



Battle Town 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 Battle Town 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 Town 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.



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- 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.



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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 Battle Town Council under the Freedom of Information Act Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How it can be obtained
Class 1 – Who we are and what we do	
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website/hard copy
Contact details for Clerk and Council Members	Website/hard copy ?+Telephone
Location of Council office and accessibility details	Website/hard copy ? +Telephone
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
Annual budget and precept	Hard copy
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Website/hard copy
Grants given	Website/hard copy
Members' allowances and expenses scheme	Hard copy
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing	
Parish Plan (Battle Local Action Plan)	Website/hard copy
Annual Report	Website/hard copy
Quality status	Hard copy



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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 Website/Hard copy Hard copy Hard copy Also website?
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 Hard copy Hard copy Hard copy Hard copy Website/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 Also 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 (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 Also website?
Bus shelters	Hard copy
Town Guide, Town Map	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



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8. Contact details

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

Town Clerk
Battle Town Council
The Almonry
High Street
Battle
East Sussex
TN33 0EA
Website address: www.battletowncouncil.gov.uk
Email: clerk@battletowncouncil.gov.uk
Tel: 01424 772210

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 2 nd class
Research or viewing arrangements	Staff and administrative costs	£35 per hour (minimum charge £35) £25 per hour (minimum charge £25)

See below from foi guide - are we able to charge per hour?

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 Battle Town Council, The Almonry, High Street, Battle, TN33 0EA, telephone 01424 772210 or email clerk@battletowncouncil.gov.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.

So long as the authority does not have to spend more than a set amount finding your information, it can only charge you for copying, printing and postage. The cost limit is £450 (2.5 days at £25 per hour)
If the cost is above these limits, the authority is not required to provide the information at all

Adopted 14 January 2009