

BEADNELL PARISH COUNCIL

TRANSPARENCY POLICY

The Transparency Code for smaller authorities was issued to meet the Government's desire to place more power into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability.

Transparency gives local people the tools and information they need to hold local public bodies to account.

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 sets out a new audit framework for local public authorities which are currently covered by the Audit Commission regime. Under the new audit framework smaller authorities, including Parish Councils, with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 will be exempt from routine external audit. In place of routine audit, these smaller authorities will be subject to the new transparency requirements laid out in the Code. This will enable local electors and ratepayers to access relevant information about the authorities' accounts and governance.

Accordingly, Beadnell Parish Council will publish items as listed on Annex A of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities, and reproduced below –

Annex A: Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

Parish councils, internal drainage boards, charter trustees and port health authorities with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 should publish:

Information title	Information which should be published
All items of expenditure above £100	Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish details of each individual item of expenditure. Copies of all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers, receipts and other related documents do not need to be published but should remain available for inspection. For each individual item of expenditure the following information must be published: a. date the expenditure was incurred b. summary of the purpose of the expenditure c. amount d. Value Added Tax that cannot be recovered
End of Year accounts	Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed statement of accounts according to the format included in the Annual Return form. It should be accompanied by: a. a copy of the bank reconciliation for the relevant financial year b. an explanation of any significant variances (e.g. more than 10-15 per cent) in the statement of accounts for the relevant and previous year c. an explanation of any differences between 'balances carried

	forward' and 'total cash and short term investments, if applicable.
Annual Governance Statement	Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed annual governance statement according to the format included in the Annual Return form. Explain any negative responses to governance statements, including how any weaknesses will be addressed.
Internal audit report	Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Publish signed internal audit report according to the format included in the Annual Return form. Explain any negative response to the internal controls objectives, including how any weaknesses will be addressed. Explain any 'not covered' responses to internal controls objectives.
List of Councillor or member responsibilities	Annual publication of councillor or member responsibilities no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. names of all councillors or members, b. committee or board membership and function (if Chairman or Vice-Chairman), and c. representation on external local public bodies (if nominated to represent the authority or board).
Location of public land and building assets	Annual publication no later than 1 July in the year immediately following the accounting year to which it relates. Parish councils and port health authorities to publish details of all public land and building assets – either in its full asset and liabilities register or as an edited version. Internal drainage boards to only publish details of registered land and buildings that have a market value and appear in Fixed Assets Register. The following information must be published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. description (what it is, including size/acreage), b. location (address or description of location), c. owner / custodian, e.g. the authority manages the land or asset on behalf of a local charity, d. date of acquisition (if known), e. cost of acquisition (or proxy value), and f. present use.
Minutes, agendas and papers of formal meetings	Publication of draft minutes from all formal meetings not later than one month after the meeting has taken place. Publication of meeting agendas and associated meeting papers not later than three clear days before the meeting to which they relate is taking place.

Reviewed March 2023