



Transparency, Publication, and Information Access Policy

Contents

Introduction	2
Purpose	3
Roles and responsibilities	3
Publication Scheme	4
Introduction	4
Charging	4
Scheme Management	4
Statutory Information Access Requests	5
Environmental Information Regulations	5
Freedom of Information Act	6
INSPIRE	6
Re-use of Public Sector Information	6
Data Protection – Individual Rights Requests	7
Document Control	7
Review of Policy	7
Version History	7

Introduction

Information and data are valued corporate and public assets; these resources help the council deliver our services, fulfil our objectives, and to meet the expectations of our customers.

The council also recognises the value in releasing data and information into the public domain to inform the public on what work the council undertakes, how it does so and at what costs. This in turn can lead to greater engagement between the public and the council, which in turn has benefits relating to consultation, decision-making, and programme delivery.

The Council is committed to publishing data not only to meet legislative requirements but to increase the transparency on how we work as an organisation. Such legislative requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”)
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIR”)
- Local Government Act 2000
- Localism Act 2011
- Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012
- Public Contracts Regulations 2015
- Transparency Code 2015

This document should be read in conjunction with the procedural and guidance documents that sit below it. This includes:

- Publication Scheme
- Procedure for handling Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations Requests
- Procedure for handling Data Subject Access Requests
- Procedure for publishing Open Data

Purpose

The purpose of the Transparency and Publication Policy is to promote a culture of open data, meeting our legal requirement and encouraging an attitude of openness through the publication of more information.

Roles and responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for approving a framework for managing and overseeing the council's duties.

The Executive Director of Community Services, in their role as the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO), is responsible for providing advice and guidance in respect of information management.

The Information Governance Manager is responsible for drafting this policy and its underlying guidance and procedures. They are also responsible for coordinating with service areas to ensure datasets are published on time.

Information Asset Owners are responsible for the management of the information and data in their own business area, in accordance with the statutory and professional obligations and this policy.

The Internet & Intranet Co-ordinator is responsible for the upload of information to the council's website.

The Monitoring Officer is responsible for ensuring the council acts in a manner compliant with its legal obligations.

Norfolk Record Office will be asked to retain all records deemed worthy of permanent preservation.

Publication Scheme

Introduction

The purpose of a publication scheme is to let everyone know what information will be automatically or routinely published by the council and to ensure a significant amount of information is available to the public.

Norwich City Council has a duty to adopt and maintain a publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 Sections 19 (1) and (2).

Where possible, the data is made publicly available via the website. Where information is only available in paper format, this is also shown, together with where any requests for such information should be directed.

The council's Publication Scheme can be viewed via our website at:

<https://www.norwich.gov.uk/publicationscheme>

Charging

No charge will be made for viewing data listed within the publication scheme unless there is a requirement to do so. Where charges do exist these will be clearly marked.

Charges may be applied for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- printing / photocopying
- packaging and postage

Scheme Management

A review of the published data will be undertaken at least annually, but new classes of data can be identified and uploaded at any time.

The scheme is managed by the Information Governance Manager who can be contacted by emailing DPO@norwich.gov.uk

Statutory Information Access Requests

Where data is not already in the public domain, this can be requested from the council. There are various pieces of legislation governing the requesting and release of information, including those listed below.

The council endeavours to make requesting information as convenient as possible; where appropriate we may relocate a request received under one piece of legislation to a more appropriate one.

Environmental Information Regulations

The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (“EIR”) requires local authorities to disclose environmental information to the public where held.

Environmental Information is defined by the legislation as:

- the state of the elements of the environment: air, water, soil, the landscape, natural sites, and biological diversity (including genetically modified organisms)
- factors affecting, or likely to affect, the environment, such as substances, noise, radiation, emissions, discharges and waste released into the environment
- measures such as policies, legislation, plans, programmes, agreements, and activities affecting the environment, and related cost-benefit and other economic analyses
- reports on the implementation of environmental legislation
- the state of human health and safety so far as they are affected by the elements of the environment and by factors, measures or activities affecting the environment
- cultural sites and built structures, so far as they are affected by the elements of the environment and by factors, measures or activities affecting the environment.

The council endeavours to provide copies of any relevant information within 20 working days.

There may be some instances in which information or records identified for disclosure needs to be withheld. In these instances, we will consider the exceptions set out in the EIR and will conduct a public interest test to determine if the exception should be applied.

EIRs can be submitted in writing to the council or via our website at:

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/forms/form/2340/en/freedom_of_information_request

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA”) requires local authorities to disclose records and information to the public where held.

The council endeavours to provide copies of any relevant information within 20 working days.

There may be some instances in which information or records identified for disclosure needs to be withheld. In these instances, we will consider the exemptions set out in the FOIA and, where applicable, we will conduct a prejudice interest and public interest test to determine if the exemption should be applied.

FOIAs can be submitted in writing to the council or via our website at:

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/forms/form/2340/en/freedom_of_information_request

INSPIRE

The INSPIRE Regulations 2009 (“INSPIRE”) require local authorities who hold spatial datasets to make these available.

The council endeavours to provide copies of any relevant information within 20 working days.

There may be some instances in which datasets identified for disclosure needs to be withheld, for example if this risks intellectual property rights.

INSPIRE requests can be submitted in writing to the council or via our website at:

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/forms/form/2340/en/freedom_of_information_request

Re-use of Public Sector Information

The Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 (RPSI) allows an individual to seek approval to reuse publicly available information.

The council endeavours to provide a response within 20 working days.

The council will approve requests wherever possible but there may be some instances in which we may refuse them, for example if this risks intellectual property rights.

RPSI requests can be submitted in writing to the council or via our website at:

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/forms/form/2340/en/freedom_of_information_request

Data Protection – Individual Rights Requests

Individuals have the right of access to information held about them by organisations as set out by Article 15 of the UK General Data Protection Regulations.

The council endeavours to provide copies of all relevant information within one calendar month.

There may be some instances in which data contained within your records needs to be withheld from disclosure – such as if it relates to an identifiable third party. In these instances, we will redact this information in line with the UK’s data protection legislation.

Subject Access Requests can be submitted in writing to the council or via our website at: <https://www.norwich.gov.uk/datasubjectaccessrequest>

Document Control

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate but not less than every two years.

The last review of this policy was February 2023.
Next review of this policy is due February 2025.

Version History

Version	Status	Author	Date	Summary of changes
0.1	Draft	James Bentley	16/02/2022	Initial Draft
1.0	Published	James Bentley	15/02/2023	Published