**Stowupland Parish Council**

**Freedom of information Policy**

**Adopted 8 October 2015**

Stowupland Parish Council has a commitment to openness and transparency and has always been concerned to make relevant information available wherever possible to individuals who may request it, subject to safeguarding the privacy of individuals and to legitimate considerations of national security, law enforcement and commercial interests where relevant.

The Freedom of Information Act, which came into force on 1 January 2005, gives everyone a statutory right of access to information held by bodies such as the Parish Council.

# Model publication scheme

From 14th December 2008 the Parish Council adopted the revised model publication scheme issued by the Information Commissioner’s Office.

# Information about the Parish Council

You can access a significant amount of information about the Parish Council on our website. If you need the information in an alternative format, please contact the clerk to the Parish Council via email or in writing at the address shown below.

**Making a request for information**

Individuals or organisations may make a written request for other information which they believe the Parish Council holds. To request information under the provisions of the Act, and to help us to help you in identifying the precise information you require please email clairepizzey@outlook.com, or write to the Clerk.

Please be sure to include your name and valid postal address, as required under the Act, and a clear description of the information you are seeking. When making a request you can state a preference of how you want the information communicated to you. This could be by providing a hard copy, or an electronic copy of the information, providing you an opportunity to inspect a record containing the information or providing a digest or summary of the information. We will try to meet your preference as far as is reasonably practical, or notify you if we cannot do so.

# Responding to your request

We will inform you in writing whether we hold the information you have requested and if so, provide it to you not later than 20 working days after we receive the request.

The Freedom of Information Act does identify a number of categories of information which the Parish Council is not required to disclose under the Act. In this case, we will write to you stating the exemption which provides the basis for refusal within the Act and why it applies to the information you requested. We will communicate this to you within the 20 working day time period.

# Charges for providing information under the Freedom of Information Act

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| **Information to be published** | **How the information can be obtained** | **Cost** |
| Class1 - Who we are and what we do  (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts)  This will be current information only and may also be found in Telstar which is delivered free to all households in Stowupland. | | |
| Who’s who on the Council and its Committees | Website  Parish Council Notice Board  Hard Copy | Free  Free  10p |
| Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members | Website  Hard Copy | Free  10p |
| Location of main Council office and accessibility details | Website  Parish Council Notice Board  Hard Copy | Free  Free  10p |
| Staffing structure | Hard Copy | 10p |

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| **Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it**  (Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit)  Current and previous financial year | | |
| Annual return form and report by auditor | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Finalised budget | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| Precept | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Borrowing Approval letter | N/A |  |
| Financial Standing Orders and Regulations | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| Grants given and received | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| List of current contracts awarded and value of contract | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Members’ allowances and expenses | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| **Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing**  (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews) | | |
| Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting (current and previous year) | Hard copy | 10p per sheet |
| **Class 4 – How we make decisions**  (Decision making processes and records of decisions)  Current and previous council year | | |
| Timetable of meetings (Council, any committee/sub-committee meetings and annual parish meetings) | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| Agendas of parish council meetings | Website  Parish Council notice board  Email  Hard Copy | Free  Free  Free  10p per sheet |
| Minutes of parish council meetings – nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. | Website  Parish Council notice board  Email  Hard Copy | Free  Free  Free  10p per sheet |
| Written reports presented to council meetings - nb this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting. | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Responses to consultation papers | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Responses to planning applications | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| **Class 5 – Our policies and procedures**  (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities)  Current information only | | |
| Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business:  Procedural standing orders  Code of Conduct – (Hard copy only) | Email  Hard Copy  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet  10p per sheet |
| Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff:  Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme) | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| Schedule of charges (for the publication of information) | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| **Class 6 – Lists and Registers**  Currently maintained lists and registers only | | |
| Any publicly available register or list | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Assets Register | Hard Copy | 10p per sheet |
| Register of members’ interests | MSDC Website |  |
| **Class 7 – The services we offer**  (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)  Current information only | | |
| Allotments | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| Cemetery | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |
| A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees) | Email  Hard Copy | Free  10p per sheet |

The Freedom of Information Act does permit the Parish Council to refuse your request if we estimate that it will cost is in excess of the appropriate cost limit (£450) to fulfil your request.

# Freedom of information Fees Notice

If you need to pay a fee for disbursements or because the costs exceed the appropriate limit, we will write to you advising you of the fee required within 20 working days of receipt of your request. This is known as a 'Fees Notice'. When you are issued the Fees Notice, the 20 working day limit for responding stops, and then will start again when we receive payment. If we do not receive the fee from you within three months we are not obliged to comply with the request.

**Complaints**

If you are dissatisfied with the way the Parish Council has responded to a request for information, please write to: Mrs Claire Pizzey, Clerk, 2 Broomspath Road, Stowupland, Suffolk, IP14 4DB.

The Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) is responsible for enforcing the operation of the Act, and you may raise issues with this office at any time. More information can be found on the ICO website listed below, or by writing to,

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire  SK9 5AF