



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Publication Scheme

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Version 3.0

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1.0 WELCOME TO THE BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL PUBLICATION SCHEME

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. It sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities (including Government Departments and Councils).

You will find that most of our information is freely available to the public by accessing our website. The Publication scheme will help you to find the information, tell you what formats are available or if there is a charge.

All requests for information must be made in writing (e.g. letter, fax, email or online submission via our website), giving your name, address for correspondence, contact details, and sufficient detail to enable us to locate the information.

1.1.2 ABOUT THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

We have adopted the Model Publication Scheme prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. This commits us to making information available to the public as part of our normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where it is held by the council.

The scheme commits the Council to:

- ❖ Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information which it holds and which falls within the classes of information listed in the scheme.
- ❖ Specify that information and make it available as a matter of routine, in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ Review and update on a regular basis the information made available under this scheme.
- ❖ Produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- ❖ Make this publication scheme available to the public.

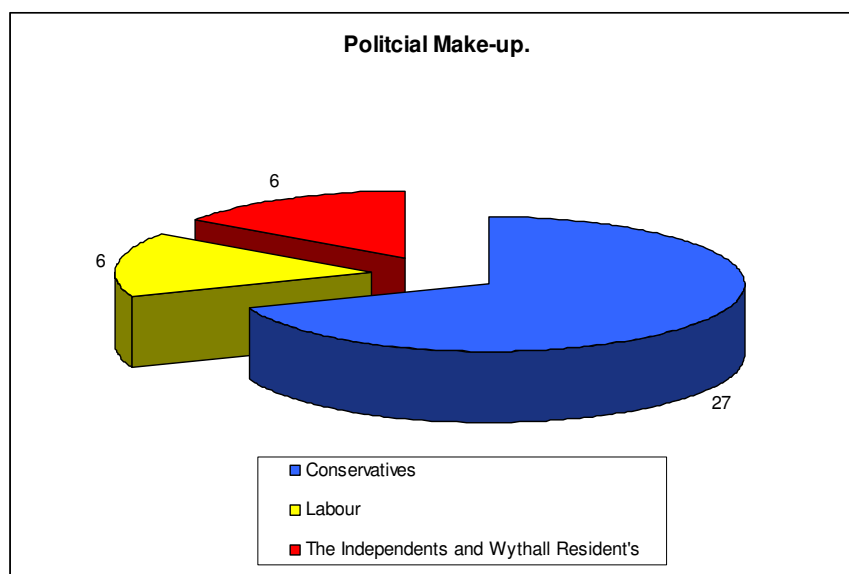
The seven classes of information include:

- ❖ **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 authority.
- ❖ **Services provided by the council.**
Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

1.2 ABOUT THE COUNCIL

Bromsgrove District is in north Worcestershire, covering a large area of approximately 83.9 square miles with 90% of that being Greenbelt land. Bromsgrove District has a total population for the district been 91,600. Bromsgrove District Council employs 400 staff and has a budget of £11m.



1.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.3.1 OVERALL MANAGEMENT

The Information Manager has overall responsibility for the Council's overall compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including the duty of directing, reviewing, publishing and promoting this scheme.

1.3.2 DAY – TO –DAY MANAGEMENT

The Information Access Officer is responsible for processing all information requests in accordance to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and insuring the implementation of this scheme.

The Information and Records Officer is responsibly for assisting the implementation of the Information and Records Management Strategy.

1.3.3 REVIEWING

Bromsgrove District Council will review the Publication Scheme annually, taking into account any advice issued by the Information Commissioner. The aim of the review is to ensure information remains up to date.

2.0 HOW TO OBTAIN INFORMATION

2.1 ONLINE

The majority of the information included in this publication scheme is available from our website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk.

To view pdf documents, you will require Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available to download free of charge from www.adobe.com.

2.2 ADVICE SURGERIES AVAILABLE

Some services provide a platform for the public in the form of surgeries. You may find that by attending a surgery you can seek advice, put forward comments or gain information on a particular Council Service. The following surgeries are provided by Bromsgrove District Council:

2.2.1 PLANNING SURGERY

This service is a free drop-in facility providing informal planning advice to residents.

