

Publication Scheme

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Part One Introduction

1. Scope and Purpose

Under the Freedom of Information Act, South Norfolk Council has a duty to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme describing:

- The classes of information it publishes
- How and where such information is published (e.g. website, paper copy etc) and
- Whether or not a charge is made for such information.

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 that a significant amount of information is available to the public, without the need for a specific request to be made. Other information is of course available from the Council by individual request, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Data Protection Act 1998, however as many requests are for routine information, this guide should assist the public in quickly and efficiently locating what they want.

If there is any information required that does not appear in this Publication Scheme, please contact:

Senior Governance Officer
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich NR15 2XE

right2know@s-norfolk.gov.uk

2. Obtaining information

Much of the information listed in this Scheme is supplied free of charge and can be downloaded from our website www.south-norfolk.gov.uk and where this is the case, the appropriate link is shown in the Scheme. Where information is available only in paper format, this is also shown in the Scheme together with where any requests for such information should be directed.

3. Charges

Unless otherwise stated, publications listed in the Scheme are supplied free of charge. Where a charge is levied this sign appears £££. Details of how much the charges are at any time can be found on the website.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy

4. Management of the Scheme

The officer responsible for the adoption and maintenance of the Scheme is the Senior Governance Officer who can be contacted as follows:

Senior Governance Officer
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE
Right2know@s-norfolk.gov.uk

5. Review of the Scheme

This scheme was approved in October 2008 and will be amended periodically as necessary. The Scheme was last fully reviewed in October 2013.

Part Two – Classes of information

1. Who we are and what we do

1.1 Council constitution and democratic structure

The Council's constitution consists of a number of documents that, under the Local Government Act 2000, are required to be brought together and made available for public inspection. The articles of the constitution set out the basic principles that underlie the way the Council operates. The other parts of the constitution include details of the Council and the committees to which the Council has delegated various powers and the functions that are the responsibility of the executive; the terms of reference of the various committees and other bodies; the standing orders that regulate the proceedings at meetings; financial regulations; the code of practice for the procurement of works, supplies and services; codes of conduct for members and employees; the schedule for the payment of member's allowances; and a description of the management structure of the Council's workforce.

Website for online access: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/constitution

1.2 Council directorate structure

The structure of our Council is organised around the main services we deliver. There are a number of service areas, which are linked together by a Strategic Management Team, consisting of a Chief Executive and Directors.

Names and contact details for each of the directors and a high-level structure chart are given on the website, link: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/directorates

1.3 Location and opening times of Council properties

Details of how to find the main head office of the Council and opening times can be located on the website. Link: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/directions

The location and opening hours of our Leisure Centres can be found on the website. Link: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/leisure

The location and opening times of our Tourist Information Centres can be found on our website. Link: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/tic

1.4 Councillors' information and contact details

Details of who all our councillors are, the wards they represent, the political party they belong to, the committees they sit on and their contact details can all be found on the website.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/councillors

1.5 Recent election results

Details of the most recent district and parish elections can be found on the website, together with the results and details of any recent by elections.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/elections

1.6 Contact details for front line services

Our website is part of the “Norfolk Portal” which means that if the service is provided by another council, there will be a link to the relevant part of that council’s website.

Our website contains details of our major front line services, including the types of services each department provides, the cost (if applicable), and full contact details including post, email and phone number for each area, including the free phone numbers.

Link to home page: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

1.7 Relationship with other authorities

Details of relationships the Council has with other authorities (such as CNC Building Control and NPLaw) can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

2. What we spend and how we spend it

2.1 Financial statements, budgets and variance reports

The Council spends public money and it is important that the public can see how we have spent that money. The website contains a large amount of information on financial matters, including the Statement of Accounts, Medium Term Plan, the Revenue budgets and the Capital programme. Budgets for the various directorates are also shown.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/finance

2.2 Capital and revenue reports and audit reports

The Council undertakes quarterly reviews of actual against projected spend on both the capital and revenue budgets and these are reported to Cabinet. For details of the latest reviews, these can be found on the website under the committee papers for Cabinet:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeepapers

2.3 Members' allowance scheme and expenses

Councillors are entitled to receive an annual allowance from the Council, as laid down under national legislation. This is called the Scheme of Members Allowances. They may also claim expenses for any travelling etc. that they do while performing their duties. The allowances, which members may decline if they wish, are subject to deductions for income tax and national insurance. Details of this scheme and what members receive annually in allowances and expenses are on the website.

<http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/1456.asp>

2.4 Staff allowances and expenses

Pay and benefits received by senior members of staff are published annually in the Council's Statement of Accounts. An extract can be accessed on the Council's website:

<http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/4704.asp>

Information relating to staff allowances and expenses can be requested from the Information Right Officer.

