*Notes (to be deleted as required):*

1. *See our Guidance on carrying out an FOI self-assessment* for *more information about gathering and recording evidence:* [*www.itspublicknowledge.info/toolkit*](https://www.itspublicknowledge.info/toolkit)
2. *Boxes will expand as you type*
3. ***NB this document is A3 but it will print as A4 if you send it to an A4 printer***

**Authority** [authority name]

**Lead Officer** [name]

**Date completed** [date evidence gathering completed]

|  | **Questions** | **Evidence gathered** | **Strengths identified** | **Weaknesses identified / Areas for improvement** |
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|  | **Open and Transparent Culture** |  |  |  |
|  | Is openness and transparency a stated aim of the authority? To what extent do leaders demonstrate openness and transparency and lead by example? To what extent is the authority's commitment to openness and transparency reflected in its FOI practice? |  |  |  |
|  | To what extent does the authority's approach to providing advice and assistance mirror the approach it takes to customer service? |  |  |  |
|  | How does the authority demonstrate requests are an integral part of its approach to public engagement? |  |  |  |
|  | To what extent are staff empowered and encouraged to provide advice and assistance to requesters? |  |  |  |
|  | How do leaders promote proactive publication of information in the public interest? |  |  |  |
|  | To what extent does the information published by the authority, including through its Guide to Information, demonstrate commitment to openness and transparency? |  |  |  |
|  | **Governance and Management** |  |  |  |
|  | Who is the senior manager with strategic responsibility for FOI practices and procedures? To what extent does this manager ensure that the authority meets its duties to provide advice and assistance? |  |  |  |
|  | How do leaders and managers promote the importance of providing appropriate advice and assistance as part of good customer service? To what extent is advice and assistance integrated into the authority's FOI procedures and practices at all relevant points? |  |  |  |
|  | How do the authority's governance and management frameworks reflect the connection between FOI and good customer service? How do they give assurance that duties are being met? |  |  |  |
|  | How effectively do staff responsible for FOI and customer service work together? |  |  |  |
|  | How does the authority manage risks associated with failing to provide appropriate advice and assistance? How effective are these arrangements? |  |  |  |
|  | How does the authority ensure that information is routinely published in the public interest? To what extent do forward planning processes include steps to proactively publish information about new developments in real time? |  |  |  |
|  | **Arrangements for Advice and Assistance** |  |  |  |
|  | How effectively do managers communicate and monitor staff responsibilities for providing advice and assistance? |  |  |  |
|  | How effective are FOI arrangements (including procedures and systems) in helping and supporting staff to deliver appropriate advice and assistance in a helpful and timely way? |  |  |  |
|  | To what extent do FOI arrangements and customer service policies and procedures align? To what extent do FOI arrangements and customer service performance and monitoring systems align? |  |  |  |
|  | How effectively do FOI monitoring arrangements include review of the quality of advice and assistance to requesters? |  |  |  |
|  | To what extent do the authority's arrangements for advice and assistance meet, or exceed, the requirements of the Section 60 Code of Practice? How well do the arrangements work in practice for each stage where advice and assistance should be offered i.e., before a request is made, while preparing the response, and at review |  |  |  |
|  | How frequently and regularly does the authority review its Guide to Information? How effectively does the authority ensure that information is published promptly in the public interest and is accessible and well-signposted? |  |  |  |
|  | How many times has the Commissioner found the authority failed to provide advice and assistance in the last three years? How effective were the actions taken to address the issue? |  |  |  |
|  | **Training and Guidance** |  |  |  |
|  | How does the authority ensure that staff understand the importance of providing helpful, meaningful and timely advice and assistance to requesters? |  |  |  |
|  | Do training and guidance make sufficiently clear the connection with wider customer policies and service standards? Do staff know how to access relevant guidance and who to contact for help? Do they use that help? If not, why not? If yes, how effective is it? |  |  |  |
|  | How often does the authority monitor and review its training, guidance and support arrangements to ensure they meet users' needs? How effective is that monitoring? |  |  |  |
|  | How are staff kept up to date with changes that affect how the authority provides advice and assistance to requesters? |  |  |  |
|  | **Monitoring, reporting and reviewing** |  |  |  |
|  | Who is responsible for monitoring and reporting against FOI performance? How effective are those arrangements? |  |  |  |
|  | To what extent is the quality of advice and assistance monitored at an operational level? What action is taken as a result of monitoring and reporting? |  |  |  |
|  | How does the authority learn from experience and how does the learning drive continuous improvement? |  |  |  |

**Document control sheet**

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| **Document Information** |  |
| Full name of current version: Class, Title, Version No and Status.  *E.g. C5 Key Documents Handbook v01 CURRENT ISSUE* | C2 TOOLKIT Module 03: Assessment Questions and Evidence Grid v02 CURRENT ISSUE |
| VC FileId | 149271 |
| Type | Briefing |
| Approver | SIC |
| Responsible Manager | HOPI |
| Date of next planned review | March 2024 |
| **Approval & Publication** | |
| Approval Date (major version) | 26/03/2021 |
| For publication *(Y/N)* | Y |
| Date published | 13/04/2021 |
| Name of document in website file library | Module\_3\_Assessment\_Questions\_and\_Evidence\_Grid |
| **Corrections / Unplanned or Ad hoc reviews (see Summary of changes below for details)** | |
| Date of last update |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Summary of changes to document** | | | | |  |
| **Date** | **Action by** | **Version updated** | **New version number** | **Brief description** | |
|  | *(initials)* | *(e.g. v01.25-36****)*** | *(e.g. v01.27, or 02.03)* | (*e.g. updated paras 1-8, updated HOPI to HOCS, reviewed whole section on PI test, whole document updated, corrected typos, reformatted to new branding*) | |
| 13/04/21 | BOW | 02.00 | 02.01 | New document created following approval of draft | |
| 13/04/21 | BOW | 02.01 | 02.02 | DCS updated, published on website | |
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