

WINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

Freedom of Information Policy

Amendments approved by Council

Minute Number

Signed.....(
Chair)

Trisha Dale
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Ivy Dene
Main Street
Matlock
Derbyshire
DE4 2BN

Winster Parish Council

Freedom of Information Policy

Freedom of Information

The Parish Council adopted the Model Publication Scheme with effect from 11^h May 2015. This scheme will enable members of the public to view and access information held by the Parish Council.

Obtaining Information and Information held

There are three ways to obtain the information:

Parish Council web site

The web site holds the type of information which the Council routinely publishes e.g. minutes and agendas. The information you want may already be included in the publication scheme – so please check the documents on the web site first.

Inspect 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 or by telephone, or in writing. Some documents require some time to locate, so it may be necessary to make an appointment. Please note clerk is contracted to 25 hours per month.

Individual Written Request

If the information is not included in the publication scheme or on the web site, you may send a written request to:-

The Parish Clerk, Trisha Dale, Ivy Dene, Main Street, Birchover, Derbyshire DE4 2BN

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

Council's Response to a Written Request

Within six weeks 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

provide you with the information (after any relevant fee has been paid) unless an exemption applies (see 'Exemptions' paragraph below).

Fees

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

Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage, as set out in the Model Publication Scheme Document.

With regards to staff costs:

The majority of requests, or a series of requests from the same applicant within a twelve 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-out rate of £25), the Council can decide to:

- refuse the request; or
- comply with the request and charge for allowable costs as prescribed in the regulations; or
- comply with the request free of charge.

If the estimated cost of a 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 fee is not received within 90 days, the request will be closed.

If the actual cost of completing the request is more than the estimate 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, for example, personal data about individuals which is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998, or commercially confidential information.

Further Help

If you need help in accessing information from the Council under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Parish Clerk (address as before).

You will also find more detailed guidance on the website of the Information Commissioner.

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with the response from the Council then you should put your complaint in writing to the Clerk at the address above. If you are still dissatisfied, you may contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700

Email: mail@ico.gov.uk