Location: Customer Service Centre,
School Drive,
Bromsgrove

Tuesday 10.00am – 1.00pm
Thursday 1.00pm – 4.45pm.

2.2.2 LICENCING SURGERY

If you are interested in becoming a licensed taxi driver, please contact the Licensing Section on (01527) 881405. An application pack is also available from:

Customer Service Centre,
School Lane,
Bromsgrove

Monday-Friday 9am – 5pm
Saturday 9am - 12noon

If you wish to speak in person with a member of the Licensing Team, please telephone (01527) 881288 and arrangements will be made for you to attend the next available Licensing Surgery.

2.2.3 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM

The Equality and Diversity Forum has been running for the past two years. The Diversity and Equality Forum was originally established so that ordinary residents of

the district could have a voice about the policies and procedures which affect their lives. Some of the successes of the panel have been the supporting of the Hate Crime initiative, the development of the Disabled Users Group, the consultation on the Inclusive Equalities Scheme and on equality legislation. As the relationship between Bromsgrove District Council and the forum has developed, comments from the Forum have been taken on board with regards to such issues as future budget planning. The Forum is continuing to recruit members from the district of Bromsgrove who have an interest in the areas of Equality and Diversity so the success can continue.

If you would like to find out more about the forum please contact our Customer Service Centre on 01527 881288. You can also view the minutes from the Forum from this site.

2.3 FORMATS AVAILABLE

Most of our documents are available in paper copies, (see charges below). If you require documents to be provided in large print, Braille, CD, audio tape, or computer disk, please contact our Equalities and Diversity Officer on (01527) 881719 for advice and assistance.

2.3.1 FEES

We do not charge for processing requests under the Freedom of Information Act 200, providing that the cost of processing does not exceed the statutory limit of £450.00. This allows for 18 hours (two and-a-half-days) of time at a rate of £25.00 per hour. When estimating how long it will take to process a request, we take into account the time it will take us to locate retrieve and extract the information requested,

We reserve the right to refuse a request where the estimated cost of processing exceeds £450.00. However, before refusing a request on this basis, we will always work with you to look at other ways of providing the information so that your request does not exceed the statutory limit.

Where we agree to process a request which exceeds the statutory limit of £450.00, you will be asked to pay our processing costs at a rate of £25.00 per hour.

Wherever possible, Bromsgrove District Council try to provide the information free of charge via the website. Electronic copies may be available free of charge upon request. A charge will only be incurred when photocopying and administrative costs are incurred. These are as follows;

Description	Charge
E-mail transmission	No Charge
CD/DVD per disk	£2.00(inc VAT)
Postage costs	Variable (weight and size).Costs based on Royal Mail Standard 2 nd Class.
Photographs	Costs of reproduction

Paper Size	Black and White (per sheet)	Colour (per sheet)
A4	0.10p	0.25p
A3	0.20p	0.50p
A2	£1.00	£2.00
A1	£1.25	£2.50
A0	£1.50	£3.00

2.4 COPYRIGHT

We are aware that information disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act may be subject to copyright protection. If an applicant wishes to use any such information in a way that would infringe copyright, for example by making multiple copies, or issuing copies to the public, he or she would require a licence from the copyright holder.

2.5 ENQUIRIES

If you have any enquiries about this publication scheme, please contact the Information Team via the customer service centre on 01527 873232.

2.6 HOW WILL I REQUEST INFORMATION NOT COVERED BY THE 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.

3.0 Classes

3.1 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Category	Documents
Council Constitution	The Council's Constitution
Council Democratic Structure	Committee Structure
	Calendar of meetings
Council Directorate Structure	Structure Charts
Customer Services	Customer service centre opening times, location and contact details
Councillors' information and contact details	Councillors
Elections and Electoral Services	Election Results
	Electoral Areas
Relationships with other authorities	Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership
	Worcestershire Partnership
	Parish Councils

