

Alcester Town Council - Publication Scheme

Introduction

Alcester Town Council is obliged, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, to make certain information available under what is known as a 'Publication Scheme'.

There are various ways in which the information can be supplied: as hard copy, which means we are required to provide the information as a printed document on request, through our website, or by allowing the public to inspect documents at our office.

We aim to provide as much information as possible through this website, and to expand the amount of information available without the need to contact the office.

The information we are obliged to provide under the scheme is divided into a number of 'classes'. These are shown below, together with details of how to obtain that information:

Alcester Town Council will make as much information available as possible on a routine basis unless:

- Alcester Town Council does not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOIA exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 exceptions, or the release of the information is prohibited by another statute;
- the information is readily and publicly available from an external website; such information may have been provided by the public authority or on its behalf (the authority must provide a direct link to that information);
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

If you wish to inspect any information at the Council's offices, please contact the Town Clerk first to make an appointment. We can then ensure that the information you require is available.

Alcester Town Council, Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester, B49 5DZ
Tel 01789 766084 E-mail: clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk

PUBLICATION SCHEME

Based on the ICO Model Publication Scheme

Information is available on the Town Council's website, on the Town Council's notice board or can be obtained in electronic or hard copy form from the Town Clerk:

- Town Council website www.alcester-tc.gov.uk
- Town Council notice boards are located outside Specsavers on the High Street and on the tuary between Waitrose and the High Street
- The Town Clerk: Tel. 01789 766084 clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk

Who we are and what we do (ICO class 1)

(Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)

- Who's who on the Council and its Committees.
- Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address).
- Location of main Council office and accessibility details.
- Staffing structure (hard copy on request).

What we spend and how we spend it (ICO class 2)

(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.
- Finalised budget (hard copy on request)
- Precept (hard copy on request)
- Financial Regulations.
- Grants given
- Grants received (hard copy on request)
- List of current contracts awarded and value of contract (hard copy on request)
- Members' allowances and expenses (hard copy on request)

What our priorities are and how we are doing (ICO class 3)

(Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews).

Current and previous year as a minimum.

- Neighbourhood Plan
- Annual Report to the Annual Parish Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum).
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Quality status – not applicable at present
- Local charters drawn up in accordance with DCLG guidelines – not applicable

How we make decisions (ICO class 4)

(Decision making processes and records of decisions).

Current and previous council year as a minimum.

- Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings).
- Agendas of meetings (as above).
- Minutes of meetings (as above) – this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.
- Reports presented to council meetings – this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. (hard copy on request)
- Responses to consultation papers (hard copy on request)
- Responses to planning applications (all available on Stratford District Council's website)

Our policies and procedures (ICO class 5)

(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.

Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:

- Discipline and Grievance policies;
- Equality and diversity policy;
- Health and safety policy;
- 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).
- Training and Development policy
- Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive).
- Data protection policies.
- Privacy policy.
- Schedule of charges (for the publication of information).

Lists and Registers (ICO class 6)

Currently maintained lists and registers only.

We may not be able to allow you access to some lists held by the Council - for example a list of Allotment Tenants. These lists hold personal data and come

within Data Protection Act restrictions.

- Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice).
- Assets register.
- Disclosure log (hard copy on request)
- Register of members' interests. (Held by Stratford District Council)
- Register of gifts and hospitality.

The services we offer (ICO class 7)

(Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses). Current information only.

- Allotments.
- Cemetery
- Parks, playing fields and open spaces
- Seating and bins
- Jubilee Centre

Freedom of Information Requests

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires that Alcester Town Council supplies to any individual or organisation the details of any information it holds on any given matter - subject to some exemptions where the information is confidential or contains data we cannot supply under the terms of Data Protection legislation.

Before you submit any formal request under the Freedom of Information Act, you should ensure that the information cannot be obtained in a less formal manner - for instance via this website or through a simple telephone call or email to the Town Clerk.

If you believe you cannot find the information you require, you should make a formal Freedom of Information request to the Town Council.

Making a Freedom of Information Request

Requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 should be sent either in writing or by email to the Town Clerk.

Your request should include your full name, a contact address and email address (if you have one) and, preferably, a contact telephone number.

You should include as much information as possible about your request, and you should be as specific as possible about the information you require.

When the Council receives a request, it will acknowledge receipt - generally by email and will let you know if it holds the information you are requesting. The Council has 20 working days in which to respond to your request but, wherever possible, we will aim to respond more quickly. If your request is complicated and we need more time, the Council will contact you to let you know.

Under certain circumstances, the Council can refuse to supply information. Generally, this will be where the Council does not hold the information requested or where the information is subject to Data Protection legislation or has been validly dealt with in a confidential session of the Council.

The Council may also refuse to supply the information if it is readily available elsewhere (for example, on this website), if it is a repeat request for the same information as has been previously supplied, or if the Council believes that the request is vexatious.

Right of appeal

If the response to your request for information is not satisfactory, you can request a review by contacting the Mayor of Alcester Town Council.

If a review is requested it will be completed within 20 working days (or within 40 working days in exceptional cases). If the review is not satisfactory, you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 if you prefer to use a national rate number. Fax: 01625 524 510 E-mail casework@ico.gov.uk

Charges

Generally, the Council will not make a charge for supplying information. However, it can do so if the amount of time needed to compile the information is likely to cause the Council considerable expense, usually anything in excess of £50. In such circumstances, a charge of £15 per hour may be levied. The Council will contact you to discuss the matter before any such work is undertaken. It may be that your request could be refined to reduce the cost.

If you require paper copies of any information, a charge at actual cost to the Council (currently 10p for each A4 black and white copy and 20p for each A4 colour copy) will be made. There will be no charge for electronic copies. Postage will be charged at the prevailing rate. The Council reserves the right to ask for any charges levied in advance before any copies or information is supplied.

Approved by Presidium – 30th July 2019
Approved by Full Council – 6th August 2019
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