

ETTON PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Adopted, 25th September 2024

Minute: 24.67.1.b

THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) provides public access to information held by public authorities. It does this in two ways:

- public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities; and
- members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

As a public authority, Etton Parish Council (the Council) is in scope of the FOIA, and members of the public are entitled to view and access information held by the council. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. This may be found in Schedule 1 of this document. The Council has adopted the Information Commissioner's Office Model Publication Scheme.

OBTAINING INFORMATION AND INFORMATION HELD

Verbal requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) will be requested to be put in written form (email will be acceptable). Requests for information do not need to refer to FOI.

There are three ways to obtain the information:

1. **Parish Council website – www.etton-pc.gov.uk**

The website holds the type of information which the Council routinely publishes e.g. Minutes, agendas, and current regulatory documents and policies. The information that you require may already be included in the publication scheme, so please check the documents on the website first.

2. **Inspection of documents held by the Clerk**

If you wish to view certain documents, you should contact the Clerk, either via the facility on the web site, by telephone, or in writing to make an appointment. Some documents require some time to locate, so it may be necessary to make an appointment.

3. **Individual Written Request**

If the information is not included in the publication scheme or on the website, you may send a written request to: The Clerk, Etton Parish Council, 15 Church Street, Thurlby, Lincolnshire, PE10 0EH or via email to: clerk@ettongate-pc.gov.uk.

Your request must include your name, address for correspondence, and a description of the information you require.

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO A WRITTEN REQUEST

The Clerk shall acknowledge a request in writing within five working days of receipt of the request. Within 20 working days of receipt of your written request the Council will:

- Confirm to you whether or not it holds the information;
- advise you if a fee will be charged; and
- provide you with the information, after the relevant fee has been paid, unless an exemption applies. (See Exemptions paragraph below).

FEES

The Act allows the Council to charge for answering Freedom of Information requests in the following circumstances:

- Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage
- When estimated staff costs involved in locating or compiling the information exceed £450. Under these circumstances, the Council can refuse the request on the grounds of costs, or charge the applicant £20 per hour, plus disbursements for the estimated work

For the majority of requests, or a series of requests from the same applicant within a 12 month period, it is expected that the charge for locating and compiling information will be less than £450 and therefore, except for disbursement costs, no reimbursement can be sought. However, where costs are estimated to exceed £450 (based on an hourly charge rate of £20), the Council can decide to:

- Refuse the request
- Comply with the request and charge for allowable costs as prescribed in the regulations
- Comply with the request free of charge

If the estimated cost of the request is more than £450, and it is decided to release the information and make a charge for the information then:

- A fee notice will be sent to the applicant requesting the appropriate fee
- The request will not be answered until the fee has been received
- If the actual cost of completing the request is more than estimated, then the Council will incur the additional cost
- Where the cost is less than the estimated cost then the difference will be refunded to the applicant

EXEMPTIONS

Some information may not be provided by the Council as there are 23 exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act, e.g. personal data about individuals which is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998, or commercially confidential information.

FURTHER HELP AND GUIDANCE

If you need any further help in accessing information from the Council under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Parish Clerk.

A more detailed guidance can be found on the Information Commissioner website: www.ico.org.uk.

COMPLAINTS

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the Council, then you should put your complaint in writing to the Clerk at the above address. If you are still dissatisfied, you may contact the Information Commissioner via www.ico.org.uk or Tel: 0303 123 1113.

SCHEDULE 1

PUBLICATION SCHEME

The FOIA requires every public authority to operate and maintain a generic model publication scheme. It is intended to provide the public with a comprehensive guide to the information that the Council will automatically or routinely publish or otherwise makes available. It is important to note that this publication scheme simply sets out the information that is routinely available. Information that is not listed can still be requested and it will be made available unless it can be legitimately withheld. This can be done by making an FOI request by the methods set out in this document.

Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do		
Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts (current information only)		
List of Council members and their responsibilities	Website and bus shelter noticeboard	Free
Details of any representation on local public bodies	Website and bus shelter noticeboard	Free
Council postal address	Contact the Clerk	Free
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts including contact phone numbers and email addresses)	Website and bus shelter noticeboard	Free
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Contact the Clerk	Free
Staffing structure	Hard copy – Parish Clerk	10p/sheet
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it		
Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit (current and previous year as a minimum)		
Statement of accounts	Website	Free
	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Internal audit report in the format included in the Annual Return form	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Finalised budget	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Precept	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	N/A	
All items of expenditure above £100	Website	Free
	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet

Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Grants given and received	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing		
Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews		
Annual governance statement in format included in the Annual Return form	Website Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Parish Plan	N/A	
Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting	Website (minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting) Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Quality status	N/A	
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DLUHC's guidelines	N/A	
Data Protection impact assessments (in full or summary format) or any other impact assessment (e.g. Health & Safety Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessments etc), as appropriate and relevant	Website Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Class 4 – How we make decisions		
Decision making processes and records of decisions (current and previous council year as a minimum).		
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website and noticeboard Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website, and noticeboards (latest meeting only) Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Minutes of meetings (as above) – exclude material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure	Website Noticeboard (latest meeting only) Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free Free 10p/sheet
Reports presented to council meetings – exclude material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Responses to planning applications	Peterborough City Council Planning Portal	Free

	Hard copy	10p/sheet
Byelaws	N/A	
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures		
Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities (current information only).		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of Council business: • Procedural standing orders • Committee and sub-committee terms of reference • Delegated authority in respect of officers • Code of Conduct • Policy statements	Website Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: • Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services • Equality and diversity policy • Health and safety policy • Recruitment policies and details of current vacancies • Policies and procedures for handling requests for information • Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Website Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Records management, personal data and access to information policies Include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing and CCTV usage) policies	Website Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Class 6 – Lists and Registers		
Currently maintained lists and registers only.		
Information legally required to hold in publicly available registers (in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	By inspection – Contact the Clerk	Free
Assets register, including details of public land and building assets	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet
Disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to FOIA and EIR requests. These are recommended as good practice	Hard copy – contact the Clerk	10p/sheet

Register of members' interests	Council website – link to Peterborough City Council website	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	N/A	
Class 7 – The services we offer		
Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses (current information only)		
Allotments	N/A	
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	N/A	
Community centres and village halls	N/A	
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	N/A	
Seating	Verbal information – contact the Clerk Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Litterbins, clocks, memorials and lighting	N/A	
Bus shelters	Verbal information – contact the Clerk Hard copy – contact the Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Markets	N/A	
Public conveniences	N/A	
Agency agreements	N/A	
Services for which we are entitled to recover a fee and details of those fees (e.g. burial fees)	N/A	
Additional Information		
Information not itemised in the lists above		
N/A		

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Calculated cost
	Photocopying @ 14p per sheet (colour)	Calculated cost
	Printing @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Calculated cost

	Printing @ 14p per sheet (colour)	Calculated cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class - £0.85 at date of publication. (Subject to change)
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation (actual statute quoted)
N/A		
Other		
N/A		