

## **PARISH COUNCIL**

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

Adopted by Full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

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#### **Introduction**

This policy sets out how members of the public are able to view and access information held by the Parish Council.

#### **Obtaining Information and Information held**

There are three ways to obtain the information:

- Inspect Documents held by the Clerk

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

- Individual Written Request

If the information is not included in the publication scheme outlined below you may send a written request to

The Clerk to the Parish Council

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

- Visit the Parish Council Website [www.lazonbyparishcouncil.org](http://www.lazonbyparishcouncil.org)

#### **Council's Response to a Written 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
- 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:

1. Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage; and
2. When estimated staff costs involved in locating and or compiling the information exceed £450. Under these circumstances, the Council can refuse the 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 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 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.

For disbursements costs, it is proposed that the Council will charge 10p per sheet for photocopying and printing documents, and recover the actual cost of postage or any other transmission costs from 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 follow the Council's Complaints Procedure and put your complaint in writing to the Clerk. If you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, you may contact the Information Commissioner at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How the information can be obtained</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Class1 - Who we are and what we do</b>		
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
<b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b>		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Finalised budget	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Precept	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Grants given and received	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Members' allowances and expenses	N/A	N/A
<b>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</b>		
Parish Plan (current and previous year as a minimum)	N/A	N/A
Chairman Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Quality status	N/A	N/A
<b>Class 4 – How we make decisions</b>		
Timetable of meetings	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet

Agendas of meetings (as above)	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Minutes of meetings (as above) – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Reports presented to council meetings – n.b. this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Responses to planning applications	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
<b>Class 5 – Our policies and procedures</b>		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders Financial Regulations Committee and sub-committee terms of reference Code of Conduct	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: List Policies and Procedures here	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Schedule of charges (for the publication of information)	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
<b>Class 6 – Lists and Registers</b>		
Assets register	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Register of members' interests	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
Register of gifts and hospitality	Email Hard copy	Free 10p per sheet
<b>Class 7 – The services we offer</b>		
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities		

Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting		
Bus shelters		

### **SCHEDULE OF CHARGES**

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

<b>TYPE OF CHARGE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BASIS OF CHARGE</b>
<b>Disbursement cost</b>	Photocopying 10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 <sup>nd</sup> class
<b>Statutory Fee</b>	As identified in the aforementioned policy	In accordance with the relevant legislation

#### **Contact details:**

**Clerk to the Parish Council:** Rebecca Wyatt

**Email:** LazonbyPC@googlemail.com

**Telephone:** 0843 2894416