



Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

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Classes of Information and Guide to Information

Document Control

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Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Publication Scheme

In implementing the Freedom of Information Act 2000 Wigan Council promotes an understanding of the work undertaken within the Council to foster a spirit of trust with the public and other organisations. We achieve this by promoting transparency in the way we make our decisions and by providing clear information about our policies and processes through our publication scheme. We deal with individual requests for information courteously and promptly and provide advice and assistance if necessary.

What is Freedom of Information?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. It lists exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

The Act came into force in two stages:-

- In February 2003 Wigan Council adopted a Publication Scheme;
- The second stage came into force in January 2005. Any person now making a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and supplied with that information. This is subject to a number of exemptions listed in the Act.

What is a Publication Scheme?

A 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. It also covers environmental information, requests for which would be handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

What Classes of Information are covered?

- Who are we and what to we do
- What we spend and how we spend it.
- What our priorities are and how we are doing.
- How we make decisions.
- Our policies and procedures.
- Lists and registers
- The services we offer.

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.

You might find what you are looking for in [Open Data](#)

By adopting the Information Commissioner's 'Model Scheme' Wigan Council is committed to the following:-

- To indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained;
- Where possible information will be provided on the website.
- Where it is impracticable to make information available on the website we will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.
- To review and update the information on a regular basis.
- In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged with a reasonable timescale.
- Information will be provided in the language in which it is held, or in such other language that is legally required.
- 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.

How do I request information not covered by this scheme?

The Council includes as much information in the Publication Scheme and the Open Data as it can. However, if you cannot find what you are looking for you can make a request for the information by emailing foirequest@wigan.gov.uk or in writing to Information Governance, Legal Services, Wigan Council, Town Hall, Library Street, Wigan, WN1 1YN.

Further details can be found at

[Freedom of Information](#)

The Act is retrospective and information requests can be for information created before the Act came fully in to force in 2005. However, where any of the information comes within an exempt category either under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or other relevant legislation, it will be published with the exempt material deleted.

Will I be charged for information?

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 via the website can be downloaded free of charge. Some information may only be available in hard copy and some information will only be available for inspection. 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.

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.

Making a complaint

If you are not satisfied with the Council's response to a request for information you may request an internal review by emailing or writing to the addresses given above within 40 days of our response and a senior officer will review the decision.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner, who is the regulator for Freedom of Information. The website is <https://ico.org.uk/> and the helpline number is 0303 1231113.

ICO staff may ask you to exhaust our internal review procedure if you choose to complain to the ICO.

Reviewing and maintaining the scheme

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a publication scheme should be reviewed from time to time. The Council is responsible for reviewing and maintaining this guide to information and the data it contains. Material will be updated and any outdated information will be removed. This guide and the scheme have been reviewed in August 2020 and will be reviewed annually.

Copyright

Reproducing material supplied under this Publication Scheme without the express permission of the Council may be an infringement of copyright. Requests for permission to reproduced should be addressed to the Information Governance Team at the address above.

Who we are and what we do		
	Council Constitution	Constitution
	Council directorate structure	Corporate Management Structure (Item 7 Management Structure and Deployment of Officers in The Council's Constitution)
	Council democratic structure	Council Meetings, Executive and other Committees
	Location and opening times of council properties	Life Centres
	Currently elected councillors information and contact details	Find your Councillor
	Contact details for all customer facing departments	https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Contact-us/index.aspx https://www.wigan.gov.uk/MyAccount/My-Account.aspx
	Most recent election results	Election Results
	Relationships with other authorities	Outside Bodies
What we spend and how we spend it		
	Financial Statements, budgets and variance reports	Annual Statement of Accounts Financial plan (Council budget) Open data
	Members allowances scheme and allowances paid under it to councillors each year	Members allowances scheme Members allowances in detail (under elections and democracy)
	Staff allowances and expenses Pay and grading structure	Open Data (under Spending & Finance)
	Details of Contracts currently being tendered	Council Procurement

	Lists of contracts awarded and their value	Contracts Register (under Finance and Spending)
	Independent Auditors' Report	https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Performance-and-Spending/Statement-of-Accounts/Statement-of-accounts.aspx
	Financial Statements for projects and events	
	Internal financial regulations	Available under Section 4 of the Constitution These can be found under 4. Financial procedure rules
	Funding for partnership arrangements	https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Performance-and-Spending/index.aspx
What our priorities are and how are we doing?		
	Annual reports	Performance and Spending
	Strategies and business plans for services provided by the Council	Strategies, Policies and Plans Progress with Unity: A new era for Wigan Borough
	Best value performance plans	Performance information
	Business Support	Why choose Wigan?
	Forward Plan	The Forward Plan details every Key Decision that the Council is going to take over a four month period Forward Plan
	Statistical information produced in accordance with the Council's and departmental requirements – <u>statistics not already produced are not available under the publication scheme</u>	Performance and Spending https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Council/Data-Statistics/Data-Statistics.aspx Office for National Statistics (ONS) - ONS
	Service Standards	Progress with Unity: A new era for Wigan Borough MyAccount

How we make decisions		
	Timetable of Council meetings	Calendar of meetings
	Agendas, officers' reports, background papers and minutes of council committee, sub committee and standing forum meetings	Committee meetings
	Major policy proposals and decisions	Forward Plan Local Plan Core Strategy
	Analyses of facts considered when framing major policies	Info on the Forward Plan and via public info on the Council's decision recording system.
	Public consultations	Consultations
Our Policies and Procedures		
	Policies and procedures for conducting council business	Constitution
	Policies and procedures for delivering our services	Policies
	Policies and procedures about recruitment and employment of staff	Working For Us
	Records management and personal data policies	Data Protection and FOI
	Charging regimes and policies	Fees and charges
	Customer Service	Contact details My Account

Lists and Registers – Some are available for inspection only		
	Public register and registers held as public records	Births, marriages and deaths Food premises registration Licensing Act 2003 Licensing Public Registers - Public register
	CCTV	Locations of CCTV Cameras
	Register of councillors' financial and other interests	Your Councillors (within details for each councillor)
	Register of gifts and hospitality	Information available on request
	Highways, licensing, planning, commons, footpaths etc	http://www.wigan.gov.uk/index.aspx
	Register of Electors	Open register
Services Provided by the Council		
	http://www.wigan.gov.uk/index.aspx Media releases Press statements and releases: http://www.wigan.gov.uk/News	