

Fairlight Parish Council

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT – PUBLICATION SCHEME

1. Introduction

1.1 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. The Act requires every public authority to adopt and maintain a generic model publication scheme and Fairlight Parish Council has now adopted the scheme. It is intended to provide everyone interested in the Council with a comprehensive guide to the information that the Council routinely publishes or otherwise makes available to the public.

1.2 It is important to note that a publication scheme simply sets out the information that is routinely available. Information that is not referred to in 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.

1.3 The Council is committed to openness and accountability and already makes large amounts of information available to the public, through its website, via the telephone, by post or by personal visits to the Almonry where much of the information can be viewed free of charge.

2. Model publication scheme

2.1 This 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.

2.2 It 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.

2.3 The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, 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.

3. Classes of information

- Who we are and what we do.
- What we spend and how we spend it.
- What our priorities are and how we are doing.
- How we make decisions.
- Our policies and procedures.
- Lists and registers.
- The services we offer.

3.1 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.

4. The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available.

4.1 The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

5. Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

5.1 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.

5.2 Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

5.3 Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- Photocopying
- Postage and packaging
- Staff costs directly incurred as a result of researching or viewing information.
- 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.

6. Written requests

6.1 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.

7. Information available from Fairlight Parish Council under the Freedom of Information Act Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How it can be obtained
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Class 1 – Who we are and what we do

Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website/hard copy
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Contact details for Clerk and Council Members	Website/hard copy
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Location of Council office and accessibility details	Website/hard copy
Staffing details	Website/hard copy

Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it

Annual return form and report by auditor	Website/hard copy
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Annual budget and precept	Hard copy
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Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Website/hard copy
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Grants given	Website/hard copy
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Members' allowances and expenses scheme	Hard copy
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Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing

Parish Plan (Fairlight Local Action Plan)	Website/hard copy
Annual Report	Website/hard copy

Quality status Hard copy

Class 4 – How we make decisions

Timetable of meetings (Council, any Committee/
Sub-Committee meetings and Annual Town Meeting) Website/hard copy

Agendas of meetings (as above) Website/hard copy

Minutes of meetings (as above) – this will exclude
information that is properly regarded as private
to the meeting. Website/hard copy

Responses to planning applications (normally
minutes of Planning Committee meetings) Website/hard copy

Responses to consultations Website/Hard copy

Class 5 - Our policies and procedures

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 Website/hard copy

Policies and procedures for the provision of services
and about the employment of staff: Risk management
policy Health and safety policy Recruitment
policies Equal opportunities and employment practice
Policies and procedures for handling requests for
information Complaints procedures (including those
covering requests for information and operating the
publication scheme) Hard copy

Schedule of charges for the publication of information Website/hard copy

Class 6 – Lists and Registers

Asset Register Hard copy

Register of Members' interests Hard copy

Register of gifts and hospitality Hard copy

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 by inspection

Allotments – standard tenancy agreements Website/hard copy

Cemetery – regulations Website/Hard copy

Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities Hard copy

Bus shelters Hard copy

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

8. Contact details

8.1 Requests for hard copies or to arrange to view information should be made to:

John Edmunds, Fairlight Parish Clerk, 285 Elphinstone Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 2AX
Website address: www.fairlight.org.uk Email: clerk@fairlightparishcouncil.co.uk Tel: 01424 722226

9. Schedule of charges

Type of Charge	Description	Basis of Charge
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 6p per A4 sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying @ 12p per A3 sheet	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost Royal Mail 2nd class
Research or viewing arrangements	Staff and administrative costs	£35 per hour (minimum charge £35)

10. Complaints procedure

10.1 The Council would normally expect the Clerk to understand what information you have asked for and to be able to tell you where you can find it. If the information you receive is not what you asked for or need, you should first contact the Clerk. If the information you have asked for is not available, the Clerk will tell you why.

10.2 If you believe that the Council has not dealt with your request fairly and cannot deal with it satisfactorily on an informal basis, you should follow our complaints procedure. You can get details from John Edmunds, Fairlight Parish Clerk, 285 Elphinstone Road, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 2AX, telephone 01424 722226 or email clerk@fairlightparishcouncil.co.uk

10.3 If you have followed our complaints procedure and are still not happy with how we have dealt with your request, you may also contact the Information Commissioner to ask them to investigate the matter.