

EAST BEDLINGTON

Parish Council



PUBLICATION SCHEME

Date Of Policy	February 2023
Approving Committee	Full Council
Minute Number	
Policy Version	V2
Date of Next Review	March 2024 ✓V1 March 2026

1. Introduction

This publication scheme commits East Bedlington Parish Council to making information available proactively, as required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It explains:

- What information the Council publishes
- How the information can be accessed
- Whether any charges apply

The scheme follows the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Model Publication Scheme and sector guidance from NALC and SLCC.

2. Classes of Information

The Council publishes information in the following categories. All information is available unless exempt under FOIA, the Data Protection Act 2018, or UK GDPR.

Class 1: Who We Are and What We Do

Information about the Council, its councillors, and how it operates.

- Council contact details
- Councillor names, roles, and contact information
- Committee structures and membership
- Location of Council offices and opening hours
- Staffing structure
- Details of the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
- Electoral arrangements and boundaries
- Representation on external bodies

How to access: Council website, noticeboards, or by request.

Charges: None unless printed copies are requested.

Class 2: What We Spend and How We Spend It

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure.

- Annual budget and precept information
- End-of-year accounts
- Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

- Internal and external audit reports
- Grants awarded
- Contracts awarded and procurement information
- Councillor and staff allowances/expenses (where applicable)

How to access: Website or by request.

Charges: None for electronic copies.

Class 3: What Our Priorities Are and How We Are Doing

Strategies, plans, and performance information.

- Parish Plan
- Annual Report of the Council
- Action plans and project updates
- Community engagement and consultation results

How to access: Website or by request.

Class 4: How We Make Decisions

Information about decision-making processes and records.

- Timetable of meetings
- Agendas and supporting papers
- Minutes of meetings (excluding confidential items)
- Reports considered at meetings
- Responses to planning applications
- Delegated powers and scheme of delegation

How to access: Website, noticeboards, or by request.

Class 5: Our Policies and Procedures

Current written protocols, policies, and procedures.

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct

- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Publication Scheme
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Privacy Notices
- Retention Schedule
- Employment policies (where appropriate for publication)
- Health & Safety policies
- Equality and Diversity policies
- Risk Management documents

How to access: Website or by request.

Class 6: Lists and Registers

Information held in registers required by law.

- Register of Members' Interests (LGA 1972 requirement)
- Asset Register
- Register of gifts and hospitality
- Allotment waiting lists (anonymised where required)

How to access: Website or by request. Some registers may require an appointment to view.

Class 7: The Services We Offer

Information about the services and facilities the Council provides.

- Allotments
- Parks, open spaces, and play areas
- Events and community activities
- Grants to local organisations
- Street furniture (benches, noticeboards, planters)
- CCTV (if applicable)
- Newsletters and parish communications

How to access: Website, noticeboards, or by request.

How to Access Information

Most information is available on the Council's website. Where information is not published online, it can be requested from:

Parish Clerk

East Bedlington Parish Council
16 Station Street
Bedlington
NE22 7JN

01670 828808

Information can be provided electronically or as printed copies.

Charges

The Council aims to make as much information as possible available free of charge. Charges may apply for:

- Photocopying or printing
- Postage
- Large or complex requests requiring significant staff time (in line with FOIA cost limits)

A schedule of charges is available on request.

Exemptions

Some information may be withheld if:

- It contains personal data (protected under UK GDPR)
- It is commercially sensitive
- It relates to legal proceedings
- It concerns confidential matters discussed in closed session
- It is exempt under FOIA or the Local Government Act 1972

Where information is withheld, the Council will explain the reason.

Review of the Publication Scheme

This scheme will be reviewed every two years or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

This document has been compiled with guidance from Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Local Government Act 1972, and good practice from NALC and SLCC. This version follows the ICO's model scheme for parish councils