

Publication scheme plan for 2013/2014

Background and overview

Introduction

This publication scheme action plan is an update to the [plan issued by the ICO in 2012](#), following our consultations on Revising Publication Schemes. Since 2012, the ICO has been working on a number of definition documents and has already published some of those. Here we set out the remaining work we intend to do to “refresh” the sector definition documents and Model Publication Scheme, over the course of this financial year.

Background

In 2008 the ICO approved a Model Publication Scheme, setting out the framework which public authorities must adopt under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Sector definition documents associated with the Model Scheme help public authorities to meet their obligations to routinely make available certain classes of information. Guidance such as “Using definition documents” and “Charging for information in a publication scheme” complement the Model Scheme and the definition documents, providing further assistance to public authorities as to how best to meet their obligations.

The ICO intends to continue to ensure the pro-active dissemination of information by public authorities, and this updated plan sets out how we intend to achieve this. The Commissioner strongly supports the open data initiative across the public sector, seeing it as a way to enhance and build upon the transparency achieved by FOIA. It is therefore important that publication schemes are updated to support and sustain open data.

The Model Publication Scheme

The current Model Publication Scheme came into effect on 1 January 2009. The Commissioner has reviewed this document and has decided that it is not necessary to produce a new Model Scheme. Instead he intends to make a small number of modifications to the existing Model Scheme and to the Model Scheme for public

authorities that are only covered for certain information. The modifications will include references to the forthcoming FOIA provisions relating to datasets, which update sections 11 and 19 of FOIA (the amendments are contained in [section 102 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)). A date for publishing the modified Model Scheme will be confirmed once the commencement date for the dataset provisions is known (likely to be summer 2013).

Definition documents and other items

Over this financial year (2013-2014), the Commissioner will complete the revision and update of the remaining sector definition documents, reflecting developments within those sectors and more generally. As before, the ICO will consult with selected key stakeholders where appropriate about the updates.

A number of linked pieces of guidance will also be updated, where appropriate.

The plan

Model publication scheme

- Model publication scheme
- Model publication scheme for bodies only covered for certain information

Definition Documents

We have already published updated definition documents for:

- Principal local authorities;
- Central government departments;
- Universities and other higher education institutions; and
- Police forces.

We are currently working on the following education sector documents:

- Colleges of further education (and Welsh language version);
- Schools in England;
- Schools in Northern Ireland;
- Schools in Wales (and Welsh language version);
- Template guide to information for schools

- Template guide to information for schools (Welsh language version); and
- How to complete the template guide to information (and Welsh language version).

The remaining definition documents and templates are:

- The House of Commons;
- The House of Lords;
- The Northern Ireland Assembly;
- Northern Ireland Government Departments;
- Northern Ireland NDPBs;
- Northern Ireland District Councils;
- Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards (to be replaced by the Education and Skills Authority in 2014);
- The National Assembly for Wales;
- Welsh Assembly Government;
- Welsh Assembly Government sponsored bodies;
- Joint authorities and boards;
- Local fisheries committees;
- National parks and Broads authorities and conservation boards;
- Charter trustees;
- Template guides to information for:
 - Parish councils
 - Parish meetings
 - Community Councils in Wales
 - Community Councils in Wales (Welsh language version)
- Police authorities (now Police and Crime Commissioners);
- Armed forces;
- Museums, libraries, art galleries and historical collections;
- Non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs); and
- Wholly-owned companies.

Health bodies: these require significant review due to the NHS reorganisation in England

- Health bodies in England;
- Health bodies in Wales;
- Community Health Councils, Wales;
- Health bodies in Northern Ireland;
- Health and social services councils, Northern Ireland;
- Health regulators;
- Template guides to information for:

- Dentists
- Dentists (Welsh language version)
- GPs
- GPs (Welsh language version)
- Opticians
- Opticians (Welsh language version)
- Pharmacists
- Pharmacists (Welsh language version)

Associated guidance

The Commissioner will also review, and where appropriate update, the following guidance:-

- Model publication scheme: using the definition documents
- Completing the guide to information for parish councils, parish meetings and community councils
- Charging for information in a publication scheme
- What should be published: minutes and agendas
- Routinely publishing environmental information (EIR proactive dissemination)

Planned timetable for Model Scheme, definition documents, template guides to information, and other documents

June – September 2013	October 2013 – March 2014	June 2013 - March 2014
Schools and colleges of FE in England, Wales and Northern Ireland		
Associated guidance listed above		All health bodies
Model publication scheme	Joint authorities and boards	
Model publication scheme for bodies	Local fisheries committees	

only covered for certain information		
	National parks and Broads authorities and conservation boards	Northern Ireland documents, including Education and Library Boards and District Councils (except health bodies)
	Charter trustees	Wales documents, including Community Councils (except health bodies)
Police and Crime Commissioners	Parish councils and parish meetings	
	Armed forces	NDPBs
House of Commons	Museums, libraries, art galleries and historical collections	
House of Lords	Wholly-owned companies	

The Commissioner will share the draft updated definition documents and template guides with key stakeholders in each sector, and will seek comments within a set timescale.

Once the definition documents and templates have been finalised, they will be published on the ICO website and will come into effect six months from the date of publication.

Further updates will be given in the [ICO e-newsletter](#) and via twitter.