

ST JUST-IN-PENWITH TOWN COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT – PUBLICATION SCHEME

REPORT OF TOWN CLERK

5 JULY 2010

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Town Council at its meeting on 22 December 2008 agreed to adopt the Model Publication Scheme which is currently available on the Council's website.
- 1.2 However, one aspect of the scheme that the Council has so far not completed is the publication of a schedule which sets out those documents that the Council will make available to the public and it is this element to which this report seeks Council approval.

2. Further information

- 2.1 Local Councils are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The key implications of this Act are that they have to publish and maintain a Publication Scheme, setting out which documents they make available to the public and that they have to respond to requests for further information made under the Act.
- 2.2 In terms of the publication scheme, local councils have to adopt two documents: a guide to the publication scheme produced by the Information Commissioner (already approved by the Council) and a list showing which standard local council documents they publish and do not publish under the Scheme (this again follows a model template and a proposed version for the Town Councils is set out at Appendix 1). It is this element of the Act that the Council has so far not completed.
- 2.3 Local councils are also entitled to charge the actual cost of providing information to those requesting it. Appendix 1 lists a charge of 10p a sheet, which is an accurate reflection of photocopying costs. However, in the interests of openness and transparency, the Council has may wish to waive charges for the present; but if there are a large number of requests, this may be reviewed.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the proposed publication scheme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
- 3.2 To authorise the Clerk to publicise the Scheme on the Council's website and delegate responsibility to the Clerk to update the Scheme as necessary, subject to an annual review by the full Council.
- 3.3 That in the interests of openness and transparency, to waive charges for the present and that this is reviewed in six months following publication of the scheme.