3.2 WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT

Category	Documents
Financial Statements and Budgets	Statement of Accounts
	Accounts – Previous Year
	CPA Report
	Annual Audit Letter 2007/2008
Member Allowances	Scheme of Members Allowances
Procurement	Contracts and Procurement Procedures
Election Expenses	Available for inspection one year after election. Requests to view to be made in writing to: Bromsgrove District Council, Electoral Services, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA.
Funding for Partnership Arrangements	Community Safety Partnership
	Voluntary and Community Sector

3.3 WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES AND HOW ARE WE DOING

Category	Documents
Forward Plan	Executive Committee Leader's Forward Plan
Strategies and Business Plan	Improvement Plan
	Customer First Strategy
	Homelessness Strategy
	Strategic Housing Strategy
Strategies developed in partnership with other authorities	Local Area Agreement
	Local Strategic Partnership
	Sustainable Community Strategy
	Community Safety Strategy
	Waste Minimisation Strategy
Reports, Performance and Inspections	Worcestershire Climate Pledge
	Performance Management Framework
	Comprehensive Performance Assessment

3.4 HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

Category	Documents
Council Meetings	Calendar of Meetings 2009/10
Committee Agendas and Minutes	Agenda & Minutes
Overview and Scrutiny	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
	Overview and Scrutiny Investigations
Major Policy Proposals	Forward Plan
Information used in decision making	Geographical Statistics
Public Consultations	Current and Planned Consultation
	Planning Consultation

3.5 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Category	Documents
Customer Services	Customer Service Standards
	Customer First Strategy
	Customer Feedback
Policies and procedures for conducting council business	Council Constitution
	Local Area Agreements
	Equality and Diversity Policy
	Disability Equality Scheme
Planning Policies	Local Development Frame work
Environmental Health	Bromsgrove Town Centre Area Action Plan
	Enforcement Policy
Information Management and Personal Data Policies	Policies for Handling Information Requests
	Retention Schedule
Policies and Procedures about the Recruitment and Employment of Staff.	Jobs Online
Charging Policies	Cemeteries
	Building Control
	Local Land Charges
	Dolphin Centre

3.6 LISTS & REGISTERS

Registers – Elected Members

Register of Elected Member Interests; and **Register of Gifts and Hospitality for Members** may be viewed by appointment at the:

Democratic Services,
The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire,
B60 1AA.

Registers – Election Services

The Register of Electors – edited version may be viewed by appointment at:

The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire,
B60 1AA.

Register of Electors – full version may be viewed **by appointment only** at:

The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire,
B60 1AA.

Register of Electors and Absent Vote List – marked copy

Note: - requests for copies can be made within 12 months of the date of the election by:

- ❖ Electoral Commission
- ❖ Elected representatives
- ❖ Local constituency parties
- ❖ Registered political parties
- ❖ Candidates
- ❖ Police forces
- ❖ Security agencies
- ❖ Government departments

Anyone other than those listed above can only make written notes and cannot have copies. Requests must be made in writing to:

Bromsgrove District Council,
Electoral Service,
The Council House,
Burcot Lane,

Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire,
B60 1AA.

Requests must give details of:

1. Which marked register or list is required
2. The purpose for which marked register or list will be used.

Can only be used for research purposes within the meaning of Section 33 of the Data Protection Act 1998, for electoral purposes, or for any purposes set out in the regulation that separately gives them a right to receive a copy of full register of electors.

Registers – Licensing

The General Licensing Register is available to view at:

The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire
B60 1AA.

The register include:

- ❖ Animal Boarding and Breeding Establishments
- ❖ Pet Shops
- ❖ Riding Establishments
- ❖ Gambling Act 2005
- ❖ Family Entertainment Centre Licence / Permit
- ❖ House-to-House Collection Permit
- ❖ Street Collections
- ❖ Street Trading
- ❖ Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment – Licensing Act 2003
- ❖ Taxi, Private Hire Drivers and Operators
- ❖ Private Hire Vehicle.

Inspection of the register is free. For copies, charges apply.

Category	Documents
Registers – Planning	Planning Applications
	Previous planning decisions
	Local Land Charges
Lists – Environmental Health	Scores on the Doors
Lists – Economic Development	Commercial and Vacant Property Guide
Lists – Housing	Registered Landlords for Social Housing.

