



This policy outlines the Council's responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and details how the council will meet its obligations under the Act.

Context

The Council is committed to being open and transparent and complying with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, the Council has put in place procedures to ensure that any requests for information are handled appropriately and responded to promptly.

Scope

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to recorded information held by public authorities, including parish councils. It does this in two ways:

- Public authorities must publish certain information about their activities.
- Members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

The Act covers any recorded information that is held by the Council. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs and sound or video recordings.

Policy

The Council will ensure that all employees are aware of their obligations under the Freedom of Information Act and will act in accordance with the requirements of the Act and the guidance provided by the Information Commissioner's Office.

The Council will respond to all requests for information in accordance with the statutory timescales set out in the Act. All requests will be considered fairly and impartially.

The Council will publish a Freedom of Information Publication Scheme on its website, detailing the information that is routinely made available. Requests for information listed in the Publication Scheme will be provided free of charge or at a minimal cost covering disbursements (e.g. printing/photocopying).

The Council reserves the right to charge for information requests in line with the Freedom of Information Fees Regulations or other applicable regulations, including charging for staff time involved in locating, retrieving and editing information where requests are deemed to exceed the appropriate limit.

The Council will maintain a record of all requests received for monitoring purposes.

If the Council chooses to apply an exemption to withhold information, it will explain its reasons for doing so.

The Council will provide advice and assistance to individuals seeking to make a request.

The Council will regularly review its procedures and decisions to ensure that it is fully complying with the Freedom of Information Act.



Requesting Information

Most information is proactively published on the Council's website. However, if the desired information is not available online, a request can be submitted to the Clerk.

To make a request, the following steps should be followed:

- Contact the Clerk, providing you name and address
- Clearly state the specific information required
- Submit the request in writing, either by letter or electronic form (e.g. email)

The Council reserves the right to not respond to:

- Repeated requests for the same or very similar information
- Requests that are deemed vexatious after due consideration

All requests received will be recorded in a log by the Council for monitoring purposes.

It is important to note that while the Council aims to be transparent, certain exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act may apply, allowing the withholding of some information in specific circumstances, such as personal data or information prejudicial to public affairs.