

Berryfields Parish Council is committed to complying with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and related legislation. This provides a general entitlement to information that the Council holds to any person subject to exemptions and conditions laid down by law.

Scope

This policy applies to all recorded information the Council holds regardless of how it was created or received. It applies no matter what media the information is stored in and whether the information may be on paper or held electronically.

Dealing with Requests

The Council offers advice and assistance to anybody who wishes to make a request for information. The Council is committed to dealing with requests within the statutory timescales of no more than 20 working days. This can be extended in specific circumstances on legal advice. However, the Council is committed to providing a prompt service.

The Council will claim exemptions as appropriate whilst maintaining a commitment to openness, scrutiny, and the public interest. Where appropriate, requests in writing will be treated as Freedom of Information requests.

There is no need for requests to indicate they are made under the Act. The Council reserves the right to refuse requests where the cost of supply of the information would exceed the statutory maximum (currently £450).

The Council reserves the right to refuse vexatious or repeated requests in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Where appropriate and practicable, information may be supplied electronically.

Adopting and Maintaining Publication Schemes

The Council has adopted a Publication Scheme and is committed to updating and maintaining it to keep it current and relevant. The Publication Scheme contains many of the documents, policies, plans and guidance which are regularly asked for.

Material contained within the publication scheme, and a copy of the scheme itself, is readily available. Where charges are applied these are stated in the Scheme. The scheme can be accessed via the website.

The Parish Clerk will give advice and assistance on how to use the scheme as appropriate.

Relationship with the Data Protection Legislation

The Council is under a legal duty to protect personal data under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Council will carefully consider its responsibilities under the Data Protection legislation before releasing personal data about living individuals, including current and former officers, members, and users of its services.

Responsibilities

The Clerk is responsible for ensuring that any request for information is dealt with under the Act and in compliance with this policy. The Clerk is also responsible for good information handling practice and implementing records management policies and procedures as appropriate to their post.

This policy should be read alongside the Council's:

Data Protection Policy

Publication Scheme

Records Retention Policy (where applicable)

Complaints

If a requestor is dissatisfied with the handling of a request for information, they should contact the Parish Clerk in the first instance.

Further advice and information, including guidance on rights of complaint and appeal, is available from the Information Commissioner's Office.

Contact Details

For advice and assistance please contact the Clerk.

Email: clerk@berryfields-pc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01296 925750

Further advice and information, including a full list of exemptions and advice on the public interest test, is available from the Information Commissioner's Office.

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Document History

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