3.7 SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COUNCIL

This class covers information about the services the council provides including leaflets, guidance and news letters.

See our [A – Z of Services](#) for a full list of Council Services.

[Arts Development](#)

[Benefits Services](#)

[Building Control](#)

[Business Rates](#)

[Council Tax](#)

[Community Safety](#)

[Economic Development](#)

[Elections](#)

[Environmental Health](#)

[Parks and Open Spaces](#)

[Housing Services](#)

[Licensing](#)

[Planning](#)

[Sports and Leisure Facilities](#)

[Street Cleansing](#)

Young Peoples' and Children's Activities

[Waste Collection and Recycling](#)

News

Press Releases

Together Bromsgrove



4.0 EXEMPTIONS

4.1 EXEMPTION CATEGORIES

The classes of information will generally not 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.

4.2 CONFIRMATION OF EXEMPTION.

The Freedom of Information Act excludes access to some information for a number of reasons, which means it does not have to be supplied upon request. This includes personal information we hold about other people, or information which is already available through our publication scheme. Often we will have to decide whether it is in the public interest to release information. Our policy is that we should always release information unless there is good reason, allowed by the law, not to. If your request is refused in most cases we will be able to tell you why, identify which exemption we are applying, and give you details of how to appeal against the refusal. If, after this internal appeal, we still refuse your request, you may ask the Information Commissioner to review our decision and finally, if even that does not help, you may have a right of appeal to a special court called the Information Tribunal.

5.0 ARCHIVING POLICY

Our archiving policy is set out in our Document Retention and Disposal Schedule which gives the length of time our records are retained and what action is taken. There is a legal requirement for us to keep some types of records e.g. financial records; others will be retained where we have a business need to keep them. Our Document Retention and Disposal Schedule is available on our website.



6.0 COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

6.1 COMMENTS

We want to give you the best service we can and it's only by listening to our customers that we can find out how well we are doing or where we can improve. If you have an idea on how we could do things better please tell us. We can look into your suggestion to see how this might work.

If something goes wrong when dealing with us please tell us. We will investigate and tell you what we plan to do about it.

If you are pleased with the way we have dealt with you please tell us. We can copy that way of working elsewhere in the council.

HOW TO CONTACT US

You can give us your feedback by speaking to any council employee in person or over the phone, by letter, by email or by completing our [online feedback form](#).

By phone...

01527 881288

By post...

Customer First Officer,
The Council House,
Burcot Lane,
Bromsgrove
B60 1AA.

By email...

Worcestershirehub@bromsgrove.gov.uk

In person...

Customer Service Centre,
School Drive,
Bromsgrove.

6.2 COMPLAINTS

We always aim to sort complaints straightaway but if we can't we will:

- ❖ Acknowledge your complaint within three working days, by telephone call, email or a letter. (As detailed above).
- ❖ Contact you within 10 working days and inform you of the outcome of your complaint investigation or tell you of it is going to take longer (Stage 1)

- ❖ Give an explanation for any delay in our response and let you know when you can expect a full reply.

What happens if I am not happy with the outcome of the investigation?

You can ask for your complaint to be taken to Stage 2 to be investigated by the Customer First Officer who will give a full written response within 15 working days of the date we received the complaint at Stage 2.

What if I am still not happy with the Stage 2 response?

You can ask for your complaint to be reviewed by our corporate management team. We will send you a final response letter within 20 working days of the date we received the complaint for review. This will set out our position and explain how to take the matter further through the Local Government Ombudsman if necessary.

How do I contact the Local Government Ombudsman?

You can ring the Local Government Ombudsman advice line and ask for a copy of their leaflet – How the Ombudsman will deal with your complaint on 0845 6021983 or you can go to their [website](#) for advice.

6.3 INFORMATION COMMISSIONERS OFFICE

If you are still dissatisfied following a review of your complaint by the Council, you have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner. You can contact the Information Commissioner at :

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone 01625 545 700
www.ico.gov.uk/