

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Definition document for authorities established to manage museums, libraries, art galleries and historical collections

This guidance gives examples of the kinds of information that we would expect authorities managing museums, libraries, galleries and historical collections to provide in order to meet their commitments under the model publication scheme. We would expect these bodies to make the information in this definition document available unless:

- they do not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOIA exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute;
- the information is readily and publicly available from an external website to which the authority has already provided it – the authority must provide a link to that information;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

The guidance is not meant to give an exhaustive list of everything that should be covered by a publication scheme. The legal commitment is to the model publication scheme, and authorities should look to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

Publishing datasets for re-use

Public authorities must publish under their publication scheme any dataset they hold that has been requested, together with any updated versions, unless they are satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so. So

far as reasonably practicable, they must publish it in an electronic form that is capable of re-use.

If the dataset or any part of it is a relevant copyright work and the public authority is the only owner, the public authority must make it available for re-use under the terms of a specified licence. Datasets in which the Crown owns the copyright or the database rights are not relevant copyright works.

The Datasets Code of Practice recommends that public authorities make datasets available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#).

The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of FOIA. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of FOIA. The ICO has published [guidance](#) on the dataset provisions in FOIA. This explains what is meant by "not appropriate" and "capable of re-use".

Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Roles and responsibilities**

Authorities should be providing both outline and detailed information about their roles and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of those working in them at senior level.

- **Organisational structure**

An explanation of the internal structures of the authority referring to its functions and how the structure relates to the roles and responsibilities.

- **Trustees, management board members and senior staff**

Identification of, responsibilities of and biographical details of those making strategic and operational decisions about the provision of the services of the authority. Biographical details that are not work-related should be published only with consent.

- **The locations of and public access arrangements to establishments managed by the authority**

- **Contact details for the authority**

Where possible, named contacts are preferable.

- **Subsidiary bodies**

Identification of the companies wholly owned by the authority.

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

We would expect as a minimum that financial information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

Financial information in enough detail to allow the public to see where money is being spent, where an authority is or has been planning to spend it, and the difference between the two. Financial information should be published at least annually and, where practical, we would also expect half yearly or quarterly financial reports to be provided. Revenue budgets and budgets for capital expenditure should be included.

- **Funding agreement / income**
- **Financial statements, budgets and variance reports**
- **Information on contracts and expenditure**

Details of contracts and items of expenditure over £25,000 each.

We would normally expect the authority to publish details only of contracts that are large enough to have gone through formal tendering and those for the acquisition of major items.

Details of items of expenditure should include costs, supplier and transaction information. This should be published at least annually and, where practical, we would also expect it to be published on a half yearly or quarterly basis.

- **Forward plans for purchasing exhibits and the forward exhibitions programme**

Information should be made available on general forward plans for purchasing

items for the collection and staging special exhibitions.

- **Spending reviews**
- **Grants and donations**
- **Financial audit reports**
- **Senior staff and board members' allowances and expenses**

Details of the allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed. It should include the total of the allowances and expenses incurred by or paid to individual senior staff and management board or trust members by reference to categories. The definition of "senior staff" is given below. These categories should be produced in line with the authority's policies, practices and procedures and will be under headings like travel, subsistence, accommodation and entertainment.

- **Pay and grading structures**

This may be provided as part of the organisational structure and should include, as a minimum, the salaries for senior staff. For the purpose of this document, this means individuals at Civil Service Grade SCS2 or equivalent and above who make strategic and operational decisions about the provision of the services of the authority. The salaries should be stated in bands of £5,000. For more junior posts, levels of pay should be identified by salary range.

- **Procurement and tendering procedures**

Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services. Contracts currently available for public tender.

- **Financial statements for projects and events**

Where there are identifiable projects, we would expect to be covered by this scheme at least those financial reports which indicate actual expenditure against original project budget. The larger the project, the greater the detail that should be available. Similarly, where organised events are publicised, the cost of them should be available through this scheme.

- **Internal financial regulations**

What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.

We would expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.

