

Stelling Minnis Parish Council

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Publication Scheme

Previously Adopted

Reviewed and updated at SMPC meeting 15 September 2021

The Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act gives you the right to obtain information held by public authorities unless there are good reasons to keep it confidential.

The Information Commissioner's Office

The ICO is the UK's independent public body set up to promote access to official information and protect personal information. It has responsibility for ensuring that information is disclosed promptly and that exemptions from disclosure are applied lawfully. Some information could be exempt from disclosure.

How do I make a request?

- **Make the information as specific as possible. If your request is too broad the Council may ask you to clarify it. This could mean it takes longer to get the information.**
- **Provide as full a description as possible of the information you require.**
- **Be clear about the format you would prefer to receive the information in, for example, by e-mail or as a paper copy.**

What happens once my request has been received?

Any request for information should be treated by the Council as a formal request for information and the Council suggests that e-mails or letters are clearly marked as freedom of information requests to avoid any confusion.

The Council must respond promptly to requests or, in any event, within 20 working days although the Council has longer to consider whether the disclosure of normally exempt information would be in the public interest. When considering the public interest test, the Council must do so 'within a reasonable time.'

What if the information is refused?

Where the Council decides not to disclose the information requested it must give reasons for its decision, it must explain how the exemption or exception applies and it must explain the arguments under the public interest test. The Council must also inform you of your right to complain to the ICO.

How can the ICO help and what is the legal process?

You may apply to the ICO for a decision about whether the request has been dealt with according to the Act, for example, you believe there has been excessive delay or if you wish to dispute the application of an exemption or refusals made on public interest grounds. The ICO may serve a decision notice on the Council either confirming the decision made by the Council or directing it to disclose information within a certain time. Non-compliance with a decision notice may constitute contempt of court. If you or the Council disagrees with the ICO's decision you have 28 days to appeal to the independent Information Tribunal. The Information Tribunal may uphold the ICO's decision notice, amend it (for example change the time frame for release of information) or overturn it. Non-compliance with the Information Tribunal's notice may also constitute contempt of court.

Additional Information

Additional guidance on the Freedom of Information Act is available on the ICO website at www.ico.gov.uk or by telephone to their helpline 01625 545745.

Model Publication Scheme

Under the Freedom of Information it is the duty of every public authority to adopt and maintain a publication scheme.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is changing **the emphasis in the approval and operation of publication schemes to a generic model which should be adopted and operated by all public authorities.**

The model commits a public authority to 'produce and publish the method by which the specific information will be available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public'.

This must be adopted in full, unedited and promoted alongside the guide to information. Local councils are not required to inform the Information Commissioner's Office that they have adopted the scheme; it will be assumed they have done so unless the ICO hears otherwise.

The publication scheme provides a list of all the information the Council will make routinely available, explain how it can be accessed (either via the Parish Council website or hard copy) and whether or not a charge will be made for it.

Classes of Information

The information held by Littlebourne Parish Council has been recorded under the following classes of information:

Class 1 Who we are and what we do

Class 2 What we spend and how we spend it

Class 3 What our priorities are and how we are doing

Class 4 How we make decisions

Class 5 Our policies and procedures

Class 6 Lists and registers

Class 7 The services we offer

CPC File Reference C: Littlebourne/My documents/Policies/Freedom of Information Policy July 2021

This is for internal Council use only to identify the location of this Policy in the Council's computerised filing system.

Additionally, a hard copy of this policy is filed in the office filing cabinet in the 'Freedom of information' hanging file.

Website

A lot of information is routinely available from the Parish Council's website at no charge. The Parish Council's website can be found at:

www.stellingminnis.co.uk

A copy of this publication scheme is also available on the Parish Council website.

Charges for Information Published under this Scheme

Information available through this Council's publication scheme should be readily available at minimum cost to the public. In most cases charges will be made on the basis of cost recovery. Charges may be made for actual disbursements (e.g. photocopying and postage) and information that the council is legally authorised to charge for.

- Anyone requesting information will be notified of any charge before the information is provided.
- Payment will be requested before the information is supplied.
- A schedule of charges is appended to this document.

FOI requests and the Publication Scheme

It is important to note that a publication scheme simply sets out the information that is routinely available. Information that is not listed in the guide to information can still be requested and should be made available unless it can be legitimately withheld.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Information available from Stelling Minnis Parish Council under the model publication scheme

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) Note: This will be current information only		
Who's who on the Council	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members (named contacts where possible with telephone number and email address (if used))	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	N/A	-
Staffing structure	None	-

Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit) Note: Current and previous financial year as a minimum		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Finalised budget	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Precept	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	N/A	-
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Grants given and received	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing

(Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)

Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Within APM Minutes - website	Free

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, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website – within minutes Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	Website within published meeting Minutes Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Bye-laws	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:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedural standing orders Committee and sub-committee Delegated authority in respect of officers – currently N/A Code of Conduct Policy statements 	Website N/A N/A Website Website	Free - - Free Free
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff 	N/A	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal policies relating to the delivery of services 	N/A	-

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and safety policy/risk assessments • Recruitment policies (including current vacancies) – N/A • Policies and procedures for handling requests for information (FOI & SAR) • Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme) 	Hard copy – contact Clerk N/A Website Hard copy – contact Clerk Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet - Free 10p per sheet Free Free
Information security policy	N/A	-
Records management policies (records retention, destruction, and archive)	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Data Breach Policy/Subject Access Request Policy	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free Free

Class 6 – Lists and Registers

Currently maintained lists and registers only

Any publicly available register or list (if any are held this should be publicised; in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Assets Register	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p per sheet
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by parish councils)	N/A	-
Register of members' interests i) available to view from the Monitoring Officer, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone CT20 2QY ii) Current Members declaration of interests forms	Published on Folkestone and Hythe District Council website – linked from SMPC website	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality – None as of 2021	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p per sheet

Class 7 – The services we offer

(Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)

Note: Current information only

Note: Some information listed below may be available by inspection only

Allotments	N/A	-
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	N/A	-
Community centres and village halls	Contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	N/A	-
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Bus shelters	Contact Clerk	10p per sheet
Markets	N/A	-
Public conveniences	N/A	-
Agency agreements	N/A	-
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	N/A	-
Additional Information		
This will provide Councils with the opportunity to publish information that is not itemised above		
Welcome Pack information sheet	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free Free

Contact details:

Gail Hubbard, Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
7 Bifrons Road, Bekesbourne, Canterbury CT4 5DE
Telephone: 01227 831197
Email: stellingminnispc@outlook.com

Meetings by appointment only.

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and is published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)
Other		