



Information Commissioner's Office
Promoting public access to official information
and protecting your personal information

Press Release

For immediate release

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ICO urges public authorities to publish meeting minutes under FOI

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is renewing its call to public authorities to become more transparent by routinely publishing minutes and agendas of meetings. The ICO is today publishing new guidance to help public authorities understand what information should be made public under the Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations.

According to the guidance public authorities should be routinely publishing minutes and agendas of public meetings and senior-level meetings. The guidance also states that documents which should be made public under other legislation such as the Local Government Act and background documents which are referred to in the agenda or minutes should, where possible, also be published proactively.

The guidance also provides advice to public authorities on the information they may not be required to make public. For example, information contained within the minutes which can be legitimately withheld and the minutes of meetings which took place more than three years ago.

Under the Freedom of Information Act all public bodies have an obligation to adopt a publication scheme which commits them to routinely publishing certain sorts of information.

Dawn Monaghan, Senior Good Practice Manager said: "Since the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations came into force

three years ago they have brought real benefits to both individuals and public authorities. This guidance will help public authorities understand what information they should be publishing in relation to minutes and agendas of meetings. Routinely publishing this kind of information shows a commitment by the authority to be transparent and accountable.”

The ICO has also today updated guidance to help public authorities considering requests for information about deceased individuals under the Freedom of Information Act.

Both pieces of guidance can be downloaded from the [ICO website](#), or ordered by contacting the ICO on 08456 306 060.

ENDS

If you need more information, please contact the Information Commissioner’s press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at: www.ico.gov.uk

Notes to Editors

1. The Information Commissioner promotes public access to official information and protects personal information. The ICO is an independent body with specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003.
2. For more information about the Information Commissioner’s Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at www.ico.gov.uk.
3. The Information Commissioner’s Office is currently working on a publication scheme initiative to produce model schemes which will deliver greater proactive disclosure from public authorities.