Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

2012 CHAPTER 9

PART 6

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION

Publication of certain datasets

102 Release and publication of datasets held by public authorities

(1) The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is amended as follows.

(2) In section 11 (means by which communication to be made)—

(a) after subsection (1) insert—

"(1A) Where—

(a) an applicant makes a request for information to a public authority in respect of information that is, or forms part of, a dataset held by the public authority, and

(b) on making the request for information, the applicant expresses a preference for communication by means of the provision to the applicant of a copy of the information in electronic form,

the public authority must, so far as reasonably practicable, provide the information to the applicant in an electronic form which is capable of re-use.",

(b) in subsection (4), for "subsection (1)" substitute "subsections (1) and (1A)", and

(c) after subsection (4) insert—

"(5) In this Act "dataset" means information comprising a collection of information held in electronic form where all or most of the information in the collection—

(a) has been obtained or recorded for the purpose of providing a public authority with information in connection with the provision of a service by the authority or the carrying out of any other function of the authority,

(b) is factual information which—

(i) is not the product of analysis or interpretation other than calculation, and

(ii) is not an official statistic (within the meaning given by section 6(1) of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007), and

(c) remains presented in a way that (except for the purpose of forming part of the collection) has not been organised, adapted or otherwise materially altered since it was obtained or recorded."

(3) After section 11 (means by which communication to be made) insert—

"**11A Release of datasets for re-use**

(1) This section applies where—

(a) a person makes a request for information to a public authority in respect of information that is, or forms part of, a dataset held by the authority,

(b) any of the dataset or part of a dataset so requested is a relevant copyright work,

(c) the public authority is the only owner of the relevant copyright work, and

(d) the public authority is communicating the relevant copyright work to the applicant in accordance with this Act.

(2) When communicating the relevant copyright work to the applicant, the public authority must make the relevant copyright work available for re-use by the applicant in accordance with the terms of the specified licence.

(3) The public authority may exercise any power that it has by virtue of regulations under section 11B to charge a fee in connection with making the relevant copyright work available for re-use in accordance with subsection (2).

(4) Nothing in this section or section 11B prevents a public authority which is subject to a duty under subsection (2) from exercising any power that it has by or under an enactment other than this Act to charge a fee in connection with making the relevant copyright work available for re-use.

(5) Where a public authority intends to charge a fee (whether in accordance with regulations under section 11B or as mentioned in subsection (4)) in connection with making a relevant copyright work available for re-use by an applicant, the authority must give the applicant a notice in writing (in this section referred to as a "re-use fee notice") stating that a fee of an amount specified in, or determined in accordance with, the notice is to be charged by the authority in connection with complying with subsection (2).

(6) Where a re-use fee notice has been given to the applicant, the public authority is not obliged to comply with subsection (2) while any part of the fee which is required to be paid is unpaid.

(7) Where a public authority intends to charge a fee as mentioned in subsection (4), the re-use fee notice may be combined with any other notice which is to be given under the power which enables the fee to be charged.

(8) In this section—

"copyright owner" has the meaning given by Part 1 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (see section 173 of that Act);

"copyright work" has the meaning given by Part 1 of the Act of 1988 (see section 1(2) of that Act);

"database" has the meaning given by section 3A of the Act of 1988;

"database right" has the same meaning as in Part 3 of the Copyright and Rights in Databases Regulations 1997 (S.I. 1997/3032);

"owner", in relation to a relevant copyright work, means—

(a) the copyright owner, or

(b) the owner of the database right in the database;

"relevant copyright work" means—

(a) a copyright work, or

(b) a database subject to a database right,

but excludes a relevant Crown work or a relevant Parliamentary work;

"relevant Crown work" means—

(a) a copyright work in relation to which the Crown is the copyright owner, or

(b) a database in relation to which the Crown is the owner of the database right;

"relevant Parliamentary work" means—

(a) a copyright work in relation to which the House of Commons or the House of Lords is the copyright owner, or

(b) a database in relation to which the House of Commons or the House of Lords is the owner of the database right;

"the specified licence" is the licence specified by the Secretary of State in a code of practice issued under section 45, and the Secretary of State may specify different licences for different purposes.

11B Power to charge fees in relation to release of datasets for re-use

(1) The Secretary of State may, with the consent of the Treasury, make provision by regulations about the charging of fees by public authorities in connection with making relevant copyright works available for re-use under section 11A(2) or by virtue of section 19(2A)(c).

