



## **Farnham Town Council Freedom of Information and Publications Scheme Adopted April 2019**

### **I. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public authorities by providing people with rights of access to the information held by them.
- 1.2 The council will comply with the requirements of the act, and in particular will:
  - Make as much information as possible available via the publication scheme
  - Respond to requests for information as quickly as possible, and in any event, within the statutory timescales
  - Where, exceptionally, we believe it is not going to be possible to respond fully within the statutory timescale (for example, where we have to consider the public interest tests), we will:
    - Advise you why, and give an estimated date by which the information will be provided, and
    - Provide as much of the information as possible within the earlier timescale
    - Apply exemptions appropriately and consistently
    - Ensure that any fees charged are calculated appropriately and consistently

### **2. How to make a request**

- 2.1 A large amount of information is freely available on the council's website, which can be found at <https://www.farnham.gov.uk/town-council>
- 2.2 If you are unable to find the information you are looking for, you can request the information directly from the council.
- 2.3 Requests must be made in writing, by either email or letter, to ensure the request is clearly understood. Requests should be made to:

Town Clerk, Farnham Town Council, Town Council Office, South Street, Farnham,  
GU9 7RN or via email [customer.services@farnham.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@farnham.gov.uk)

- 2.4 The request should provide as full a description as possible of the information you require, and your preferred method for receiving the information.
- 2.5 The Council will respond to Freedom of Information requests promptly and within 20 working days, in accordance with section 10(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. The date on which a request is received is the day on which it arrives or, if this is not a working day, the first working day following its arrival. Non-working days include weekends and public holidays anywhere in the UK.

### **3. Exemptions**

- 3.1 There are certain circumstances where the Council is not obliged to provide some or all of the information.
- 3.2 The Freedom of Information Act contains a number of exemptions. Details of exemptions are set by the Information Commissioners Office and can be viewed at:  
<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/refusing-a-request/>
- 3.3 The Council is obliged to refuse an entire request under the following circumstances
  - 3.3.1.1 It would cost too much or take too much staff time to deal with the request
  - 3.3.1.2 The request is vexatious
  - 3.3.1.3 The request repeats a previous request from the same person
- 3.4 When considering Freedom of Interest requests, the Council shall also consider whether disclosure would breach the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018.

### **4. Complaints**

- 4.1 The council would normally expect the Clerk or other named officer to understand what information you have asked for and be able to tell you where you can find it. If the information you received is not what you asked for or need, you should contact the Clerk or named officer to clarify your requirements.
- 4.2 If you believe that the council has not dealt with your request fairly and it cannot be resolved on an informal basis, you should follow our complaints procedure.
- 4.3 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's Office to ask them to investigate further. They can be contacted at:

Email: [caseworker@ico.org.uk](mailto:caseworker@ico.org.uk)

Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

### **5. Charges**

- 5.1 Charges made by the council in relation to the publication scheme will be justified, transparent and kept to a minimum.
- 5.2 Information which is published and accessed on the council's website is provided free of charge.

5.3 Charges will be made for actual disbursements incurred as detailed below:

<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BASIS OF CHARGE</b>
Photocopying @ 10p per A4 sheet (black & white)	Actual cost incurred
Photocopying @ 12p per A3 sheet (black & white)	Actual cost incurred
Photocopying @ 20p per A4 sheet (colour)	Actual cost incurred
Photocopying @ 30p per A3 (colour)	Actual cost incurred
Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class postage

### **Staff time**

A public authority can charge for the time taken by its staff on the activities included in communicating the information. Regulation 7(5) indicates that staff time is to be charged at the flat rate of £25 per hour, irrespective of whether a higher rate is actually incurred by internal staff or charged by external contractor staff.

A public authority can also charge for the time it takes a member of staff to actually redact the exempt information. This cost can be included because it is part of the costs of communicating the information under regulation 7. Regulation 7(5) of the Fees Regulations confirms that a public authority can only charge £25 per hour for this activity. For example, if it takes one employee 45 minutes to black out the information which is not to be disclosed then the public authority can charge £18.75 for this activity. For the avoidance of doubt, any staff time spent redacting exempt information cannot be taken into account when initially estimating whether it would exceed the appropriate limit to comply with the request.

### **Date of Adoption**

This Freedom of Information Policy was reviewed and adopted by Council in April 2019

Review Date – 2022

**Information available from FARNHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**under the model publication scheme**

<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
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**Class 1 – Who we are and what we do**

(Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)

Who's who on the council and its committees	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Contact details for the Clerk and council members	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Location of main council office and accessibility details	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Staffing structure	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost

**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)

Full accounts and audit report	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Finalised budget	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Precept	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Borrowing Approval letter	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Grants given and received	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard copy	Disbursement cost
Members' allowances and expenses	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Expenditure above £100 (except for certain exempted payments)	Website, email hard copy.	

**Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing**

(Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)

Strategic Plans and audit.	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Annual report to Town Meeting.	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost

**Class 4 – How we make decisions**

(Decision making processes and records of decisions)

Timetable of meetings (Council and Working Groups).	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost

Minutes of meetings (as above) – <i>n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting</i>	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Reports presented to council meetings – <i>n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting</i>	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Responses to consultation papers	Email, hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Responses to planning applications	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost

### **Class 5 – Our policies and procedures**

(Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)

<u>Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:</u> Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
<u>Policies and procedures about the employment of staff:</u> Equality and Diversity Policy Health and Safety Policy Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Record management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Hard copy, Web site	Disbursement cost
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Hard copy, Web site	Disbursement cost

### **Class 6 – Lists and Registers**

(Currently maintained lists and registers)

Any publicly available register or list.	Hard copy – some information may be available for inspection only	Disbursement cost
Asset Register	Email, Hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Register of members' interests	Website, email hard copy.	Disbursement cost
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hard copy.	Disbursement cost

### **Class 7 – The services we offer**

(information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)

Allotments	Available for inspection	Free of charge
Cemeteries	Website, email hard copy. – some records by inspection only.	Free of charge
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Available for inspection	Free of charge
Newsletters	Delivered to all properties in the parish. Website.	Free of charge
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Hard copy, Web site	Disbursement cost

