

Local Government Transparency Code

What is it?

Government believes all data should be made available to the public about how decisions are made & how public money is spent. This is all to promote democratic accountability.

The code has just been revised from an earlier proposal with the key difference that - they now state deadlines and what data should be published with much more detail.

Who does this apply to?

Local Authorities in ENGLAND ONLY. This includes the following (amongst others):

- County, district, parish, London Borough councils
- Transport for London
- National Park Authorities
- Fire and rescue authorities
- Greater London Authority

For a full list see page 6 of the code under the “definitions” section.

What data needs to be published and when?

There are 13 data themes to publish either with an annual or quarterly frequency, as well as one once only.

Annually

- Local Authority land
- Grants to community & social orgs
- Organisation charts
- Trade union facility time
- Parking accounts
- Parking spaces
- Senior salaries
- Constitution
- Pay multiple
- Fraud

Quarterly

- Expenditure exceeding £500
- Government procurement card transactions
- Procurement info e.g. contracts and tenders






Once Only

- Waste Contracts - one off requirement for current contracts. All future ones will come under the procurement info theme.

If you need a more detailed explanation of what data should be published see pages 9-18 of the code. For a list of what to look out for, check out our guide to transparency data sets on our website.

Publishing

- The Government is recommending publishing data to a certain standard of openness. On the chart they recommend 3 stars minimum.
- This includes taking all the steps in stars 1,2 and 3 - within 6 months of the publication of the code. (approx mid April '15)

One star		Available on the web (whatever format) but with an open license
Two Stars		As for one star plus available as machine-readable structured data (eg. Excel instead of an image scan of a table)
Three Stars		As for two star plus use a non-proprietary format (eg. CSV and XML)
Four Stars		All of the above plus use open standards from the World Wide Web Consortium (such as RDF and SPARQL21)
Five Stars		All the above plus links an organisation's data to others' data to provide context

Key dates to remember

2014

- 3rd Oct New code released
- 7th Nov Code set to become mandatory - I.e. part of legislation.
- 31st Dec First round of Quarterly data and the Once Only data must be published by this date

2015

- 2nd Feb First round of Annual data must be published

Data must be published no later than 1 month past its deadline. Within these timescales you can publish at any point.

If you have any questions about transparency please get in touch on 0121 232 8000 or email us at info@misportal.com