

LOWER SEVERN (2005) INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME: GUIDE TO INFORMATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000("the Act") gives a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities and sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities, which includes Internal Drainage Boards.
- 1.2 Further information about the Act and its operation can be obtained from the Information Commissioner's Office (<http://www.ico.gov.uk>).
- 1.3 The Board is required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme setting out the classes of information it holds, the manner in which it intends to publish the information, and whether a charge will be made for the information. The purpose of a Publication Scheme is to ensure a significant amount of information is available, without the need for a specific request. Schemes are intended to encourage organisations to publish more information proactively and to develop a greater culture of openness.
- 1.4 The Board has adopted the model publication scheme produced by the Information Commissioner. To supplement the model scheme, we have also produced this Guide to Information which indicates in greater detail, both how information will be published and where we may charge for producing it. The Guide also specifies the type of information which is exempt from disclosure. The Schedule to the Guide, shows in greater detail than is disclosed in the generic classes contained in the model publication scheme itself, the types of information which we will routinely make available.

2. What Information is Routinely Available

- 2.1 Information on who we are and what we do:
 - Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts
- 2.2 Information on what we spend and how we spend it:
 - Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and audited accounts
- 2.3 Information on what our priorities are and how we are doing:
 - Strategies and plans, value for money indicators, audits, inspections and reviews
- 2.4 How we make decisions:
 - Decision making processes and records of decisions
- 2.5 Information on policies and procedures:

- Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities

2.6 Information on lists and registers:

- All statutory and non-statutory registers (with personal information redacted)

2.7 The service we offer:

- Information about the services we currently provide including leaflets, guidance and newsletters.

3. How to Access Information

3.1 The information referred to in the document may be accessed through a variety of means and in a number of formats where available. All information is available for inspection on request and by prior appointment; where appropriate copies can be made available. A charge may be applied for providing the information; each case is considered individually.

- Some information will be available on our web-site. This information is non-chargeable
- Information may be requested by e-mail to admin@lowersevernldb.org.uk with 'Freedom of Information Request' in the subject line
- Information may be requested by post to:

Principal Officer
 Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board
 Waterside Buildings
 Oldbury Naite
 South Glos
 BS35 1RF
 Tel: +44 (0)1454 413340 Fax: +44 (0) 1454 411830
<http://admin@lowersevernldb.org.uk>

Please note that where hard copies of information will normally be supplied upon request, multiple copies cannot normally be provided.

- Information may be requested in person at the Boards' offices by prior appointment only. Please refer to contact details above

3.2 The Board will always endeavour to respond promptly and fully within 20 working days, as set out in the Freedom of Information Act.

4. Exempt Information

4.1 Information is exempt if, and so long as in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, For example:

- Information relating to any individual
- Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

- Information relating to the financial affairs or business affairs of any particular person (including the Board)
- Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any employee relations matter arising between the Board or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Board.
- Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
- Information which reveals that the Board proposes:
 - (a) To give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person, or;
 - (b) To make an order or decision under any enactment
- Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of a crime

4.2 In adopting this scheme the Board intends to be as open as possible but there are instances where, for legitimate reasons, certain information is not available. Where this is the case the reasons behind the decision to exclude certain information will be clearly stated. Justification for excluding information is made in consideration of the general exemptions contained in the Act, the Environmental Information Regulations, the Data Protection Act or where it may be of a confidential or commercially sensitive nature.

5. Charges

5.1 Charges may be imposed for the provision of some of the information available. Where a class contains information which may be the subject of a charge, this is made clear with a £ symbol in the Schedule to this Guide.

5.2 Any charge made will be justified, transparent and kept to a minimum.

6. Feedback

6.1 Feedback, comments or complaints about this publication scheme should be made to the Principal Officer at the address stated in section 3. If you are not satisfied that information is being published in accordance with this scheme you can refer your complaint to the Information Commissioner:

The Case Reception Unit
 Customer Services Team
 Information Commissioners Office
 Wycliffe House
 Water Lane
 Wilmslow
 Cheshire
 SK9 5AF
<http://www.ico.gov.uk/complaints.aspx>

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SCHEDULE TO GUIDE TO INFORMATION: DETAILS OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE

Introduction

We show below and in greater detail than is disclosed in the generic classes of information contained in the adopted Model Publication Scheme, the information which will routinely be made available.

Who we are and what we do:

- Constitution of the Board, including the structure and membership
- Staffing structure
- Geographical area covered
- Outline of responsibilities
- Location of offices and contact details

What we spend and how we spend it (£):

- Annual accounts and financial reports
- Audit of accounts
- Schedules of paid accounts
- Revenue and capital spending plans
- Financial regulations
- Funding: details of drainage rates, special levies, grants and other financial contributions/sources of income
- Staff and Board member allowances and expenses
- Contracts awarded and their value

What our priorities are and how we are doing (£):

- Business Plan

How we make decisions:

- Programme of meetings
- Agendas for and minutes of meetings of the Board, Committees and Working Parties
- Terms of reference of the Board, Committees and Working Parties
- Delegations to Officers
- Standing Orders
- Board reports
- Public consultations
- Reports from advisory groups/joint committees and ADA
- Assessments of flooding risk

- Other publicly available reports

Our policies and procedures:

- Policies and procedures for the conduct of the Board's business
- Policies and procedures about the provision of services
- Policies and procedures about employment matters
- Asset management plan
- Investment policy
- Risk management policy
- Whistle blowing policy
- Anti-fraud and corruption policy
- Bribery Act policy
- Data protection policy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Member Code of Conduct
- Employees Code of Conduct
- Member/Officer protocol
- Health and safety policy

List and registers (£):

- Record of drainage infrastructure
- Asset register
- Complaints register
- Rate book
- Electoral register, (for the purpose of election of IDB members)
- Risk register
- Register of members' interests
- Register of gifts and hospitality
- Members' attendance register
- Freedom of Information

The services we offer (£)

- Byelaws
- Land drainage consents
- Formal comments on planning applications
- Notices, leaflets and guidance
- Media releases

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MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

Freedom of Information Act

This model publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. It may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

This publication scheme commits the Board 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. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits the Board:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the Board and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the Board and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the Board makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.
- To publish any dataset held by the Board that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the Board is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the Board is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under a specified licence. The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

Classes of information

Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

How we make decisions

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

Lists and registers

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the Board.

The services we offer

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

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

The Board will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of the Board, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, the Board will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means. In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. 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 an authority is legally required to translate any information, it 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.

Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

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 Board for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

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 packaging
- 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, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with either regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act or other enactments.

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.

Written requests

Information held by the Board 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.