

Inkberrow Parish Council
Policy and Procedure for handling requests for information.

The Parish Council has adopted a model publication scheme. This scheme will enable members of the public to view information held by the Parish Council and the Council's commitment to release information in a recognised format.

Obtaining Information and Information held

There are three ways to obtain the information:

1. Parish Council Website
 - a. The website holds the type of information which the Parish Council routinely publishes e.g. minutes and agendas. The information you want may already be included in the publication scheme.
2. Inspect documents held by the Clerk
 - a. If you wish to view certain documents, you should contact the Clerk, either via the website or e-mail.
3. Individual written requests
 - a. If the information is not included in the publication scheme or on the website, you may send a written request

Verbal requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will be requested to be put in written form, e-mail will be acceptable, giving the name, correspondence, address and details of information required.

The Clerk shall agree with the chairman of the Parish Council whether the requested information is freely accessible, whether it is available in the requested form, whether a refusal notice needs to be served in respect of all or part of the requested information. And what charges will be levied and the timescale for delivery of the information.

The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the request and normally within 20 working days the information will be provided. If it is not reasonably possible to provide the information within 20 working days of receipt of the information, the reasons for the delay and a target date shall be provided, which must not exceed 40 working days.

Fees

The Information Act 2000 only allows the Parish Council to charge for answering Freedom of Information requests in the following circumstances:

- a. Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage and,
- b. When estimated staff costs involved in locating and or compiling the information exceed £450. Under these circumstances, the Parish Council can refuse their request on the grounds of cost, 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 out rate of £20, the Parish Council can decide to

- a. Refuse the request or
- b. Comply with the request and charge for allowable costs as prescribed in the Regulations or
- c. Comply with the request free of charge.

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

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

For disbursement costs, it is proposed that the Parish Council will charge £0.10 per sheet for any photocopying and printing documents and recover the actual cost of postage or any other transmission costs from the applicant.

If the requested information cannot be found within the Parish Council records then the applicant should be advised accordingly, as soon as the search is completed.

The Parish Council shall maintain a record of Freedom of Information requests.

Exemptions.

Some information may not be provided by the Parish 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 or commercially confidential information.

Further help

If you need help in accessing information from the Parish Council under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Parish Clerk. You would also find more detailed guidance on the website of the Information Commissioner.

Complaints

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

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF.
Telephone 01625545700. E-mail mail@ico.gov.uk

Contact details of the Clerk/ Chairman can be found on [HTTPS:// www.inkberrow.org.uk](https://www.inkberrow.org.uk)