

**Barkway Parish Council**

**Freedom of Information Act**

**Publication Scheme**

**Adopted March 2011**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **The Freedom of Information Act**

The Freedom of Information Act grants to members of the public rights of access to all kinds of recorded information held by public authorities, unless there are good reasons to keep it confidential. Information about the Act is available from the Information Commissioner's Office at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

### **Publication Scheme**

The Act requires every public authority to adopt and maintain a generic model publication scheme which should be adopted and operated by all public authorities from 1 January 2009. Barkway Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme at their Council Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011. It is intended to provide everyone interested in the Council with a comprehensive guide to the information that the Council will automatically or routinely publish or otherwise makes available to the public.

### **Freedom of Information Requests and the Publication Scheme**

It is important to note that a publication scheme simply sets out the information that is routinely available. Information that is not listed in the Information Available Guide of 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 who will reply within 20 working days after receipt of the request.

### **The Council's Commitment to the Act**

The Council is committed to openness and accountability and already makes large amounts of information available to the public, through the website, via the telephone and by post. Should a personal visit to view information be required, an appointment will be necessary.

## **Model Publication Scheme**

This model publication 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.

This publication scheme 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. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

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

## **Classes of Information**

### **Who we are and what we do.**

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

### **What we spend and how we spend it.**

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

**What our priorities are and how we are doing.**

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

**How we make decisions.**

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

**Our policies and procedures.**

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

**Lists and Registers.**

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

**The Services we Offer.**

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

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.

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

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

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.

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.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

### **Charges which may be made for Information published under this 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 the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

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

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

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.

## **Written Requests**

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.

## Information available from Barkway Parish Council under the Model Publication Scheme

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained		Cost per sheet
	Hard Copy	Website	
Class1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) This will be current information only  N.B. Councils should already be publishing as much information as possible about how they can be contacted.			
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	√	√	10p
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	√	√	10p
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	√		10p
<del>Staffing structure</del>			
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) Current and previous financial year as a minimum			
Annual return form and report by auditor	√		10p
Finalised budget	√		10p
Precept	√		10p
<del>Borrowing Approval letter</del>			
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	√	√	10p
Grants given and received	√		10p
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	√		10p
Members' allowances and expenses	√		10p

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)			
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	√	√	Free
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	√	√	Free
<del>Quality status</del>			
<del>Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines</del>			
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum			
Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	√	√	10p
Agendas of meetings (as above)	√	√	10p
Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	√	√	10p
Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	√		10p
Responses to consultation papers	√		10p
Responses to planning applications	√		10p
<del>Bye-laws</del>			
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only			
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:			
Procedural standing orders			10p
Committee and sub-committee terms of reference			10p
Delegated authority in respect of officers			10p
Code of Conduct			Free
<del>Policy statements</del>			

Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:			
Internal policies relating to the delivery of services			
Equality and diversity policy			
Health and safety policy			
Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)			
Policies and procedures for handling requests for information	√		Free
Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	√	√	10p
Information security policy			
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	√		10p
<del>Data protection policies</del>			
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)			Free
Class 6 – Lists and Registers			
Currently maintained lists and registers only			
Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	√		10p
Assets Register	√	√	10p
<del>Disclosure log</del> (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)			
Register of members' interests	√		Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	√		Free
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			
Alotments	√		10p
<del>Burial grounds and closed churchyards</del>			
Community centres and village halls	√		10p
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	√		10p
Seating, litter bins, <del>clocks</del> , memorials and <del>lighting</del>	√		10p

Bus shelters	√		10p
Markets			
Public conveniences			
Agency agreements			
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)			
Additional Information This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above			

**Contact details:**

**Website: [www.barkway-village.co.uk](http://www.barkway-village.co.uk)**

**Request for hard copies**

**Mrs Catharine Toms  
Parish Clerk  
The Reading Room  
12 High Street  
Barkway  
Royston  
Herts  
SG8 8EE**

**Email: [parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@barkway-village.co.uk)**

## 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 @ ..p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Photocopying @ ..p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation, if applicable
Other		

\* the actual cost incurred by the public authority