

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 17 JUNE 2024

REPORT ON: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

REPORT BY: ASSESSOR

REPORT NO: TVJB 14-2024

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present to the Joint Board the updated Freedom of Information Policy.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Joint Board is asked to note the content of this report and to approve the updated Policy.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

5 BACKGROUND

5.1 Henderson Loggie, Chartered Accountants, were appointed to provide an Internal Audit Service in respect of the financial years 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2025. Audit work has proceeded in accordance with the Audit Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan for the period 2022 to 2025 as approved by the Joint Board on 29 August 2022.

5.2 Follow-Up Reviews: Internal Audit Report No. 2023/03 – Data Protection / Freedom of Information indicated that the revised Freedom of Information Policy would be presented to the Board for approval at the next opportunity.

5.3 The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 gives a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that general right, and places a number of related obligations on public authorities. The policy statement sets out the general responsibilities and framework by which information may be released.

5.4 A review of the Freedom of Information Policy has been undertaken with minor adjustment.

5.5 If approved by the Joint Board the document will be published on the Joint Board's web-site.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The Clerk and Treasurer to the Joint Board have been consulted on this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

DONALD ALLAN
Interim Assessor

June 2024

TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Responsibility for the implementation and annual review of this policy together with the communication of any resultant amendments across the Board and to relevant third parties is assigned to the Information Asset Owner (currently the Assessor).

Revision History

Version	Originator	Summary of Changes	Date	Next Review date
Original Document				
v.1	R Michalski		15/08/18	August 2023
v.2	I Leitch	Minor Amendment	23/08/23	August 2026

1 POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Tayside Valuation Joint Board to conduct its business in an open, accountable and transparent manner.

This policy is designed to ensure that Tayside Valuation Joint Board is fully compliant with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

Tayside Valuation Joint Board (TVJB) has designed Publication Schemes to permit ease of public access to the information held by the Board and the Assessor. Where enquiries cannot be dealt with via the Publication Scheme, TVJB staff will provide advice and assistance to any person making a request for information.

2 TVJB PUBLICATION SCHEME

The TVJB Publication Scheme and the Assessor's Publication Scheme are published on the web <http://www.tayside-vjb.gov.uk> and are available at the Board's Divisional Offices and at public libraries.

The Publication Scheme sets out:

- The classes of information which we routinely make available
- The manner in which the information is made available
- Details of any charges

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

TVJB acknowledges its responsibility under the Act to provide general access to information held. To this end, all staff have been provided with guidance on the policies and procedures relating to handling requests for information.

4 REQUESTING INFORMATION

4.1 Introduction

TVJB wishes as far as possible to provide the public with information held by the Board or the Assessor. The rights of individuals to obtain information held by TVJB are contained in the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

4.2 Accessing Information from TVJB under the Publication Scheme

The Board's and the Assessor's publication schemes are available on our web site <http://www.tayside-vjb.gov.uk>. The scheme is also available at the Board's Divisional Offices. The publication scheme shows for every class of information the formats available. These will normally include printable formats from our web site, electronic versions of documents on CD ROM, and hard copies of documents. An Information Request form is available on our web site <http://www.tayside-vjb.gov.uk> and may be used to request information from the Board or Assessor. Alternatively, requests may be sent in in writing or by email to:

Assessor for Tayside Valuation Joint Board
William Wallace House
Orchard Loan
Orchardbank Business Park
FORFAR
DD8 1WH

Tel: 01307 499910
Fax: 01307 499950
e-mail: assessor@tayside-vjb.gov.uk

Both hard copy and e-mail formats are acceptable but these should include your name and return address. It will be helpful if you can specify clearly the information that you seek. The publication scheme describes and explains each Class of Information with examples of the type of information that we hold.

In some circumstances it will be necessary to make a charge for the provision of information. The charges applicable are set out in the Publication Schemes.

4.3 Accessing Information out with the Publication Scheme

If the information is **not** in the Publication Scheme you should print and complete the form titled *Information Request* and send it to the Assessor at the address shown above. Alternatively a letter or an email containing the required details can be sent. We will respond to your enquiry promptly and within 20 working days.

TVJB appreciates that you may wish to make a request for information by telephone. We will ask you to confirm the nature of your request. Thereafter, we will send you the *Information Request* form outlining the request and ask you to sign your confirmation that you wish us to provide the information requested.

There may be a charge payable for information requested out with the Publication Scheme. This requires payment to be received by TVJB before the information is made available. Fees are calculated in accordance with current regulations associated with the Act.

Where a fee is payable, the Assessor will issue a fees notice. The notice will state what the prescribed costs are in relation to the request and how the amount of the fee specified in the fees notice has been arrived at.

4.4 Re-use of Public Sector Information

Under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005, the Assessor will consider a request to re-use any information released. A charge may be imposed for re-use of the information disclosed.

5 EXEMPTIONS

TVJB will endeavour, as far as is possible, to provide the public with the information they hold. Information may however be withheld where TVJB considers that statutory exemptions apply. We may also withhold information that is personal information under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Information regarding exemptions can be obtained by contacting the Assessor at the address shown above.

6 REQUIREMENT FOR REVIEW

TVJB will endeavour to provide a high standard of service in responding to all requests for information. In the event of dissatisfaction regarding the manner in which freedom of information requests have been dealt with a Requirement for Review Procedure has been developed. This is available on our website <http://www.tayside-vjb.gov.uk>.

DRAFT