

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Executive Member People and Information
Maxine O'Mahony, Executive Director – Strategy & Governance

To: Overview and Scrutiny Commission, 27th September 2018
Cabinet, 16th October 2018

(Author: Ross Bangs, Corey Gooch Corporate Improvement & Performance Manager
(shared), Business Intelligence Officer)

Subject Freedom of Information Policy

Purpose: To present the draft of the Council's Freedom of Information policy to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for review.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission recommend the adoption of the draft Freedom of Information Policy to Cabinet on 16th October 2018.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The current Freedom of Information policy was originally adopted in June 2014. The new version looks to update the policy in line with any changes that have been seen in the last 4 years and renew the format.
- 1.2 The format changes to the policy have been made in order to produce a policy that is written in plain English and reduced in size.
- 1.3 The new policy achieves this by linking directly to the Freedom of Information Act and therefore reducing the need to make regular changes to the policy should there be changes to the act as this is incorporated into the policy.
- 1.4 Appendix A is the draft policy that is being introduced to the commission asking for your recommendation to Cabinet for adoption.

2.0 OPTIONS

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Commission to review the draft freedom of information policy and make a recommendation to Cabinet to adopt the new Policy.
- 2.2 Do nothing.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 The currently adopted policy is 4 years old and due a review. Whilst there have not been any fundamental changes to statutory requirements, the new policy is improved for the

benefit of the people wishing to contact the Council regarding freedom of information.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 An updated policy will provide an opportunity to promote the policy and reintroduce new procedures to ensure that the services are aware of their statutory requirements.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.1 Constitutional & Legal

5.1.1 It is a statutory requirement to answer freedom of information requests. This policy provides assurance that this is clearly set out to services and requesters.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 N/A

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 N/A

Background papers:- [See The Committee Report Guide for guidance on how to complete this section](#)

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Key Decision: Yo

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Freedom of Information Policy