



London Borough of Southwark Publication Scheme

Introduction

Southwark Council provides a wide range of services to residents, visitors and businesses. To support these services and help people to get access to them, we also produce information in various formats.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on the council with regard to the provision of information.

Individuals already have the right of access to information about themselves under the Data Protection Act 1998. The Freedom of Information Act extends this right to allow public access to other types of information held by public authorities.

The general right of access to the information held by a public authority is provided by section 1 of the FOIA Act. Any person wishing to exercise this right is required to make a written request (this includes e-mails, FAX messages, and website contact forms and via Twitter) to the council.

About Southwark Council's publication scheme

Under the FOIA the council is required to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. It is also required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme, to publish information in accordance with that scheme and to review the scheme regularly.

The council considers that its public website is the source of all proactive information made available by it and therefore constitutes its Publication Scheme. You will be able to see what information is available, where it can be obtained and if there is a charge for the information.

The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the council.

We may have to withhold the information where there are valid reasons for doing so. There may be exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that prevent some information from being released. This will affect several of the classes listed below, where some of the information in a class is derived from documents which we

consider contain exempt information. Where this occurs the material will clearly show where information has been withheld.

Information which the council will refrain from publishing includes:

- Personal records
- Records that contain personal data or sensitive personal data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998
- Records pertaining to legal proceedings, courts summonses, witness statements etc.
- Emergency planning, where disclosure may prejudice emergency procedures
- Records relating to the council's audit function
- Contract information regarding commercially sensitive material, tenders and contract documents

The above list is not an exhaustive list but serves to give examples of what might be exempt from publication.

Information available under the publication scheme

The website sets out all the information we make available, in what format the information is held and how to obtain the information. The website is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it still reflects the work of the authority and does not wrongly omit information and that old information is removed.

Information published under the scheme can be categorised into the following classes:

Who we are and what 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

List and registers

The services we offer

You can expect to find the following types included in the classes listed above: leaflets and publications (promotional material, brochures, advertising material, pamphlets); protocols (codes of conducts and information about roles and responsibilities); policy and procedures (rules, strategies, plans that embrace the general principles and aims of Southwark); forms and records (printed documents with blanks to be filled in, written accounts of events, registers, reports, notices, applications and information based on fact); performance information (about effectiveness of Southwark's systems and services, plans for improvement of service delivery, independent reviews and accounts of delivery of results against commitments, priorities and targets); and consultations.

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.

The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

Where possible, information available under the publication scheme will be found on the council's website so that it is easily accessible and available without charge.

In circumstances where information is available by viewing in person only, 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 we are legally required to translate any information, we will do so.

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.

Information that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Details are contained on our website.

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact the Financial and Information Governance Team as set out below. Please help by giving us sufficient information about what it is that you are looking for. Provided the information you are requesting falls within the scope of our publication scheme, we aim to provide it to you as soon as possible.

You can also contact the relevant department who can provide the online information in another, more suitable format.

Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge. 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 packing
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised. 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.

Copyright

Some of the information contained on the Southwark Council website is protected by copyright. Before you re-publish any of the material on our website you will need to seek our permission as the copyright owners. Please do not make alterations or additions to the material on our website. The material may also not be sold or otherwise misappropriated. However, you are free to download or copy the information on our site for personal use.

Contact and complaints

If you have any complaints relating to the information under the publication scheme please contact us directly. The address is:

The Financial and Information Governance Team
Southwark Council
PO Box 64529
London
SE19 5LX
Tel. 020 75257511

If you remain dissatisfied with the response received, you can seek an independent review by the Information Commissioner's Office, but only if you have followed Southwark Council's information complaints procedure first. Complaints should be addressed to:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5A Telephone: 01625 545700 Fax: 01625 545510

Feedback

Southwark Council values your comments on any aspect of our Publication Scheme. When responding, we would be grateful if you could tell us:

- Your name, address and organisation, if appropriate
- How did you find about Southwark Council's publication scheme?
- Were you looking for anything in particular, if yes, did you find it?
- What other information would you like to see in our publication scheme?
- How else could we improve the scheme?

Please send your comments to:
The Financial and Information Governance Team
Southwark Council
PO Box 64529
London
SE1P 5LX
Tel. 020 75257511