

STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Clerk: Mrs Janet Coates

Email: staplegroveparishcouncil@hotmail.com

Adopted by Staplegrove Parish Council on 18th March 2021

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.staplegroveparish.co.uk

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.

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

INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL UNDER THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

Information to be published	How to obtain	Cost
Who we are and what we do. Current information only		
Who's who on the Council	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
What we spend and how we spend it. Current and previous financial year		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Finalised budget	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Precept	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Borrowing Approval letter	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Grants given and received	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
What our priorities are and how we are doing.		
Annual Report to Parish Meeting	Website	Free

Current and previous year	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
How we make decisions. Current and previous council year		
Dates of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website/noticeboards Contact Clerk	Free
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website Hard copy - contact Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Minutes of meetings (as above) – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude info that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Responses to planning applications	SWT website Hard copy – contact Clerk	Free 10p/sheet
Our policies and procedures. (Current written protocols, policies & procedures for delivering our services & responsibilities)		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: Procedural standing orders, Code of Conduct	Hard copy – contact Clerk Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet 10p/sheet
Schedule of charges for the publication of information	See foot of page	
Lists and Registers. Currently maintained lists & registers only		
Assets Register	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet
Register of members' interests	By inspection – contact Clerk	
Register of gifts and hospitality	By inspection – contact Clerk	
The services we offer. Current information only		
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities - Trustee of Staplegrove Children's Playground.	Hard copy – contact Clerk	10p/sheet

Type of charge	Description	Basis of charge
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @10p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost incurred by the Parish Council
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class

Contact details: Janet Coates, Clerk, 16 Stoneleigh Close, Taunton TA2 6ET. Tel 01823 276702.

Website www.staplegroveparish.co.uk

Email staplegroveparishcouncil@hotmail.com