



Royston Town Council
Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme
Adopted 15th May 2023 Minute number: 21/24
Review date: May 2024

Introduction

This scheme will enable members of the public to view and access information held by the Town Council.

Obtaining Information

There are three ways to obtain the information:

- **Inspect Documents at the Town Council Offices**

Some information may only be available by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified you should contact the Clerk, either by telephone, email or in writing. Some documents require some time to locate, so it may be necessary to make an appointment. This will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

- **Individual Written Request**

If the information is not included in the publication scheme outlined below you may send a written request to: The Town Clerk, Royston Town Council, Town Hall Offices, Melbourn Street, Royston SG8 7DA or by email to town.clerk@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk. Your request must include your name, address for correspondence, and a description of the information you require.

- **Visit the Town Council Website:** www.roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Where it is within the capability of the council, information will be provided on its website. When an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, alternative means will be provided.

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.

Written Requests

Information held by a public authority that is not published under the publication scheme can be requested in writing and its provision will be considered in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Within 20 working days of receipt of your written request the Council will:

- confirm to you whether or not it holds the information
- advise you if a fee will be charged
- provide you with the information (after any relevant fee has been paid) unless an exemption applies (see 'Exemptions' paragraph below).

Fees

The Act only allows the Council to charge for answering Freedom of Information requests in the following circumstances:

1. Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage; and
2. When estimated staff costs involved in locating and or compiling the information exceed £450. Under these circumstances, the Council can refuse the request on the grounds of cost, or charge the applicant £25 per hour, plus disbursements for the estimated work.

For the majority of requests, or a series of requests from the same applicant within a 12 month period, it is expected that the charge for locating and compiling information will be less than £450 and therefore, except for disbursement costs, no reimbursement can be sought.

However, where costs are estimated to exceed £450 (based on an hourly charge-out rate of £25), the Council can decide to:

- refuse the request; or
- comply with the request and charge for allowable costs as prescribed in the regulations; or
- comply with the request free of charge.

If the estimated cost of a request is more than £450, and it is decided to release the information and make a charge for the information then:

- A fee notice will be sent to the applicant requesting the appropriate fee.
- The request will not be answered until the fee has been received.
- If the actual cost of completing the request is more than the estimate then the Council will incur the additional cost.
- Where the cost is less than the estimated cost then the difference will be refunded to the applicant.

For disbursements costs, it is proposed that the Council will charge 10p per sheet for photocopying and printing documents, and recover the actual cost of postage or any other transmission costs from the applicant.

Exemptions

Some information may not be provided by the Council as there are 23 exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act, for example, personal data about individuals which is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998 and 2018, commercially confidential information or information provided under legal professional privilege.

Further Help

If you need help in accessing information from the Council under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Town Clerk (address as before).

You will also find more detailed guidance on the website of the Information Commissioner <https://ico.org.uk>

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the Council then you should put your complaint in writing to the Clerk at the address above. If you are still dissatisfied, you may contact the Information Commissioner using the contact details on the ICO website

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Information available under the Royston Town Council Publication Scheme

Website: www.roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

email: town.clerk@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Information published	How the information can be obtained	Cost (hard copy only)
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do		
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Staffing structure	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it		
Annual return and audit reports	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Finalised Budget and Precept information	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	Hard copy/Email	10p per sheet
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Grants given and received	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard copy/Email	10p per sheet
Members Allowances and expenses	N/A	
Payments to suppliers	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing		
Annual Report and newsletters	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Annual Town Meeting Minutes	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Local Council Award Scheme status	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Class 4 – How we make decisions		
Timetable of meetings	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Agendas of meetings	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Reports presented to council (this will exclude information that is not available to the public)	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy/Email	10p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet

Class 5 – Our policies and procedures		
Adopted policies not solely related to the employment of staff	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Adopted policies relating solely to the employment of staff	Hard copy/Email	10p per sheet
Class 6 – Lists and Register		
Assets Register	Hard copy/Email	10p per sheet
Register of members' interests	Online - Link to District Council website	N/a
Register of gifts and hospitality	Hard copy/Email	10p per sheet
Class 7 – The services we offer		
Allotments	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Town Hall & Market Hill Rooms - Hire of rooms & halls	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
War Memorial	Online	
Markets	Hard copy/Email/Online	10p per sheet
Cave	Email/Online	
Plantations – tree surveys	Email/Online	

Contact details:

Town Clerk, Town Council Offices, Melbourn Street, Royston, Herts SG8 7DA
Tel: 01763 245484 Email: town.clerk@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation