



**HADLOW DOWN PARISH COUNCIL
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PUBLICATION SCHEME**

**Reviewed and approved on 3rd December 2024
Next review date: December 2025**

Index

Section and Page Number:

1. Introduction p.2
2. The Model Publication Scheme p.2
3. Information Available Guide p.5
4. Contact Details p.11
5. Schedule of Charges p.11
6. Complaints Procedure. p.12

1. INTRODUCTION

The Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives to the public a limited right to see information held by public bodies such as local councils. Information about the Act is available from the Information Commissioner's Office at 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. Hadlow Down Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme at their Council meeting on 2nd December 2008, the scheme is reviewed every two years. 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 makes large amounts of information available to the public, through St Mark's Parish Magazine, via the telephone, by post, by items posted on the village notice boards or by items that appear on the village website www.hadlowdown.com or by their twitter account @hadlowdownpc or Facebook page: HadlowDownVillage.

2. 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, contracts and financial audit.

What our priorities are and how we are doing.

Strategy and performance information, plans, audits, 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, 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 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.

3. INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM HADLOW DOWN PARISH COUNCIL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

| Information to be published | How the information can be obtained | Cost |
|---|---|---------------|
| Class 1 – who we are and what we do? (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) | | |
| Who's who on the Council and its Committees | St Mark's Parish Magazine Hard Copy – contact Clerk (see page 11 for contact details) - Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used)) | St Mark's Parish Magazine and website: www.hadlowdown.com Hard copy – contact clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Location of main Council office and accessibility details | St Mark's Parish Magazine and website: www.hadlowdown.com for address. Hard Copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Staffing structure | Only Clerk employed | |
| 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 | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website – www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |

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| Finalised budget | Hard Copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Precept | Hard Copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Borrowing Approval letter | Hard Copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Financial Standing Orders and Regulations | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Grants given and received | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| List of current contracts awarded and value of contract | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Members’ allowances and expenses | Hard Copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Expenditure over £500 | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews) Current and previous year as a minimum. | | |
| Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum) | Hard copy of recent Plan available from the Clerk. Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum) | Hard Copy – contact Clerk - Website: www.hadlowdown.com St Mark’s Parish Magazine | 10p per sheet |

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| Quality status | | |
| Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines | | |
| 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) | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Agendas of meetings (as above) | Displayed on notice boards Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com Twitter @hadlowdownpc Facebook – HadlowDownVillage | 10p per sheet |
| Minutes of meetings (as above) – n.b this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. | St Mark’s Parish Magazine Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Reports presented to council meetings – n.b this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. | Hard Copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Responses to consultation papers | Minutes in St Mark’s Parish Magazine, on notice boards, on www.hadlowdown.com website. Hard Copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |

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| Responses to planning applications | Minutes in St Mark's Parish Magazine and on website: www.hadlowdown.com Hard Copy – contact Clerk. WDC planning department and website: www.wealden.gov.uk | 10p per sheet |
| Bye laws | | |
| 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 Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Delegated authority in respect of officers Code of Conduct Policy statements Co-option procedures | All on website: www.hadlowdown.com Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk | All 10p per sheet |
| Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: Internal policies relating to the delivery of services Equal opportunities policy Health and safety policy | All on website: www.hadlowdown.com Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk. | All hard copies 10p per sheet |

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| 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) Discipline and grievance policy Dignity at work policy | Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk | |
| Information security policy | Back up of computer details held at a different building | |
| Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive) | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Data protection policies | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Schedule of charges (for the publication of information) | See below | |
| Class 6 – Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only | (hard copy or website www.hadlowdown.com ; some information may only be available by inspection) | |
| Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice) | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Assets Register | Hard copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Burial Ground Register | Hard copy of register available for inspection only – contact Clerk | |
| Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils) | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Register of members' interests | Hard copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| Register of gifts and hospitality | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |

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| Landholdings | Hard copy – contact Clerk Website: www.hadlowdown.com | 10p per sheet |
| 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 www.hadlowdown.com ; some information may only be available by inspection) | |
| Allotments | | |
| Burial grounds and closed churchyards | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Community centres and village halls | | |
| Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Bus shelters | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| Markets | | |
| Public conveniences | | |
| Agency agreements | | |
| Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees) | Hard copy – contact Clerk | 10p per sheet |
| | | |
| Additional Information This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised in the lists above | | |

4. CONTACT DETAILS:

Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer:

Vicki Rutt
33 Swaines Way
Heathfield
TN21 0AN,
Tel: 01825 760103
Email: clerk@hadlowdown.org

5. 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 Website | Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white) All information listed as being available on the website can be downloaded for free. | Actual cost incurred. |
| | Postage | Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class |
| Freedom of Information Request | For information which costs public bodies less than £450 to retrieve and collate, there will be no charge. This is roughly equivalent to two and a half days of work, for free. | |

6. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

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.

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.

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.

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