

LEATHERINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

**How we handle Requests submitted under the
Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Adopted: 27th November 2023 minute reference 2023.41.04

Next Review: November 2024

Freedom of Information Act

Every individual is entitled to make a request for information from a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The term 'public authority' covers over 100,000 different organisations and locally includes Suffolk Coastal District Council, town and parish councils and Suffolk County Council.

A guide to the Act can be found on the Information Commissioner's website [here](#).

Making a Freedom of Information request

Requests for information must be made in writing (which includes email) and must state your name and address so that we can respond to the request. The request need not state that it is being made under the Freedom of Information Act. You can make a Freedom of Information request by emailing or writing to the Parish Clerk @ letheringhamparishcouncil@gmail.com. We must confirm, subject to certain exemptions, that we hold the information. Generally, we must give you the information within 20 working days and give advice and assistance, and if deemed necessary, to help you with your request.

We are not allowed to charge a fee for information that costs less than £450 to produce. If there is a fee for costs above that figure then we must tell you in writing. Note: A charge for the cost of any printing or photocopies will be made as this is not affected by the £450 cost ceiling. If we do charge a fee then the 20 days for responding to the initial request is put on hold until the fee is paid. If, after three months, the fee is unpaid it will be assumed that you no longer require the information.

You may ask for a copy of the information sought; the chance to inspect the records; or even to be given a summary of the information. We will try to provide the information in the form requested unless it is unreasonable to do so.

Exempt information

It should be noted that there are 23 exemptions that may apply. The exemptions are in two sections; those that are absolute and those that are weighed and assessed against the 'public interest'. There is no definition of 'public interest', but in nearly every case, it will prove to be in the public interest to release the information, or publish it at a later date. Where it is not deemed to be in the public interest to release the information we must give you a reason in writing and an opportunity to appeal against the decision. In all your dealings with us, you must remember that your entitlement is to the information, not to files. However, it may be simpler and more efficient for us to provide you with the relevant file.

Costs

All photocopies or prints of information requested from the Parish Council will be charged at 15p per single A4 sheet.

If you require substantial amounts of information help by the Parish Council, the production costs involved may exceed the £450 ceiling.

Please enquire as to current rates and projected costs for the information you are seeking.

Letheringham Parish Council

Adopted at a meeting of the Council on: November 27th 2023

Minute Reference: 2023.41.04

Next Review: November 2024

Paul Clarke
Chairman