

SUTTON BRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Freedom of Information

Sutton Bridge Parish Council (hereafter known as 'the Council') adopted the Model Publication Scheme with effect from 27th May 2025. 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:

(i) Parish Council website:

The website holds the type of information routinely published by Council for example, minutes and agendas. The Parish website can be accessed at:

<https://sutton-bridge.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

(ii) Inspect documents held at the Parish Office:

If you wish to view documents not available on website (see table included in Model Publication Scheme), please contact the clerk to arrange an appointment to inspect the documents at the Parish Office. You will need to supply your name and address and a clear description of the information required.

(iii) Individual written Request:

If the information is not included in the Publication Scheme or on the website, you may send a request via email or post to the clerk. The request must include your name and address and a clear description of the information required.

Contact details:

Clerk to Sutton Bridge & Wingland Parish Council
The Parish Office
The Curlew Centre
151 Bridge Road
Sutton Bridge
PE12 9SA

Council's Response to a Written Request:

If a request for information is made outside the Freedom of Information Act 2000 then the Clerk will aim to provide a response as soon as is reasonably possible. In general terms this will normally be within two weeks unless the issue needs to be referred to Council at the next monthly meeting.

If a request for information is made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, a response will be provided within 20 working days of receipt; in line with statutory procedure; advising;

- whether or not Council holds the information,
- if a fee will be charged for accessing the information (*see below),
- details of the information requested (subject to payment of fees if applicable) unless an exemption applies (**see below).

***Fees:**

The Council is permitted to charge for responding to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in the following circumstances:

- Disbursement costs such as printing, photocopying and postage,
- When estimated staff costs involved in locating and/or compiling the information exceed £450.

For the majority of requests, or a series of requests from the same applicant 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 as defined by statutory regulations), Council reserves the right to;

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

If the estimated cost of a request exceeds £450, and Council resolves to release the information subject to payment of fee:

- A fee notice will be sent to the applicant requesting the appropriate sum to be paid.
- The request will not be answered until receipt of payment.
- If the actual cost of completing the request is more than the estimate then Council will incur the additional cost.
- Where the cost is less than the estimated cost then the difference will be refunded to the applicant.

In respect of disbursement costs;

- photocopying and printing of documents will be charged at 10p per sheet,
- postage or any other transmission costs will be charged at face value.

****Exemptions**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 contains a number of exemptions which; if relevant to the information being requested; may result in Council refusing to release that information. If this is the case, Council's response will refer to the exemption/s under which the information requested is being withheld.

Complaints:

If you are not happy with the information that has been provided in response to a request or, if you are not happy with the way that your request has been handled you may request a review under the Council's Complaints Procedure Policy; a copy of which is available on the Council's website or in hard copy by request.

If Council's Complaints Procedure has been exhausted, you may refer to the Information Commissioner's Office for guidance at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. <https://ico.org.uk/>