of council, committee and sub-committee meetings – limited to the last 2 years.

Procedural Standing Orders

Agendas and supporting papers for council, committee and sub-committee meetings-limited in each case to the forthcoming/immediate meeting.

Terms of Reference for Committees

2) CODE OF CONDUCT

Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Members Register of Interests

Register of Members Interests Book

3) PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW

This is information concerning changes to the electoral arrangements for parish, town and community councils. It includes recommendations for the creation of new wards, the amendment of existing wards, proposals for the names of new wards and alterations to the number of councillors to be elected to the council.

Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review of the council area

Information relating to the latest boundary review of the council area

4) EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

Terms & conditions of employment

Job descriptions

Equal Opportunities Policy

Health & Safety Policy

Staffing Structure

Exclusions – ‘personal records’

5) PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Responses to planning applications

Exclusions – Copies of planning consultations, the Development Plan, Structure Plan, Local Plan and Rights of Way/Footpath maps all of which are available from the local planning and/or highway authority respectively

6) AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS

Annual return form – limited to the last financial year

Annual Statutory report by auditor (internal and external) – limited to the last financial year

Receipt/Payment books, Receipt books of all kinds, Bank Statements from all accounts – limited to the last financial year

Precept request – limited to the last financial year

VAT records – limited to the last financial year

Financial Standing Orders and Regulations

Assets register – this will include details of commons/village greens owned by the council including management schemes for commons as well as village halls, community centres and recreation grounds.

Risk Assessments

Loan sanction approvals

Fees and charges applied by the council

Safety inspection records for example for playgrounds

Register/file of members allowances

Exclusions – all commercially sensitive information e.g. quotations and tenders, loan documentation and insurance policies. With regard to quotations and tenders, this information is treated as confidential to ensure that the whole tender process is fair i.e. if tender information is released to a third party prior to the end of the tender period those who initially submitted tenders could be undercut and/or unfairly disadvantaged.

7) DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

- Policy Statements issued by council
- Responses made by council to consultation papers
- Analysis of responses received to public consultations by the council
- Complaints handling procedure

8) BYELAWS

- Made for any of the following purposes: -
 - The regulation of a pleasure ground or public space
 - The regulation of an open space or burial ground
 - To control dogs and dog fouling

9) COUNCIL CIRCULARS/NEWSLETTERS

- Town, parish, community guide

10) ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & TOURIST INFORMATION

- Information about Council organised Community Events

11) ALLOTMENTS

- Plans
- Standard tenancy Agreements
- Exclusions – individual tenancy agreements and rent payment records under both privacy and data protection laws

12) BURIAL GROUNDS

- Plans
- General policies
- Exclusions – all documentation relating to individual applications and registrations under both privacy and data protection laws