Below is a list of the type of information that we would expect authorities to have readily available for publication. Any other reports or recorded information demonstrating the authority's planned or actual performance should normally be included.

- **Strategic plans**
- **Annual business plan**
- **Annual report**
- **Internal and external reviews of the organisation's performance**
- **Funding agreement reports**
- **Privacy impact assessments (in full or summary format)**
- **Service standards**
- **Visitor figures and audience research**

How we make decisions

Decision making processes and records of decisions.

We would expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.

- **Minutes of senior level meetings**

We would expect minutes from the management board, meetings of trustees and the minutes of similar meetings where decisions are made about providing services to be readily available. This excludes information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.

- **Reports and papers provided for consideration at senior level meetings**

Information presented to those at meetings making executive decisions. This excludes information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.

- **Public consultations**

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Policies and procedures for the conduct of business**
- **Policies and procedures for the provision of services**

Any written policies and procedures for the acquisition of items for the collection, their conservation, their display, their digitisation (where relevant), and their deaccessioning / disposal, as well as access to collection items by the public, researchers and others.

- **Policies and procedures for the recruitment and employment of staff**

A number of policies, for example equality and diversity, the Equality Scheme, and health and safety, will cover both the provision of services and the employment of staff. If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available.

- **Customer service**

Standards for the provision of services to the authority's customers, including the complaint procedure. Complaints procedures will include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.

- **Records management and personal data policies**

This will include information security policies, records retention, file plans, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies. It should also include procedures for handling requests for information.

- **Charging regimes and policies**

Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published and clearly state what costs are to be recovered together with the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated.

If the authority charges a fee for licensing the re-use of datasets, it should state in its guide to information how this is calculated and whether the charge is made under the Re-use Fees Regulations or under other legislation. It cannot charge a re-use fee if it makes the datasets available for re-use under the Open Government Licence.

Lists and registers

We expect this to be information contained only in currently maintained lists and registers.

- **Asset registers**

We would not expect authorities to publish all details from all asset registers. We would expect some information from capital asset registers to be available.

- **CCTV**

Details of the locations of any overt CCTV surveillance cameras operated by or on behalf of the authority. The authority should decide on the level of detail which is appropriate. This could be by building, area or more general geographic locations e.g. postcodes or partial postcodes, depending on the security issues raised.

- **Disclosure logs**

Where an authority produces a disclosure log indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests it should be readily available. Disclosure logs are themselves recommended as good practice.

- **Register of gifts and hospitality provided to trustees, Board members and senior staff**
- **Register of interests**
- **Any other register or list required by law**

If an authority is required to maintain any register and make the information in it available for public inspection, the existing provisions covering access will usually be adequate. However, we expect authorities to publicise which public registers they hold, and how the information in them is to be made available to the public. Where registers contain personal information, departments must ensure that they consider the data protection principles.

The services we offer

Information about the services we currently provide including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced.

Generally this is an extension of part of the first class of information. While the first class provides information on the roles and responsibilities of the authority, this class includes details of the services which are provided by the authority, internationally, nationally and locally as a result of them. The starting point would normally be a list or lists of the services provided by the authority, linked to details of these services.

By the very nature of the material for which authorities of this type are responsible, the collections they hold will contain a great deal of unique information in items of considerable value. It is recognized that a large amount of this information cannot be provided to members of the public in the same way that other recorded information can be made available. We would expect therefore that authorities of this nature will indicate through their publication scheme sufficient details of arrangements for accessing this material to satisfy the requirement to make information available. It is also recognized that some material, because of its fragility or because it is held in store or subject to restoration, will not be put on public display nor be immediately available. In such circumstances, authorities should indicate what the arrangements are or will be for access to the information in such material. Where this includes research or other fees, these need to be specified.

- **Information about the collection and access to it**
- **Exhibitions**
- **Services for which fees are charged and details of those charges**
- **Opportunities for volunteers**
- **Educational services**
- **Publications, leaflets, booklets and newsletters**
- **Advice and guidance**
- **Media releases**
- **Publication for the purposes of Part 6 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007.**