2.5 Pay and grading structure

The Council produces a Pay Policy Statement annually, which sets out the Council's policy with regard to:

- the remuneration of Chief Officers
- the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
- the relationship between Chief Officers remuneration and that of other officers

The Statement can be accessed from the website: <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/5271.asp>

Further details of the pay and grading structure used by the Council can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

2.6 Election expenses

Information relating to election expenses can be requested from the Electoral Services Team Leader:

South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE
Email: register@s-norfolk.gov.uk

2.7 Procurement procedures

We have a strategy for procuring goods, works and services and the Rules for Financial Governance provide a set of controls to make sure the Council does this each time. The Contract Standing Orders sets out in detail the way we invite bids for contracts and promote effective and fair competition to achieve good value for money.
www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/procurement

2.8 Contracts currently being tendered

Any opportunities for contractors and suppliers for the work the Council intends to contract for, and the goods and services the Council intends to buy either now or in the near future are on our website:
www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/currentcontracts

2.9 List of contracts awarded and their value

Details regarding contracts the Council has awarded can be extracted from the East of England Local Government Association's website:
<http://contracts.eelga.gov.uk/search/?o=South+Norfolk+District+Council+>

2.10 Funding for partnership arrangements

Each partnership will have separate funding arrangements and details of any particular partnership funding arrangement can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

2.11 Local spending data

The Council publishes local spending data each month, which consists of details of spending over £250. This information can be accessed from the Council's website via the following link: <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/4704.asp>

2.12 Details of grants awarded

The Council awards grants from its Neighbourhood Fund and in the form of capital grants. Details of grants awarded annually can be accessed from the Council's website: <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/4704.asp>

3. What our priorities are and how we are doing

3.1 Business Planning

The Council's Business Plan details our priorities and the progress we have made on delivering our priorities, improving performance and customer service, and sets out how we intend to build on this success. The Plan can be found on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/corporateplan

3.2 Service strategies and business plans

Each Directorate has responsibility for their own policies, strategies and business plans and many of them can be found on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/strategies

Details of any others not located in this section of the website may be requested from:

Information Rights Manager
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE
Email: right2know@s-norfolk.gov.uk

3.3 National and local Performance Indicators

The Council's Cabinet monitors performance quarterly. These reports can be accessed via the Committee pages of the council's website: <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/default.aspx>

Any queries that are not answered as part of the reports considered by Cabinet should be addressed to the Senior Governance Officer.

3.4 Strategies developed in partnership

All the Council's policies, strategies and plans can be found on the website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/strategies

3.5 Key Decisions

The Council issues notices of key decisions to be taken by Cabinet in the next 28 days. Details are on the website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/forwardplan

The Council also has a Cabinet Core Agenda which lists the items which Cabinet intend to look into at forthcoming meetings. The Agenda identifies those items which will result in expenditure, income or savings, and those which will have a significant effect (either environmental, physical, social or economic) on communities. These are known as Key Items. Details are on the website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/coreagenda

3.6 Capital strategy

The Capital Strategy is reported to Cabinet each year, normally at the December meeting. It can therefore be located on the website with the Committee papers: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeepapers

3.7 Local Area Agreements

A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three year agreement between a local area and central government and Norfolk's LAA is Norfolk Ambition: <http://www.norfolkambition.gov.uk/>

The LAA sets out how local priorities will be met by applying local solutions and the Council's Action Plan to deliver results against those priorities is the Sustainable Community Strategy which is on our website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/communitystrategy

3.8 Impact assessments

An equality impact assessment is a tool for identifying the potential impact of a council's policies, services and functions on its residents and staff. It can help staff provide and deliver excellent services to residents by making sure that these reflect the needs of the community. The Council subjects all relevant policies and strategies to an impact assessment and further details are available on request from the Senior Governance Officer.

3.9 Customer Care and Service standards

The Council has a number of service standards to ensure we offer an excellent service if you contact us by telephone, email, if you visit our offices in person, or if you write. Details are on our website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/customercare

4. How we make decisions

4.1 Timetable of Council meetings

The calendar of meetings shows the dates and times of committee meetings.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeedates

Please note that meeting dates and times do occasionally change – for accurate dates of forthcoming meetings go to:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeepapers

4.2 Agenda, officers' reports, background papers and minutes of meetings

Details of all the agenda papers, reports and minutes are available on the website.

