

Executive Report

Ward(s) affected: Not applicable

Report of Director of Strategic Services

Author: Ciaran Ward, Information Governance Officer

Tel: 01483 444072

Email: Ciaran.Ward@guildford.gov.uk

Lead Councillor responsible: Joss Bigmore

Tel: 07974 979369

Email: joss.bigmore@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 26 October 2021

Update to FOI Publication Scheme

Executive Summary

This proposal seeks the approval of an updated and revamped version of the Council's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme (originally drafted in 2009).

Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive approves the new Publication Scheme.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

For an improved up to date, more comprehensive and more user-friendly Publication Scheme in line with the Information Commissioner's recommendations and with other local authorities

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? (delete as appropriate)

No

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks to update the Council's Publication Scheme (originally drafted in 2009) to reflect the model template as recommended by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and other changes as outlined below.

Approval for the revised version is sought from Executive.

2. Strategic Priorities

To make the public aware of what information is routinely available from the Council and how to access it.

3. Background

3.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. Section 19 of the Act requires every public authority to produce a publication scheme outlining the types of information which it makes available to the public as a matter of routine.

3.2 The Council's existing [publication scheme](#) requires updating to reflect organisational changes within the Council as well as legislative and regulatory developments including the implementation of the amended Data Protection Act 2018/UK GDPR and guidance produced by the ICO. The ICO's latest model publication scheme (2015) has since been adopted by many local authorities.

3.3 The types of information listed in the Scheme include:

- Who we are - Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance
- What we spend and how we spend it
- Strategy and performance, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews
- Policy proposals and decisions, decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations
- Our policies and procedures
- Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority
- Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases

3.4 The new Scheme also provides links to frequently requested types of information on the Council's website including:

- Planning applications/Planning committee meetings
- Waste collections and recycling
- Public Health Funerals
- Business Rates

4. Consultations

4.1 Following consultations with the Council's Information Risk Group and approval from the Strategic Services Director, it was agreed to formalise the updated version.

5. Key Risks

- 5.1 The proposed updates will ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and will assist the public in locating information which is made routinely available by the Council.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 [Section 19](#) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 imposes a duty on local authorities to adopt and maintain a publication scheme and to review it periodically.

8. Human Resource Implications

- 8.1 There are no HR implications arising from the report.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

10. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 10.1 There are no climate change or sustainability implications arising from the report.

11. Summary of Options

- 11.1 To adopt the revised Publication Scheme is recommended.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 It is proposed to update the existing Publication Scheme for the reasons outlined above.

13. Background Papers

None.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1: Revised Publication Scheme.