

# **ASSOCIATION OF GREATER MANCHESTER AUTHORITIES GUIDANCE ON PUBLICATION SCHEMES, CLASSES OF INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE TO INFORMATION**

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – PUBLICATION SCHEME**

In implementing the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (herein after called AGMA) promotes an understanding of the work undertaken within AGMA to foster a spirit of trust with the public and other organisations. We achieve this by promoting transparency in the way we make our decisions and by providing clear information about our policies and processes through our publication scheme. We deal with individual requests for information courteously and promptly and provide advice and assistance if necessary.

### **WHAT IS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION?**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. It lists exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

The Act came into force in two stages: -

- The first stage was in February 2003 when AGMA adopted a Publication Scheme.
- The second stage came into force in January 2005. Any person now making a request to a public authority for information must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and supplied with that information. This is subject to a number of exemptions listed in the Act.

### **WHAT IS A PUBLICATION SCHEME?**

A Publication Scheme is a guide to the classes of information that AGMA publishes or intends to publish routinely. The term “published” is broad and is not limited to information produced in paper forms. As far as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is concerned, information made publicly available has been published. Therefore, information on our website is as much part of the Publication Scheme as printed documents.

### **WHAT ARE CLASSES OF INFORMATION?**

A requirement of the Act is to specify “classes” of information that AGMA will publish within its Publication Scheme.

The Information Commissioner has issued a ‘**Model Publication Scheme**’ and from 1<sup>ST</sup> January 2009 AGMA has adopted the ‘Model Scheme’.

The Model Scheme contains 7 classes of information and these are as follows: -

- **Who we are and what we do**
- **What we spend and how we spend it**

- **What our priorities are and how we are doing**
- **How we make decisions**
- **Our policies and procedures**
- **Lists and registers**
- **The services we offer**

Examples of the type of information available are given below under the **Guide to Information**.

By adopting the Information Commissioner's 'Model Scheme' AGMA is committed to the following: -

- To proactively publish information (including environmental information which is held by it and contained within each class).
- To provide a means by which the Authority can ensure the public are aware of the sorts of the information the Council has committed to make readily available, how they can access and whether they will have to pay for it.
- To review and update the information on a regular basis and in accordance with The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Publication Scheme Review Guidance.

## **HOW WILL I REQUEST ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT COVERED BY THIS SCHEME?**

AGMA includes as much information in the Publication Scheme as it can however, if you cannot find what you are looking for you can make a request for the information.

The Act is retrospective and information requests can be for information created before the Act came fully in to force in 2005. However, where any of the information comes within an exempt category either under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or other relevant legislation, it will be published with the exempt material deleted.

## **WILL I BE CHARGED FOR INFORMATION?**

Material which is published and accessed on the website can be downloaded free of charge. Some information may only be available in hard copy and some information will only be available for inspection. Charges may be made for information subject to a legal charging regime. Charges under the publication scheme may be made for actual disbursements such as: -

- Photocopying
- Printing
- Postage and packaging

- The cost directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Any charges will be in accordance with Wigan MBC's policy

<http://boston/foi/drafts/wiganfees.htm>

## **WHO DO I CONTACT?**

For information concerning the scheme or if you wish to make a request for other information you can contact the following:

David Fletcher  
AGMA  
Wigan Investment Centre  
Waterside Drive  
Wigan. WN3 5BA

The information can be found under the AGMA website at the following:

[www.agma.gov.uk](http://www.agma.gov.uk)

## **MAKING A COMPLAINT, SUGGESTION OR COMPLIMENT**

If you are not satisfied with AGMA's response to a request for information you may make a complaint to the address below: -

David Fletcher  
AGMA  
Wigan Investment Centre  
Waterside Drive  
Wigan. WN3 5BA

d.fletcher@agma.gov.uk

If after going through AGMA's formal complaint and appeals system you are still not satisfied then the Freedom of Information Act 2000 makes provision for you to complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office: -

Wycliffe House,  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

<http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

If you have any suggestions or compliments, we need to know so that we can improve our service to you. Feedback forms are available by contacting:

David Fletcher  
AGMA  
Wigan Investment Centre

Waterside Drive  
Wigan. WN3 5BA

[d.fletcher@agma.gov.uk](mailto:d.fletcher@agma.gov.uk)

Or via the following link: -

[www.agma.gov.uk](http://www.agma.gov.uk)

## **ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE**

If you need help to make a request for information you may contact the following: -

David Fletcher  
AGMA  
Wigan Investment Centre  
Waterside Drive  
Wigan. WN3 5BA

[d.fletcher@agma.gov.uk](mailto:d.fletcher@agma.gov.uk)

## **REVIEWING AND MAINTAINING THE SCHEME**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a publication scheme should be reviewed from time to time. AGMA is responsible for reviewing and maintaining this guide to information and the data it contains. Material will be updated and any outdated information will be removed. This guide and operation of the scheme will be reviewed annually in accordance with The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities Publication Scheme Review Guidance.

## **COPYRIGHT**

Reproducing material supplied under this Publication Scheme without the express permission of the Council may be an infringement of copyright. Requests for permission should be addressed to the Data Protection / FOIA Officer at the following address:-

Data Protection / FOIA Officer  
Wigan Council  
Town Hall  
Library Street  
Wigan  
WN1 1YN

## AGMA GUIDE TO INFORMATION

The guidance below is intended to assist you by giving some examples of the type of information that AGMA routinely makes available.

Where a document is indicated within this guidance it will be the current version. There is a search facility on the website to assist you in finding information.

