

Drayton St Leonard

Freedom of Information Policy

1. The Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) grants to members of the public rights of success to all kinds of recorded information held by a wide range of public authorities. Information about the Act is available from the Information Commissioners' Office at www.ico.gov.uk.

2. Publication Scheme

The Act requires every public authority to adopt and maintain a generic model publication scheme which should be adopted and operated by all public authorities from 1st January 2009. Parish Council adopted the generic model publication scheme. The publication scheme provides a list of all the information the Parish Council will make routinely available, explain how it can be accessed (via the website or in hard copy) and whether or not a charge will be made for it.

There is a need to manage information and requests for Information to ensure that the rights under the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act 2018 are fulfilled.

How do I make a request?

- Requests should be made in writing either by letter or e mail addressed to the Parish Clerk.
- Make the information as specific as possible. If your request is too broad the Parish Council may ask you to clarify it. This could mean a delay in obtaining 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, e.g. by e- mail or paper copy.

3. What happens once my request is received?

Any request for information will be treated as a formal request for information and the Parish Council suggests that e-mails or letters are clearly marked as "Freedom of Information" to avoid confusion.

The Parish Council must respond promptly to requests or, in any event, within 20 working days although the Parish Council has longer to consider whether the disclosure of normally exempt information would be in the public interest or to protect personal data entrusted by disclosing the information only in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.

4. What if the information is refused?

The Parish Council is committed to openness and accountability and already makes information available to the public through the website. Where the Parish Council decides not to disclose the information requested it must give reasons for its decision and explain how the exemption or exception applies. The Parish Council must also inform you of your right to complain to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).

5. How can the ICO help?

You may apply to the ICO for a decision about whether the request had been dealt with according to the Act.

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 0303 123 1113.