

Hethersgill Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy

A Publication Scheme was adopted by Hethersgill Parish Council and has been operational since 11 November 2008.

Introduction

The model publication scheme was prepared by the Information Commissioner. It has been adopted by the Parish Council and does not require further approval, being valid until further notice.

The publication scheme commits the Parish Council 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, if and where this information is held by the Council.

The Scheme commits the Council to: -

- Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the Council and falls within the classifications below.
- Specify the information which is held by the Council and falls within the classifications below.
- Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- 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.
- Review and update on a regular basis the information the Council makes available under this scheme.
- Produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- 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. The decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures – The current written policies and procedures 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 Council.

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

1. The Parish Council will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.
2. Information will be provided on the Parish Council's 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, the Parish Council will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.
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.
4. Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. If the Parish Council is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.
5. 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.
6. Charges which may be made for Information are published under this scheme.
7. 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 Parish Council for routinely published material will be justified, transparent and kept to a minimum.
8. Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.
9. Charges will be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.
10. Charges will be made for actual disbursements incurred such as: - Photocopying, Postage and Packaging and the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information, or as a result of preparing information in a non-standard format or a different format to that held by the Parish Council.
11. Charges will 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.
12. If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment will be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written Requests

Information held by the Parish Council 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.

Approved and Adopted at the Parish Council Meeting held on 12 May 2015.