Wigan MBC are the legal lead authority for AGMA and some of the information below can be found on their website: -

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/>

### 1. WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

- **Structure of the authority**

Information about AGMA membership and AGMA Executive

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/about-agma/>

AGMA Organisation Chart :-

[http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/agma/Images/AGMA\\_organisation\\_chart.en](http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/agma/Images/AGMA_organisation_chart.en)

- **Staff structure and contact information of the authority**

- Information about AGMA units:-

- [Policy and Research Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester Trading Standards Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester Geological Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester County Record Office](#)
- [Out of Authority Placements and Joint Commissioning Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester Brussels Office](#)
- [Greater Manchester Urban Traffic Control Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester Ecology Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester Transportation Unit](#)
- [Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit](#)
- [Grants Unit](#)
- [The Greater Manchester Casualty Reduction Partnership](#)

- **Geographical area of operation**

- **General outline of responsibilities**

- **Relationship with other authorities**

Details about the above three areas can be found on the website under "About AGMA"

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/about-agma/>

There are four joint authorities, established by statute, which provide services across the whole of Greater Manchester. AGMA works closely with these authorities: -

- [Greater Manchester Police Authority](#)
- [Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority](#)
- [Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority](#)
- [Greater Manchester Fire and Civil Defence Service](#)

## 2. WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT

- **Summary of revenue budget estimates and capital expenditure plans**
- **Annual statement of accounts**
- **Financial audit reports**

See the following link to view this type of information:-

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/agendas-and-minutes/>

There are regular reports on monitoring spend and financial performance throughout the year. Annual statement of accounts have been recently introduced and are usually available in the summer for the preceding financial reports. Budget proposals are usually discussed in October/January each year and are in most cases resolved at the Executive meetings in January each year.

- **Staff pay and grading structure**

Salary bands for all grades, including senior and chief officer grades in accordance with Wigan MBC's banding.

- **Expenses paid to members of the authority and senior officers**

AGMA does not operate a member's allowance scheme. Any expenses paid to staff working for the AGMA Policy Unit are based on Wigan MBC's procedures.

- **Procurement procedures**

Procurement policies and procedures in accordance with Wigan MBC's procedures.

- **List of contracts and value**

AGMA does not hold this information. Because it is not a legal entity any contracts let on behalf of AGMA will be done so by one of its member authorities; and information will therefore be held by individual member authorities of AGMA where necessary.

- **Internal financial regulations and delegated authority**

Financial regulations under Wigan MBC's Standing Orders, as contained in Wigan MBC's Constitution. The AGMA constitution also contains general causes on financial matters.

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/CouncilDemocracy/Constitution/>

AGMA's constitution

### 3. WHAT OUR PRIORITIES ARE AND HOW WE ARE DOING

- **Strategic plan, business plan, aims and objectives**
- **Reports indicating service provision, performance assessments, operational assessment reports**
- **Joint strategies**
- **Statistical information**

This information above can be found under "Key Strategies": -

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/key-strategies/>

For example: -

- [City Region Development Programme](#) -
- [Learning & Skills Priorities](#) -
- [GMP Policy Strategy & Policing Plan](#) -
- [Greater Manchester Broadband Strategy](#) -
- [Greater Manchester Derelict Land strategy](#) -
- [Greater Manchester Economic Development Plan](#) -
- [Greater Manchester Strategic Health Plan](#) -
- [Greater Manchester LSC Strategic Plan](#) -
- [Job Centre Plus Business Plans](#) -
- [Local Transport Plan](#) -

Information can also be found under "Committees": -

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/committees/>

For example AGMA has a number of Committees: -

- [Executive](#)
- [Health Scrutiny Panel](#)
- [Select Committee](#)
- [Statutory Functions Committee](#)
- [Joint Waste Committee](#)

#### 4. HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

- **Schedule of meetings open to the public**
- **Agendas and approved minutes of the authority and authority sub-committees**

This information can be found under “AGMA papers”

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/committees/>

For example :-

- [AGMA AGM](#)
- [AGMA Executive Board](#)
- [AGMA Council](#)
- [AGMA Scrutiny Pool](#)
- [Greater Manchester Health Commission](#)
- [Health Scrutiny Panel](#)
- [Select Committee](#)
- [Statutory Functions Committee](#)
- [GM Joint Waste Committee](#)

#### 5. OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- **Policies and procedures for the conduct of authority business**

The AGMA Constitution

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

The AGMA Constitution

- **Policies and procedures about the employment of staff**

In accordance with Wigan MBC's procedures..

- **Customer service**

In accordance with Wigan MBC's procedures.

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/Services/CouncilDemocracy/CommentsComplaints/ComplaintsProcedure.htm>

- **Records management and personal data policies**

In accordance with Wigan MBC's procedures.

- **Charging regimes and policies**

In accordance with Wigan MBC's procedures.

## 6. LISTS AND REGISTERS

The AGMA Policy Unit does not hold any lists or registers

## 7. THE SERVICES WE OFFER

- **Information about the provision of the authority's services**
- **Leaflets and explanatory booklets**
- **Services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees**
- **Media releases**
  - [Disaster Relief Trust](#)
  - [Contingency Planning](#)
  - [Governance](#)
  - [Agency Staffing Procurement Project](#)
  - [Greater Manchester Strategic Arts Fund](#)
  - [Collaborative Services](#)

Information from our Research function :-

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/research-and-intelligence/>

For example :-

- [Indices of Deprivation](#)
- [The Greater Manchester Forecasting Model](#)
- [Making Housing Count](#)
- [Strategic Flood Risk Assessments](#)

Information about events: -

<http://www.agma.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/events/>

For example regional events: -

North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership Events (NWIEP)

North West E-Government Group Events (NWEKG)

- **Regulatory responsibilities and procedures**

The AGMA Constitution