(2) Regulations under this section may, in particular—

(a) prescribe cases in which fees may, or may not, be charged,

(b) prescribe the amount of any fee payable or provide for any such amount to be determined in such manner as may be prescribed,

(c) prescribe, or otherwise provide for, times at which fees, or parts of fees, are payable,

(d) require the provision of information about the manner in which amounts of fees are determined,

(e) make different provision for different purposes.

(3) Regulations under this section may, in prescribing the amount of any fee payable or providing for any such amount to be determined in such manner as may be prescribed, provide for a reasonable return on investment.

(4) In this section "relevant copyright work" has the meaning given by section 11A(8)."

(4) In section 19 (publication schemes)—

(a) after subsection (2) insert—

"(2A) A publication scheme must, in particular, include a requirement for the public authority concerned—

(a) to publish—

(i) any dataset held by the authority in relation to which a person makes a request for information to the authority, and

(ii) any up-dated version held by the authority of such a dataset,

unless the authority is satisfied that it is not appropriate for the dataset to be published,

(b) where reasonably practicable, to publish any dataset the authority publishes by virtue of paragraph (a) in an electronic form which is capable of re-use,

(c) where any information in a dataset published by virtue of paragraph (a) is a relevant copyright work in relation to which the authority is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use in accordance with the terms of the specified licence.

(2B) The public authority may exercise any power that it has by virtue of regulations under section 11B to charge a fee in connection with making the relevant copyright work available for re-use in accordance with a requirement imposed by virtue of subsection (2A)(c).

(2C) Nothing in this section or section 11B prevents a public authority which is subject to such a requirement from exercising any power that it has by or under an enactment other than this Act to charge a fee in connection with making the relevant copyright work available for re-use.

(2D) Where a public authority intends to charge a fee (whether in accordance with regulations under section 11B or as mentioned in subsection (2C)) in connection with making a relevant copyright work available for re-use by an applicant, the authority must give the applicant a notice in writing (in this section referred to as a "re-use fee notice") stating that a fee of an amount specified in, or determined in accordance with, the notice is to be charged by the authority in

connection with complying with the requirement imposed by virtue of subsection (2A)(c).

(2E) Where a re-use fee notice has been given to the applicant, the public authority is not obliged to comply with the requirement imposed by virtue of subsection (2A)(c) while any part of the fee which is required to be paid is unpaid.

(2F) Where a public authority intends to charge a fee as mentioned in subsection (2C), the re-use fee notice may be combined with any other notice which is to be given under the power which enables the fee to be charged.", and

(b) after subsection (7) insert—

"(8) In this section—

"copyright owner" has the meaning given by Part 1 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (see section 173 of that Act);

"copyright work" has the meaning given by Part 1 of the Act of 1988 (see section 1(2) of that Act);

"database" has the meaning given by section 3A of the Act of 1988;

"database right" has the same meaning as in Part 3 of the Copyright and Rights in Databases Regulations 1997 (S.I. 1997/3032);

"owner", in relation to a relevant copyright work, means—

(a) the copyright owner, or

(b) the owner of the database right in the database;

"relevant copyright work" means—

(a) a copyright work, or

(b) a database subject to a database right,

but excludes a relevant Crown work or a relevant Parliamentary work;

"relevant Crown work" means—

(a) a copyright work in relation to which the Crown is the copyright owner, or

(b) a database in relation to which the Crown is the owner of the database right;

"relevant Parliamentary work" means—

(a) a copyright work in relation to which the House of Commons or the House of Lords is the copyright owner, or

(b) a database in relation to which the House of Commons or the House of Lords is the owner of the database right;

"the specified licence" has the meaning given by section 11A(8)."

(5) In section 45 (issue of code of practice)—

(a) in subsection (2), after paragraph (d) (and before the word "and" at the end of the paragraph), insert—

"(da) the disclosure by public authorities of datasets held by them,",

(b) after subsection (2) insert—

"(2A) Provision of the kind mentioned in subsection (2)(da) may, in particular, include provision relating to—

(a) the giving of permission for datasets to be re-used,

(b) the disclosure of datasets in an electronic form which is capable of re-use,

(c) the making of datasets available for re-use in accordance with the terms of a licence,

(d) other matters relating to the making of datasets available for re-use,

(e) standards applicable to public authorities in connection with the disclosure of datasets.", and

(c) in subsection (3) for "The code" substitute "Any code under this section".

(6) In section 84 (interpretation), after the definition of "the Commissioner", insert—

""dataset" has the meaning given by section 11(5);".