Please note some of the information may be exempt from publication under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeepapers

Details of documents relating to internal meeting should be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

4.3 Major policy proposals and decisions

There is a section on the website which describes the decision-making process at the Council which can be accessed via:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy

All major policies and strategies would be agreed by the relevant committee and the details could either be found in the committee papers section of the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeepapers

or can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

4.4 Facts considered when formulating major policies

All major policies and strategies and the facts and reasons behind them would be agreed by the relevant committee and the details could either be found in the committee papers section of the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/committeepapers

or can be requested from:

Information Rights Manager
South Norfolk Council
Swan Lane
Long Stratton
Norwich
NR15 2XE
Email: right2know@s-norfolk.gov.uk

4.5 Public consultations

The Council publishes all current consultations on the website which include details of what we are asking your ideas and opinions about and how you can have your say. We also list the results of previous consultations we have carried out on the website and the Norfolk Consultation Finder can also be accessed via our website which has details of all consultations across Norfolk:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/haveyoursay

5. Our policies and procedures

5.1 Policies and procedures for conducting Council business

There are a number of procedures regarding how the Council conducts its business, including codes of practice, procedural standing orders, delegated decision making and authority, communication between councillors and staff, codes of conduct for councillors and staff, terms of reference for committees, rights of the public at meetings can all be found in the Council's Constitution which is on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/constitution

5.2 Policies and procedures for delivering our services

Each service provided by the Council has a section on the website and these can be accessed from the homepage:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

If further information is required, this can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

5.3 Policies and procedures around the recruitment and employment of staff

The Council advertises vacancies on the website and also provides a range of guidance to assist candidates, including the People Strategy. Details can be found at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/jobs

The Council has a number of policies around equality and diversity and these can be found on the website at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/equalities

Details of our Health and Safety procedures can be found on the website at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/healthandsafety

Details of our Pay Policy Statement: see **2.5**.

5.4 Customer service

In order to improve the services the Council provides, we want to get feedback. There are a number of ways to contact the Council and details are on our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/feedback

The Council has a number of service standards to ensure we offer an excellent service if you contact us by telephone, email, if you visit our offices in person, or if you write.

Details are on our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/customercare

5.5 Records management and personal data policies

Anyone has the right to ask the Council for any information we hold (with some exceptions, such as personal data about someone else). The Council will make the

information available if we have it, and if there is no legal reason why we cannot. Our policy and procedures on Freedom of Information is on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/foi

The Council has duty to ensure the information we hold and use for making informed judgements and decisions is accurate, valid, reliable, relevant, complete and timely and the Data Quality and Data Retention policies are available on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/strategies

5.6 Charging regimes and policies

Details of the charges associated with Freedom of Information requests can be found on our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/foi

Details of charges associated with planning fees can be found on our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planningfees

Details of charges associated with environmental services fees can be found on our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/environmentfees

Details of charges associated with land charge search fees can be found on our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/landcharges

Details of any other fees and charges made by the Council can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

6. Lists and registers

6.1 Public registers and registers held as public records

The Council maintains several public registers, although some of the registers it maintains, are not available for public inspection, for example the Housing Register as this contains personal information.

Some of the most important registers are shown separately below, but we are also responsible for a number of other registers, including:

- Business Premises Register
- Register of private water suppliers
- Food Premises Register
- Animal Premises Licenses
- Buildings at Risk Register
- Burglar and vehicle alarm list

6.2 Asset registers and information asset register

The Council has an Asset Management Plan whose objective for the Council is to make sure all property assets support the corporate objectives of the Council. This objective includes the need to manage the assets in an optimum way to achieve the desired and sustainable outcome and the plan can be found on our website at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/assetplan

6.3 Register of councillors' declarations of interests

All South Norfolk Councillors and officers are required to complete declaration of interest forms, and then declare interests at Council meetings. The declaration forms themselves can be downloaded from our website via the following link: <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/5474.asp>

6.4 Register of gifts and hospitality

Councillors have a duty to record any gifts or hospitality they receive and a register is maintained by the Council. Further details are available on request from the Senior Governance Officer.

6.5 Licensing Registers

The Council is responsible for issuing and maintaining registers for alcohol licences, entertainment licenses, taxi licenses and gambling licences. Full details are available via the website at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/licensingregister

6.6 Planning lists

There is a range of planning lists available on the council's website. These include planning applications, and relating comments, comments and reports; and appeals. They can be accessed via the planning section on the website at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning

6.7 Register of electors

There are two types of electoral register; the full register and the edited register. The registers cannot be accessed electronically (however they can be viewed by visiting our Council offices) and details of who can see and who can have copies (and how to obtain them) are explained on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/elections

6.8 Disclosure logs

The disclosure log relating to the financial interests declared by officers or councillors can be located in the Statement of Accounts, which is produced yearly. These can be accessed on the website:

<http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/democracy/650.asp>

6.9 National Assistance burials

The Council arranges funerals for deceased individuals where no relatives are able or willing to make funeral arrangements. A list of these funerals, details of the deceased and whether details have been passed to the Treasury Solicitors Department can be accessed on the Council's website:

www.nationalassistanceburials/community/2101.asp

7. Services provided by the Council

7.1 Licensing responsibilities

The Council is responsible for licensing of all taxis (Hackney Carriage) drivers and vehicles, and any licences to do with animal premises (e.g. zoos, boarding kennels, pet shops) and food premises.

