



# **Southend-on-Sea Borough Council**

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

### **Publication Scheme**

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**Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009**

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## **1. Introduction**

(a) This Publication Scheme commits the 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 in (3) below, where this information is held by the Council.

(b) This Publication Scheme is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 and replaces the existing Publication Scheme approved by the Information Commissioner's Office in February 2003.

## **2. The Commitment of 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.
- To specify the information which is held by the Council 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 Publication 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 Council makes available under this Publication 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.

## **3. 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. An A to Z of services offered.

**4. Excluded Information**

The classes of information stated in (3) 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.

**5. Access to information published under the Publication Scheme**

The information available to the public under this Publication Scheme is set out in the Council's 'List of Publication Scheme Documents'. The List:-

- Groups the information under the seven classes set out in (3) above; and
- Specifies how individual documents can be obtained

The List is available on the Council's website [www.southend.gov.uk](http://www.southend.gov.uk) and at all the Council main reception areas.

Most of the information is made available for downloading from the Council's website although some information is also available in printed form upon request and the List specifies how to do this.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified in the List, contact details are provided and 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 the Council are legally required to translate any information, we will do so.

The Council will comply with its obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats.

## **6. Charging for information under the Publication Scheme**

The purpose of this Publication Scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the Council for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Most of the information available under the Publication Scheme is available free of charge by downloading it from the Council's website and no charge is made for providing leaflets.

Charges may also be made for information provided under this Publication Scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principle of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with the Council's Charging Policy in respect of requests for information under FOI and the Environmental Information Regulations which is published on the Council's website.

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.

## **7. Written Requests**

Information held by the Council that is not published under this Publication Scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

## **8. Guide to Information**

In operating this Publication Scheme, the Council has produced a 'Guide to Information' giving details of:-

- the information it will routinely make available
- how the information can be accessed and
- whether or not a charge will be made for it