



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
PARISH COUNCIL

ACCESS TO INFORMATION POLICY

Adopted Full Council 5th July 2017

Reviewed and approved by the Council on 31st October 2018

Reviewed and approved by the Council on 16th December 2020

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

- 1** To meet the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council has examined the range of documents it holds and resolved to make many of these available to the public.
 - 1.1 The Parish Clerk will take responsibility for the scheme and will manage it on a day to day basis and the full contact details are provided in Appendix I.
 - 1.2 Classes of information for publication are attached in Appendix II.
 - 1.3 The above is based on the Model Scheme for Local Councils and reflect the responsibilities of Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council.

2 Availability of Information

- 2.1 The copy of the scheme will be available In person from the Parish office, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am to 4pm or on Wednesdays 9am – 1pm, by post from the same address or in any other appropriate format that is required for an individual to access a document. The full address is in Appendix I.

The website - www.stansted.net

- 2.2 Arrangements will be made with the local RNIB office to have text translated into Braille if required.

3 Charges of Information

- 3.1 The Parish Council will not charge for the inspection of documents or for viewing the information.

The following charges will apply for supplying copies of documents:

10 or under £1

20 - £2

30 - £3

There will be a minimum copy fee of £10 payable (at the discretion of the Parish Clerk)

The Council reserves the right to make additional charges to those shown above in line with the charges as published by the Information Commissioner's Office.

- 3.2 The Parish Council complies with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The biggest cost in providing information under the FOI Act is likely to be staff time. Staff time is provisioned at £25 per person per hour, regardless of who does the work, including external contractors. In accordance with the 2000 Act, there is a limit of £600 of staff costs attributable to the FOI request (or 24 staff hours). Any refusal from the Parish Council to provide information will be communicated in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

4 Rights

- 4.1 From 1 March 2003 any person will have the right to receive a copy of the information described in the Publication Scheme and, where that information is available in printed format the Council will endeavour to provide copies within 20 working days of receiving the request.

5 Complaints

- 5.1 If you are unhappy with the way in which Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council has dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you should raise the matter in accordance with our usual Complaints Procedure.

APPENDIX I

PUBLICATION SCHEME

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council has RESOLVED to adopt the Model Scheme for Local Councils (core classes plus optional classes within the core classes and optional classes) as outlined in Appendix II.

DECLARATION

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council
The Mountfitchet Exchange
Crafton Green
72 Chapel Hill
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex
CM24 8AQ

has adopted the Model Scheme titled "Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council - Access to Information Policy" produced in accordance with Section 20 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and will publish information in accordance with that scheme.

The contact details for the person who will be responsible for maintaining the publication scheme and who should be contacted if any issues arise concerning the organisation's compliance with the Freedom of Information Act is:

Mrs Ruth Clifford
Parish Clerk
Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council
The Mountfitchet Exchange
Crafton Green
72 Chapel Hill
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex
CM24 8AQ
Tel No: 01279 813214
Fax No: 01279 813214
E-mail: parishcouncil@stansted.net

APPENDIX II

CLASSES OF INFORMATION

1 COUNCIL INTERNAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

- Minutes of Council, Committee and sub-Committee meetings - limited to the last 2 years.
- Procedural Standing Orders
- Councils Annual report to the Parish Meeting
- Agendas and supporting papers for Council, Committee and sub-Committee meetings - limited in each case to the forthcoming/immediate meeting. Terms of Reference for Committees

2 CODE OF CONDUCT

- Members Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- Members Register of Interests
- Register of Members Interests Book

3 PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW

- This is information concerning changes to the electoral arrangements for Parish, Town and Community Councils. It includes recommendations for the creation of new wards, the amendment of existing wards, proposals for the names of new wards and alterations to the number of Councillors to be elected to the Council.
- Information relating to the last Periodic Electoral Review of the Council area
- Information relating to the latest boundary review of the Council area

4 EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

- Terms & conditions of employment
- Job descriptions
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staffing Structure

Exclusions - 'personal records' i.e. appraisals, employee-specific salary details, disciplinary records, sickness records and the like by virtue of being personal data under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

5 PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- Responses to planning applications

6 AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS

- Annual return - limited to the last financial year
- Annual Statutory report by the auditor (internal and external) - limited to the last financial year
- Receipt/Payment books, receipt books of all kinds, bank statements from all accounts - limited to the last financial year
- Precept request - limited to the last financial year
- VAT records - limited to the last financial year
- Financial Standing Orders and Regulations
- Safety Inspection records for playgrounds
- Assets Register
- Fees and charges applied by the Parish Council
- Risk Assessments

Exclusions - all commercially sensitive information e.g. quotations and tenders, loan documentation, legal advice and insurance policies. With regard to quotations and tenders, this information is treated as confidential to ensure that the whole tender process is fair i.e. if tender information is released to a third party prior to the end of the tender period those who initially submitted tenders could be undercut and/or unfairly disadvantaged.

7 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

- Policy Statements issued by Council
- Responses made by Council to consultation papers
- Analysis of responses received to public consultations by the Council
- Complaints handling procedure

8 BYELAWS

Made for any of the following purposes:

- The regulation of a pleasure ground or public space
- The regulation of an open space

9 COUNCIL CIRCULARS/NEWSLETTERS

Town, Parish, Community guide

10 ALLOTMENTS - when provided

- Plans
- Standard tenancy Agreements

Exclusions: Individual tenancy agreements and rent payment records under both privacy and data protection laws.

The Parish Council will also comply with the information required to be available under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 which prescribes certain information which must be made available by publication on the Council's website.

