LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL PUBLICATION SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

The Council as a public authority, has always been as open as possible with information and the work that it does. However, to develop a greater culture of openness and transparency in the public sector legislation has been introduced to make more information available.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. It gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. Any person who makes a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and, subject to exemptions, must be supplied with that information.

Individuals already have the right of access to information about themselves under the Data Protection Act 1998. As far as public authorities are concerned, the Freedom of Information Act will extend this right to allow public access to all types of information held.

Every public authority is required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. A publication scheme must:

1) specify classes of information that the public authority publishes or intends to publish;

2) specify the manner in which information of each class is, or is intended to be published; and

3) specify whether the material is, or is intended to be, available to the public free of charge or on receipt of payment.

The Council in meeting the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has decided to adopt the model publication scheme for Parish, Town and Community Councils (known collectively as 'local councils') in England and Wales.

The model scheme that we have adopted has been approved for a period from 28 February 2003 to 28 February 2007 by the Information Commissioner. The Commissioner has responsibility for enforcing the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as well as approving publications schemes.

If you wish to contact the Information Commissioner for any reason, the address details are as follows:

WYCLIFFE HOUSE
WATER LANE
WILMSLOW
CHESHIRE
SK9 5AF

TEL: 01625 545700
FAX: 01625 524510
E-MAIL: mail@dataprotection.gov.uk
WEBSITE: www. dataprotection.gov.uk

In accordance with the provisions of the Act, the Council's scheme specifies the classes of information it publishes or intends to publish. In some cases a class of information sets out a range of information which is excluded from publication. Where that is the case the reasons behind the decision to exclude are clearly stated. Excluded throughout the scheme is general correspondence sent or received by the Council and all information relating to private individuals by virtue of it being personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

In certain classes a limitation on the age of some documents has also been stipulated. For all avoidance of doubt this does not mean information beyond that date cannot be obtained, it simply indicates that it is not available as a matter of course within the publication scheme.

The information contained in each class is available in hard copy on request from the Clerk or may be inspected at the Council offices.

2. CHARGING POLICY

If information is required in hard copy, a charge will be levied to cover costs. Details of any charges for information made available through the scheme are set out below. If your request does attract any charges we will ask whether you wish to continue with the request before we undertake the work. The charges are subject to regular review. Charging criteria:

1) INFORMATION PROVIDED FREE

There is no charge for inspecting information included within our publication scheme, nor is there a charge for servicing telephone enquiries in connection with the same.

2) PHOTOCOPYING COSTS, POSTAGE AND ADMINISTRATION COSTS

Charges will be raised for the provision of copies of documents/information listed in each of the classes of the publication scheme. The current charges are:

PHOTOCOPYING	–	10p per side
ADMINSTRATION	-	£3.50
POSTAGE	-	actual and necessary

However, where photocopying charges are less than £1.00, the administration charge will be waived.

3) CHARGES FOR THE TIME TAKEN TO LOCATE AND PREPARE INFORMATION FOR RELEASE

If you request information not available under the publication scheme, you will be charged the same rates as in 2) above. However, if it takes a considerable amount of time to gather or prepare the information that you require, you will also be recharged for the amount of staff time involved in preparing it for release. Charges will be based on the hourly rate of the member of staff concerned.

3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COUNCIL PUBLICATION SCHEME

The Clerk to the Council has overall responsibility for the scheme. He may be contacted as follows:

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL
LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL
VAUXHALL BUILDINGS
VAUXHALL
LLANELLI
SA15 3BD

TEL: 01554 774103
FAX: 01554 779250

E-MAIL: markg@llanelli-rural.gov.uk

The person responsible for maintaining the publication scheme on a day to day basis is:

DAWN JONES
LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL
VAUXHALL BUILDINGS
VAUXHALL
LLANELLI
SA15 3BD

TEL: 01554 774103
FAX: 01554 779250

E-MAIL: dawnj@llanelli-rural.gov.uk

4. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION LISTED UNDER THE SCHEME

We aim to provide information as quickly as possible, however, any requests will not exceed 20 working days, as prescribed under Section 10(1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

5. THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

Detailed below are the classes of information contained within the Council's publication scheme. As new pieces of information falling within one of the classes is created, we will include and publish that information as part of our scheme. As the scheme develops more and more information will be added over time.

If we receive requests for disclosure of information not covered in any of the classes referred to below, we shall consider that information against the scheme, and look to include it in the future as the scheme develops.

CLASS:	**COUNCIL INTERNAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE**
DESCRIPTION:	Minutes of Council, Committee and Sub Committee meetings - limited to the last 2 years. Procedural Standing Orders. Agendas and supporting papers for Council, Committee and Sub Committee meetings – limited in each case to the forthcoming/immediate meeting. Terms of reference for Committees.
CLASS:	**CODE OF CONDUCT**
DESCRIPTION:	Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Members Register of Interests, Register of Members Interests Book.

CLASS: **PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW**

DESCRIPTION: This is information concerning changes to the Council's electoral arrangements. It covers the creation of new wards, the amendment of existing wards, proposals for the names of new wards and alterations to the number of Councillors to be elected to the Council.

The information available relates to the last periodic electoral review of the Council and to the latest boundary review of the Council's area.

CLASS: **EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE**

DESCRIPTION: Terms and conditions of employment and job descriptions. Policy documents including Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety. Staffing Structure Chart.

NOTE: The following documents are excluded from the scheme: -
Personal records such as appraisals; employee specific salary details; disciplinary records; sickness records and the like by virtue of being personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998.

CLASS: **PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

DESCRIPTION: Responses to planning applications.

NOTE: The following documents are excluded: - Copies of planning consultations, the Unitary Development Plan, Rights of Way/Footpath maps, all of which are available from Carmarthenshire County Council.

CLASS: **AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS**

DESCRIPTION: External Auditor's report – limited to the last financial year. Income and Expenditure records, bank statements from all accounts – limited to the last financial year.
Precept request – limited to last financial year. VAT records – limited to the last financial year. Financial Standing Orders and Regulations. Assets register – this will include all Council assets, community halls and recreation grounds.
Risk Assessments and safety inspection records; loan sanction approvals; fees and charges applied by the Council; register file of members allowances.

NOTE: The following documents are excluded: - all commercially sensitive information such as quotations and tenders, loan documentation and insurance policies.

CLASS: DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

DESCRIPTION: Policy statements issued by the Council. Responses made by the Council to consultation papers. Analysis of responses received to public consultation by the Council. Complaints handling procedure.

CLASS: COUNCIL CIRCULARS/NEWSLETTERS

DESCRIPTION: This includes any Council circulars/newsletters such as the annual council tax notice; community guides (or similar commissioned publication).

CLASS: ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & TOURIST INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION: This relates only to information produced by the Council.

CLASS: BURIAL GROUNDS

DESCRIPTION: General information about Llanelli District Cemetery including plans and general policies. The running of the cemetery is a joint partnership scheme between Llanelli Rural Council and Llanelli Town Council and is administered by Llanelli Joint Burial Authority.

NOTE: The following information is excluded from the scheme: -
All documentation relating to individual applications and registrations under both privacy and data protection laws.

CLASS: BEST VALUE

DESCRIPTION: Any information which encompasses the duty owed by the Council to its tax payers, to provide good quality services at an acceptable cost, to continually improve the delivery of public services and to marshal such services across the Council's area.

NOTE: The Council is not subject to the Best Value regime because its budget is less than £1 million. However, the Council does follow the spirit and principle of best value. The Council does not produce a best value performance plan nor is it subject to best value inspection.