



Royston Town Council Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

Adopted: 13th May 2019
Minute number: 18/20
Review date: May 2020

Introduction

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

Obtaining Information and Information held

There are three ways to obtain the information:

- **Inspect Documents held by the Clerk:**

If you wish to view certain documents, you should contact the Clerk, either by telephone, or in writing. Some documents require some time to locate, so it may be necessary to make an appointment.

- **Individual Written Request:**

If the information is not included in the publication scheme outlined below you may send a written request to:

Town Clerk, Royston Town Council, Town Hall Offices, Melbourn Street, Royston SG8 7DA
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

Council's Response to a Written Request

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 £20 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 £20), 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, or commercially confidential information.

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/>

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

Information available under the Publication Scheme

Website: www.roystontowncouncil.gov.uk email: town.clerk@roystontowncouncil.gov.uk

Information published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do		
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website Town Council Office	Free 10p per sheet
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members	Website Town Council Office Notice board Newsletter	Free Free Free Free
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website Newsletter	Free Free
Staffing structure	Website	Free
Class 2 - What we spend and how we spend it		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Town Council Office Website	10p per sheet Free
Finalised budget	Town Council Office Website	10p per sheet Free
Precept	Website	Free
Borrowing Approval letter	Town Council Office	10p per sheet
Standing Orders and Financial Regulations	Email Town Council Office Web-site	Free 10p per sheet Free
Grants given and received	Town Council Office	10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Town Council Office	10p per sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	N/A	
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing		
Annual Report	Town Council Office Web-site	Free Free
Parish Plan	N/A	
Annual Town Meeting Minutes	Town Council Office Web-site	10p per sheet Free
Local Council Award Scheme	Town Council Office	Free

Class 4 – How we make decisions		
Timetable of meetings	Website Town Council Office	Free 10p per sheet
Agendas of meetings	Website/Noticeboard Town Council Office	Free 10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings	Website Town Council Office	Free 10p per sheet
Reports presented to council	Town Council Office	10p per sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Town Council Office	10p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	Planning minutes - Town Council Website NHDC Website Town Council Office	Free Free 10p per copy
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders Financial Regulations Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Members Code of Conduct	Town Council Office Website	10p per sheet Free
Internal policies relating to the delivery of services: Equal Opportunities Policy Health and safety policy Recruitment policies Policies and procedures for handling requests for information Complaints policy	Town Council Office Website	10p per sheet Free
Information security policy	Town Council Office Website	10 per sheet Free
Records management policies	Town Council Office	10p per sheet
Data protection policies	Town Council Office Website	10p per sheet Free
Schedule of charges	Town Council Office Website	10p per sheet Free
Class 6 – Lists and Register		
Assets Register	Available for inspection at office	
Register of members' interests	Link to District Council website	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	Available for inspection at office	
List of current Planning Applications	Current agenda Web-site	Free

Class 7 – The services we offer		
Allotments	Website	Free
Town Hall and Market Hill Rooms - Hire of Rooms and halls	Website Town Council Office	Free Free
War Memorial	Website	Free
Markets – Charter	Website	Free
Museum	Town Council & Museum Web-site	Free
Cave	Town Council & Cave Web-site	Free

Contact details:

Caroline Mills

Town Clerk

Town Hall, 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