

GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL
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Document Control

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Policy Author	Julie Hawkins, Town Clerk. Based on the model publication scheme template produced by the ICO.
Applies to	Public, councillors and officers.
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Notes	<p>The Datasets Code of Practice recommends that public authorities make datasets available for re-use under the Open Government Licence.</p> <p>The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of FOIA. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of FOIA. The ICO has published guidance on the dataset provisions in FOIA. This explains what is meant by "not appropriate" and "capable of re-use".</p>

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

MODEL PUBLICATION 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 Gillingham Town Council for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Paper copies are available and will be printed in black and white, single sided at a cost of 6p per sheet

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained
<p>Class1 - 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>	(Hard Copy or Website)
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Hard Copy and Website
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Hard Copy and Website
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Hard Copy and Website
Staffing structure	Hard Copy and Website
<p>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)</p> <p>Current and previous financial year as a minimum</p>	(Hard Copy or Website)
Annual return form and report by auditor	Hard Copy
Finalised budget	Hard Copy and Website
Precept	Hard Copy
Borrowing Approval letter	Hard Copy
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Hard Copy and Website
Grants given and received	Hard Copy
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard Copy
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard Copy

<p>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)</p> <p>Current and previous year as a minimum</p>	(hard copy or website)
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hard Copy
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Hard Copy and Website
Quality status	Hard Copy
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines	Hard Copy
<p>Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions)</p> <p>Current and previous council year as a minimum</p>	(hard copy or website)
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Hard Copy and Website
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Hard Copy, Website and Gillingham Library
Minutes of meetings (as above) – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard Copy, Website and Gillingham Library
Reports presented to council meetings – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard Copy and Website
Responses to consultation papers	Hard Copy
Responses to planning applications	Hard Copy, Website and Gillingham Library
Bye-laws	Hard Copy
<p>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)</p> <p>Current information only</p>	(hard copy or website)
<p>Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:</p> <p>Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements</p>	<p>Hard Copy and Website Hard Copy and Website Hard Copy and Website Hard Copy and Website Hard Copy and Website</p>

Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:	Hard Copy
Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services	Hard Copy
Equality and diversity policy	Hard Copy and Website
Health and safety policy	Hard Copy and Website
Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)	Hard Copy
Policies and procedures for handling requests for information	Hard Copy and Website
Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Hard Copy and Website
Information security policy	Hard Copy
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hard Copy
Data protection policies	Hard Copy and Website
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Hard Copy and Website
Class 6 – Lists and Registers	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)
Currently maintained lists and registers only	
Any publicly available register or list	Hard Copy
Assets register	Hard Copy
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)	Hard Copy
Register of members' interests	Hard Copy and Website
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)	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)
Current information only	
Allotments	Hard Copy and Website
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	Hard Copy and Website
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Hard Copy and Website
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Hard Copy
Bus shelters	Hard Copy
Public conveniences	Hard Copy
Agency agreements	Hard Copy
Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Hard Copy

Contact Details:

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SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 0.06p per sheet single sided (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Photocopying @ 0.12p per sheet single sided (colour)	Actual cost *
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)

* the actual cost incurred by the public authority

A requester may ask for any information that is held by a public authority. However, this does not mean we are always obliged to provide the information. In some cases, there will be a good reason why we should not make public some or all of the information requested.

We can refuse an entire request under the following circumstances:

- It would cost too much or take too much staff time to deal with the request (£450 or >18 hours staff time)
- The request is vexatious.
- The request repeats a previous request from the same person.

In addition, the Freedom of Information Act contains a number of exemptions that allow us to withhold information from a requester.

Some exemptions relate to a particular type of information, for instance, information relating to government policy. Other exemptions are based on the harm that would arise or would be likely arise from disclosure, for example, if disclosure would be likely to prejudice a criminal investigation or prejudice someone's commercial interests.

There is also an exemption for personal data if releasing it would be contrary to the Data Protection Act.

We can automatically withhold information because an exemption applies only if the exemption is 'absolute'. This may be, for example, information we receive from the security services, which is covered by an absolute exemption. However, most exemptions are not absolute but require us to apply a public interest test. This means we must consider the public interest arguments before deciding whether to disclose the information. So we may have to disclose information in spite of an exemption, where it is in the public interest to do so.

If we are refusing all or any part of a request, we will send the requester a written refusal notice.

Signed by The Mayor of Gillingham: _____

Date: _____