

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME FOR THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. In line with a commitment made since the introduction of the Act to change the emphasis in the approval and operation of publication schemes, the Information Commissioner's Office set a deadline of 31st December 2008 for the adoption by 'public authorities' of what it termed a 'generic model'. At its meeting on 26th November 2008 (under minute 276/08), Thetford Town Council agreed to adopt the model scheme as of 1st January 2009, in line with the Information Commissioner's requirements.

The model scheme commits an authority:

- To publish or otherwise make available proactively, as a matter of routine, information held by the authority (including environmental information) and falling within the classifications below.
- To specify the information held by the authority and falling within the classifications below.
- To publish or otherwise make available proactively, as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within the scheme.
- To publicise the methods by which specific information is made routinely available, so that it can be identified and accessed easily by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under the scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to available information.
- To make the scheme publicly available

Information is classified under these seven headings:

Class 1	Who we are and what we do
Class 2	What we spend and how we spend it
Class 3	What our priorities are and how we are doing
Class 4	How we make decisions
Class 5	Our policies and procedures
Class 6	Lists and Registers
Class 7	The services we offer

Information not generally included

- Information, the disclosure of which is prevented by law or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act or otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information no longer readily available, being contained in files placed in archive storage or, for similar reasons, difficult to access.

Requests for information

Requests must:

- Be received in writing (including by electronic means) and legible.
- Include the name and address of the person making the request.
- Describe the nature of the information required.

Information not published under the scheme can nonetheless be requested in writing. In such circumstances, consideration will be given to its release under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, although heed may need to be paid in some cases to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.