

Publication Scheme

23 October 2019

In response to the guidance from Healthwatch England in April 2014, Healthwatch Cornwall has developed its Publication Scheme.

Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) gives rights of public access to recorded information held by public authorities such as Healthwatch Cornwall (HC). The FOIA is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public sector bodies, and therefore facilitate a better understanding of how public authorities carry out their duties; make decisions and spend public money. One way in which the FOIA achieves this is by requiring public authorities to make information about itself and its activities routinely available to the public. The purpose of this guide is to describe the information that HC makes routinely available and how to find it.

HC has adopted the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) 'Model Publication Scheme'. Under the scheme, HC will to:

- Proactively publish, or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information that falls within the 'classes of information', sections 1 – 7
- Specify the information that it holds, and which falls within those 'classes of information'
- Publish guidance on how this information is made available, so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public
- Review and update, on a regular basis, the types of information it makes available
- Publish information on any fees that may be charged for this information
- Make this publication scheme available to the public



Publication of Information

Healthwatch Cornwall uses its website as the principal means of disseminating information about itself and its activities. In most cases, this information can be located using the 'search' facility on the site. A guide to the 'classes of information' that we routinely publish is included in sections 1 - 7.

Information falling into the following categories will not be made routinely available:

- Information in draft form
- Information which would be impractical or resource intensive to prepare for routine release
- Information which is no longer readily available because it is archived or its retrieval would be difficult, impractical or resource intensive to prepare for routine release
- Information whose release is prohibited by law, or exempt under the FOIA or is otherwise considered to be protected from disclosure.

Making a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

If the information you need is not in the publication scheme you can also contact us to request information under the FOI Act. Please email your requests to enquiries@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk. You can also write to:

Healthwatch Cornwall
6 Walsingham Place
Truro
TR1 2RP

We will usually respond to your request within 20 working days following receipt of your request. However, this deadline may be extended if we need to seek clarification of your request from you, or if (in very rare circumstances) we need to consider complex issues of public interest in deciding whether to provide certain information. We will tell you within 15 working days if we need to extend the deadline and will explain the reason why.

Some information might be exempt from disclosure under the FOIA. However we will usually tell you if we are withholding information. We will also explain why we consider that it is appropriate to apply the exemption.



In some cases, the FOI Act allows us to refuse to confirm or deny holding certain information.

For example, we can use exemptions under the FOIA to refuse to disclose confidential personal information, or to refuse to make disclosures that would make it difficult for us to carry out our regulatory role.

We may need to consult with other people or organisations before providing you with requested information. This usually happens where you have requested information that was provided to HC by another organisation.

Unhappy with our response?

If you are unhappy with the response you received from us relating to your FOIA request please let us know, giving your reasons. We will respond to you in writing within 15 working days.

If you remain dissatisfied following your appeal, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 03031231113.

Classes of Information

We routinely publish information within the following classifications:

1. Who we are and what we do

Information about what Healthwatch Cornwall is, how we work, how we are set up, our functions, board members and staff members is available on our [About Us](#) page.

Information about our location and contact details is available on our [Contact Us](#) page.

Information about what we do is available on our [News and Reports](#) page.

2. What we spend and how we spend it

This information can be found in our published Board papers from our meetings held in public available on the [Our Board](#) page and the Annual Report available on our [News and Reports](#) page.

3. What are our priorities and how are we doing

Our in public board papers and minutes show our activities and work and can be found on the [Our Board](#) page.



4. How we make decisions

You can find out how we make decisions at our Decision making Policy. Minutes from our public Board meetings are published on the [Our Board](#) page.

We publish information about our public consultations on our [News and Reports](#) page.

5. Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities are published on [the Our Board](#) page.

6. Signposting

We are unable to represent individual cases, but we always endeavor to signpost to appropriate providers who could offer you support. Please contact us via our Freephone number 0800 0381 281 or through our Contact Us page.

7. The services we offer

Information about services we offer is available on our [website](#).

Keeping this Publication Scheme up to date

The Business Support Manager is responsible for ensuring that this Publication Scheme is kept up to date.

The Publication Scheme will be reviewed every two years or whenever there is a significant change to the way we work, the types of information we publish, or the way in which we make that information available.

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