The Council also deals with the licensing of premises that sell or supply alcohol, or provide entertainment (public entertainment, theatres, cinemas, registered members' club, late night hot food provision and indoor sport entertainment).

Details of all the various licenses and the registers can be found on our website at: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/licensing

7.2 Planning Services

The Council has a great deal of information on planning available on the website, including finding out about planning applications and appeals, conservation, landscape and trees, building control and regulations, planning policy (e.g. the Local Development Framework), local land searches and street naming and numbering: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning

7.3 Homes and Housing Services

Although the Council does not own any social houses itself, we are responsible for housing advice, advising on prevention of homelessness, assisting with applying for housing, and working with private landlords. Details of all the housing services can be found on our website at: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/housing

7.4 Council Tax

The Council is responsible for the collection of council tax, which helps pay for local services such as the police, fire service, refuse collection, social services and education. Our website details the information about council tax, including advice on discounts, how to appeal, what the money is spent on and the charges and banding of houses: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/counciltax

7.5 Housing and council tax support

People on low incomes can apply for either housing benefit or council tax support or both to help meet the cost of rent and council tax. Details of how to apply, how the benefits are paid, an online benefits assessment, how to appeal, assistance for the self employed and also details of the Local Housing Allowance, a scheme for people in privately rented accommodation, can be found on the website: www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/housingbenefit

7.6 Environmental Services

The Council provides a number of services to help preserve the health and well-being of our natural environment and of the people who live and work in South Norfolk. Details of all our services can be found on our website:

- Abandoned vehicles
- Animal welfare
- Bird flu
- Climate change
- Commercial waste and recycling
- Drinking water, drainage and sewerage
- Emergencies
- The service standards and any fees charged
- Garden waste and composting
- Household waste and recycling
- Pest control
- Pollution and nuisance complaints
- Street care and road maintenance

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/environment

7.7 Leisure and Culture

There are a number of leisure activities in South Norfolk and details of these, along with information about the countryside and walking and cycling routes can be found on the website at:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/leisure

7.8 Transport and Streets

Although Norfolk County Council has the major responsibility for roads and transport, there is a dedicated section of the website which gives details of the latest travel information, how we can help you to get out and about on public transport, how to advise the Council of problems with the roads and details of the Council's car parks.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/transport

7.9 Services for local businesses

There is a dedicated section on the website which gives information around the services, support and advice for business in the area, for anyone thinking of relocating to South Norfolk and also for anyone thinking of starting a new business:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/business

7.10 Services for other organisations

Details of any services provided to other organisations can be requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

7.11 Services for which the Council can charge, together with those charges

Some of the services provided by the Council are free, others are charged for. Each service has their own section on the website and details of charges can be accessed there. Section 5.6 of this publication scheme details some of the more common charges.

7.12 Information for visitors to the area

The Council publishes a number of leaflets and guides to assist visitors to South Norfolk and there is a dedicated section on our website, which also includes details of the Tourist Information Centres around the district:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/visiting

7.13 Leaflets, books and newsletters

The Council publishes a community magazine called The Link three times a year and this is distributed to every household in the district. Links to all the editions can be found on the website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/linkmagazine

The Council also publishes a number of leaflets and guidance relating to all the services it provides and any of these can be found on the website, or requested from the Senior Governance Officer.

7.14 Advice and guidance

The Council has a dedicated section on the website which details information including animal welfare and bird flu, to careers advice and how to apply for grants or loans from the Council.

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/benefits

There is also the A-Z section on the website which also links to services provided by other public bodies, for example schools and social services and this can be accessed via the homepage:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk

7.15 Media releases

All press releases issued by the Council can be accessed via our website:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/news

7.16 Election information

There is a dedicated section on the website which includes information about how to register to vote, where and how to vote when there are elections, results of previous South Norfolk Council district elections and election statistics:

www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/elections

7.17 CNC Building Control

We work with our partners Broadland Council, Norwich City Council and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council by providing Building Control services through what is called CNC Building Control. Information on this partnership can be accessed from the website: <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/250.asp>